

FINAS DIALOGUES

DISPATCH - 005

MAY 2026

AfDB grants \$25 million to protect drought-prone communities and strengthen food security in Zimbabwe




A Zimbabwean smallholder farmer smiles as she receives a government grant via mobile money, reflecting growing financial inclusion in rural agricultural communities. *Photo Credit: AfDB*

Zimbabwe is set to bolster its fight against climate change and food insecurity with a new \$25 million grant from the African Development Bank Group aimed at revitalizing smallholder agriculture, strengthening grazing lands, and expanding water resources in drought-prone provinces. The initiative, running from 2026 to 2030, will directly benefit over 92,000 vulnerable farmers—half of them women and one-fifth youth—while creating thousands of jobs and catalyzing private sector investment to build lasting resilience in rural communities. Funded through the Bank's Transition Support Facility (TSF) Pillar 1, the Zimbabwe Agricultural Climate Resilient and Vulnerability Reduction Project (ACRES) will run from 2026 to 2030, delivering lifechanging impact in areas where it is most needed.

ACRES will be deployed in two of Zimbabwe's most climate-exposed provinces: Masvingo Province (Gutu District) and Matabeleland South (Gwanda, Matobo,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4>>

IN THIS ISSUE

-  Financing Skills Development in Agrifood Systems
-  FINAS 2026 Summit to Unlock Sustainable Financing for Africa's Food Systems
-  IFAD and Côte d'Ivoire launch US\$344.5 million agro-industrial project to stimulate inclusive agricultural growth
-  Kenyan youth agri-tech startups win over \$40,000 in push to scale farm innovations
-  Sudan Secures \$87 Million Boost to Tackle Food Crisis Amid Conflict and Climate Shocks
-  Uganda's Omia Agribusiness and Kenya's SokoFresh Secure \$1 Million Concessional Loans to Boost Smallholder Farmers

FINAS DIALOGUES

MAY ISSUE

Contents

- 03 Financing Skills Development in Agrifood Systems
- 05 FINAS 2026 Summit to Unlock Sustainable Financing for Africa's Food Systems
- 10 IFAD and Côte d'Ivoire launch US\$344.5 million agro-industrial project to stimulate inclusive agricultural growth
- 11 Kenyan youth agri-tech startups win over \$40,000 in push to scale farm innovations
- 13 Sudan Secures \$87 Million Boost to Tackle Food Crisis Amid Conflict and Climate Shocks
- 14 Uganda's Omia Agribusiness and Kenya's SokoFresh Secure \$1 Million Concessional Loans to Boost Smallholder Farmers



✉ summit@finasafrica.org
☎ +254 722 670 910 /+254 717 782 782/ +254 734 782 782
🌐 <https://finasafrica.org/>

🌐 [Financing Agri-food Systems Sustainably](#)

Financing Skills Development in Agrifood Systems



Naatarin Lowakutuk, chair lady for Naapu Nkai Ntepes Restoration CBO in Oldongiro, Isiolo. Photo Credit: Swisscontact

By Sharon Mosin, Country Director, Swisscontact

When discussions on financing agrifood systems arise, attention typically centers on funding production and value-chain operations, with far less focus on the skills required within the system. Yet even with adequate capital, productivity, resilience, and inclusive growth cannot be achieved without the right capabilities among farmers, aggregators, processors, service providers, and financiers.

Agrifood systems are evolving rapidly, influenced by climate change, urbanization, digitalization, and shifting consumer preferences. These forces create opportunities but also expose persistent and widening skills gaps. Addressing these gaps is not marginal; it is fundamental to ensuring that agrifood investments deliver their intended impact.

At the production level, smallholder farmers; the backbone of many African agrifood systems; often lack access to practical and updated knowledge on climate-smart agriculture, soil health, water management, and integrated pest management. Traditional extension services remain under-resourced and poorly connected to market needs, leaving farmers unable to meet the quality, volume, and consistency standards demanded by buyers.

Beyond production, skills gaps widen further. Aggregators and SMEs involved in trading, storage, and processing often lack critical competencies in inventory management, quality control, logistics, and regulatory compliance. These limitations hinder their ability to scale, integrate into formal markets, or meet requirements for financing. Financial institutions, in turn, view these enterprises as high-risk—not only due to market conditions but also because of weak managerial and technical capacity.

Financial literacy and investment readiness remain particularly weak links. Many agrifood enterprises struggle to articulate viable business models, maintain reliable financial records, or structure proposals that align with investor expectations. This creates a persistent mismatch between available capital and the ability to absorb it. Even where appropriate financial products exist, uptake remains low due to limited enterprise capacity.

As the sector transitions toward greener and more sustainable models, new competencies are required. Skills in climate risk assessment, regenerative practices, carbon measurement, and sustainable sourcing are increasingly essential yet remain scarce among SMEs

page 4>>

<<from pg 1

Mangwe, and Bulilima Districts) — regions defined by high livestock populations and extreme vulnerability to erratic, low, and declining rainfall.

The project will directly benefit 92,500 vulnerable rural smallholder farmers – at least 50% of them women and 20% youth – who face the burden of food insecurity, recurrent droughts, and limited economic opportunities, leading to widespread poverty and irregular migration.

Beyond the direct beneficiaries, an estimated 200,000 people in surrounding areas will benefit from improved infrastructure and enhanced food security, nutrition, and economic stability. The project will also create 320 full-time and 2,100 seasonal jobs across crop and livestock value chains.

“This investment represents a critical intervention to build climate resilience, reduce vulnerability, and improve food and nutrition security in Zimbabwe’s most vulnerable rural communities,” said Eyerusalem Fasika, the African Development Bank Group’s Country Manager for Zimbabwe.

Martin Fregene, African Development Bank Director of Agriculture and Agro-Industry, underscored the initiative’s alignment with the Bank’s Four Cardinal Points.

“The project will enhance the adaptive capacity, promote sustainable economic opportunities, and strengthen rural communities’ resilience to climate change, within the target areas,” Fregene said.

The African Development Bank has long been a cornerstone partner in Zimbabwe’s rural development journey, making sustained investments that have progressively reduced food insecurity and poverty. ACRES deepens that commitment and signals the government’s resolve to put climate-smart agriculture and agricultural infrastructure investment at the center of its development agenda.



Simon Okentunyoi, member of the Osuguroi Self Help Group, inspecting his beehive. Photo Credit: Swisscontact

<<from pg 3

and service providers. Without these capabilities, climate-smart investments risk underperformance.

Digitalization is another growing frontier with notable gaps. While digital tools for advisory, traceability, market linkages, and financial services continue to expand, the capacity to adopt and integrate these tools remains limited. Farmers and SMEs often lack basic digital literacy, and service providers may lack the expertise to build or deploy solutions suited to local contexts.

These gaps are not only technical, they are systemic. Many TVET institutions and universities operate with outdated, theoretical curricula that are misaligned with industry needs. Employers are rarely involved in shaping training programs, perpetuating a mismatched supply and demand for skills.

Addressing these challenges requires reframing skills development as a core component of agrifood financing strategies. Blended approaches that integrate capital with capacity building and ecosystem strengthening are essential. Swisscontact’s NURTURE initiative, for example, embeds skills development within value-chain financing models by enabling off-takers to train farmers, and by supporting financial institutions to integrate business development services into lending.

Strengthening TVET institutions to deliver demand-driven, competency-based training, through blended learning, apprenticeships, and industry partnerships; is another key lever, as demonstrated by Swisscontact’s PropelA program. Investment in green and digital skills is equally critical.

Ultimately, building resilient, inclusive, and sustainable agrifood systems requires coordinated effort across governments, development partners, the private sector, and training institutions. Closing the skills gap is not just a workforce issue—it is central to effective financing and long-term sector transformation.

FINAS 2026 Summit to Unlock Sustainable Financing for Africa's Food Systems



From Left: Kennedy Oketch, Agriculture Economy and Financial Advisor, GIZ Kenya, George Kubai, MD, Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC), Rashid Khator, Secretary of Administration in the State Department of Agriculture (representing Dr. Paul Ronoh, Principal Secretary, State Department of Agriculture) and Peter Owoko, Director of Policy at the State Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture during the FINAS2026 media launch in Nairobi. Photo Credit: FINAS

Over one thousand stakeholders from government, finance, development, and the private sector will gather in Nairobi for the Financing Agri-Food Systems Sustainably (FINAS) 2026 Summit, set for 30 June–2 July. Under the theme “Towards Sustainable Financial Architecture for Africa’s Food Systems,” the summit will focus on unlocking sustainable financing, mobilising investment, and delivering measurable outcomes across Africa’s agri-food systems.

Agriculture remains the backbone of Africa’s economies, contributing up to 30% of GDP and employing more than 60% of the workforce. Yet the sector faces a financing gap of over USD 100 billion annually, with agriculture receiving less than 5% of formal bank lending. Smallholder farmers, women, youth, and agri-SMEs, who produce up to 80% of the continent’s food—are disproportionately affected. Climate change, market volatility, and rising food import bills further underscore the urgency for resilient and inclusive financing solutions.

Speaking at the media launch, Dr. Paul Ronoh, Principal Secretary, State Department of Agriculture, said: “The FINAS summit provides an opportunity to take stock of funding in the sector and unlock key opportunities for Africa. Financing must be results-oriented, delivering measurable outcomes to enhance agri-food sustainability.” said Dr Ronoh in a keynote speech read on his behalf by Rashid Khator, Secretary of Administration in the State Department of Agriculture.

Dr. Sophia Baumert of GIZ Kenya highlighted FINAS as a crucial platform for collaboration: “FINAS began as a national platform in 2024 and has advanced into a continental forum. We look forward to rallying more partners to join us in this cause.”

Pre-summit dialogues will address structuring an Agricultural Development Fund, advancing

page 6>>



From Left: **Kennedy Oketch, Agriculture Economy and Financial Advisor, GIZ Kenya, David Adama, Senior Policy Officer, AGRA, Rashid Khator, Secretary of Administration in the State Department of Agriculture (representing, Dr. Paul Ronoh, Principal Secretary, State Department of Agriculture) and Peter Owoko, Director of Policy at the State Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture during the FINAS2026 media launch in Nairobi.** Photo Credit: FINAS

<<from pg 5

green finance, and operationalising the Kampala Declaration. The three-day programme will feature ministerial and CEO roundtables, keynote addresses, side events, and deal-making sessions built around four pillars: policy alignment, innovative and inclusive finance, green and climate-resilient economies, and trade and investment cooperation. Site visits to Konza Technopolis, Tatu City, and the Northern Corridor Transit and Transport Coordination Authority in Mombasa will showcase Kenya's innovation hubs.

Prof. Hamadi Boga, Vice President at AGRA and Chair of the FINAS Secretariat, said: "FINAS 2026 is about moving beyond commitments to coordinated delivery. By bringing together policymakers, financiers, and practitioners, the summit provides a platform to unlock capital at scale and translate policy ambitions into bankable investments."

Stakeholders are encouraged to participate as delegates, partners, or exhibitors, contributing to shaping a more inclusive, resilient, and investment-ready future for Africa's food systems. To attend, exhibit or partner visit www.finasafrica.org or send email to summit@finasafrica.org

FINAS MEDIA BRIEFING | 2026 PICTORIAL



David Adama, Senior Policy Officer, AGRA.



Peter Owoko, Director of Policy, State Department for Agriculture



BANK

YOUR PARTNER KWA GROUND

understands that no two Agribusiness needs are the same

KCB Agribusiness solutions range

From financing purchases to expanding farms

Dairy Herd Improvement Loan | Livestock Financing Loan |
Agribusiness Asset Finance Loan | Mavuno Coffee Loan |
Mavuno Tea Loan | Seed Financing Loan



Visit your nearest KCB Branch today.

Call: 0711087000

T&Cs Apply

For People. For Better.



Regulated by the Central Bank of Kenya



PICTORIAL

ALL PHOTOS CREDIT: FINAS



Rashid Khator, Secretary of Administration in the State Department of Agriculture with the FINAS Summit partners and secretariat during the summit launch.



Dr Charity Mutegi, FINAS Summit Director and Rehema Kahurananga, Aceli Africa Communications Manager.



Ngo Bakang Anny Caroll, Secretary General, African Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (AFRACA).



Jared Ochieng', Agriculture and Finance Processing Lead, FSD Kenya.



Sheena Raikundalia, Chief Growth Officer, Kuza Biashara.



George Kubai, Managing Director, Agricultural Finance Corporation.



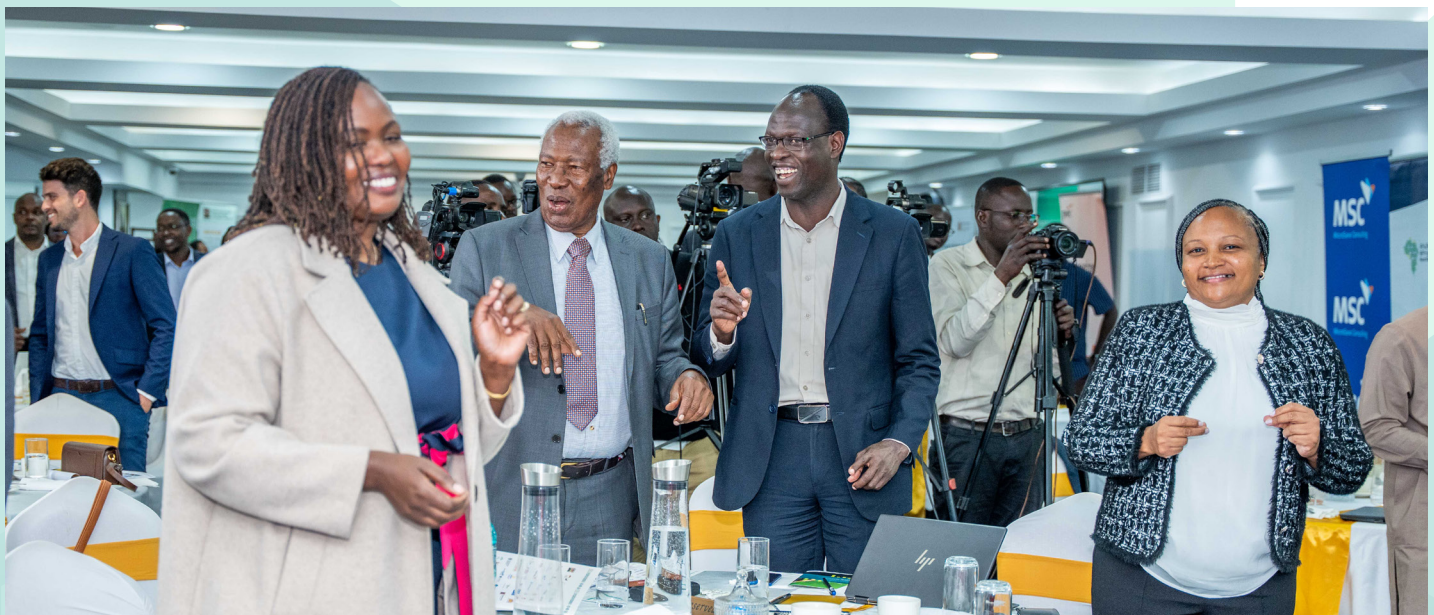
Geoffrey Nyamau, Kenya Country Manager, Aceli Africa and Titianne Donde, Policy Consultant, Aceli Africa.



Rashid Khator, Secretary of Administration in the State Department of Agriculture.



Dr Sophia Baumert, Project Manager, Sustainable Agricultural Systems and Policies AgSys. BIO. Deutsche Gesellschaft für



Sharon Mosin, Kenya Country Manager, SwissContact, Ratemo Michieka, Chancellor, Tharaka University, Okisegere Ojepat, CEO, FPC Kenya and Dr Charity Mutegei.

IFAD and Côte d'Ivoire launch US\$344.5 million agro-industrial project to stimulate inclusive agricultural growth



Participants pose for a photo during the launch of the Agro-Industrial Pole Project in the North-East of Côte d'Ivoire: Photo Credit: IFAD

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire officially launched the Agro-Industrial Pole Project in the North-East, aimed at modernizing agricultural systems, increasing access to markets and building climate resilience throughout the Zanzan region. This initiative involves the creation of the Aggregation and Services Centre (CAS), which will be located in Bouna on 25 hectares of land. The CAS will be an innovative agro-industrial pole with modern processing units, storage and cold chain infrastructure, logistical services and financial service outlets, as well as technology demonstration areas. The CAS will increase the value of agricultural products, encourage entrepreneurship, and foster market entry for rural producers and emerging rural enterprises.

The US\$344.5 million project is cofinanced by IFAD, the Italian National Promotional Institution (CDP) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) and is grounded in a strong multi-stakeholder partnership designed to accelerate rural transformation and increase the competitiveness of rural producers and local enterprises. Its emphasis will be on agricultural technologies and sustainable innovative farming practices designed to boost productivity while reducing vulnerability to climate risks.

"This investment reflects our common engagement with rural communities and takes advantage of Côte

d'Ivoire's leading role in promoting inclusive sustainable agricultural transformation, opening up economic opportunities and offering rural regions of the country a brighter future," declared Hermann Messan, IFAD Country Director for Côte d'Ivoire.

IFAD's investment aims to reach more than 222,000 people living in rural areas, with priority given to youth and women. This financing will make it possible to boost production capacity on some 2,200 hectares of climate-resilient irrigated agricultural land, improve access to water, increase yields and promote sustainable land use.

"The Agro-Industrial Hub Project in the North-East represents a structured, holistic, coherent and ambitious response to the development challenges facing this important area of our national territory, despite its immense agricultural potential," said Angui Tehua, Director General for Production and Food Security, speaking on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development and Food Production.

Since 1984, IFAD's investments in Côte d'Ivoire have benefited more than 585,000 rural households. Over the course of four decades, the Fund has invested in 14 development projects totalling US\$827.97 million, US\$289.5 million of it in the form of direct financing, attesting to its long-term engagement in inclusive, large-scale, climate-resilient agricultural transformation.

Kenyan youth agri-tech startups win over \$40,000 in push to scale farm innovations



Pictured from left to right: Boniface Mihati (Under Secretary, State Department for Agriculture), Wairimu Munyinyi-Wahome (Country Director, Heifer International Kenya), Patrick Mutahi Muthoni (Founder, Mukurweini Oil Enterprises Limited) holding their cheque of USD 11,627.36, Daniel Litunya (Founder & CEO, Dairy Sense), Ninah Muli (Co-Founder, Dairy Sense) holding their cheque of USD 6,201.15, Dolly Sagwe (Treasurer, Heifer International Kenya Board), and Joseph Murabula (CEO, Kenya Climate Innovation Centre). Photo Credit: Heifer International Kenya

Eight agritech startups founded by young Kenyans have secured a combined \$41,088 in funding under the 2025-26 AYUte Africa (Agriculture, Youth and Technology) Challenge Kenya, a competition that supports young people developing practical technology solutions for smallholder farmers.

The winners emerged from a competitive process that attracted 486 applicants nationwide, reflecting growing interest among young entrepreneurs in tackling agricultural inefficiencies, from post-harvest losses to limited market access.

Mukurweini Oil Enterprises Limited took the largest share in the growth-stage category, winning \$11,628 for its model of processing off-grade avocados into oil and other products, an approach designed to reduce waste while creating new income streams for farmers.

Other top performers in the growth-stage category included Bellfeeds, which placed second with \$10,078, and Jolly Mushroom Enterprises, which took third place with \$3,876. Zuphifarm finished fourth with \$1,939.

In the early-stage category, Dairy Sense won \$6,202,

followed by DroFarmer Ltd at \$3,101, Soil Doctors Limited placed third with \$2,326, while Chrisfa Poultry finished fourth with \$1,938.

“We are creating a market where none existed before,” said Mukurweini Oil Enterprises Limited co-founder Patrick Mutahi. “This support allows us to scale and reach more farmers.”

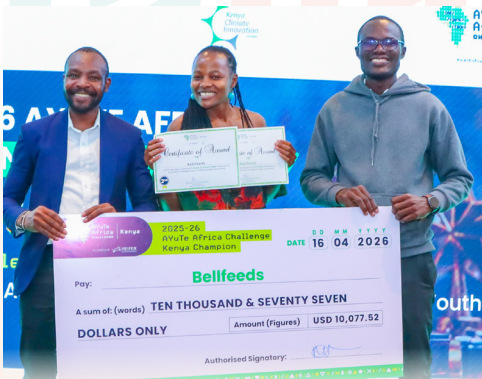
DroFarmer CEO Ken Mbuki said the recognition would help accelerate partnerships. “Validation like this opens doors. It moves you from idea to implementation much faster,” he said.

The competition, run by Heifer International, focuses on identifying and backing young innovators whose solutions can improve productivity, resilience, and incomes in Kenya’s agriculture sector, which employs a majority of the population.

Sector leaders say such initiatives are critical as the country looks to modernize agriculture and make it more attractive to young people. “We are seeing young people build practical solutions to real agricultural problems,” said Country Director Wairimu Munyinyi-

page 12>>

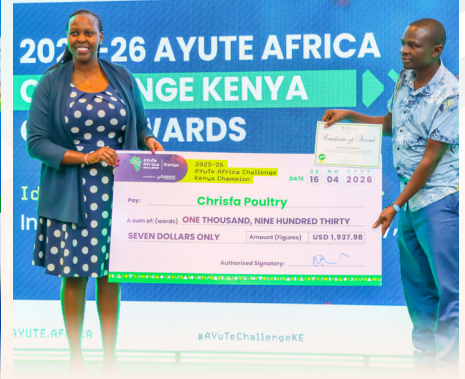
All Photo Credits: Heifer International Kenya



George Ayuka and Brean Ogechi, co-founders of Bellfeeds, celebrate their win at the AYUTE Africa Challenge Kenya 2026, taking home the top prize of USD 10,371.92.



Sarah Wambulwa Natembeya, Founder & CEO of Jolly Mushroom Enterprises, proudly displays her winner's cheque of USD 3,875.97 at the AYUTE Africa Challenge Kenya 2026.



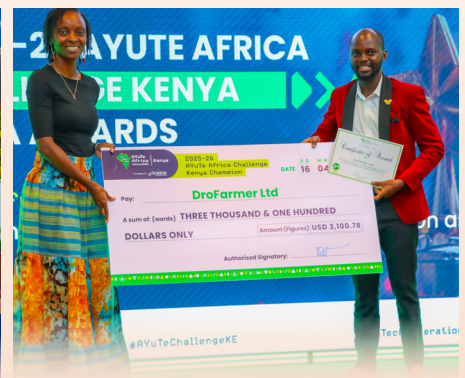
The founder and CEO of Chrisfa Poultry is called Bigirimana Christopher and is being awarded by Mercy Kimalat, CEO of ASSEK



Christine Muriuki, Founder & CEO of Zuphifarm, receives her award cheque of USD 1,937.88 at the AYUTE Africa Challenge Kenya 2026.



Charles Mwangi, Founder & CEO of Soil Doctors Limited, holds his winner's cheque of USD 2,925.58 at the AYUTE Africa Challenge Kenya 2026.



Ken Mbuki, CEO of DroFarmer, is being awarded by Sophie Naboliri, AGRA

<<from pg 11

Wahome. "The focus now is helping these businesses grow and reach farmers at scale."

Heifer International Kenya Board Chairperson Florence Kimata said the programme is structured to support viable enterprises, not just ideas.

"This is about building businesses that create value across the agricultural economy," she said. "AYUTE is more than a funding opportunity. It is a deliberate investment in young innovators who are solving real problems in productivity, climate resilience, market access, and enterprise growth. The real value will be seen in how many of these enterprises scale, how many farmers benefit, and how many of these solutions are adopted more widely."

The 18 finalists in this year's competition showcased solutions across climate-smart agriculture, digital advisory services, livestock systems, and post-harvest management, areas seen as key to improving food security and farmer incomes.

Kenya National Innovation Agency CEO Dr Tony Omwansa said innovation alone is not enough.

"It has to be supported by the right ecosystem, financing, infrastructure, and partnerships, to reach the market," he said.

The 2025-2026 edition, delivered in partnership with the Embassy of Sweden in Kenya through the Kenya Livestock Market Systems Project (KLMP) and the Kenya Climate Innovation Centre (KCIC), reflects a growing shift toward commercially viable solutions, as noted by Joseph Murabula, CEO of KCIC "We are encouraged by the quality and ambition of the enterprises we have seen through this process," he said. "What stands out is that these are not just ideas, but businesses that are responding to real farmer needs and showing the potential to scale. Through our work with Heifer International, we have seen how structured support, mentorship, and technical assistance can help young innovators move from concept to market readiness, and that is where real transformation begins."

Sudan Secures \$87 Million Boost to Tackle Food Crisis Amid Conflict and Climate Shocks



A Sudanese farmer carrying maize stalks. : Photo Credit: AFDB

The African Development Bank Group has approved a grant of \$87 million to strengthen food security and rural livelihoods in Sudan to address a deepening food crisis driven by conflict, climate shocks and economic disruption.

The Boosting Agrifood Systems Resilience Project (BOOST) has an estimated cost of roughly \$100 million, to which the Bank's concessional window, the African Development Fund, will contribute \$87 million. The UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, World Food Programme, UN Women and the CGIAR's International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center will also support the project with in-kind contributions of approximately \$12.3 million in value.

BOOST, approved on 22 April, seeks to increase food production and availability while creating agribusiness opportunities for women and youth in Sudan. It will be implemented in key agricultural regions of the country including Blue Nile, Sennar and Kassala states – all which host large numbers of displaced people and remain critical to national food production.

Farmers will receive improved seeds and access to climate smart technologies, increasing food production, helping to close supply gaps and reducing reliance on

imports. Storage, processing and access to new markets will reduce post-harvest losses and improve household incomes. Women and youth will receive access to finance, skills and digital tools to develop agribusinesses.

The project is expected to benefit more than 1.2 million people, including more than 232,000 farming households, largely targeting women and young people. Families will have better access to food and more stable livelihoods. It is also projected to create tens of thousands of jobs, both directly and indirectly, supporting economic recovery in fragile communities.

The Bank Group's financing draws on undisbursed funds from previously cancelled operations, an approach that allows resources to be redirected quickly to urgent national priorities.

"This investment will help farmers rebuild their livelihoods, support women and young people to create businesses, and strengthen the resilience of communities facing immense challenges," said David Muthusi Mutuku, the Bank's Country Manager for Sudan. "At a time of profound hardship, this project offers a path to recovery, bringing practical support to families, reviving local economies and laying the foundation for a more secure and self-reliant future."



A smallholder farmer carrying a basket of farm produce. Photo Credit: Omia Agribusiness Development Group

Uganda's Omia Agribusiness and Kenya's SokoFresh Secure \$1 Million Concessional Loans to Boost Smallholder Farmers

As part of a strategic partnership, the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and Bayer Foundation announced the first investments under the Food Systems Innovation Finance Facility (FSIFF), committing catalytic capital to support innovative food systems enterprises in underserved markets.

The facility's inaugural investments include a \$500,000 local currency loan from UNCDF to Omia Agribusiness Development Group Limited in Uganda and a \$500,000 local currency loan from UNCDF to SokoFresh in Kenya, marking the transition from pipeline development to active capital deployment. These first transactions anchor a dynamic, fast-

moving pipeline of investments designed to scale agribusiness innovation and strengthen food systems across multiple markets.

This comes at a critical moment for development finance. According to the OECD, official development assistance fell by 23.1% in 2025, the largest annual decline on record, returning to levels last seen in 2015. As concessional resources contract, the need to mobilize additional capital into high-impact sectors such as food systems has become increasingly urgent.

The Food Systems Innovation Finance Facility (FSIFF), managed by UNCDF with funding from Bayer Foundation, addresses these challenges by

page 15>>

<<from pg 14

investing in high-impact food system enterprises operating in underserved and frontier markets across Africa, Asia Pacific, and Latin America. These businesses are critical to strengthening food security and smallholder livelihoods but often lack access to appropriately structured capital, as grants are limited and traditional financing is frequently too costly or restrictive.

The FSIFF responds by deploying catalytic concessional capital through tailored financial instruments, enabling viable enterprises to scale while helping to build a dynamic pipeline of investable opportunities that can crowd in private capital over time.

Omia: Scaling inclusive agribusiness models in fragile and last mile contexts

Omia Agribusiness Development Group Limited, founded and led by Ugandan entrepreneur Iganachi Razaki Omia, is a locally rooted agribusiness providing agricultural inputs, extension services, and market access to smallholder farmers in Northern Uganda — a region shaped by historic conflict, refugee inflows, limited infrastructure, and increasing climate risks.

The \$500,000 local currency loan will support Omia's expansion of farmer services and market linkages. Omia currently serves more than 90,000 smallholder farmers, and the investment is expected to reach over 75,000 additional farmers, including 30,000 women and 20,000 refugees.

The financing includes an innovative performance-based incentive mechanism, linking loan terms to the achievement of impact targets, particularly outreach to women and refugee farmers.

Iganachi Razaki Omia, CEO of Omia Agribusiness, said: "This investment enables us to significantly expand our reach while strengthening farmer incomes, resilience, and food security. Partnering with UNCDF allows us to grow sustainably while deepening our impact in some of the most underserved communities in Uganda. This complements the important support we have previously received from other UN partners including World Food Programme."

SokoFresh: Reducing food loss and increasing farmer incomes in Kenya

In Kenya, the FSIFF is investing \$500,000 through a four-year local currency loan in SokoFresh, a Kenyan enterprise addressing post-harvest losses and limited market access for smallholder farmers through solar-powered cold storage solutions and market linkages across fresh produce and cereal value chains.

The investment will enable SokoFresh to bring cold storage and reliable market access to more than 5,000 smallholder farmers annually, contributing to a projected 10% increase in farmer incomes while significantly reducing post-harvest losses across fresh produce value chains. By improving produce quality, storage, and aggregation, SokoFresh supports more efficient food systems while increasing income stability for farmers and other value chain actors.

"Strengthening food systems and reducing post-harvest losses is critical to improving outcomes for smallholder farmers across Sub-Saharan Africa," said Denis Karema, CEO of SokoFresh. "This catalytic financing from the United Nations Capital Development Fund enables us to deliver inclusive market access and financial solutions that ensure smallholder farmers have access to reliable markets, prompt payments, and fair pricing. This partnership will accelerate our mission to drive sustainable, inclusive growth and economic empowerment for rural communities reliant on agriculture."

Investing beyond grants to unlock sustainable food systems

The Food Systems Innovation Finance Facility reflects a growing recognition that grant funding alone is insufficient to meet the scale of today's development challenges.

By deploying concessional capital through direct investments and blended finance structures, UNCDF enables partners such as Bayer Foundation to use their capital catalytically — derisking early-stage investments, improving risk-return profiles, and building markets where private capital can follow.

FINAS 2026



FINANCING AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS SUSTAINABLY

FINAS 2026 SUMMIT & DIALOGUES

Towards Sustainable Financial
Architecture for Africa's Food Systems

Register to attend

30 June - 02 July 2026

Nairobi, KICC

www.finasafrica.org

