



# AFRICAN UNION 2022 YEAR OF NUTRITION: STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE IN NUTRITION AND FOOD SECURITY ON THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

## Nutrition and Food Security Dialogue Series

Organized by *AKADEMIYA2063* and the *Senegalese National Council for Nutrition Development (CNDN)*



July 26, 2022

**Dialogue #3: “Impacts of the Russia-Ukraine War on Nutrition, Food Security, and Poverty in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities to Building Resilient Food Systems”**



## Background

Good nutrition is essential for human and socio-economic development. Investments in nutrition particularly in the first 1,000 days of a child's life help to prevent lifelong effects of malnutrition, enable children to have better health and education outcomes, and contribute to improved economic outcomes. The 2007-2008 global food price crisis raised awareness on the need to improve nutrition in order to achieve international, regional, and national development and growth targets as well as the need for concerted effort to address the triple burden of malnutrition (undernutrition, micronutrient deficiency, and overweight and obesity).

In Africa, the awareness generated strong resolve at the highest political levels, which resulted in several new nutrition initiatives and the incorporation of nutrition in major development agendas. For example, in 2013 the African Union Commission (AUC) launched the cost of hunger studies in Africa to quantify the social and economic impacts of child undernutrition; in 2018, the African Development Bank and AUC set up the African Leaders for Nutrition Initiative and followed suit with a Continental Accountability Scorecard in 2019 to highlight country and continental progress on achieving nutrition targets. A total of 40 African countries are now part of the Scaling Up Nutrition Movement that was launched in 2010 to apply multi-sectoral nutrition-sensitive approaches in addressing malnutrition. Furthermore, the commitment to address malnutrition has been echoed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and World Health Assembly Nutrition Targets as well as in various African strategies and agendas including the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063, the AU African Regional Nutrition Strategy (2015-2025), the 2014 Malabo Declaration, and national development strategies and investment plans.

Africa has made remarkable progress in reducing hunger and malnutrition since the mid-1990s and saw steady declines in the prevalence of undernourishment, child stunting, child underweight, and child wasting, [particularly between 2008 and 2014](#). However, since 2017, there has been a reversal in the declining trend in undernourishment. The rising undernourishment and still high levels of child malnutrition have been attributed to several factors including economic volatility, conflicts, and climate change and more frequent weather extremes. The COVID-19 pandemic has further threatened to reverse nutritional gains and exposed vulnerabilities in Africa's economic, health, and food systems alike, [adding a projected 46.2 million](#) more undernourished people. Meanwhile, the ongoing Ukraine-Russia war is expected to exacerbate food insecurity in countries that are highly dependent on imports from Russia and Ukraine through import disruptions and rising global agricultural commodity and input prices.

In addition, Africa faces rising trends in overweight and obesity among children, youth, and adults that is associated with a growing middle class and rapid urbanization on the continent. If no measures are taken to reverse these trends, one in five adults and one in 10 children and adolescents are [projected to be obese](#) by the end of 2023 in 10 high-burden African countries.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic that has exposed pinch points in Africa's health and food systems and is threatening to reverse Africa's gains in combating malnutrition, the AU has designated 2022 as the Year of Nutrition in order to advocate for greater financing, implementation capacity, and coordination in strengthening the resilience of Africa's food security and nutrition.



## Objectives

In support of the AU's 2022 Year of Nutrition, AKADEMIYA2063 and the Senegalese National Council for Nutrition Development (CNDN) will organize a series of continental level dialogues on nutrition and food security with a broad group of stakeholders, including policymakers, civil society organizations, farmers' organizations, research institutions, the private sector, and development partners, to facilitate knowledge exchange, mutual learning, and drive necessary action toward achieving continental and global food security and nutrition targets.

Specific *objectives* of the nutrition and food security dialogues are to highlight the following:

1. Africa's progress, challenges, successes, and opportunities in achieving nutrition and food security outcomes and targets;
2. Critical and emerging areas that need to be addressed in order to effectively improve food security, dietary quality, and nutritional outcomes on the African continent; and
3. Potential solutions to challenges and required policies and investments to accelerate and sustain the achievement of nutritional and food security goals in Africa.

## Topics for Dialogue Series

AKADEMIYA2063 and CNDN will organize a series of five dialogues covering the following pertinent topics:

1. Africa's progress toward meeting nutrition and food security targets, successes, challenges, and lessons learned, including the importance of applying a food systems lens and multi-sectoral approaches to addressing hunger and malnutrition
2. The role of trade and food safety in advancing nutrition and food security objectives and the need for policy alignment
3. Impacts of the Russia-Ukraine War on Nutrition, Food Security, and Poverty in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities to Building Resilient Food Systems
4. Balancing nutrition goals with climate and environmental goals, shifting to more sustainable consumption patterns, and building resilience in nutrition and food security
5. Africa's rapid urbanization and impacts on diet quality, both in rural and urban areas.



## Nutrition and Food Security Dialogue # 3

July 26, 2022

“Impacts of the Russia-Ukraine War on Nutrition, Food Security, and Poverty in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities to Building Resilient Food Systems”

### Context

- Rural African households have become more vulnerable with the COVID-19 pandemic and the growing effects of climate change. African governments have responded to both challenges with several initiatives aiming to increase the resilience of their populations. However, with the war in Ukraine and its consequences on food and agricultural input prices, including fertilizers, the vulnerability of African populations is likely to be exacerbated in the coming months, and the number of undernourished people could rise sharply due to the dependence of most African countries on imported products.
- These challenges threaten the ability of African countries to achieve international, regional, and national goals and targets related to nutrition and food security by 2025 and 2030. Therefore, African food systems need to be more resilient, and education, agriculture and vocational training policies must be more responsive to national opportunities and challenges. These policies must also consider the global and sub-regional contexts marked by successive crises that impact the livelihood of populations and their access to health and nutrition services and food products. They also undermine the objectives stated during previous summits on food systems and nutrition.
- **The third dialogue, which will take place on July 26, 2022, will focus on** the impacts of the Russia-Ukraine war on nutrition, food security, and poverty in Africa and its implications on the ability of African governments to build food systems that are more resilient to economic, health and environmental shocks. Dialogue participants will also discuss the challenges and opportunities faced by African countries in achieving the different targets related to nutrition, food security and well-being by 2025 and 2030.
- Senegal’s experience in developing shock resilience programs will also be shared to illustrate the importance of social safety nets and price subsidy programs in crisis contexts. The event will be centered around a keynote presentation followed by a panel discussion with experts who will share different perspectives on the challenges and opportunities for African countries to achieve nutrition and food security goals and ensure healthy and sustainable diets for all.

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