



FTCA NEWSLETTER

EDITION 02

MAY-JUNE 2023



1. POLICY INFLUENCING

Context

The Food Trade Coalition for Africa aims to leverage Coalition Champions and Members to influence policy changes and/or reforms that help address some of the challenges to increased intra-Africa food trade. As the Coalition engages national governments, regional and continental bodies, the initial areas of focus will be:

- **agricultural data systems** – agriculture market information systems can be useful policy-making tools that can enable governments to make better coordinated and informed food trade regulation and intervention decisions. The availability of accurate and up-to-date market information would foster deeper understanding of that state of food and nutrition security at the national, regional and global level.
- **food safety** – Despite the strengthening of Africa's comparative advantage in agricultural products over the past years, non-tariff barriers (NTBs) and non-tariff measures (NTMs) present the biggest impediment to Africa's trade performance. Food Safety is an essential bedrock of food security and economic development. SPS measures remain a major impediment to trade between African countries, who face challenges including limited technical support to drive harmonization and convergence on standards.
- **the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement** – food trade in Africa is at a critical juncture. The AfCFTA creates the largest single market in the world in terms of the number of countries and people and is a critical opportunity for the continent to boost growth, decrease poverty, and reduce Africa's dependence on global markets. It is also a critical opportunity to increase food trade in Africa, transform Africa's food systems, and increase the Continent's food security.

Policy Influencing – Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Kenya

- **Context:** In Kenya, the Coalition intends to engage the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock and the Ministry of Trade and Industry to champion initiatives around agriculture data systems, i.e., the Regional Food Balance Sheet Initiative and food safety i.e., the COMESA MRA
- **Outcomes:** The Coalition and AGRA held a bilateral engagement with Hon. Kello Harsama Principal Secretary, State Department for Crop Development, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development.



- Accompanied by Kenya's Country Manager, John Macharia the key takeaways were:

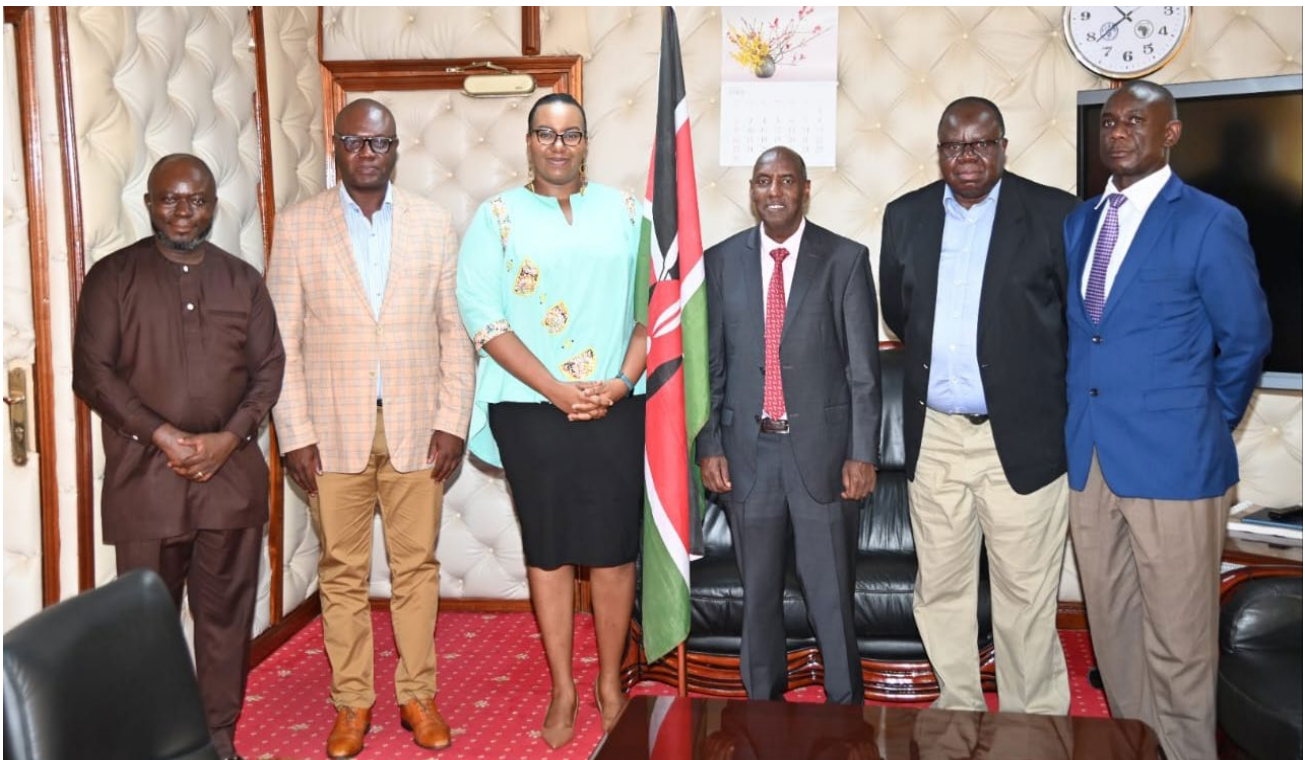
1. Regional Food Trade:

- i. Inspired by the Food Security Monitor, the PS proposed that AGRA and the Ministry co-create a Kenya-focused Newsletter with the first newsletter slated to be published in June 2023;
- ii. The PS acknowledged the importance of the Regional Food Balance Sheet and pledged support to strengthen the functioning of the National Food Balance Sheet Committee through reconstitution and embedding it in a legal framework; and,

- iii. AGRA and the Ministry are in discussion to access raw data in food prices, food stocks and food production estimates

2. Kenya Country Team:

- i. The Ministry is finalizing its priorities based on the Kenya Kwanza Manifesto and will share with AGRA to ensure alignment; and,
- ii. The PS directed that the process of reviewing the MoU between AGRA and the Ministry begin and pledged to support the process



2. DIALOGUE: SHAPING REGIONAL FOOD TRADE MARKETS: EXPERIENCES AND SUCCESS STORIES

Context

- The Coalition aims to support and facilitate learning among key stakeholder in food trade in Africa. The platform provides a space for knowledge to be shared, and lessons to be learnt, for synergies between different stakeholders to be built and developed. In line with supporting continuous learning, the Coalition hosted a dialogue: Shaping Regional Food Trade Markets: Experiences and Success Stories.
- The Coalition's Secretariat, AGRA's Food Trade and Resilience Unit aims to stimulate increased regional food trade from surplus to deficit areas, contributing to regional food security and inclusive income growth. One of the strategic components is around markets shaping i.e., working directly with private companies that source, process and trade food in the region to maximize investment, coordination, and benefits to smallholder farmers. Under this workstream a demand-pull and competitiveness approach is being applied to determine key regional value chains, trade corridors and actors, as well as challenges to determine high potential interventions for building resilience and inclusive supply chains. One of the approaches is providing technical assistance for structured trade. This entails recruiting component service providers to work with top-of-market players, off-takers, or processors who buy large, and can potentially influence price and rules of the game. Under this approach, market players are assisted in organizing their food supply chains by strengthening quality control, information sharing and improving efficiencies with aggregators and small farmers.
- Over the course of implementing this market-shaping work, these investments have demonstrated how the TA model can be applied towards shaping regional trade markets in partnership with private sector partners. To ensure learning through sharing of the applied TA model, experiences, including success stories, challenges and opportunities, the Coalition, on 18th May 2023, hosted a dialogue highlighting the TA model while also hearing from other private sector actors.

Panelists:

Isaac Tallam – CEO, Alika Ltd

Bio – Isaac has 25 years of experience in international trade, program management and market systems in agribusiness and agriculture ecosystem, and has been actively involved in commodity trade practice, development and coordination of value chains and structure trade finance in Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Europe. Alika Ltd has been implementing AGRA's Regional Food Trade Technical Assistance project in rice, maize, beans and cassava value-chains across the Great Tanganyika Lake region covering Tanzania, Kenya, DRC, Uganda and Rwanda.



Shandini Naidoo – Director, Avoport

Bio – Shandini is an international trade lawyer with significant experience in South Africa and the SADC region. She founded Avoport in 2017 having identified the need for a more transparent, inclusive and efficient supply chain management of South Africa's agricultural trade. Additionally, Shandini sits on the Board for the National Agricultural Market Council (NAMC) of South Africa and is the current Chair of the Crop Estimates Liaison Committee and the Supply and Demand Estimates Liaison Committee of the NAMC. A strong ambassador for women and youth empowerment, she is a firm believer in the important role that women and youth play in the future development and prosperity of South Africa.



“Market insight is a key component to driving market access and building sustainable markets and incomes for smallholder farmers”

Akinyinka Akintunde – President, AFEX Nigeria

Bio – As President/CEO of AFEX Nigeria, he provides in-country oversight and leadership of AFEX business entities to help accelerate operational excellence, growth, and Go-to-Market transformation through strategic platforms and partnerships. He is responsible for driving innovation and leading performance across the financial and capital market ecosystem. In his previous role, he spearheaded AFEX's endeavor to leverage technology to transform the commodities exchange ecosystem in Nigeria.



Sunil Dahiya – Senior Programme Officer, Regional Food Trade, AGRA

Moderator

Bio – Sunil is a Senior Program Officer, AGRA's Regional Food Trade unit under the Policy & State Capability Division. He has more than 18 years of experience in International Development through rural economic empowerment dedicated to underdeveloped nations. He has been deeply engaged in agricultural value-chains and NGOs works with multi-expertise in areas of Project Management, Stake-holders Mobilization, Business Competitiveness Advisory, Market & Finance Linkages, and Technology Analysis delivering to variety of SMEs via development projects. Sunil has served on multiple development programs funded by diverse set of donors. He is responsible for Market shaping component activities under Regional Food Trade unit of AGRA.



Key messages:

- Africa is a continent that can feed itself, we need to build a structure that promotes the viability of smallholder farming
- It's critical to always consider the context of the market situation in Africa. In many African countries, markets are characterized by smallholder farmers – who are unorganized and uncoordinated, and sell small quantities;
- Across the Continent, lack of data, and lack of access to information/market insights continues to be a significant challenge;
- The Technical Assistance is a good model and a critical building block towards building an inclusive commodity exchange;
- Logistics continues to be a critical barrier to regional trade, efficiently moving commodities across countries is one of the biggest challenges.
- Collaboration between the public and private sector is critical to building the sector and working towards Africa's food security;
- Women and youth are often at a disadvantage and more needs to be done to ensure their challenges are addressed, their concerns and raised and addressed, and that they benefit from increased intra-African trade
- The technical assistance model works well in a number of ways – knowledge and information sharing; creating structure around policies; supporting aggregators to access regional markets supporting documentation processes
- Imperative that we have an all-inclusive approach to building commodity exchanges. A more inclusive system that prioritizes smallholder farmers thereby building an ecosystem that makes the continent more food secure, increases intra-African trade and increases key engagements of stakeholders across borders.



3. AGRF 2023

Registration for AGRF 2023 is now open!



Theme – Recover, Regenerate, Act. Africa’s Solutions to Food Systems Transformation

Africa’s Food Systems Forum 2023 Summit (AGRF 2023) will be the defining moment in highlighting and unlocking the political, policy, and financial commitments and innovations the continent has made and continues to work towards achieving. The summit seeks to showcase the innovations and solutions toward food systems transformation under the theme “Recover, Regenerate, Act: Africa’s Solutions to Food Systems Transformation.”

[Visit the summit page for more information](#)

Dates:

- Field visits – 3rd Sep 2023
- Pre-summit (side – events) – 4th Sep 2023
- Summit – 5-8 Sep 2023

Venue: Julius Nyerere International Convention Center

Registration for Africa’s Food Systems Forum 2023 Summit is now open.

Please visit our registration page on <https://www.agrf-inperson.com/>

Looking back at AGRF 2022

Regional Food Trade Platform – AGRF 2022

Themed, “Grow, Nourish, Reward – Bold Actions for Resilient Food Systems”, the 2022 AGRF provided a platform for over 2,000 delegates to reflect on the coordinated large-scale actions by leaders, institutions, investors, coalitions, and individuals to accelerate action towards translating commitments made into actionable strategies and progress on the ground. The Food Trade Coalition for Africa and the Regional Food Trade Platform of the AGRF hosted two dialogues at the 2022 AGRF.



Driving Safe Food Trade in Africa

The Food Trade Coalition for Africa and the Standards and Trade Development Facility, WTO, collaborated to host a policy dialogue on, “Driving Safe Food Trade in Africa”. The dialogue showcased how the use of evidence can strengthen decision-making and policy-processes in support of the AfCFTA’s objectives. The dialogue also provided an opportunity for stakeholders to reflect on why and how evidence-based decision-making matters for food safety and regional trade.

Key Messages:

- It is critical that food safety issues remain at the top of agendas for the private and public sector, and don’t just come up when there is a crisis;
- Support national governments to ensure evidence-based approaches to addressing issues around food safety;
- Challenges around policies that impact food safety need to be addressed to ensure that they speak to each and are complimentary;
- The private sector is critical to the movement of safe food around the continent, successful implementation of food safety measures will require their involvement; and,
- Coordination and collaboration across different sectors and agencies at national, regional and continental level are critical to addressing challenges around food safety.

Leveraging Data to Improve Intra-African Trade and Launch of the Regional Food Balance Sheet

The recent shocks from COVID-19 and the Russia-Ukraine Crisis have exposed the lack of coordination that has always existed as a result of lack of information and data. The need for timely and reliable information on food availability is particularly important in light of frequent shocks that have the potential to dramatically increase food insecurity for millions of vulnerable people throughout Sub-Saharan Africa.

Following the session, “Leveraging Data to Improve Intra-African Food Trade”, AGRA and COMESA, who led the RFBS initiative, in collaboration with the implementing partners, launched the digital Regional Food Balance Sheet in East and Southern Africa. This web-based tool leverages machine-learning and advanced analytics to provide timely supply, demand, and price information about staple crops in Sub-Saharan Africa to inform evidence-based decision making by public, private and civil society organizations.

Key Messages:

- Ministers of agriculture and ministers responsible for trade from the RFBS pilot countries have committed to support the implementation of the digital Regional Food Balance Sheet as a critical

tool for food security, trade and investment decision making as well as for resilience in times of crisis;

- Major development partners have re-affirmed their support to the priorities set by governments including the roll out of the RFBS to reach wider geography and facilitate the implementation of the AfCFTA. It was noted that the RFBS will be critical as Africa seeks to increase intra-regional trade and boost food systems resilience;
- Hon. Chileshe Kapwepwe, Secretary-General of COMESA, articulated COMESA's position to fully implement the RFBS in the entire COMESA region using the early adopters and MVP crops as a building block;
- Other regions in the world are eager and looking to learn from the successful implementation of the COMESA RFBS as a regional digital platform and infrastructure to inform their food trade and food security plans.
- Partnerships between governments, the private sector, and the developing world will be key in delivering strong, reliable, efficient, and fit for purpose RFBS;
- A fully operational RFBS will be key to championing the transformative actions and investments needed to increase regional trade in ESA;



4. LEARNING

Policy Brief – SPS Landscape/Regulatory and Economic Impact of Key Value Chains in Selected Sub-Saharan African Countries

“Africa has continued to play a minimal role in global agricultural trade. Despite the strengthening of the continent’s comparative advantage in agricultural products in recent years, non-tariff barriers (NTBs) and non-tariff measures (NTMs) including sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) requirements and technical barriers to trade (TBT) present the biggest impediment to Africa’s trade performance. With the operationalization of the AfCFTA agreement, numerous opportunities to increasing regional trade are presented. However, food safety remains an important aspect of regional and intercontinental trade, and African countries still face challenges in aligning their regulations to international standards”

[Download Report](#)



Key Messages:

- The food safety regulatory landscape in African countries is fragmented, with food safety regulations falling under the responsibility of different institutions, agencies, and departments that carry out mandates independently with minimal or no linkages, and with some evidence of overlap;
- The lack of harmonization in food safety legislation and regulations also poses a huge challenge in addressing issues to deal with non-conformity to prescribed standards and regulations for African countries;
- In most of the selected countries, Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Committees are not functional and African countries are also not in a position to generate scientific evidence to support their SPS measures and strategies;
- SPS constraints faced by the reviewed countries range from unaccredited labs to lack of resources to carry out risk assessments and risk analyses;
- Cognizant of the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement and the African Union food safety policy framework, which seeks to strongly and consistently align African SPS systems with international science-based standards, there is need to do more towards the development of supporting mechanisms for the implementation of Annex 7 of the AfCFTA Agreement; and,
- The key value chains identified as susceptible to SPS issues and are important to increasing interregional trade due to high production, export potential, and national prioritization in the various national agricultural policies of the reviewed countries are maize, sugar cane, rice, livestock, bananas, fresh vegetables, palm oil, coffee, black tea, fish/sea food, cashew nuts, groundnuts, soya beans, potatoes, wheat, cocoa, and sesame seed.

5. REVIVING COALITION TASK FORCES AND THEMATIC WORKING GROUPS

Context:

The Coalition mainly carries out its activities through its Secretariat (AGRA), and its Task Forces and Thematic Working Groups. Focused on priority areas that are critical to food trade in Africa, these sub-committees are demand-driven by members who have a keen interest in these specific focus areas.

Having received feedback from members expressing interest in participating more in the Task Forces and Thematic Working Groups, and in an effort to revive the TFs and TWGs, the Coalition Secretariat is reaching out to members and other stakeholders interested in participating in the upcoming meetings to reach out to the Coalition Coordinator, Mumbi Gichuri – mgichuri@agra.org.

Task Forces and Thematic Working Groups	Proposed Meeting Dates and Times
Food and Nutrition Security Data and Hunger Hotspots Task Force	July 5 th , 2023 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. EAT
Logistics and Trade Corridors Task Force	July 12 th , 2023 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. EAT
Women in Food Trade Thematic Working	July 19 th , 2023 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. EAT
Food Safety and Nutrition Thematic Working Group	July 25 th , 2023 3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. EAT

An overview of the TFs and TWGs

Task Force/Thematic Working Group	Objectives	Co-Chairs	Key Activities
Food and Nutrition Security Data and Hunger Hotspots Task Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To coordinate the collation and sharing of timely and credible data, information, knowledge products and best practices on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on food trade, food and nutrition security, resilience of food value chains, as well as on mitigation interventions by different actors i.e., national governments, regional and continental bodies and international organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IFPRI ReNAPRI 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> COVID-19 Study, “The Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic and Associated Policy Responses on Food Systems in Africa: A Synthesis of Evidence” Policy Dialogue – “Regional Food Trade as a Driver for Sustainable Food Systems Transformation in Africa”

Task Force/Thematic Working Group	Objectives	Co-Chairs	Key Activities
Logistics and Trade Corridors Task Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To monitor and propose strategies to minimize the impacts of the external shocks on food security and nutrition through potential production and food supply disruptions To give advice to policy makers based on the experiences and lessons from members and stakeholders who work along trade corridors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FAO ETG Farmers Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulated knowledge products among members for enhanced coordination on on-going and future initiatives aligned with the TF's focus
Women in Food Trade Thematic Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To foster mechanisms for coordination and participation of women in policy dialogue, advocacy, and lobbying for the conducive environment and amplifying the voice of women in regional food trade. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> African Development Bank TradeMark Africa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study, "Landscape Analysis of Women in Food Trade: Challenges, Opportunities and Policy Recommendations"
Food Safety and Nutrition Thematic Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate the collation and sharing of timely, credible and sex-disaggregated data, and information, knowledge products, and best practices on implementation of food safety and nutrition measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study, "Assessing the Food Safety and Nutrition Landscape and Key Value Chains in Select Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa" Report – The Economic Cost of Food Safety Measures: A Case Study of AGRA Focus Countries Policy Brief: Landscape/Regulatory and Economic Impact of Key Value Chains in Selected Sub-Saharan African Countries



food trade
coalition for
africa

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT
Mumbi Gichuri, FTCA Coordinator
mgichuri@agra.org

WWW.FTCAFRICA.ORG

