



Addis Ababa University
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The UN Food Systems Summit 2021: African policy priorities

March, 2021

Concept Note

Over the past decade, Africa's food systems have begun to transform, sparked by prolonged economic growth, a growing population, urbanization, and shifting dietary preferences and habits driven by an increasing middle class across the continent. These shifts are coupled with a variety of challenges, including environmental degradation and increasing resource-scarcity, as well as socio-economic shocks including conflicts and prolonged economic crises, migration, youth unemployment and health crises. Within the context of Covid-19 and the post-Covid era, now is the opportunity to re-think and re-build African food systems, to be more sustainable, resilient and inclusive.

In September 2021, UN Secretary-General António Guterres will hence convene a Food Systems Summit (FSS) as part of the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The Summit will launch bold new actions to deliver progress on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), each of which relies to some degree on healthier, more sustainable and equitable food systems. The objectives of the Summit are to generate momentum, expand the knowledge base, and share experiences and approaches to unleash the benefits of food systems for all people. Guided by five Action Tracks, the Summit will bring together key stakeholders from science and research, business, and government, as well as farmers, indigenous groups, youth organizations, consumer groups, and others.

In response to an invitation by the Scientific Group of the UN Food Systems Summit, [AKADEMIYA2063](#) (A2063), through its [Malabo Montpellier Panel program](#), will facilitate a collation of African perspectives and priorities on food systems and their transformation. To do so, a detailed survey will inform a convening of representatives from African think tanks and universities, as well as a desk study to produce a policy brief on African food systems policy priorities. Founded on existing evidence, the study will identify policy challenges, opportunities and priorities for the sustainable transformation of African food systems.

To do so, [AKADEMIYA2063](#) seeks to mobilize a critical mass of representatives from leading African think tanks and universities in assessing policy areas that needs to be prioritized in order to enhance and transform African food systems. The following modalities are being envisaged:

1. Formation of a coordination group comprising representatives of four (4) leading African think tanks and five (5) leading African universities;
2. Implementation of a survey of experts from key African think tanks and universities;
3. Organization of a one-day dialogue event on African FSS policy priorities during week/c 22 March;
4. Preparation of a draft brief to be discussed at the March dialogue event; and
5. Finalization and submission of a policy brief to the FSS Scientific Group by April 15.

The four think tanks to join the Coordination group through representatives are:

- i. AKADEMIYA2063 based in Rwanda,
- ii. Policy Center for the New South based in Morocco,
- iii. African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET) based in Ghana,
- iv. The Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) based in South Africa.

The five universities to join the Coordination group through representatives are:

- i. Tegemeo Institute of Agricultural Policy and Development at Egerton University based in Kenya,
- ii. Université Cheikh Anta Diop (UCAD) based in Senegal,
- iii. University of Cairo based in Egypt,
- iv. University of Pretoria based in South Africa and
- v. Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia.

Besides engaging faculty from the universities, we seek inclusion of student groups in the dialogues, including encouraging students' statements on the Summit agenda from African perspectives.

The think tanks and universities mentioned above will facilitate the consultation workshop, including the drafting of background documents and finalization of policy brief based on its outcomes. The survey results will be circulated prior the workshop to enable participants to be better prepared and contribute actively to discussions during the workshop. The outcome of the survey and the consultative workshop will serve as the main input to the policy briefing that will be finalized and submitted in mid-April.

Key contacts at AKADEMIYA2063

For questions regarding the work of the coordination group (workshop, survey, briefing paper):

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