



STATEMENT BY KENYA ON INNOVATION FOR A FOOD-SECURE FUTURE IN KENYA DURING THE 47TH IFAD GOVERNING COUNCIL: 14 -15 MARCH 2024

The Republic of Kenya is honoured to be invited to participate in this Forty-seventh session of the IFAD Governing Council. Food insecurity remains a global concern and a threat to humanity in this last decade of action. Kenya appreciates the focus on Innovation for a food secure future for this 47th Governing Council session . Indeed, every day, rural people grapple with climate change, conflict, poverty and other hardships. Kenya takes note that this Governors session comes in the wake of commodity price inflation linked to the aftermath of COVID-19 pandemic, prevailing conflict in key world food baskets, adverse impacts occasioned by climate change, pests and diseases outbreaks among others .

Agriculture is the mainstay of Kenya’s economy, contributing over 50% of Kenya’s Gross domestic product (GDP) directly and indirectly through linkages with other sectors. In addition, Agriculture has the highest employment multiplier effect than any other sector, owing to its strong forward and backward linkages to other sectors of the economy. We recognize the International Fund for Agricultural Development’s (IFAD) global contribution to strengthening agriculture and rural development. The Government of Kenya is cognizant of the critical role played by IFAD since 1979 where a total of US\$980.31 million has funded 20 programmes and projects in the country. IFAD has been an ideal development partner and has supported the Government of Kenya through its participatory approaches and rural institutional building.

The Government of Kenya through a bottom-up economic transformation model has unveiled agriculture as its top priority hence elevating the importance of food systems transformation. The Government of Kenya has prioritized food and nutrition security in the rolled out the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) approach. The target is activities and sectors that have strong socioeconomic transformation impacts: Agriculture, Health, Housing, Manufacturing, ICT, Security and Infrastructure development.

The agriculture sector takes the lead through initiatives to increase agricultural competitiveness, productivity, and food security. We are focusing on agricultural transformation and inclusive growth targeting all cohorts and value chain actors to increase food production for domestic use and exports to increase foreign exchange earnings. We are also promoting youth and women inclusivity and empowerment;

enhancing climate action; conservation of our natural resources, and resilience building.

Innovation in agriculture plays a pivotal role in addressing food security challenges, the government's focus is on incentivizing production by adopting responsible technological innovations, and promoting mechanization of agricultural process to reduce drudgery and attract more youth and women into agriculture for inclusive growth. Kenya has embraced digitization of agricultural processes and embracing science and innovations to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in agri-food systems performance. Youth engagement provides a more promising opportunity to transform agricultural food systems to generate more jobs and incomes, as we improve our food security for a healthy productive population. Technological innovations are attracting youths to agriculture making agri-food systems more diverse and sustainable in a manner to safeguard our livelihoods and our planet for present and future generations.

We have embarked on a countrywide drive to digitize our farmers records, For the first time, Kenya has profiled and registered all farmers and agricultural actors across the country. This will enable better targeting monitoring and evaluation of government programmes for farmers and other relevant value chain actors. Last year the farmers register which is a major output of this digitization process was instrumental in developing the electronic subsidy programme(e-subsidy) for fertilizer. In the past production cycle our efforts have borne fruit as our farmers realized increased production for two consecutive seasons.

The Kenya Kwanza government has acknowledged the urgency to transform farmers' agricultural activities from a futile struggle for meager subsistence to surplus production, food security and sustainable incomes. Incentivizing smallholder farmers, who make up 80% of food production, remains a priority in Kenya's agricultural transformation to increase food availability and access to end chronic hunger and malnutrition. Agriculture is a key source of employment for 70% of the rural population. These innovations demonstrate Kenya's commitment to leveraging technology for inclusive growth, sustainable agriculture, and improved livelihoods for its farmers and communities.

In Conclusion Chair,

- Kenya has developed an Agricultural Sector Growth and Transformation Strategy (ASTGS) that draws on the status of our agriculture today to address challenges and informs the food systems transformation agenda and propel us towards our vision of attaining 100% food and nutrition security by 2030.
- For continued and sustained efforts to address Kenya's food needs, the Government of Kenya has identified stakeholder collaboration from both the Public and Private sector as a key driver in food systems transformation, this is critical considering that our economy relies on agriculture.

- We are encouraging Smallholder farmers to participate in commercial farming by embracing sustainable adaptive on-farm technologies as well as quality assurance for market access in the local and domestic markets.
- IFAD's agricultural transformative initiatives have therefore been timely in supporting the Government's efforts of transforming our rural communities economically and socially, as well as promoting of gender equality and inclusiveness.
- I reaffirm Kenya's Commitment to our collaboration with IFAD as we strive to transform rural economies and food systems by making them more inclusive, efficient, productive, resilient and sustainable.

I Thank You