

Concept Note

Participation in the UN Food Systems Summit 2021: Pre-Summit Dialogue for African Ministers and other Key Stakeholders.

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Date: 9th June 2021

Time: 1600-2000 East African Standard Time

Registration Link: <https://bit.ly/2Sk4FSn>

The **UN Food Systems Summit 2021** under the theme “*Transforming food systems is crucial for delivering all the Sustainable Development Goals,*” is scheduled to take place in October 2021. The Summit is expected to launch bold new actions, solutions, and strategies to deliver progress on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), each of which relies on healthier, more sustainable, and more equitable food systems. The Summit acknowledges that transforming the global food systems must be central in efforts to achieve all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The COVID-19 pandemic was a wake-up call to the glaring fragility and inequalities of the global, regional and national agri-food systems making the resolve for sustainable, inclusive, and resilient food systems extremely urgent. The Summit aims to:

1. Raise awareness and elevate public discussion about how reforming our food systems can help us all to achieve the SDGs by implementing reforms that are good for people and planet;
2. Develop principles to guide governments and other stakeholders looking to leverage their food systems to support the SDGs; These principles will set an optimistic and encouraging vision in which food systems play a central role in building a fairer, more sustainable world;
3. Generate action and measurable progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; identify solutions and leaders, and issuing a call for action at all levels of the food system;
4. Create a system of follow-up and review to ensure that the Summit’s outcomes continue to drive new actions and progress.

The build up to the Summit which commenced in 2020 includes several dialogues, activities and designations. These have been structured to facilitate maximum participation from the different stakeholders and to ensure that the objectives of the Summit are fulfilled. The Summit will ensure a strong interface between science, policy, and implementation. In order to facilitate sustainable, tangible and positive changes to food systems, the Summit dialogues have to be rooted in national and local realities.

Specifically, the Summit preparatory process has programmed national dialogues to encourage analyses, explorations, and solutions that are context-specific. The UN Deputy Secretary General Dr. Amina J. Mohammed is rallying all Member States to use the opportunity to lead a progressive three-stage dialogue process between November 2020 and June 2021, starting with an examination of existing systems and policies and moves on to the shaping of pathways for sustainable national food systems that are aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Concomitant to the dialogues, the Summit has designated a Multi-Actor Food Systems Champions Network to mobilize a diverse range of people in every region of the world to engage more deeply and develop into a broad and inclusive coalition for transformation of the world's food systems through coordinated action before, during, and after the Summit. The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) Executive Secretary Prof Adipala Ekwamu is one of the 100 UN Food Systems Champions. This is a recognition that there is a key role for Universities in Africa, Science Technology and Innovations in the Agri-Food Sector and for attainment of the SDGs.

From this perspective, RUFORUM is reaching out to stakeholders and Agri-Food Sector players, particularly, high-level actors in African Governments to take up the Deputy Secretary General's call to convene national food systems dialogues in preparation for the October 2021 Summit. RUFORUM commits that universities under the network in partnership with research institutions and other key players will:

1. Help to identify gaps, key questions, or concerns as well as offer advice on substantive discussions and emerging recommendations;
2. Participate in the convened country, regional and global food systems dialogues; and,
3. Contribute and share ideas for action and solutions to food systems issues.

RUFORUM is therefore convening meetings of various key stakeholders to dialogue on the key issues and needed action to strengthen Food Systems in Africa. A key group are policy leaders at various level but especially African Ministers, African Union Commission, Food and Agriculture Organization and African Development Partners such as the European Union, United States Department of Agriculture, World Bank, amongst others.

Accordingly, RUFORUM is convening a Ministerial Policy dialogue on 9 June 2021, from 1600-1900 East African (Nairobi) Time.

Each participant will have 3-5 minutes to deliver their statements on the underlying issues affecting the Food Systems in their respective countries/organizations.

Chair: - Hon. Dr. Itah Kandjii-Murangi, Minister for Higher Education Training and Innovation,
Namibia

Draft Programme

Time	Session/Topic	Responsible Person
	Opening Session	
1600-1610	Welcome Remarks by Session Moderator	Hon. Dr. Itah Kandjii-Murangi, Minister for Higher Education Training and Innovation, Namibia
1610-1620	Statement from Government of Malawi (Host of the Ministerial Meeting)	Hon. Lobin Lowe, Minister of Agriculture
1620-1635	Background to the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 and the National, Regional and Continental dialogues	Prof Adipala Ekwamu, RUFORUM Executive Secretary
1635-1645	Official Opening address	H.E. Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, AUC
1645-1655	Renewed commitment for US-Africa partnership on agricultural advancement in Africa	Daniel Whitley, Acting Administrator of the Foreign Agricultural Services, USA
1655-1705	Perspective from European Union Commission	Dr. Leonard Mizzi, Directorate-General (DG) for International Cooperation and Development - Rural development, food security and nutrition, European Commission,
1705-1715	World Bank efforts to rebuild and strengthen agricultural development and food systems in Africa and globally	Dr. Simeon Ehui, World Bank Regional Director for Sustainable Development (Agriculture, Environment, Social, Water, Urban and Climate), West and Central Africa
1715-1730	Key Note address: Current status of food systems in Africa and implication for poverty, food and nutritional security in the continent	HE. Prof. Abebe Haile-Gabriel, Food and Agriculture Organisation Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa
1730-1740	Response: Statement from African Universities	Prof Theresia Nkuo-Akenji, RUFORUM Deputy Board Chair & Vice Chancellor, University of Bamenda, Cameroon
1740-1800	Open discussion	
1800-1840	Brief country statements (3 minutes maximum) on current	Ministers/Country Representatives

	status of food systems and emerging key issues for consideration by the UN Food Systems Summit and African Union Commission	
1840-1900	Open discussion	
1900-1920	Presentation and discussion on the Ministers' draft communique	Mrs Erica Maganga, Secretary for Agriculture, Government of Malawi
1920-1930	Closing Discussion	Session Moderator
1930-1940	Vote of Thanks	Prof. Address M. Malata, Vice Chancellor, Malawi University of Science and Technology

