



PROPOSAL FOR A SIDE SESSION IN THE 10TH AFRICA FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Title session:	Refocusing Africa’s Food Trade Markets: Prioritizing Africa’s food for the African people
Organiser(s) (names, affiliation):	Ms. Agnes Kirabo- Executive Director – Food Rights Alliance Ms. Orochi Freda Laura- Head of Programmes- Food Rights Alliance Ms. Claire Atukunda- Food Governance Manager
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Session format	The session is envisaged to be conducted in the form of a dialogue and will have one keynote speaker and panelists
Description of session	<p>Africa’s agrifood system holds the potential not only to transform the socio-economic potential of the African People to the aspirations of Agenda 2063 but also propel Africa as a global leading actor in addressing the current poly crisis (poverty, mounting debt, climate change, and food insecurity) in a world dealing with the post effects of the human and economic losses from COVID-19 and rise in armed conflict and militarization. However, African food systems remain highly dysfunctional, unable to address the food insecurity and poverty challenges that continue to crumble continental development. This development discourse is largely attributed to food trade imbalances and exploitative agricultural policies developed in the sole pursuit of increasing yields for export commodities and tailoring markets to meet the export needs of the population outside Africa, without considering the context-specific food needs and interests of the local people and their environments. On the other hand, this policy agenda has greatly impacted the environment and dismantled Africa’s diverse indigenous food systems.</p> <p>Indigenous foods largely constitute the majority of the diets consumed by family farmers who account for up to 70% of Africa’s population. However, evidence shows a discrepancy in their promotion, production, market acceptability, and competitiveness. This is mostly attributed to narratives promoting that indigenous foods are not productive or resilient enough to address the food security and poverty needs of Africa. However, evidence shows that most indigenous foods are highly nutritious as such hold the potential to improve the livelihoods of vulnerable communities. On the other hand, industrialized agriculture has, after 20 years, evidently failed to address the challenges of hunger and poverty that still reign in our continent. Hence, as we deliberate on ambitious and bold actions to realize the Sustainable Development Goals and Build the Africa, We Want in line with Agenda 2063, it is crucial that we deliberate and find solutions to the following questions;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is hunger and poverty still prevalent in Africa due to the marginalization and non-prioritization of Africa’s local food systems that feed and employ the majority of family farmers on the continent? 2. What potential does refocus our local and regional markets hold to improving local African food access, acceptability, competitiveness for improved food security, reduced import dependency, and national and regional development?

	<p>3. What is the fate of Africa’s local food systems in the face of the food system transformation agenda? Challenges and opportunities</p> <p>This session aims to engage all African food system actors in evidence and experience sharing on how the promotion of indigenous foods through transforming local markets and governance systems can ensure improved food security, livelihoods, and community and national development. In addition, the session aims to call to action all continental players and stakeholders to shift the narrative, rethink strategies, and refocus on democratizing Africa’s agrifood system to ensure that food produced in Africa feeds its people first, before the rest of the world.</p>
Potential speakers/presenters:	<p>The workshop will engage a multi-stakeholder approach and involve;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Government representatives2. Private sector3. CSOs4. Academia and research organizations