

UGANDA'S COMMITMENT TO ACTION IN TRANSFORMING THE FOOD SYSTEMS

The first commitment to transforming food systems was by Uganda Government responding to the call by the UN Secretary-General to transform food systems. Uganda went ahead and organized national, regional and stakeholder-based dialogues to produce a common understanding and position to that effect.






The Commitment to Action is based on the country analysis of the food systems based on evidence and voices from the relevant actors during the dialogue process, identification of bottlenecks, opportunities and game-changing solutions to transforming the food systems for sustainable development in Uganda.

The commitment is deduced through providing answers to targeted questions raised below;

1. How do you plan to deliver interventions across the five action tracks of the food systems transformation as envisioned in the Agenda 2030?

Through the dialogue process across the five action tracks, transformative interventions were generated to address the identified bottlenecks in the Ugandan food systems. The bottlenecks and interventions (strategic actions) are arranged alongside action tracks in the matrix below.

Bottlenecks and Strategic Actions for Uganda Food Systems Transformation

Action Tracks	    				
	AT 1: Ensure access to safe and nutritious food for all	AT 2: shift to sustainable consumption patterns	AT 3: Boost Nature positive production	AT 4: Advance equitable livelihoods	AT 5: Build resilience to shocks & stress
Bottlenecks	High post-harvest losses	Uganda is facing a double burden of malnutrition.	Environmental degradation	Poverty and inequality have persisted due to limited social protection services and coverage.	Climate change effects and environmental degradation are negatively affecting Uganda's food systems potential
	High levels of food loss and waste linked to poor harvesting and post-harvest management practices.	Low competitiveness of the agro-food sector due to limited value addition.	Over-reliance on rain-fed agriculture and low irrigation capacity.	Poor behavior and malnutrition are perpetuated by inadequate community mobilisation, and poor mind-set, behavior and lifestyle change	Increasing intensity of shocks and stressors
	Unsafe food and poor-quality products affecting health and market competitiveness.	Limited agro-industrialization affects the food export potential.	low update on sustainable land use management practices	Empowerment of smallholder farmers, women, youth in the food chain.	Limited contingency affecting ability to mitigate and manage shocks and stresses to food systems.

	Limited market access for Ugandan agricultural products impeding income and export earnings.			Inadequate financing to core sectors supporting food systems.	
	Inadequate supportive infrastructure especially transport, storage facilities, markets, appropriate technology, energy and ICT.	Low government financial contribution towards the research and development agenda resulting to external-led research agendas that do not address the local problems or lead to short term projects that do not create impact.		Smallholder and subsistence dominated agricultural production and a fragmented land tenure system.	
	Limited access to regional and global markets due to low competitiveness of Uganda's food.	Uneffective communication between researchers, policy makers and the public/ stakeholders on current findings, immediate needs, appropriate technologies and innovations		Uganda's food production and supply potential is under-exploited.	
	Poor developed food markets and distribution systems.	Inadequate accredited infrastructure and facilities that supports research and science		Low investment in food systems research, science, technology and innovations hindering accelerated socio-economic transformation	
	Low-quality assurance capacity challenges across the value chains.				

	Poor quality of seeds, fake and low quality of agro-inputs, low quality farm inputs and poor farming practices.				
	Low government financial contribution towards the research and development agenda resulting to external-led research agendas that do not address the local problems or lead to short term projects that do not create impact.				
	Uneffective communication between researchers, policy makers and the public/ stakeholders on current findings, immediate needs, appropriate technologies and innovations				
	Inadequate accredited infrastructure and facilities that supports research and science				

	Pests and diseases				Pests and diseases.
Strategic Actions (Interventions)	Establish and invest in a food systems research and innovation fund to advance science and research and enhance focus on local context-based challenges	Establish and invest in a food systems research and innovation fund to advance science and research and enhance focus on local context-based challenges		Promote decent employment and income generation opportunities for the most vulnerable actors in the food system.	Promote climate-smart agricultural practices such as mulching, minimum tillage, agro-forestry, among others.
	Set up a national Multi-stakeholder forum to increase multi-stakeholders' engagement and enhance efficient communication among researchers, policy makers, civil society organizations and private sector in the research agenda right from initiation of research interventions up to technology/innovation piloting and scaling	Set up a national Multi-stakeholder forum to increase multi-stakeholders' engagement and enhance efficient communication among researchers, policy makers, civil society organizations and private sector in the research agenda right from initiation of research interventions up to technology/innovation piloting and scaling		Empower rural communities to be resilient and respond to crises whenever they occur. These can be through community food reserves and seed systems, community early warning and emergency response systems, and community saving schemes among others.	Restoration of degraded land and soil productivity especially in areas affected by droughts and floods by upscaling Integrated Catchment Management and Landscape Restoration programmes.
	Invest in establishing and maintaining functional platform/s to provide avenues for continued	Invest in establishing and maintaining functional platform/s to provide avenues for continued sharing of knowledge and		Increase access to universal health coverage through enactment of the	Exploit ICT to strengthen early warning systems (EWS) and

	sharing of knowledge and techniques and that support/nurture young researchers, through internships, fellowships, etc	techniques and that support/nurture young researchers, through internships, fellowships, etc		national health insurance Bill into law.	Emergency Response mechanisms (ERM) for managing disasters, such as droughts, floods, and outbreak of pests and diseases are vital for mitigating climate change impacts
	Strengthen food safety and quality assurance along the food value chain by developing and implementing standards.	Establish and invest in a food systems research and innovation fund to advance science and research and enhance focus on local context-based challenges		Expand cash grants such as SAGE beyond the elderly to include vulnerable farmers in addition to reducing the age for beneficiaries from 80 years to 60 years for the rest of the country like it is for Karamoja.	Promote agricultural biodiversity to ensure diversification of the food we supply in terms of number and variety to avoid concentration of agricultural budget on a few crops
	Enhance human and infrastructure capacity for effective enforcement, and sensitizing the stakeholders along the value chain with emphasis at local government level.	Promote production and consumption of indigenous foods of high nutritional value among the strategic commodities e.g. millet, milk, Sesame, indigenous fruits and vegetables.		Strengthening routine food insecurity and malnutrition vulnerability mapping and response systems across the district local governments.	Promote regenerative agricultural training for sustainability and protection of the environment for future generation
	Promote appropriate and affordable preservation methods like small	Promote and support optimal Maternal Infant Young Child and Adolescent Nutrition (MIYCAN)		Fast track the development of the national vulnerability	

	electrical and solar dryers and other technologies that can easily be adopted by resource poor households to improve quality and safety of food.	practices at all level of service delivery including the implementation of the Maternity Protection Convention, Regulations on marketing of breastmilk substitutes.		register to enable collection and routine updating of the vulnerability related information	
	Establish a food safety and quality control tracking system to monitor and enforce food safety and quality control across the country.	Scale up sensitization and promotion campaigns on the benefits of consumption of bio and industrial fortified foods with emphasis on sweet potato, beans, maize, cassava, cooking oil and wheat including ensuring mandatory consumption of fortified foods in institutions such as schools, hospitals, Prisons Services, Army and Police Force etc.		Promote decent employment and income generation opportunities for the most vulnerable actors in the food system.	
	Strengthen food safety and quality assurance along the food value chain by developing and implementing standards.	Enact a specific food law to enhance standards and regulation of marketing, sales promotion and consumption of unhealthy foods.		Establishment of village food banks and promote appropriate traditional food storage systems.	
	Develop a research agenda to support food systems transformation.	Enhance consumer awareness about good nutrition practices and healthy lifestyle throughout the life cycle through mass sensitization at all levels using TV, radios, Newspapers, IEC		Promote diversification of livelihood opportunities beyond agriculture so as to ensure multiple	

		materials, home to home extension services and other appropriate modes of communication.		sources of income for the households.	
	Establish a food systems research and innovation fund to advance science and research on Ugandan foods.	Strengthen human and infrastructure capacity for quality assurance and surveillance of food markets and high population institutions such as schools, health facilities, police, prisons, army, etc.		Establish a national and regional food reserve systems for food security in line with Objective XXII of the Constitution.	
	Invest in research initiatives to understand the drivers of consumer demand (including tradition, culture, religion, values and social norms) and how to change behaviour.	Develop and disseminate food procurement policy, food composition tables, food based dietary guidelines, food labelling standards for Uganda.		Promote land use planning at farm level to ensure enterprise mixes that can mitigate both environmental and market risks as part of the overall undertaking to ensure household food and nutrition security.	
	Strengthen food systems research at research organisations and education institutions.	Develop and disseminate the food safety policy and strategy		Fast track agricultural insurance scheme targeting all farmers with attention to vulnerable farmers.	
	Commission research studies in the food	Promote parent-led school feeding and nutrition across all schools in		Adopt a decentralized contingency and	

	systems including areas such as traditional, cultural, religion, values and social norms and how to change behaviour.	the country to enhance the domestic food market and sustainably which improves development.		disaster management system to mitigate deprivation and inequalities that accelerate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition during disaster.	
	Invest in research and technology development (R&D) for young entrepreneurs.	Promote urban and backyard farming to improve access, availability, and affordability of food among urban dwellers especially the marginalized or those stricken by poverty		Increase sensitization of communities about risks and hazards, environmental management, population control measures and income-generating programmes.	
	Provide incentives to industries to acquire appropriate technologies.			Strengthen food insecurity vulnerability and information mapping systems (FIVIMS) to support evidence-based disaster risk mapping and relief.	
	Increase access to agricultural extension services through recruitment, deployment			Capacity building of the advisory and	

	and effective logistical facilitation of extension workers up to parish level.			extension services to handle disasters.	
	Increase investment in commercial agriculture, agro-processing, and access to affordable agricultural inputs including fertilizers and vaccines.			Promote community centred awareness through the Barraza's systems, radios and television.	
	Supporting food producers to access affordable financing by capitalizing the Agricultural Credit Facility (ACF), Uganda Development Bank (UDB), and Micro-Finance Support Center. There is also need to scale up agricultural insurance, farmers' cooperatives and the Electronic-Voucher system for both smallholder and large commercial farmers.			Utilise the parish structures to promote good nutrition and health practices.	
	Increase investment in and/or provision of			Increase routine health and nutrition	

	incentives to farmers to acquire appropriate agricultural mechanization technologies to maximize production.			inspection of households.	
	<p>Increase investment in water for production and enable access to irrigation technologies especially for smallholder farmers. This will include provision of solar powered irrigation systems as well as rehabilitation and construction of medium and large irrigation systems including Doho Phase II, Mubuku phase II and Wadelai, Olwenyi, Ngenge, Acumai, among others.</p>			Empower village health teams and community extension workers to improve household education, monitoring and training on food systems improvement.	
	<p>Increase digitalization of agriculture and farmers' access to and utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in agricultural extension, disease monitoring and</p>			Improve coordination of all the stakeholders in the food systems within and outside the government structures.	

	surveillance, soil mapping, early warning and marketing.				
	Increase production of vegetables, fruits, herbs and other nutraceutical crops for domestic consumption, enhanced nutrition, health and export			Build capacity of governance and accountability structures to mainstream food systems actions in their structures including necessary institutions in key implementing ministries such as MAAIF, MoH, MTIC and related District Local Government Structures.	
	Scale up production of bio fortified foods with emphasis on sweet potato, beans, maize, cassava and rice through supporting Research and Development, seed value chain development and appropriate extension services to farmers.			Mainstreaming food systems in e-governance systems.	
	Scale up capture fish and aquaculture production			Mainstreaming food system under the	

	for both the domestic and export market.			Parish Development Model.	
	Scale up milk and meats production through resource poor and environmentally friendly livestock production systems.			Undertake policy reforms on production, procurement, marketing, food labelling, menu labelling, and trade of food especially to children.	
	Increase access to agricultural extension services through recruitment, deployment and effective logistical facilitation of extension workers up to parish level.			Strengthen legal, policy and institutional frameworks to safeguard people rights to adequate food, land and equality is improving but socio-cultural barriers exist.	
	Establishing and promoting community bulking, primary processing and storage facilities at parish level.				
	Investing in cold chain technologies and infrastructure to minimise loss and waste of				

	perishable foods such as fruits, vegetables, dairy, fish, and meats during transportation, distribution and marketing.				
	Strengthening food safety and quality assurance along the food value chain by establishing appropriate standards, enhancing human and infrastructure capacity for effective enforcement, and sensitizing the stakeholders along the value chain.				
	Promoting bio and industrial food fortification through scaling up of fortified food such as bananas, maize, beans, sweet potatoes, wheat, and vegetable oil, among others.				
	Establishing and promoting community bulking, primary				

	processing and storage facilities at parish level.				
	Investing in cold chain technologies and infrastructure to minimise loss and waste of perishable foods such as fruits, vegetables, dairy, fish, and meats during transportation, distribution and marketing.				
	Improve the stock of food markets infrastructure in rural and urban areas by construction of new, rehabilitation and equipping of existing ones to attain operational efficiency in line with NDP III agro-industrialization programme.				
	Develop and implement bi-lateral and multilateral trade agreements to effectively exploit bilateral, regional, continental and global				

	market opportunities such as EAC, COMESA, COMESA-EAC-SADC-TRIPARTITE to AfCTA, EU, AGOA, EBA among others.				
	Strengthen agro-product information systems, product certification, standards assurance and attractive packaging, branding and labelling of local food products in line with the Buy Uganda Build Uganda (BUBU) policy.				
	Increase market access for farmers through local purchase in partnership with big off takers/aggregators, large population/institutional buyers such as WFP and government institutions like schools, prisons, army, police, etc.				
	Develop and promote innovative e-commerce marketing platforms by				

	among others, operationalizing the Uganda National Commodities Exchange.				
	Establish border export zones and cross border markets to facilitate cross border trade.				
	Promote formation and strengthening farmers' associations or cooperatives to ensure bulking, and collective marketing for improved access to markets for both agro-inputs and outputs.				
	Identify and promote unique traditional food products aimed at achieving competitiveness in regional, continental and international specialty markets through Geographical Indications and Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs)				

2. How will the commitment to action support national and/or regional pathways and local communities?

Uganda commits to put forth the following enablers to be able to deliver the country pathway of food systems transformation: Industrialization especially in the agri-food sector, infrastructure improvement especially efficient transport networks and power supply, technology development, research and development, increasing the mobilization, equitable access and utilization of agricultural finance, market systems improvement, standardization of trade, consumer protection, healthy food environment and safe water access among others.

These levers will provide an enabling environment for the delivery of the transformative interventions highlighted in the matrix above to make food systems accelerate Uganda in achieving the 2030 Agenda.

3. How possible is the commitment?

a. What kind of support is given to this commitment?

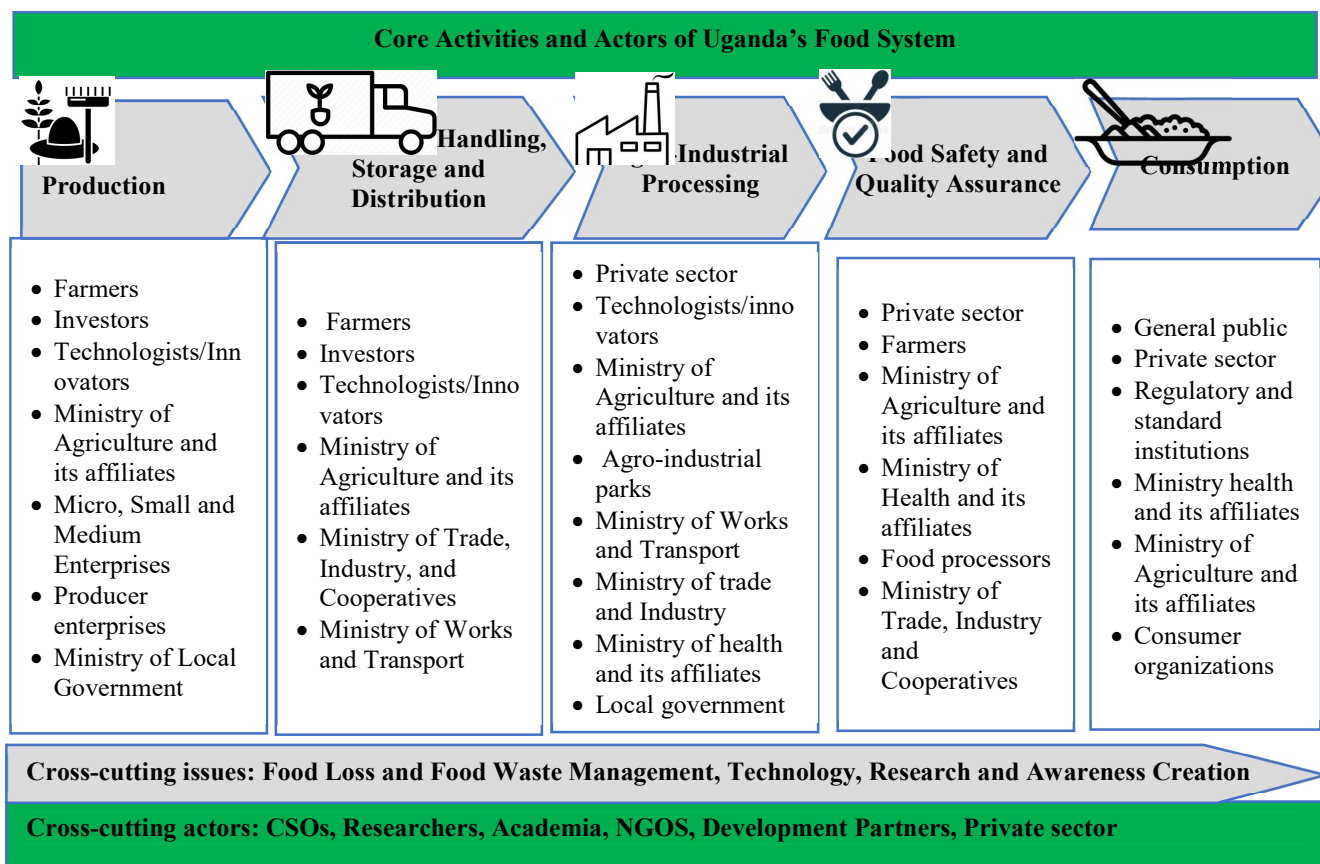
- i. The 1995 Constitution of Uganda and the Uganda Vision 2040 provide a strategic direction and an enabling environment for the food systems. Therefore, through the subsequent NDPs to feed Vision 2040 food systems space will always be high on the agenda since nutrition as an outcome plays a pivotal role in development and accelerates the achievement of Agenda 2030.
- ii. Uganda will provide and is already providing budget support to the food systems transformation through funding of priority areas in the current Third National Development Plan 2020/21-2024/25 (NDPIII).
- iii. The Office of the Prime Minister will play a coordination role of all actors in the food systems value Chains. It will also be supported by the National Planning Authority (NPA) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) as co-conveners.
- iv. Several legal, policy and institutional frameworks are in place to allow the smooth transformation of the food systems. Some of these will be reviewed to sync with the modern-day food systems. Examples of some of these frameworks include but not limited to; National Environment Act, 2018, Land Act, National Forestry and Tree Planting Act, 2003, Local Government Act, 1997, Equal Opportunities Commission Act, Food and Drug Act (CAP 278 of 1959), Public Health Act (CAP 281 of 1939), UNBS Act (CAP 327, 1989), Fisheries Act (CAP 157, 2000), Dairy Industry Act (CAP 85, 2000), Uganda Food and Nutrition Policy (2003), 2nd National Health Policy 2010, Agriculture Policy (2014), Agriculture Extension Policy (2016), 2nd National Health Policy 2010, National Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy (2016), Social Protection Policy (2015), 2nd Uganda Nutrition Action Plan 2020/21-2024/25 and the National Strategy towards Zero Hunger 2020-2030.
- v. Food systems will be planned for at all levels including the local governments. The Parish Development Model (PDM) as the delivery engine for the NDPIII provides chance for food systems actors to reach the population at the parish level. The National Planning Authority (NPA) and Partners through a consultative process is developing the second Nutrition Planning guidelines (2020/21-2024/25) which will enable nutrition as a component of the food systems to well entrenched at all levels of government.
- vi. His Excellence the President as the Chief Guest of the National food systems Dialogue promised sustained peace, security and good governance for the stability of food systems.
- vii. NDPIII provides for strengthening of the coordination role Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and this comes handy for the transformation of food systems since OPM coordinates all actors in the food systems.

b. How will inclusiveness and multi-stakeholder involvement be supported and promoted?

- i. Food systems transformation comes at a time when Uganda has considered a Programmatic approach for the implementation of the third National Development Plan (NDPIII) from 2020/21-2024/5. It calls for all stakeholders to work together towards common outcomes to eliminate working in silos. Therefore, the food systems transformation agenda is fully aligned to NDPIII especially the Agro-industrialisation (AGI), Human Capital Development (HCD), Regional Development (RDP), Natural resources management (NRMP), and Community Mobilisation & Mind-set change (CM&MP) Programmes. In the event that the NDPIII left out any aspects which are raised by the food systems dialogues and consultations, an addendum will be created for the NDPIII to reflect the issues.
- ii. Through the Programme Implementation Action Plans (PIAPs), government, the Private sector, CSOs and Development Partners have committed specific funding towards specific food systems outcomes. For example, government has committed in the next five years to fund research on the developing of nutrient dense food staples, the private sector remains committed to industrial micronutrient food fortification and the FAO has aligned its Country Programming Framework (CPF) 2021-2025 to the NDPIII especially looking at digitization of Agro-industrialisation to make it have impact on the population.
- iii. Uganda has the Multi-sectoral nutrition policy and the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan that calls for a wider stakeholder involvement in the food systems and therefore this will provide fertile ground for wider stakeholder participation.

The scale of impact of the commitment focuses significantly on; Increased food and nutrition security for the Ugandan Population, intentionally reduce malnutrition being aware that one out of three people in the world is affected by one of the forms of malnutrition; Reduced disease burden especially nutrition related Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) since 33% of annual deaths are attributed to Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) especially heart diseases, cancer, Type 2 Diabetes and Trauma; addressing Micronutrient deficiencies and focusing women empowerment since women are involved in production of about 60 percent of all food that is produced.

The NDPIII (2020/21-2024/25) calls for a programmatic approach between different stakeholders in the development process. This will be the direction actors in the food systems will follow. Below we provide a diagram that shows the relationship between the Uganda food systems actors along the food value chain and their involvement.



4. How will the commitment be included and linked to other global processes such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCBD), Nutrition for Growth (N4G), and other global mechanisms?

- i. The Food Systems Transformation process in Uganda plans to follow a climate-resilient and low-carbon development path linked to green growth and broader sustainable development goals. Uganda as a signatory and Party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Kyoto Protocol and the Paris

Agreement is committed to honoring her pledge in reducing Green House Gas (GHG) emissions. The food systems transformation has been aligned UNFCCC through interventions that reduce and manage agricultural waste to minimize on methane emission, regulating and recommending proper use of Agricultural chemicals so as to minimize pollution of land and water bodies and as a mitigation measure the food systems have planned to invest heavily in agro-forestry and reforestation.

- ii. The food systems transformation agenda in Uganda has been aligned to United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCBD) through a call for conservation and multiplication of indigenous food staples but also emphasis is put on use of high-yielding agricultural inputs and high yielding early maturing crop varieties to increase production and productivity. This will minimize further biological loss through further land opening since farmers will have higher production in a relatively small area. The food systems transformation process in Uganda has called for Sustainable land use and land management Practices. The transformation process has discouraged dependence on forest-based energy (like charcoal) to shift to environmentally friendly energy sources such as biogas, sugarcane and cassava ethanol and LPG. Social protection measures have been planned for different vulnerable groups (such as the elderly and persons with disability) along the food systems value chains to prevent them from depending on the environment as a direct source of income. To further reduce pressure on the environment, the food systems has championed other diversification of sources of income for the farmer. Having agriculture as the only source of income increases pressure on land, therefore if farmers indulge in other non-farm sources of income is the way to go.
- iii. Uganda has committed to align the food systems transformation process to the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) aspirations knowing aware of COVID-19's disruptions to regional, national, and global health, food, and economic systems are already significantly impacting global poverty. The alignment is made to the three core areas of N4G which are; Making nutrition integral to Universal Health Coverage (UHC), Building food systems that promote healthy diets and nutrition and Addressing malnutrition effectively in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. Specifically, the food systems transformation has prepared for interventions that link food to the nutrition and health outcome, promoted access to safe, healthy and nutritious foods and has catered for resilient packages for those in fragile situations or communities.
- iv. The Food Systems transformation for Uganda in the next decade is also aligned the SDGs agenda 2030, it is directly linked to five SDGs: ending poverty (#1); ending hunger, achieving food security and improving nutrition and promotion of sustainable agriculture (#2); achieving good health and wellbeing (#3); quality education for all

(#4); achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (#5); access to clean water and sanitation (#6); promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all (SDG 8); and reduce inequality (SDG 10).

The food systems transformation in Uganda has also aligned to the African Union (AU) main framework for transforming food systems in the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) was launched the Malabo declaration whose theme is: “*Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods*” with goals that aim to achieve the Continent’s agricultural vision of shared prosperity and improved livelihoods.

The transformation has also been aligned to the East African Community’s Agricultural and Rural Development (EAC-ARD) policy as a key framework for alignment to food systems transformation. The policy recognizes the importance of eliminating hunger and ensuring sustainable food security within the region as a necessary first step to poverty eradication. This is to be achieved through stimulating agricultural development, which constitutes the overall objective of the EAC Treaty regarding cooperation in agriculture and rural development.

Conclusion

Uganda has made significant commitment towards the transformation of the food systems. This transformation will require commitment to funding game changer solutions, having the right legal, policy and institutional frameworks in place. Involvement of the Private sector is pivotal or takes centre stage in transforming these systems. A multi-sectoral approach and stakeholder partnerships will be key in making food systems work for the population. Finally, food system transformation in Uganda is achievable provided a business unusual momentum is collectively mobilized in the immediate and medium-term to improve the way food is managed at all levels.