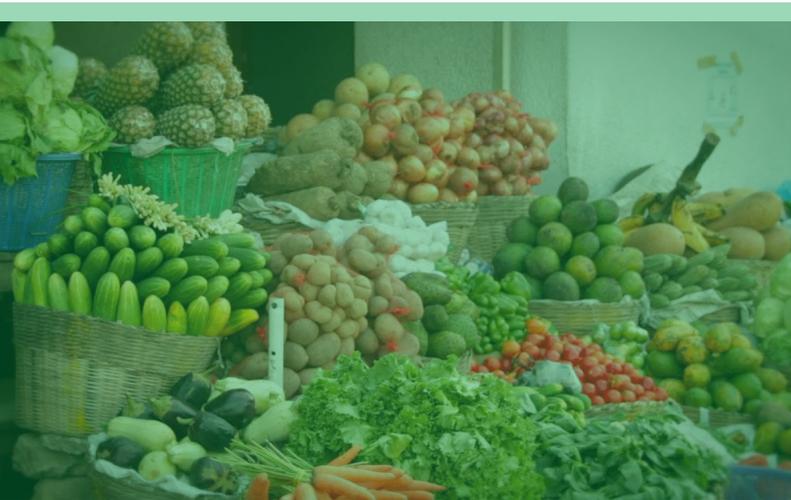




# AFRICAN UNION 2022 YEAR OF NUTRITION: STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE IN NUTRITION AND FOOD SECURITY ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

## Nutrition and Food Security Dialogue Series

Organized by AKADEMIYA2063 and the Senegalese National Council for  
Nutrition Development (CNDN)



June 28, 2022

**Dialogue #2: “The Role of Trade and Food Safety in Advancing Nutrition and Food Security Objectives and the Need for Policy Alignment”**



## Background

Good nutrition is essential for human and socio-economic development. Investments in nutrition particularly in the first 1,000 days of a child's life help to prevent lifelong effects of malnutrition, enable children to have better health and education outcomes, and contribute to improved economic outcomes. The 2007-2008 global food price crisis raised awareness on the need to improve nutrition in order to achieve international, regional, and national development and growth targets as well as the need for concerted effort to address the triple burden of malnutrition (undernutrition, micronutrient deficiency, and overweight and obesity).

In Africa, the awareness generated strong resolve at the highest political levels, which resulted in several new nutrition initiatives and the incorporation of nutrition in major development agendas. For example, in 2013 the African Union Commission (AUC) launched the cost of hunger studies in Africa to quantify the social and economic impacts of child undernutrition; in 2018, the African Development Bank and AUC set up the African Leaders for Nutrition Initiative and followed suit with a Continental Accountability Scorecard in 2019 to highlight country and continental progress on achieving nutrition targets. A total of 40 African countries are now part of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement that was launched in 2010 to apply multi-sectoral nutrition-sensitive approaches in addressing malnutrition. Furthermore, the commitment to address malnutrition has been echoed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and World Health Assembly Nutrition Targets as well as in various African strategies and agendas including the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063, the AU African Regional Nutrition Strategy (2015-2025), the 2014 Malabo Declaration, and national development strategies and investment plans.

Africa has made remarkable progress in reducing hunger and malnutrition since the mid-1990s and saw steady declines in the prevalence of undernourishment, child stunting, child underweight, and child wasting, [particularly between 2008 and 2014](#). However, since 2017, there has been a reversal in the declining trend in undernourishment. The rising undernourishment and still high levels of child malnutrition have been attributed to several factors including economic volatility, conflicts, and climate change and more frequent weather extremes. The COVID-19 pandemic has further threatened to reverse nutritional gains and exposed vulnerabilities in Africa's economic, health, and food systems alike, [adding a projected 46.2 million](#) more undernourished people. Meanwhile, the ongoing Ukraine-Russia war is expected to exacerbate food insecurity in countries that are highly dependent on imports from Russia and Ukraine through import disruptions and rising global agricultural commodity and input prices.

In addition, Africa faces rising trends in overweight and obesity among children, youth, and adults that is associated with a growing middle class and rapid urbanization on the continent. If no measures are taken to reverse these trends, one in five adults and one in 10 children and adolescents are [projected to be obese](#) by the end of 2023 in 10 high-burden African countries.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic that has exposed pinch points in Africa's health and food systems and is threatening to reverse Africa's gains in combating malnutrition, the AU has designated 2022 as the Year of Nutrition in order to advocate for greater financing, implementation capacity, and coordination in strengthening the resilience of Africa's food security and nutrition.



## Objectives

In support of the AU's 2022 Year of Nutrition, AKADEMIYA2063 and the Senegalese National Council for Nutrition Development (CNDN) will organize a series of continental level dialogues on nutrition and food security with a broad group of stakeholders, including policymakers, civil society organizations, farmers' organizations, research institutions, the private sector, and development partners, to facilitate knowledge exchange, mutual learning, and drive necessary action toward achieving continental and global food security and nutrition targets.

Specific *objectives* of the nutrition and food security dialogues are to highlight the following:

1. Africa's progress, challenges, successes, and opportunities in achieving nutrition and food security outcomes and targets;
2. Critical and emerging areas that need to be addressed in order to effectively improve food security, dietary quality, and nutritional outcomes on the African continent; and
3. Potential solutions to challenges and required policies and investments to accelerate and sustain the achievement of nutritional and food security goals in Africa.

## Topics for Dialogue Series

AKADEMIYA2063 and CNDN will organize a series of five dialogues covering the following pertinent topics:

1. Africa's progress toward meeting nutrition and food security targets, successes, challenges, and lessons learned, including the importance of applying a food systems lens and multi-sectoral approaches to addressing hunger and malnutrition
2. The role of trade and food safety in advancing nutrition and food security objectives and the need for policy alignment
3. Food systems-related opportunities and challenges to advancing nutrition in Africa
4. Balancing nutrition goals with climate and environmental goals, shifting to more sustainable consumption patterns, and building resilience in nutrition and food security
5. Africa's rapid urbanization and impacts on diet quality, both in rural and urban areas.



## Nutrition and Food Security Dialogue # 2

June 28, 2022

### “The Role of Trade and Food Safety in Advancing Nutrition and Food Security Objectives and the Need for Policy Alignment”

*Organized in partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)*

Trade and food safety can play essential roles in ensuring food and nutrition security. Trade can help to stabilize fluctuations in domestic food supply and prices<sup>1</sup>, increase the diversity of national diets by increasing the availability of different types of foods<sup>2</sup>, and raise incomes and the ability of households to purchase food<sup>3</sup>. Meanwhile, unsafe food can cause acute and chronic illnesses that can lead to permanent disability or death. Foodborne hazards can reduce the bioavailability of nutrients in food and affect the growth and modernization of domestic food markets, as well as income and employment opportunities that domestic food markets provide through production, processing, and distribution<sup>4</sup>. Thus, access to safe and nutritious food is key to sustaining healthy diets and food security and promoting trade and economic growth and development.

Furthermore, challenges in adhering to sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, particularly on agricultural products, often impede African exports to regional and global markets. This impediment can further aggravate the ability of African countries to use trade as a means of propelling food and nutrition security. Moreover, trade can have positive or negative impacts on nutrition depending on factors such as differences in the forms of malnutrition and foods affected, characteristics of sub-populations and food systems, and existing policies and institutions<sup>5</sup>. It is therefore important to promote complementary and coherent trade, food safety, and nutrition policies that maximize positive outcomes.

This second dialogue will delve into the nexus between trade, nutrition, food safety and food security. It will examine Africa’s SPS-related challenges and share lessons learned and best practices in strengthening Africa’s SPS systems to promote trade, nutrition, and food safety and security. Participants will also reflect on how best to use trade and food safety policies as instruments to improve nutritional and dietary quality. The discussion will also note efforts to advance trade and food safety under existing frameworks such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the African Union (AU) SPS Policy Framework, and the AU Food Safety Strategy.



1 Gillson, I. & Fouad, A., eds. 2015. Trade policy and food security: improving access to food in developing countries in the wake of high world prices. Directions in Development. Washington, DC, World Bank.

2 Brooks, J. & Matthews, A. 2015. Trade dimensions of food security. OECD Food, Agriculture and Fisheries Papers, No. 77. Paris, OECD Publishing.

3 UK Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (UKBIS). 2013. Can trade improve food security? Trade and Investment Analytical Papers, Topic 9 of 18. London, DBIS.

4 Jaffee, S., Henson, S., Unnevehr, L., Grace, D., and Cassou, E. 2019. The Safe Food Imperative: Accelerating Progress in Low and Middle-Income Countries. Overview booklet. World Bank, Washington, DC.

5 Hawks, C. 2016. Enhancing Coherence between Trade Policy and Nutrition Action. United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition Discussion Paper. UNSSCN, Rome.



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