

*By Our reporter,*

The virtual High Level National Dialogue on Food Systems held on Wednesday has called for coordinated joint responses and action to transform Rwanda's agri-food systems towards achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals Agenda.

The dialogue which brought together 120 participants, was convened by the Government of Rwanda and the United Nations Resident Coordinator's office with the aim to facilitate the widespread engagement of multiple actors from different societies, shareholders, and sectors.

Organized under the theme of "Shaping Country Food Systems Pathways for the pre-UN Food Systems Summit 2021", the dialogue was held as a culmination of several other dialogues held in the country on various topics in the transformation of food systems.

Rwanda widely initiated National Food Systems Dialogues in March 2021, following approval by the Cabinet in February 2021 for the African country to embark on the discussions ahead of the UN Food Systems Summit 2021 to be convened by the UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

Panelists discussed about the crosscutting pillars toward Rwanda's sustainable food systems, which are empowering youth and women and access to financing.

UN Resident Coordinator in the country, Mr. Fodé Ndiaye, stressed the need to keep the conversation going on how to best transform food systems both across the country, the continent, and the world.

Mr. Ndiaye lauded the partnership of the Government of Rwanda with other stakeholders in the move to build inclusive, resilient, efficient, and sustainable food systems.

"Rwanda is globally seen as a good example of the Food Systems Summit process. Of course, it has been grounded on excellent leadership, ongoing policies and strategies, institutions building and home-grown solutions.

"Kudos to all of us this is only the beginning to make our dialogue a continuous forum to find innovative, comprehensive and sustainable solutions, to get food systems functioning well for everybody, everywhere, leaving no one behind," he said at the meeting.

In both opening and closing the High Level Food Systems National Dialogue, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources Mukeshimana thanked the entire UN and other stakeholders for supporting Rwanda as the country gets its voice heard in the on-going global conversation to transform food systems worldwide.

Rwanda has been participating, like other countries globally, in the preparation for the UN Food Systems Summit 2021, which is led by the United Nations Secretary-General.

Most importantly, the country's leadership has engaged different in-country stakeholders' dialogues in the process to shape a commitment to action for the Summit objectives.

The UN Food Systems pre-summit is confirmed to be hosted by Italy in Rome from 26-28 July 2021 and the full summit is confirmed to be in conjunction with the UN General Assembly in New York in October 2021.