

Beyond Dialogue: FINAS 2026 Driving Action for Africa's Food Systems



Kenya's Principal Secretary, State Department for Livestock, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (in the middle with a grey suit) together with other partners and the FINAS 2026 Summit Oversight Committee, pose for a group photo on day 1 of the summit. PHOTO CREDIT: FINAS

Africa's food systems stand at a defining moment. As the continent grapples with the intertwined challenges of climate change, food insecurity, evolving markets and constrained investment, one reality has become increasingly clear: transforming agriculture requires transforming how it is financed.

It was against this backdrop that the Financing Agri-food Systems Sustainably (FINAS) 2026 Summit convened from 30 June to 2 July 2026 at the Kenyatta International Convention Center under the theme "Towards Sustainable Financial Architecture for Africa's Food Systems." Bringing together leaders from government, development finance institutions, the private sector, research organizations, farmers' organizations, and development partners, the summit served as a continental platform to rethink how finance can unlock resilient, inclusive, and investment-ready food systems across Africa.

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FINAS DIALOGUES

JULY ISSUE

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   Financing Agri-food Systems Sustainably

New Financing Model Targets Post-Harvest Losses through Cold Storage Investment



Karen Poore of DanChurchAid Kenya and George Kubai of Agricultural Finance Corporation during the signing of Memorandum of Understanding to implement an innovative financing model during the FINAS 2026 Summit. PHOTO CREDIT: FINAS

For many smallholder farmers, the challenge does not end at harvest. Without access to affordable cold storage, highly perishable produce often loses quality or spoils before reaching the market, forcing farmers to sell immediately after harvest when prices are at their lowest. The result is significant post-harvest losses, reduced incomes, and missed opportunities to maximize the value of agricultural production.

Addressing this challenge took center stage during the side event, “Leveraging Wholesale Lending to Advance Financial Inclusion in the Agricultural Sector,” convened by the Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC) during the FINAS 2026 Summit.

The session unveiled a new financing partnership between AFC and DanChurchAid that will enable farmer cooperatives to access financing for cold

storage infrastructure. The initiative, initially targeting Nakuru and Nyandarua counties, aims to reduce post-harvest losses, preserve produce quality, and allow farmers to store their harvests until market prices become more favorable, with plans to expand to other regions.

Speaking during the session, AFC Managing Director George Kubai said the initiative is designed to strengthen agricultural value chains by investing in infrastructure that enables farmers to capture greater value from their produce. By working through cooperatives, the model also expands access to finance for farmers who may lack conventional collateral, while improving their capacity to repay loans by increasing returns from their harvests.

Supported by the Danish Government through DanChurchAid’s Loss to Value project, the partnership reflects a growing shift towards financing solutions that address systemic bottlenecks across agricultural value chains rather than production alone. By combining finance with cold chain infrastructure, the model seeks to reduce food loss, strengthen farmer incomes, and improve market access for smallholder producers.

The discussion reinforced a key message that resonated throughout FINAS 2026: sustainable agricultural finance is not only about expanding access to credit, but also about investing in the infrastructure that enables farmers to become more productive, resilient, and competitive. As Africa continues to rethink its agrifood finance architecture, initiatives such as this demonstrate how targeted partnerships can turn dialogue into practical solutions with lasting impact.



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For Dr. Charity Mutegi, Director of FINAS, the summit's ambition extends beyond convening stakeholders. "We do not want to be labeled a talk show. We want to remain accountable. How can we transition the conversations about food systems finance into action?" That commitment to accountability and measurable impact was evident throughout the three-day summit, where discussions consistently focused on translating ideas into investments, partnerships and policy action.

Among the summit's landmark achievements was the launch of the Kenya National Agrifood Systems Investment Plan (NASIP) 2025-2029, positioning Kenya as the first country to develop a national agrifood investment framework aligned with the African Union's Kampala CAADP Declaration.

The launch, which was presided over by Jonathan Mueke, Kenya's Principal Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development on behalf of the Cabinet Secretary for Agriculture Hon. Mutahi Kagwe.

"I am equally proud that the 2026 FINAS Summit provides the platform for the official launch of the National Agri-food Systems Investment Plan (NASIP 2026-2030). At the heart of NASIP is a fully costed investment framework of KES 1.081 trillion over the next five years." said PS Mueke "This investment will be mobilized through a strategic partnership in which the Government of Kenya, together with County Governments, will contribute 35 percent. I am calling on the commitment of the County Governments, through the Council of Governors, to achieve this goal. The private sector is expected to contribute 45 percent, and the Development and bilateral partners' share is 20 percent of the total investment envelope." added PS Mueke.

More than a policy milestone, the launch demonstrated the kind of coordinated, country-led investment planning that FINAS seeks to champion across the continent, one that aligns

public policy, private capital, and development partnerships to accelerate the transformation of sustainable food systems.

Across plenary discussions, side events and networking engagements, a common message emerged: sustainable finance is about more than capital. It requires enabling policies, innovative financial instruments, climate resilience, technology, skills development and inclusive market systems that empower farmers, agribusinesses, women and young people. Participants explored how finance can better respond to market realities, strengthen resilience across agricultural value chains and unlock investment opportunities that deliver lasting social, economic and environmental impact. The summit also reinforced that no single institution can transform Africa's food systems alone; meaningful progress depends on stronger collaboration among governments, financial institutions, development partners, the private sector, and farming communities.

Reflecting on the summit's achievements, Dr. Mutegi noted, "In its third edition, FINAS 2026 has continued to advance sustainable finance as a lever for meaningful change in Africa, laying the ground for the unveiling of a private-sector-led agriculture finance working group." The unveiling of the Working Group marked an important step towards sustaining the momentum generated during the summit, providing a platform for continued collaboration and ensuring that the conversations initiated at FINAS translate into coordinated action and tangible outcomes.

As FINAS 2026 concluded, one message resonated clearly: transforming Africa's food systems is no longer a question of whether finance is needed, but of whether financial systems are designed to deliver lasting impact. By convening the right stakeholders, fostering strategic partnerships and championing accountability, FINAS continues to position itself not merely as a summit, but as a platform for action, one committed to shaping the sustainable financial architecture that Africa's food systems require for generations to come.

Turning Dialogue into Action: FINAS 2026 Launches Agriculture Finance Technical Working Group



Dr Samuel Tiriongo, Kenya Bankers Association, Petra Jacobi, GIZ Kenya and Titianne Donde, Aceli Africa during the unveiling of the TWG at the FINAS 2026 Summit. PHOTO CREDIT: FINAS

The Financing Agri-Food Systems Sustainably (FINAS) 2026 Summit took another step towards advancing sustainable agricultural finance with the launch of the Agriculture Finance Technical Working Group (TWT), a permanent platform established to drive evidence-based reforms and strengthen collaboration across the sector.

Bringing together representatives from government, financial institutions, development organizations and the private sector, the Working Group aims to bridge the gap between policy and implementation by championing practical solutions that improve access to agricultural

finance. It will serve as a collaborative platform to mobilize expertise, inform policy and support reforms that unlock greater investment in agrifood systems.

Speaking during the launch, Finance and Investment Expert David Sajabi challenged stakeholders to move beyond discussions and focus on tangible results. "Good ideas must not remain reports. Reforms must be followed through," he said, adding that the Group's success would ultimately be measured by meaningful improvements in agricultural lending.

The discussion underscored the need for stronger partnerships, better data,

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(Third from Left) Susan Mang'eni, Kenya's Principle Secretary, State Department for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development, (L-R) David Sajabi and Dr Samuel Tiriongo of Kenya Bankers Association, Petra Jacobi, GIZ Kenya, Wangui Muna, Heifer International Kenya, Jared Ochieng', FSD Kenya, Titianne Donda, Aceli Africa and George Kubai, Agricultural Finance Corporation. PHOTO CREDIT: FINAS

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innovative collateral models and effective risk-sharing mechanisms to expand financing for farmers and agribusinesses. Dr. Samuel Tiriongo of the Kenya Bankers Association called for evidence-based advocacy and alternative forms of collateral, while Titianne Donda of Aceli Africa described the Working Group as a product of collaboration that will transform data into evidence and evidence into policy reforms. Petra Jacoby of GIZ Kenya reaffirmed the importance of coordinated action to build confidence among financial institutions and expand access to finance.

The launch of the Agriculture Finance Technical Working Group reflects FINAS 2026's commitment to creating lasting platforms that extend beyond the Summit. As delegates concluded three days of dialogue and collaboration, the new Working Group stood as a practical mechanism to ensure that the conversations begun at FINAS continue to shape agricultural finance, policy and investment across Kenya and the wider African continent.

FINAS 2026 SUMMIT



Susan Auma Mang'eni, CBS, Principal Secretary, State Department for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), during the launch of the Private Sector Technical Working Group. PHOTO CREDIT: FINAS



Delegates follow proceedings attentively during the launch of the Private Sector Technical Working Group PHOTO CREDIT: FINAS

PICTORIAL- FINAS 2026 SUMMIT

PHOTO CREDIT: FINAS



Panelists during side event session convened by MESPT during the summit.



Dr Charity Mutege, Director, FINAS Summit



Rashmi Pillai, CEO. FSD Kenya



A delegate at the FINAS Summit



Takanori Satoyama, Senior Agricultural Advisor and Expert, JICA



Exhibition area during the summit

PICTORIAL- FINAS 2026 SUMMIT



Panelists during one of the side events



Esther Muchiri and Duncan Otieno, part of the summit protocol team



Delegates had the opportunity to go for field visits at Tatu City and Konza Technopolis as shown above and below respectively



GIZ Champions Practical Solutions for Sustainable Agrifood Finance at FINAS 2026



Maren Kneller, Head of Development Cooperation at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany.
PHOTO CREDIT: FINAS

Financing Africa's agrifood systems requires more than capital; it calls for strong partnerships, enabling policies, and coordinated action. This message resonated throughout the Financing Agri-Food Systems Sustainably (FINAS) 2026 Summit, where GIZ helped shape conversations on the policies and partnerships needed to unlock sustainable investment across the continent.

During the Key Remarks and Partnerships session, Maren Kneller, Head of Development Cooperation at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany, reaffirmed Germany's long-standing partnership with Kenya and its commitment to advancing sustainable agrifood systems through strategic public and private

investment. Her remarks underscored the importance of collaboration in building resilient food systems and creating an enabling environment for agricultural transformation.

The discussions continued with a strong focus on turning strategy into implementation. Dr. Sophia Baumert, Project Manager for Sustainable Agricultural Systems and Policies (AgSys) at GIZ, highlighted the role of National Agrifood Systems Investment Plans (NASIPs) as practical tools for mobilizing, aligning and tracking finance to accelerate agrifood systems transformation.

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GIZ Kenya Senior Advisor Kennedy Okech.
PHOTO CREDIT: FINAS

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Across panel discussions and side events, a common theme emerged: financing solutions must respond to the realities farmers and agribusinesses face. Conversations on strengthening agri-SME finance through policy and prudential reforms, alongside discussions on making Agriculture Development Funds more effective, explored practical ways to expand access to finance through evidence-based policies, innovative financing mechanisms and stronger public-private collaboration.

Bringing these conversations together, GIZ Senior Advisor Kennedy Okech synthesized the Summit's key messages, reinforcing the need to move from policy discussions to coordinated implementation.

As FINAS 2026 concluded, GIZ's contributions reflected a broader message echoed throughout the Summit: that transforming Africa's agri-food systems will depend not only on increased investment, but also on stronger partnerships, smarter policies, and a shared commitment to turning ambition into action.

FINAS 2026 SUMMIT



Representatives from GIZ and partner organizations pose for a group photograph during the FINAS Summit PHOTO CREDIT: FINAS



Dr. Sophia Baumert of GIZ addresses participants during the Financing Agri-food Systems (FINAS) Summit. PHOTO CREDIT: FINAS

Putting People at the Center of Agricultural Finance

What if the biggest challenge in agricultural finance isn't the amount of money available, but whether the system is designed for the people it is meant to serve?

That question echoed throughout Heifer International Kenya's engagements at FINAS 2026, where discussions consistently challenged delegates to rethink finance through the lived realities of farmers, women, and young agripreneurs.

Opening the conversation, Heifer International Kenya Country Director Wairimu Munyinyi-Wahome posed a bold question: Who is agricultural finance really designed for? Her keynote encouraged stakeholders to move beyond conventional financing models and build systems that respond to the diverse needs, aspirations and realities of those working across Africa's agri-food systems.

Across subsequent sessions, the conversation deepened. From advancing gender-responsive financing to exploring how finance and skills together unlock productivity, speakers emphasized that access to capital alone is rarely enough. Sustainable transformation requires the right knowledge, partnerships, and enabling ecosystems that allow individuals and enterprises to grow with confidence.

Attention also turned to Africa's next generation of agripreneurs, with discussions highlighting the need to bridge the "missing middle" by creating financing pathways that support businesses as they evolve from promising start-ups into scalable enterprises.



Heifer International Kenya Country Director Wairimu Munyinyi-Wahome. PHOTO CREDIT: FINAS

Participants called for financing models that recognize the different stages of business growth while expanding opportunities for young innovators to thrive.

Collectively, Heifer International's sessions advanced a simple but powerful message: inclusive finance is not achieved by widening access alone, but by intentionally designing financial systems that reflect people's realities, unlock opportunity and strengthen resilience.

At FINAS2026, Heifer International challenged delegates to look beyond expanding access to finance and instead ask a more fundamental question: Who is our financial system designed to serve? The answer, they argued, will determine whether Africa's agri-food transformation is merely financed or truly inclusive.

Kenya Launches KES 1.081 Trillion Agrifood Investment Plan at FINAS 2026



Kenya's Principal Secretary for Livestock Jonathan Mueke and other partners during the launch of the Kenya National Agri-Food Systems Investment Plan (NASIP) 2025-2029 at the FINAS 2026 Summit. PHOTO CREDIT: FINAS

A major milestone in Kenya's agricultural transformation was achieved at the Financing Agri-Food Systems Sustainably (FINAS) 2026 Summit with the launch of the Kenya National Agri-Food Systems Investment Plan (NASIP) 2025-2029. Unveiled during the Summit's opening at the Kenyatta International Convention Center (KICC), the KES 1.081 trillion framework provides a bold financing roadmap to accelerate the country's agrifood transformation over the next five years.

Developed as part of the implementation of Kenya's Agricultural Sector Transformation and Growth Strategy (ASTGS) 2019-2029, NASIP outlines how government, the private sector and development partners will work together to mobilize investments that strengthen food systems, modernize agricultural value chains, expand irrigation, improve food security and increase farmers' incomes. The Plan is also expected to create more than two million jobs, with women and young people among the key beneficiaries.

Speaking during the launch, Principal Secretary for Livestock Jonathan Mueke described financing as the missing link in implementing Kenya's agricultural ambitions.

"We always come with very good plans and strategies on how we are going to increase production and productivity, but there's always a gap, which is financing. With NASIP, we now have a clear financing path," he said.

The launch underscored FINAS 2026's growing role as a platform for driving meaningful action in Africa's agrifood sector. Summit Director Dr. Charity Mutegei reiterated the need to move beyond conversations towards measurable outcomes, noting that FINAS is committed to catalyzing partnerships, investment and accountability in food systems finance.

As African countries begin implementing the CAADP Kampala Strategy and Action Plan, Kenya's launch of NASIP positions the country among the continent's frontrunners in translating policy into investment and ambition into action.

Skills: The Infrastructure Africa's Food Systems Can't Afford to Ignore



What if Africa's greatest agricultural investment isn't the next financing facility or climate fund, but its people? That question anchored one of the most thought-provoking conversations at FINAS 2026, where Swisscontact challenged delegates to rethink what truly drives agricultural transformation.

Delivering the keynote address, Swisscontact Kenya Country Director Sharon Mosin argued that sustainable progress rests on three inseparable pillars: Skills, Systems and Capital. Remove one, and the entire ecosystem weakens.

Mosin highlighted a paradox facing Africa's agri-food systems: employers struggle to find skilled workers, graduates struggle to secure jobs, financial institutions struggle to identify investment-ready businesses, and young entrepreneurs struggle to access finance. Rather than isolated challenges, she described them as symptoms of disconnected systems that fail to link education, enterprise and finance.

Modern agriculture, she noted, is no longer defined by farming alone. It increasingly demands expertise in technology, data, climate innovation, renewable energy, logistics and entrepreneurship. Yet many training systems continue to prepare young people for the agriculture of yesterday rather than the opportunities of tomorrow.

One message resonated throughout the keynote: "Capital follows confidence. Confidence follows capability. Capability comes from skills." The statement captured a simple but powerful truth; investment is most effective when paired with competent people and connected systems.

Mosin called for stronger collaboration among governments, industry, training institutions, and development partners to expand apprenticeships, strengthen employer-led learning, and equip young people with market-driven skills that build resilient, competitive agri-food systems.

Her closing message offered a compelling reminder that the future of African agriculture will not be shaped by capital alone, but by the capabilities of the people entrusted with putting that capital to work. At FINAS 2026, Swisscontact made the case that investing in skills is not simply preparing people for employment; it is building the economic infrastructure that will sustain Africa's food systems for generations to come.

Burundian
drummers
captivate
delegates with
a lively cultural
performance
during the FINAS
Summit.

To All Our Partners, Exhibitors, Delegates,
Field Visits Hosts and Service Providers
A BIG THANK YOU!

