

The urgency to transform African food systems goes beyond borders and sectors, involving policymakers, farmers, entrepreneurs, youth, and stakeholders to unite for a common vision.

In examining food system failures, AFS (Africa Food System) in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MINAGRI), held a round table discussion with the press on Tuesday, August 20, 2024, to address issues related to food security.

Despite having nearly 60 per cent of the world's uncultivated arable land, Africa still imports a large amount of its food, spending billions annually to meet its needs. A significant portion of its population continues to struggle with chronic hunger and malnutrition.

The AFS Forum 2024, scheduled from September 2-6, 2024, in Kigali and hosted by the Government of Rwanda and the AFS Forum Partner's group, aims to address some of the existing challenges.



Amath Pathé Sene, Managing Director of AFS

Amath Pathé Sene, Managing Director of AFS, mentioned that this year's summit will focus on the continental agenda on food systems, showcasing innovative approaches, solutions, business models, best practices, and latest technologies that could transform agriculture and food systems to ensure food and nutrition security in Africa, while creating jobs and opportunities for youth and women.

AFS, with an investment of 300 million US dollars, hopes to promote food security through cooperation with the Government of Rwanda.

Dr. Olivier Kamana, Permanent Secretary of MINAGRI, emphasized Rwanda's commitment to strengthening its agricultural sector to combat hunger, acknowledging that approximately 20% of Rwandan households still struggle to put food on the table.



Dr. Olivier Kamana, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture

President Paul Kagame is expected to be one of the guests of honor, underscoring the significance of the event and Rwanda's leading role in agricultural transformation across the region.

Ndagijimana Jean-Paul, Director General of AGRA in Rwanda, stated that AGRA invested more than 50 million US dollars, or over 67 billion Rwandan francs, in the conference. He added that they will discuss innovative ideas to address agricultural challenges, as well as plans to enhance agricultural development in Rwanda by 2050 and across Africa.



Ndagijimana Jean-Paul, Director General of AGRA in Rwanda

AGRA supports Rwanda's plan to grow food and markets, with a focus on avocado, pepper, and chicken farming due to their high productivity. They also aim to support 132,000 Rwandan youth in agriculture over the next five years.

Africa is facing a critical juncture, with the number of its young people expected to reach 200 million by 2030. This highlights the need to provide productive employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. The focus on digitalization, automation, and artificial intelligence (AI) as potential solutions for Africa's food systems places the youth in a strategic position to bring innovation and energy to transform the continent's food systems landscape.