

# Africa's Food Systems Forum 2023 Summit

Dates: 5<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> September 2023

**Theme:** 'Recover, Regenerate, Act: Africa's Path to Transforming Food Systems'



## The Africa Food Systems Forum 2023 Summit:

'Recover, Regenerate, Act - Africa's Path to Transforming Food Systems,' centered on the imperative of revitalising and empowering food systems, placing youth and women at the forefront.

Explore the narratives of stakeholders who actively engaged in tangible initiatives, shared invaluable insights, and lessons towards resilient food systems in Africa.

## AFRICA FOOD SYSTEMS FORUM 2023 SUMMIT

Recover, Regenerate, Act: Africa's Solutions to Food Systems Transformation



President Samia Suluhu Hassan, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania addresses delegates at the Africa Food Systems Forum 2023 at the Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre (JNICC) in Dar es Salaam.

## Samia calls on African leaders to reassess their priorities for resilient food systems

While Africa boasts of nearly 60 per cent of the world's arable land, it continues to be a net food importer, expending billions each year to fulfill its food requirements. A significant portion of its populace still struggles with persistent hunger and malnutrition. It is important for African countries to interrogate the resilient and varied food systems that are the vital essence of the continent.

**MILLICENT MWOLOLO**  
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**A**t the just-ended Africa Food Systems Forum (AFSF) 2023 Summit in Dar es Salaam, the president of the United Republic of Tanzania Samia Suluhu Hassan, has called on African leaders to re-assess their priorities to build resilient food systems for the continent. "It is high time African leaders reassessed their priorities, compared them with the current demands in the wide context of the world, realised the intended food systems transformations, and made the sector take the people to the Africa we want," President Samia said when she addressed the 'Presidential Summit Heads of State Roundtable' session at the Summit.

In general, Africa's food system falls short in providing sustainable and nutritious diets to its entire population. This shortfall can be attributed to a combination of factors, including climate change, economic instability, conflicts, low agricultural productivity, and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Latest statistics from the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), indicate that with

over 20 per cent of the continent's population – roughly 257 million people – undernourished, Africa bears the heaviest burden of malnutrition.

Child malnutrition remains a pressing challenge in numerous African nations. Despite advances in certain regions, elevated levels of malnutrition persist. Figures from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) indicate that in 2022 alone, over 20 million people and at least 10 million children faced severe food shortages in Africa due to crop failure and four consecutive dry seasons. Forecasts from the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) paint a significant sevenfold increase in Africa's annual food imports, soaring from USD15 billion in 2018 to USD110 billion by 2025, and tripling from the current USD43 billion.

President Samia noted that although the

### TOWARDS FOOD RESILIENCE

"The resolutions should strengthen trade, food security and sustainability, as well as work on the promise to address the unemployment challenge among the youth," – Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

continent is immensely blessed with lucrative deposits of minerals that could generate enough income for sustainable agricultural funding, millions of Africans were still going to bed hungry, a situation that she deemed as shameful and unacceptable. "An estimated 283 million Africans are reported to go hungry every day, leading to malnutrition and other nutrition-related diseases. Worse enough, there are some who die due to lack of food. This is shameful and unacceptable," she observed.

The continent's richness in resources placed it in a position to provide food system solutions to the world, she added. However, African leaders still remained complacent instead of finding solutions ahead of the green economy revolution.

"The continent is blessed with 65 per cent of conducive land for agriculture production, 60 per cent of the youth among its population, and excessive water in its large lakes and rivers," she said.

President Samia urged development partners, the Africa Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) and the private sector to assist African nations in improving the agricultural sector. But not before she called on her peers to show solidarity with those who were dealing with hunger and food insecurity for various reasons. She said that Tanzania was ready to cooperate with development partners in utilising its investment opportunities to transform the country's food systems.

As Tanzania hosted the 13th Africa Food Systems Summit, AGRA released the *Africa Agriculture Status Report 2023*, indicating that half of the continent's population is food insecure. The report lists outdated farming methods and a slow adoption rate of enhanced agricultural technologies among the key contributors to low productivity and underperformance of Africa's agricultural sector,

resulting in a bleak outlook for food and nutrition security. The authors also note that inadequate infrastructure encompassing poor roads, storage, and processing facilities restrict market access and amplifies post-harvest losses. Further, many African farmers and other stakeholders in the food system lack access to financial resources and credit facilities, which could empower them to invest in improved agricultural technologies and inputs.

It is therefore a critical time for Africa to put the food security conversation on the table and float resolutions that would build resilience at a time when climate change is being seen as the biggest source of hunger in the continent. "The resolutions should open opportunities in the agriculture sector, trade, and finance to support food systems transformation at the national level, as well as share experience in the areas of production, soil health, value addition, research and marketing," President Samia said.

Further, she added; "The resolutions should strengthen trade, food security and sustainability, as well as work on the promise to address the unemployment challenge among the youth."

President Samia's sentiments as to why African countries should invest in strengthening resilience their agricultural systems come at a time when Africa is at a critical juncture with the number of its young people expected to reach 200 million by 2030. This increases the urgency to provide productive employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. With the strong current focus on digitalisation, automation, and now artificial intelligence (AI) as surefire solutions for Africa's food systems, the youth are strategically placed to effectively leverage them to infuse innovation and energy into transforming the continent's food systems landscape.

Through the 2003 Maputo Declaration, African leaders pledged to reverse decades of underinvestment in the sector by allocating 10 per cent of their national budgets to agriculture. Almost 10 years, but only about 20 per cent of African governments have implemented it, with some of the countries investing only 1 per cent of their national budgets into agriculture.

Hitting this budget alone will allow long-term solutions to be implemented. "When we invest in climate infrastructure, climate funds and insurance solutions, agricultural technologies and inputs, farmer training and supporting strategic value chains in agriculture; we believe that it solves most of the issues faced by small-holder farmers because you make them more resilient. This is the key to making Africa food secure," Fati N'zi Hassane, the director for Oxfam in Africa observed in a recent interview with *The EastAfrican*.

The AGRF Summit 2023 served as a pivotal forum where prominent African thinkers, policymakers, and innovators came together to deliberate and delve into the most recent innovations and successful approaches in agriculture and food systems transformation. At the forum a diverse range of speakers ranging from policy makers, experts and grassroots organisations working with youth and women in agriculture showcased the actionable strategies and how previously defined pathways are being translated at the country level. The event aimed to expedite the conversion of established pathways and commitments into tangible strategies, investments, and measurable progress. The discussions centered around the opportunities, necessary actions and pathways to hasten the continent's progress towards enhanced food systems.

## AFRICAS' FOOD SYSTEMS NEED BETTER SOIL

# Africas' Journey Towards Soil Sustainability

“The imperative to define Africa’s strategy for sustainable soil management cannot be overstated. Soil health is the linchpin of agriculture, and our approach underscores the importance of preserving this vital resource. It is a call to action, a recognition that we must prioritize sustainable practices that safeguard soil health while boosting agricultural productivity,”

- Dr Leigh Ann

**JASPER KWAYU**  
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Beneath Africa’s diverse farming methods and ecosystems lies a common foundation: the vital importance of soil health. Healthy soils are the backbone of agriculture, providing essential nutrients, supporting strong crop growth, and enhancing overall ecosystem vitality. However, beneath the surface, African soils face significant challenges such as degradation, erosion, and declining fertility—serious threats that undermine the foundation of food production. These issues are exacerbated by the specter of climate change, marked by unpredictable rainfall patterns, prolonged droughts, and an increase in extreme weather events. In this context, adopting sustainable soil health practices and using fertilizers wisely is no longer a choice; it’s a necessity to ensure agricultural resilience in the face of a changing climate.

## The Significance of Soil Health

At a Africa Food Systems Summit Side Event, Dr. Leigh Ann Winowiecki, Global Research Lead for Soil and Land Health at CIFOR-ICRAF, emphasized that “Healthy soil hosts more biodiversity in one teaspoon than there are humans on Earth.” She added, “Yet today’s soils face an unprecedented crisis. Over one-third of the Earth’s surface is degraded, negatively affecting over 3.2 billion people.” “The urgency of breaking away from business as usual is paramount to securing the well-being of both humanity and the planet,” she continues.

Globally, data from the United Nations paints a troubling picture, revealing that 33% of the world’s

land is already degraded, primarily attributed to erosive forces, compaction, soil sealing, nutrient depletion, and various other factors. The situation is especially dire in Africa, where an estimated 180 million hectares of land, roughly equivalent to 40% of the continent’s entire agricultural area, grapple with soil degradation. This widespread issue results in an alarming annual loss of 36 billion tons of topsoil on a global scale, with global cropland erosion at 17 billion tons, resulting in USD \$300 Billion in lost agricultural production annually.

Africa’s commitment to sustainable soil management is a call to action—a recognition that the path to a prosperous future lies in nurturing the very soil that sustains us all. According to a study by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), global food production must increase by 70% by 2050 to adequately feed the growing population, and soil degradation compounds this challenge by diminishing crop yields, making it even more difficult to meet the increasing demand for food.

## Case for East Africa

Closer to Home, East Africa grapples with a looming agricultural crisis, as soil degradation, erosion, and dwindling fertility relentlessly challenge the region’s farming sector. Soil health is the linchpin of sustainable agriculture, underpinning the vitality of East Africa’s diverse ecosystems. These healthy soils not only nourish crops, providing essential nutrients, but also serve as nature’s buffer against climate change impacts while preserving vital biodiversity. The recent emergence of Panama disease, linked to poor soil management, rings alarm bells. A comprehensive survey across the region revealed high incidences of banana Fusarium wilt, or Panama disease, impacting more than half of all



Panel from the Plenary on Defining a Soil Health Strategy. Picture | Credit John Kameka

farms, with Tanzania experiencing the highest rates. With millions in the region reliant on agriculture for their livelihoods and East Africa ranking among the world’s top consumers of bananas per capita of 400 to 600kg, these soil challenges are far-reaching.

## A Comprehensive Strategy for a Sustainable Future

“The imperative to define Africa’s strategy for sustainable soil man-

### Highlights

- According to a study by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), global food production must increase by 70% by 2050 to adequately feed the growing population, and soil degradation compounds this challenge by diminishing crop yields, making it even more difficult to meet the increasing demand for food.
- In Africa an estimated 180 million hectares of land, roughly equivalent to 40% of the continent’s entire agricultural area, grapple with soil degradation.
- CA4SH focuses on integrating soil health in policy across various domains, expanding research and development on soil health practices, significantly increasing the adoption of healthy soil practices, and amplifying investments in soil health.



Panel from the Plenary Session on Defining a Soil Health Strategy at the Africa Food Summit 2023 - Pre AGRF Picture | Credit John Kameka

agement cannot be overstated. Soil health is the linchpin of agriculture, and our approach underscores the importance of preserving this vital resource. It is a call to action, a recognition that we must prioritize sustainable practices that safeguard soil health while boosting agricultural productivity,” states Dr. Leigh Ann Winowiecki. CIFOR-ICRAF’s Soil and Land Health aims to address the multiple challenges of climate change, food and nutrition insecurity, land degradation and biodiversity loss, from the soil up.

Dr. Anthony Anderson Kimaro, The World Agroforestry, Country Representative for Tanzania adds, “Our efforts must represent an opportunity for Africa to lead in sustainable agriculture. It must align soil health with climate resilience and environmental conservation. We must recognize that this approach is not just about agriculture; it’s about securing a sustainable future for our continent. It requires a collective effort that transcends borders and disciplines, and it is a journey worth embarking on.”

There is a growing momentum to address soil health issues, exemplified by the upcoming African Union Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health Summit on November 5-7, 2023, in Nairobi. During this event, a 10-year action plan for a continental framework for soil actions will be launched.

## A United Effort with CA4SH

This collaborative effort aligns with the objectives of the Coalition of Action 4 Soil Health (CA4SH), a global initiative committed to catalyzing investments in soil health for human well-being and climate resilience. This initiative provides a valuable framework for addressing Africa’s soil health and fertilizer manage-

ment challenges.

CA4SH focuses on integrating soil health in policy across various domains, expanding research and development on soil health practices, significantly increasing the adoption of healthy soil practices, and amplifying investments in soil health. This platform fosters partnerships and knowledge exchange, facilitating a coordinated and coherent response to the critical issues of soil health and sustainable agriculture.

CA4SH calls upon the global community to recognize soil as the common thread weaving through complex challenges such as food and nutrition security, poverty reduction, climate change, and biodiversity loss. It urges private investors to embrace soil as a valuable capital asset, moving beyond limited commodity-focused investments, such as coffee, cocoa, and palm oil. It rallies all public and private stakeholders to unite in closing the soil health investment gap and incentivizing farmers to implement practices that enhance soil health. Its vision is to adopt a holistic approach, one that not only revitalizes soil but also yields co-benefits for production, the environment, climate resilience, and the economy. To achieve this, CA4SH calls for alignment among growers, investors, financial markets, and value chain actors to collectively tackle the social, economic, and technical barriers faced by farmers in adopting soil-healthy practices. It urges us to shift our focus from context-specific actions to evidence-based outcomes delivered through flexible, agronomically sound approaches.

*“It is our shared responsibility to safeguard soil health for generations to come” - Dr. Leigh Ann Winowiecki.*



ICRAF Land Restoration Kenya Picture | Credit Kelvin Trautman



Eastern Kenya landscape. Picture | Credit Kelvin Trautman

## AFRICA FOOD SYSTEMS FORUM 2023 SUMMIT

Recover, Regenerate, Act: Africa's Solutions to Food Systems Transformation



Dr William Samoei Ruto, the President of the Republic of Kenya follows proceedings at the Africa Food Systems Forum 2023 at the Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre (JNICC) in Dar es Salaam.

# With the right policies, Africa can feed itself

MILLICENT MWOLOLO  
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**A**frican leaders traded renewed hope and vision that the continent will no doubt rise up from food insecurity but also draw enormous potential for sustainable economic development from it, if only they invest strategically in the sector. They identified investments in technology, infrastructure, agriculture value chain and availability of agricultural financing as key drivers that will usher in the next phase of development in Africa through resilient agriculture systems.

On the sidelines of the Africa Food Systems Forum 2023 at the Julius Nyerere International Convention Centre (JNICC) in Dar es Salaam, the future of Africa's food security looked bright.

**Dr William Samoei Ruto, the President of the Republic of Kenya** “According to African Development Bank, future billionaires will not be people in Google and other spaces. If you want to be a rich man in the future, you have to begin to go to the right corner and start being a farmer and am telling you this from experience because I am one of them.”

“A new narrative around agriculture will make it attract more young people who can help us produce more efficiently.” Africa has the potential to feed itself. We must utilise the arable lands that we have to our advantage.

“Let us use the borders as a bridge to intra-Africa business rather than frustrating commerce.”

**President Samia Suluhu Hassan, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania**

“In agriculture, we cannot avoid modern technologies. Agriculture research has to begin with studying the soil health, have database of farmers and extension service.”

“The resolutions should open opportunities in the agriculture sector, trade, and finance to support food systems transformation at the national level, as well as share experience in the areas of production, soil health, value addition, research and marketing.”

**Prof Eric Danquah, a genetics scientist and the founding director of the West Africa Centre for Crop Improvement.**

“We want the youth to go into agriculture, but they won't go if there are no opportunities.”

“The first thing we must do is to ensure that there are opportunities that the youth can take up. So, you get back to the research institutions and empower them to develop the innovations that will create opportunities for the youth entering the agrispace. Its only that they you will find the youth coming to the agriculture sector to take up the innovations and then translate the ideas into businesses that impact the people.”

## Advancing Climate-Smart Agribusiness in Africa



Mercy Zulu-Hume, Program Lead (CGIAR)

JASPER KWAYU  
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

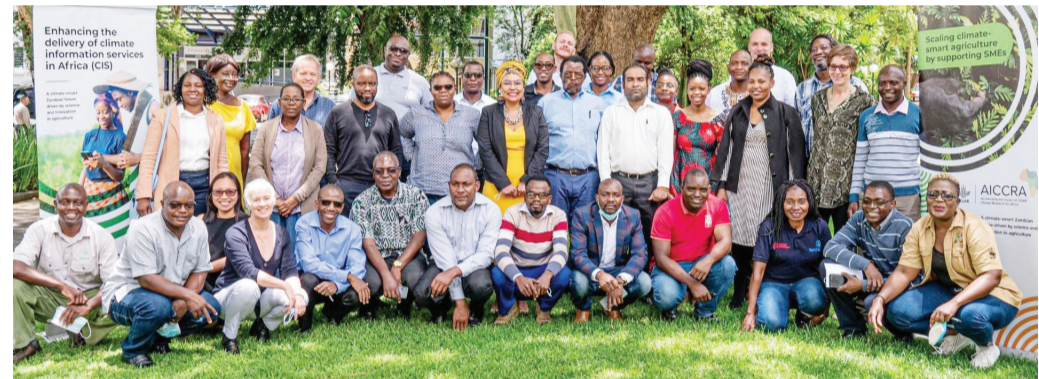
The Ukama Ustawi Initiative drives Africa to scale climate-smart innovations, setting a remarkable precedence with its unique Food Systems Accelerator program. What sets this accelerator apart is its crafty blend of investment readiness and science-based technical assistance, meticulously crafted for climate-smart agriculture. By equipping agribusinesses with the tools and knowledge to enhance their commercial viability and sustainability, the program not only attracts private-sector investments but also champions sustainable farming practices that boost food production and counteract the adverse effects of climate change. This holistic approach reduces threats and fosters an attractive investment climate, unlocking funding for the agriculture sector and nurturing a culture of innovation.

Launched in Kigali, Rwanda the Food Systems Accelerator Program drives innovations aimed at fortifying food security, elevating farmer productivity, and fostering adaptation to the impacts of climate change on agriculture. The program emphasizes agribusinesses that scale climate-smart innovations for smallholder farmers and demonstrate potential for commercial viability. These innovative solutions encompass mechanization and irrigation, conservation agriculture, nutrition-sensitive climate-smart agriculture, and risk management within agriculture.

Within this initiative is a profound recognition of the symbiotic relationship between science and business acceleration within the agricultural sector. “Leveraging the vast scientific expertise embedded in the CGIAR network, boasting over 9,000 scientists worldwide, the program offers vital technical support to agribusinesses, ensuring their production activities align with the latest agricultural research,” explained Mercy Zulu-Hume, Program Lead (CGIAR). This meticulous approach “provides investors with a well-vetted pipeline of agribusinesses that prioritize both social and environmental responsibility, amplifying the appeal of sustainable investments,” added Salome Ng'ang'a, Invest-



Entrepreneurs in the AICCRA Senegal Gender Smart Accelerator Challenge presented their projects to a jury composed of investors from across Senegal's financial sector in February 2023. Six companies were chosen to be awarded amounts ranging from 6 to 15 million CFA francs.



The AICCRA Zambia Accelerator Program has selected 14 agribusiness to scale five 'bundles' of innovation that support climate-smart agriculture and climate information services in the country. Finalists announced in Lusaka in February 2022.

ment Readiness Lead (2SCALE).

The inaugural cohort of agribusinesses represents the vanguard of Africa's food system, collaborating with over 39,000 smallholder farmers to tackle pressing food system challenges. The initiative will support agri-enterprises in three successive cohorts. The enterprises selected for the first cohort are Afri-Farmer's Market, Aggregator Trust Rwanda Ltd, Batian Nuts Ltd, East Agricultural Development Company Ltd, Farm Depot, Forest Africa Zambia Ltd, Shamba Records, Stable Foods, The Insectary Kenya, and Yellow Star Produce and Food Processors Ltd. These enterprises benefit from comprehensive climate-smart agriculture technical assistance provided under the program, investment readiness support through 2SCALE, and guidance on user experience and gender inclusion from The Rallying Cry.

Within this cohort, one of those represented is the remarkable journey of Florence Okot, who leads Yellow Star, a produce and food processing company, epitomizes resilience and determination.

**Not Just Another Gender Story**

Currently, the agriculture sector in East and Southern Africa faces significant risks, with over USD 45 billion in investments is at risk possibly being susceptible due to climate variability. These risks disproportionately affect women, who often contend with limited access to resources and opportunities. Furthermore, youth engagement is pivotal for the future of agri-food systems in Africa, and the Ukama Ustawi

Initiative is dedicated to addressing these challenges while actively promoting gender equality and social inclusion within the agribusiness landscape.

The Initiative's strategic partnership with The Rallying Cry aims to create a more inclusive financial system by aligning the financial priorities and needs of women with those of investors. In 2023, Ukama Ustawi will strengthen its collaboration with women in agribusiness, facilitating connections with investors and strategic partners.

The Ukama Ustawi Initiative is unwavering in its commitment to championing gender equality and social inclusion while steering the course of agribusiness towards a sustainable and prosperous future in East and Southern Africa. As Hauke Dahl, Scaling Lead – East and Southern Africa, Ukama Ustawi, aptly puts it, “For the longest time, agricultural research and the agribusiness sector development have been looked at separately. At Ukama Ustawi, we realize that the agribusiness ecosystem is the backbone of the food systems sector in Africa. That is why our Food Systems Accelerator provides a bespoke and demand-driven mix of science-based technical assistance, that builds the private sector's capacity to scale innovation. This also enables our researchers to develop scaling pathways, ensuring that their research reaches a desirable impact. Lastly, we aim to de-risk investments into the agricultural sector by strengthening the SMEs' business models, as well as mobilizing financial resources to bridge the funding gap that still

exists to reach the SDGs.”

CGIAR is a global research partnership for a food-secure future dedicated to transforming food, land, and water systems in a climate crisis. The Ukama Ustawi Initiative complements and connects with other CGIAR projects, such as the Accelerating Impacts of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa (AICCRA) project actively promoting approaches that support the integration of agribusinesses with science and innovation to drive food systems transformation, fostering impact on mitigation, adaptation, productivity, and resilience.

For instance, the AICCRA Gender Smart Accelerator Challenge in Senegal provides 17 agribusinesses—mostly those led by women entrepreneurs—with coaching and support to build and scale business models that increase the adoption of climate-smart practices to increase their resilience of smallholder farmers in the face of climate change. The Accelerator Challenge team hosted knowledge sharing sessions and masterclasses at AGRF2023 in Dar-es-Salaam this week, which saw debate between more than 4,000 delegates on the future of Africa's food systems.

A similar AICCRA accelerator project in Zambia supports 14 small agribusinesses in opening up access to 400,000 smallholder farmers—nearly half of them women—to a range of climate-smart innovations including off-grid solar irrigation; micro-finance; drought-tolerant seeds and digital information services.

## GGML'S AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT TRANSFORMS THE REGION WITH A TENFOLD IMPACT.

From seeds to futures: GGML's continued commitment

# GGML enables citizens to turn mining town into a sunflower oasis

“Geita’s journey from a symbol of extraction to one of environmental stewardship exemplifies a global trend toward sustainable development. This shift reflects not only the community’s adaptability but also its commitment to preserving the region’s natural resources for future generations.”

**BEATRICE MATERU**  
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

**T**he Geita, a region historically known for its mineral wealth, a remarkable transformation is taking place. The community is transitioning from a mining-centric economy to a thriving hub of sunflower farming, thanks to the support of Geita Gold Mining Limited (GGML).

GGML, traditionally associated with mining, has embarked on a groundbreaking agricultural initiative. This shift from mining to modern farming practices is changing the landscape of Geita and revitalizing its economy.

Over the past eight years, GGML has played a pivotal role in promoting agriculture in the region. Supported by substantial financial and material resources, the community has diligently cultivated sunflower seeds and rice.

Mr. Saakumi Makungu, a lifelong resident of Geita and Chairman of the NYABUSAKAMA cooperative society, shares his perspective on this transformation. He was one of the initial 40 villagers selected in 2015 to receive comprehensive training, financial support, and materials to kickstart sunflower cultivation in Geita.

These 40 villagers were equipped with one-acre plots of land, modern tractors provided by GGML, sunflower seeds, and essential insecticides. This marked a significant departure from their reliance on daily labor for their livelihoods. GGML, in partnership with the Cholima Agriculture Institute, launched a capacity-building initiative, training these villagers in sunflower farming.

Access to high-quality seeds, fertilizers, and mechanized services like plowing and harvesting was ensured by GGML. As a result, Geita residents started planting sunflowers, gradually transforming the town into a vibrant sea of golden blooms. What began as a 40-person project quickly evolved into a community-wide effort to rejuvenate both the land and the spirit of Geita.

Beyond their visual appeal, sunflowers served as natural purifiers, detoxifying the soil and restoring its fertility. They attracted pollinators, breathing new life into the area and revitalizing the ecosystem.

Mr. Makungu explains the economic benefits, saying, "This boost in yields significantly reduced production costs. GGML also facilitated our access to markets; we now sell our produce at competitive prices, increasing our income."

With determination and sunflower seeds, the community embarked on a mission to transform barren land into fields of golden splendor.



Geita District Commissioner Hon Colonel Maghembe and GGML's Senior Manager for Sustainability Gilbert Mworira handover seeds to farmers.

GGML's venture into agriculture created employment opportunities, substantially lowering the region's unemployment rate. Residents from Kasota, Nyasalwa, Nyamilian-

## Highlights

- Mr. Makungu was one of the initial 40 villagers who, in 2015, received comprehensive training, financial resources, and material support to kickstart sunflower cultivation in Geita.
- GGML's venture into agriculture created a wave of employment opportunities, substantially lowering the region's unemployment rate.
- The enhanced crop yields directly impact public health and education. Increased access to nutritious food mitigates food shortages and malnutrition, leading to better overall health and educational outcomes for the region's residents.
- GGML has provided NYABUSAKAMA with two oil production machines capable of processing sunflower seeds at high speeds, producing between 12 and 18 liters of sunflower oil per 100 kilograms of seed.

go, Isabilo, and neighboring villages found gainful employment, stimulating consumer spending and overall economic activity.

"After a successful year of bountiful harvests, more people joined the initiative the following year, and the group grew to 106 participants. Today, over 850 individuals are actively engaged in sunflower agriculture," Mr. Makungu proudly stated.

GGML's partnership with the Cholima Agriculture Institute empowered local farmers and entrepreneurs, ushering in a new era of private sector development. As sustainable farming practices became the norm, Geita transitioned from being a symbol of extraction to one of environmental stewardship and renewal.

The transformation into an agricultural hub not only revitalized the land but also rekindled a sense of pride and community among its residents. As sustainable farming practices became the norm, the town transitioned from being a symbol of extraction to one of environmental stewardship and renewal, demonstrating the power of community, innovation, and collaboration in shaping a brighter future.

This shift towards agricultural diversification has not only bolstered the community's resilience but also reduced its vulnerability to economic downturns. Sunflower cultivation serves as a buffer, stabilizing

livelihoods in a region once overly dependent on a fluctuating mining sector.

Moreover, the revitalization of the once-degraded soil signifies a significant environmental victory. Sunflowers, beyond their economic benefits, possess natural detoxifying properties that have restored fertility to the land. This renewal has a broader ecological impact, including the resurgence of local pollinators and the restoration of a balanced ecosystem.

The empowerment of local farmers and entrepreneurs underscores the importance of self-reliance. As the community gains skills and knowledge, they are better equipped to establish and manage their businesses, reducing dependence on external forces.

Geita's journey from a symbol of extraction to one of environmental stewardship exemplifies a global trend toward sustainable development. This shift reflects not only the community's adaptability but also its commitment to preserving the region's natural resources for future generations.

Beyond economic advantages, the enhanced crop yields directly impact public health and education. Increased access to nutritious food mitigates food shortages and malnutrition, leading to better overall health and educational outcomes for the region's residents.



Saragurwa Rice Paddy Project storage and processing unit.



Inside the GGML funded Saragurwa Rice Paddy Project storage and processing unit.



Through knowledge sharing and best practices, farmers have achieved higher yields.

## GGML'S AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT TRANSFORMS THE REGION WITH A TENFOLD IMPACT.

From seeds to futures: GGML's continued commitment



Sunflower farming has transformed livelihoods.

## Sunflower farming transforming Geita Region, Nurturing Prosperity and Sustainability

**“Tanzania's largest gold host region, Geita, has witnessed an unprecedented sunflower harvest, all thanks to GGML's unwavering commitment to corporate social responsibility”**

**BEATRICE MATERU**  
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

In an inspiring narrative of community empowerment and agricultural success, the Geita region, boasting over 850 local sunflower farmers, stands as a shining testament to the transformative potential of collaboration with GGML, a mining industry leader dedicated to sustainable development and community well-being.

Tanzania's largest gold host region, Geita, has witnessed an unprecedented sunflower harvest, all thanks to GGML's unwavering commitment to corporate social responsibility. Recognizing agriculture's potential to uplift local communities, GGML has closely collaborated with these sunflower farmers for the past eight years, providing essential resources, expert guidance, and access to modern agricultural practices. This partnership has led to a significant surge in sunflower production, catalyzing economic growth

throughout the region.

GGML's investment in sunflower farming has not only diversified the region's economy but also bolstered food security. The sunflower oil produced not only enriches local cuisine but also contributes to a more sustainable and self-reliant food supply, reducing dependence on external sources.

The positive impact of this initiative extends beyond the sunflower fields, as NYABUKASAMA Cooperatives farmers and their families experience remarkable improve-

ments in their living standards. Increased income from sunflower sales has opened doors to better education, healthcare, and housing, ushering in a new era of prosperity in the region.

Beyond tangible benefits, the collaboration between GGML and the sunflower farmers has fostered a strong sense of community spirit. Farmers now share knowledge and resources, further fortifying the agricultural sector in Geita.

This initiative's success has inspired GGML to explore additional agricultural projects, with the goal of creating enduring positive impacts in the regions where they operate. Collaborations with local agricultural organizations and government agencies are on the horizon to expand and diversify

these efforts.

The story of these one thousand plus sunflower farmers serves as a powerful testament to the transformative potential of corporate-community partnerships. GGML's commitment to the well-being of the regions it operates in sets a commendable example for responsible corporate practices within the mining industry. As the sunflowers continue to flourish, so does hope and prosperity in Geita.

The success of sunflower farming has generated demand for goods and services, thereby promoting regional economic development. GGML's efforts to boost productivity and enhance farming methods have benefited not only food security and farmer incomes but also the social and environmental well-being of communities.

Furthermore, GGML's investment has spurred the growth of ancillary businesses. Suppliers of agricultural inputs, transportation services, and processing facilities have thrived, creating a ripple effect that touches other facets of the local economy.

In a region where agriculture is vital to the livelihoods of 1.4 million people, GGML has played a pivotal role in promoting modern agricultural methodologies through corporate social responsibility. Farmers have seen in-

creased productivity, especially in villages with favorable climatic conditions for cultivating sunflowers twice a year, maximizing their annual harvests.

The rise in profitability for farmers and flourishing local businesses has translated into higher tax revenues for the government. This additional income enables the government to invest in public services and infrastructure, further fueling economic development.

GGML has provided NYABUSAKAMA with two oil production machines capable of processing sunflower seeds at high speeds, producing between 12 and 18 liters of sunflower oil per 100 kilograms of seed. These modern farming techniques and technologies introduced by GGML have led to bountiful harvests, improved crop yields and quality, allowing farmers to command better prices for their produce, which is often sold to neighboring regions, bolstering the local economy.

GGML's commitment to training and capacity building has fostered a new generation of skilled laborers, boosting not only the agricultural sector but also promising long-term contributions to other industries in the region.

Furthermore, GGML's emphasis on sustainable agricultural practices underscores its commitment to environmental stewardship. Techniques such as minimum tillage, cover cropping, and crop rotation have reduced soil erosion, enhanced soil health, and promoted biodiversity in the region.

GGML's venture into agriculture has diversified the region's economic portfolio, reducing dependence on a single industry. This newfound resilience has made the region better equipped to withstand global economic fluctuations.

Makungu, a local resident, highlights the transformative impact beyond agriculture, saying, "Members of the NYABUKASAMA COOPERATIVE have raised their living standards; GGML has also facilitated access to essential services such as schools, health centers, clean water, and sanitation, apart from sunflower seed farming."

Geita has long been an agricultural community, but traditional farming practices had remained largely unchanged for generations, limiting growth and prosperity. However, recent years have seen a transformative shift as local sunflower farmers, led by GGML's support and vision, have embraced modern agricultural practices, achieving remarkable success and inspiring others to join the movement.

Geita is now celebrated not only for the wealth it once extracted from the earth but also for the wealth it has given back to the land and its people. The region's newfound prosperity, driven by sunflower farming, serves as a powerful reminder of the transformative power of nature and the unwavering determination of citizens to create positive change in their community.

GGML's support extends beyond sunflower seed cultivation; it has also provided improved rice seeds to the villagers. These high-yielding seeds have significantly increased rice production, elevating farmer incomes and overall food security in the region.

GGML's journey from mining to agriculture exemplifies the power of responsible corporate citizenship and strategic investment. As the region continues to reap the benefits of this diversification, it stands poised for a more prosperous and sustainable future, where growth and opportunity flourish hand in hand. GGML's visionary approach through corporate social responsibility has led to significant investment in the region's agricultural sector, transforming not only the way farmers work but also improving the lives of thousands of people in the community.



Rice farmers processing rice at Saragurwa storage and processing unit.



## AFRICA FOOD SYSTEMS FORUM 2023 SUMMIT

Recover, Regenerate, Act: Africa's Solutions to Food Systems Transformation

# Tanzania's New Agriculture Transformation Office is a Crucial Driver of Food System Transformation



Some of the distinguished guests at the launch of the Agriculture Transformation Office included Hon. Mizengo Pinda, Former Prime Minister of Tanzania among other Ministers, development partners and private sector organizations.

**“The establishment of the ATO is rooted in the recognition that agriculture not only ensures food security but also drives economic growth and job creation” - Hon Hussein Mohamed Bashe, Minister of Agriculture, Tanzania**

**JASPER A. KWAYU**  
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The recently launched Tanzania Agriculture Transformation Office (ATO) holds the promise of ushering in a new era of agricultural prosperity in Tanzania, often hailed as the "breadbasket of East Africa." With its abundant natural resources and fertile lands, Tanzania has the potential to elevate its agriculture, livestock, and fishery sectors to unprecedented heights. In a significant stride towards realizing this potential, Tanzania, through its Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries has joined forces with the African Agricultural Transformation Initiative (AATI) to officially inaugurate the Tanzania Agriculture Transformation Office (ATO).

#### A Glimpse into Tanzania's Agriculture, Livestock, and Fishery Sector:

Tanzania's agricultural sector stands as a cornerstone of its economy, making substantial contributions to both its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employment rates. At present, it accounts for a noteworthy 28% of the country's GDP and provides livelihoods for an impressive 64% of its population. The scope of agriculture in Tanzania spans a wide array of activities, encompassing crop cultivation, livestock farming, and capture fisheries.

Key agricultural products in Tan-

zania include dairy, beef, pulses, rice, maize, cassava, and fisheries. While pulses, rice, maize, and cassava dominate crop production, there exists untapped potential for other crops such as avocado, sunflower, coffee, and wheat. In the livestock sector, beef and dairy production thrive, bolstered by Tanzania's position as home to the second-largest cattle population on the continent. Capture fishing takes precedence in the fishery sector, representing approximately 94%, with aquaculture contributing around 6%. In terms of trade, Tanzania exports a variety of commodities, including cashews, rice/paddy, tobacco, fish, coffee, cotton, maize, wheat, and avocado, with export values reaching 3,301 billion Tanzanian shillings in 2022. Conversely, the nation imports commodities like wheat, raw sugar, and rice, with import values standing at 1,842 billion Tanzanian shillings in 2021.

Despite its favorable agroecological conditions, Tanzania heavily relies on imports for agricultural inputs and predominantly exports raw produce, thus limiting value addition and export value. In the livestock sector, exports primarily consist of sheep/goat meat to the Middle East, while sardines find their way to regional markets.

#### The Drive Behind the Agricultural Transformation Office

Despite its vast potential, Tanzania faces several pressing challenges in its agricultural sector, including limited market access, underutilized

processing capacity, inadequate mechanization, restricted financial access, and infrastructural deficiencies.

During a pivotal side event at the Africa Food Systems Summit, the launch of the Tanzania Agriculture Transformation Office (ATO) took center stage, with a distinguished lineup of attendees that included Hon. Mizengo Pinda, Former Prime Minister of Tanzania; Hon. Hussein Mohamed Bashe, Minister of Agriculture; Hon. Abdallah Ulega, Minister of Livestock and Fisheries; and Hon. Mudrik Ramadhan Soraga, Minister in the President's Office, Labour, Economic Affairs, and Investment, all from Tanzania. Also in attendance were Hon. Suleiman Masoud Makame, from the Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries, and Hon. Shamata Shaame Khamis, Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation, Natural Resources, and Livestock, both representing Zanzibar. Hon. Henry Musa Kpaka, Minister of Agriculture and Food Security from Sierra Leone, and Ambassador Michael A. Battle Sr., US Ambassador to Tanzania, graced the event with their presence. Craig Hart, Mission Director of USAID, along with Founding Partners, Heads of Missions and development partners, Private Sector partners, and other distinguished guests, all came together to show their support in addressing pressing agricultural challenges. Honorable Hussein Mohamed Bashe, Minister for Agriculture in Tanzania, underscored the significance of the event, stating, "The establishment of the ATO is rooted in the recognition that agriculture not only ensures food security but also drives economic growth and job creation." He further added, "Under the visionary leadership of Her Excellency President Samia Suluhu Hassan, the Tanzanian government has made a firm commit-

ment to triple its budget for agriculture and implement multi-year strategies aimed at addressing the sector's pressing challenges."

The ATO is poised to play a crucial role in shaping the future of the agricultural sector through the development and implementation of an Agriculture Master Plan. Honorable Hussein Mohamed Bashe explained, "This comprehensive plan, developed in collaboration with stakeholders and local communities, will prioritize opportunities that yield the most significant impact in the sector."

Safia Boly, the Executive Director of the African Agricultural Transformation Initiative (AATI), highlighted the critical role of agriculture in addressing global challenges and celebrated Tanzania's newfound status as an African leader in agricultural transformation. She noted, "The unwavering vision and strong political commitment demonstrated by Her Excellency Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan in overseeing Tanzania's agricultural sector provide the solid foundation for growth, transformation, and job creation." She further emphasized that, "Agriculture undeniably serves as a cornerstone of the Tanzanian economy, contributing a significant 28% to the nation's GDP and offering substantial employment to 64% of its population. This sector, ripe with untapped potential, is poised for growth once we address its key challenges."

Ms. Boly also commended the proactive initiatives led by the Honorable Hussein Mohamed Bashe, Minister of Agriculture, and the Honorable Abdallah Ulega, Minister of Livestock and Fisheries, as instrumental in translating this vision into tangible policies, robust delivery infrastructures, and effective mechanisms that will benefit farmers, fishermen, and herders across Tanzania.

She concluded by saying, "As the African Agricultural Transformation Initiative, we hold immense honor in being integral to this significant juncture in Tanzania's agricultural trajectory. The ATO stands poised to lend substantial support in implementing the transformation agenda through the meticulous crafting of an Agriculture Master Plan, characterized by inclusivity and participation. In essence, the ATO signifies the promise of a wave of positive transformations for the nation, ushering in a brighter future for the agricultural sector. Its core mandate spans the augmentation of agricultural productivity, the promotion of commercialization, the assurance of food security, the mobilization of private sector investments, and the fortification of institutional frameworks. This collective effort is a testament to the collaborative spirit, both within Tanzania and on the international stage, aimed at steering agriculture towards unprecedented growth and prosperity."

#### Partnerships and Collaborations

The launch of the ATO is a testament to the collaborative efforts of various stakeholders, both within Tanzania and on the international stage. Hon Abdallah Ulega, Minister of Livestock and Fisheries, highlighted the need for greater partnerships in the sector. While speaking about the Agriculture Masterplan Hon. Ulega notes that "The implementation of the Agriculture Masterplan under the Agriculture Transformation Office will require strong partnership, and when possible co-financing, with development partners and with private sector. We in Tanzania and in the Ministries of Agriculture and of Livestock and Fisheries are ready for this." He further emphasized that the Agriculture Transformation Office, ATO, will play a vital role in strengthening knowledge, prioritization in decision-making, and improved access to financing to make this aspiration a reality.

The Tanzania Agriculture Transformation Office (ATO) holds the promise of unlocking the nation's agricultural potential and underscores Tanzania's commitment to agricultural growth and prosperity. Through strong partnerships and collaborative efforts, the ATO represents a significant milestone in Tanzania's journey towards agricultural development.

The African Agricultural Transformation Initiative (AATI), a result of a robust partnership between the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, and McKinsey and Company, is honored to be part of this transformative endeavor, fostering inclusive agricultural growth for Tanzanian farmers, fishermen, and herders.

## AFRICA'S' SOLUTIONS TO FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

The European Union's AGRI-CONNECT Initiative Supports Africa's Food System Agenda

# The European Union investment in Tanzania's Agricultural Sector bears fruit in Coffee, Tea and Horticulture

“In its fourth year of implementation, the European Union-funded AGRI-CONNECT programme is beginning to unveil its remarkable potential in enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of Tanzania's agricultural sector, with a primary focus on the horticulture, coffee, and tea value chains”

**W**ith the substantial investment of EUR 103.5 million (equivalent to TZS 2 billion), AGRI-CONNECT is emerging as a transformative force, dedicated to driving economic growth, fostering private sector growth, creating employment opportunities, and improving food security across Tanzania. This programme operates at both national and local levels, with strategic interventions in the Southern Highlands and Zanzibar regions.

Agriculture remains at the core of Tanzania's industrialization drive aspirations as outlined in government plans such as the Five-Year Development Plan 2021 - 2025, the Agricultural Sector Development Plan second phase and the recently introduced Building a Better Tomorrow programme for Youth Initiative in Agribusiness, launched by Prime Minister Hon. Kassim Majaliwa Majaliwa in August 2022.

AGRI-CONNECT aims at fostering the development of value chains in horticulture, coffee, and tea. Over the past four years, the programme's interventions in these sectors have shown significant potential to elevate smallholders' income and nutrition through enhanced productivity, post-harvest management, value addition, and improved market linkages. For instance, Tanzanian coffee exports have seen unprecedented growth, generating TZS 566 billion in revenue during the 2022/23 season, thanks in large part to AGRI-CONNECT's contributions. To reduce post-harvest losses and to facilitate access to markets for horticulture, tea and coffee products, a comprehensive rural roads network spanning 311 kilometers in selected districts of the Southern Highlands is under construction. These developments signal promising opportunities for increased exports and revenue, including entry into premium markets.

Moreover, the three commodities have spurred entrepreneurship opportunities both on and off farm, creating jobs and particularly benefiting women and youth. The horticulture sector, with its rapid returns, has attracted a substantial youth workforce and is significantly reducing the net import of fruits, vegetables, tubers, and spices. Through

the AGRI-CONNECT Programme, the Tanzanian Horticultural Association (TAHA) has successfully linked 8,000 horticultural farmers to domestic and international markets using information systems and contract farming arrangements. Furthermore, TAHA has established horticultural crops collection centres and irrigation benefiting farmers in the Mpapa and Muwanda areas. Over 10,000 other farmers have received training in the best horticultural practices, with 500 of them accessing financial services resulting in loans worth TZS 2.5 billion.

Notably, the Mbeya Food Processing Park recently launched by Hon. Dr. Philip Mpango, Vice President of Tanzania, through the EU funded KIBOWAVI project has introduced infrastructure and processing equipment valued at TZS 1.7 billion. This initiative has made a significant impact on the lives of youths and women engaged in the horticultural value chain in Southern Highlands.

According to KIBOWAVI Project Director Mr. Daniel Kalimbiya, the project has positively impacted over 80,000 beneficiaries through 21,334 households organized in 650 women and youth farmer groups in 334 villages. These groups have received direct training in good horticultural

## Highlights

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- The Tanzanian Horticultural Association (TAHA) has successfully linked 8,000 horticultural farmers to domestic and international markets using information systems and contract farming arrangements
- Over 10,000 other farmers have received training in the best horticultural practices, with 500 of them accessing financial services resulting in loans worth TZS 2.5 billion
- The project has positively impacted over 80,000 beneficiaries through 21,334 households organized in 650 women and youth farmer groups in 334 villages



Beno Hyera, Erick Ndunguru and James Hyera are members of Jitegemee Group from Mbinga, in Ruvuma Region. Through the AGRI-CONNECT programme, youth are taught how to care for coffee seedlings and to grow viable businesses.



The 30.3 kms of tarmac road extending from Sawala - Mkonge - Iyegeya in Mufindi district, Iringa region. The road is part of the 311 kms of road networks under construction through AGRI-CONNECT programme aiming to facilitate easy access to market for agricultural produces.



Mangapwani organic horticulture farming group inspecting their farm in Zanzibar. Thanks to AGRI-CONNECT programme interventions many residents in the islands of Zanzibar are realising the benefits of organic farming.



Sprinkler irrigation of tea farms under way in Rungwe District, Mbeya. Irrigation practices promoted through the AGRI-CONNECT programme have led to increased tea yields.

al practices, nutrition, access to finance, business development, marketing, policy dialogue, partnership building and infrastructure investment with a focus on gender equality, HIV/AIDs, environment and good governance.

“AGRI-CONNECT stands as a prime example of the European Union's unwavering commitment to advancing Tanzania's agricultural landscape. It embodies our shared vision for sustainable, inclusive growth in the agricultural sector,” said **Cedric Merel, Head of Cooperation at the EU Delegation to Tanzania.**

“This programme illustrates how our collaborative endeavours, backed by substantial investments, are effectively nurturing Tanzanian agriculture, creating opportunities for smallholders, and fostering economic development that will bear fruit for years to come,” he added. AGRI-CONNECT also addresses

sector governance and the business environment issues, in line with Agriculture Sector Development Plan and the Blueprint for Regulatory Reforms to Improve the Business Environment. To facilitate investment and enhance access to finance for small and medium sized enterprises, the programme has developed a special loan mechanism.

On a national scale, AGRI-CONNECT has supported the development of a communication strategy and campaign to foster behavioural change for improved nutrition in mainland Tanzania and in Zanzibar, in line with the Government's Food and Nutrition Policy, contributing to the objectives of the National Multi-sectoral Nutrition Action Plan. The programme has also supported the development of the recently launched National Horticulture Development Strategy for the Tanzanian mainland and the Zanzibar

Horticultural Development Strategy.

In the tea sector, the programme has been instrumental in planning the revival of 3,300 hectares of tea farms abandoned for nearly three decades in Kilolo District, Iringa region. Furthermore, the programme supports the forthcoming launch of the online Tea Auction, a platform thought to greatly benefit tea farmers and stakeholders across the country.

Speaking on behalf of the Government, Ms Daines Mtei, a senior government officer from the Ministry of Agriculture, expressed the Government's appreciation for the financial support extended by EU to Tanzania's Agriculture sector, specifically the Horticulture, Coffee, Tea sub-sectors and upgrading the networks of rural roads.