



AGENDA

Mobilising the private sector for sustainable trade and investment in Africa's agrifood sector

Public-private dialogue

9-10 February 2026

Trademark Hotel

Nairobi, Kenya

Context

Africa's agriculture and food sectors are crucial for economic growth, contributing about 20% to GDP and employing approximately 60% of the labor force. However, the potential of these sectors is often hampered by significant challenges, including the need for reforms to improve the business and investment climate. These challenges are exacerbated by infrastructure inadequacies; roughly 600 million people do not have access to reliable electricity and only 34% of the rural population has access to all-weather roads. Finance is another important constraint, with an annual funding gap of USD 40 billion to secure food security and improve productivity in Africa. Currently, only around 10% of smallholder farmers in Africa have access to credit.

Various regional initiatives are designed to create partnerships to address these challenges. The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) of the African Union calls for commitment from each government to dedicate 10% of its budgets to the agricultural sector. As highlighted by the African Union, enhancing agrarian growth is vital for poverty reduction, aiming to halve the number of people living in extreme poverty in Africa by 2030. Engaging in meaningful dialogue will help align the interests of both public and private sectors, ultimately driving growth, food security, and innovation across the continent.

The entering into force and the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) also provides opportunities to enhance regional trade and investment in Africa's agrifood sector. By creating a unified market across 55 African countries, the AfCFTA seeks to lower trade barriers, enhance market access, and promote economic integration, which are crucial for the agrifood sector and mobilising private sector investments. The agreement is expected to enhance intra-African trade, promote agricultural productivity and attract investment, thereby contributing to sustainable economic growth and food security across the continent.

Objective

In 2023, jointly with the African Union Commission, the OECD launched the [Africa-OECD Partnership](#) to enhance engagement with the Africa at continental, regional and country levels, including to support regional integration through trade and investment in agrifood value chains.

In this context, the OECD is organizing a public-private dialogue on mobilising the private sector for sustainable trade and investment in the agrifood sector in Africa, jointly with the Government of Romania and Kenya, to be held in **Nairobi on 9-10 February 2026**. The meeting will bring together key actors from the private sector and public institutions representing the African continent and beyond. The first day will address challenges and opportunities for enhancing trade and investment for agricultural development and sustainable agri-food systems in Africa. The second day will focus on capacity building around quality seed systems based on the OECD Seed Schemes and the G7 - OECD seeds scheme initiative "Strengthening Seed Certification Capacities in Africa" to improve seed quality, boost yields and farmer incomes, and strengthen agricultural productivity across the continent.

Practical information

English/French interpretation will be provided during the meetings.

Agenda

English/French interpretation will be provided during the meetings

Day 1, 9th February 2026

08:30-09:00 Networking and welcome coffee

09:00 – 09:45 Opening and setting the scene

- **H.E. William Kabogo**, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Information, Communications & The Digital Economy, Kenya
- **Dr. Kipronoh Ronoh CBS**, Principal Secretary, State Department for Agriculture
- **Mr. Frantisek Ruzicka**, Deputy Secretary-General, OECD
- **Mr. Florian-Emil Dumitru**, Secretary of State, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Romania
- **Mr. Themba Kumalo**, Director of the Private Sector Unit, African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat

Keynote speech

- **H.E. Prof. Yemi Osinbajo**, Former Vice-President of Nigeria

09:45 – 11:00 **SESSION 1: Bringing sustainable investment and finance into the agrifood sector in Africa**

While foreign direct investment flows into the African continent have reached a record of USD 94 billion in 2024, it is primarily dominated by extractive industries such as oil and gas while the agri-food sector itself only attracts less than 5%.¹ As the continent's population is expected to exceed 2 billion by 2050, the demand for food will increase substantially. Bringing sustainable investment in this strategic sector should be a priority for African economies aiming to achieve diversification and strengthen their position in global markets. This also requires working together with the private sector to enhance food security and sustain economic growth across Africa's agri-food economy.

Moderation : **Carole Kariuki**, Chief Executive Officer, Kenya Private Sector Alliance

Speakers:

- **H.E. Arvin Boolell**, Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries, Mauritius
- **H.E. Abubakar Hassan Abubakar**, Principal Secretary, State Department for Investment Promotion, Ministry of Investments, Trade & Industry, Kenya
- **Ms. Daniela Rebega**, Director-General, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Romania
- **Amb. Aminou Akadiri**, CEO/Executive Director, Federation of West Africa Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FEWACCI)
- **Mr. James Mwangi**, CEO, Equity Bank Group

11:00 – 11:15 Coffee break

¹ <https://unctad.org/news/africa-foreign-investment-hit-record-high-2024#:~:text=In%202024%2C%20foreign%20investment%20in,for%20urban%20development%20in%20Egypt.>

11:15 – 12:30

SESSION 2: Implementing the AfCFTA to foster the development of agrifood value chains within Africa and beyond

Implementing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and its protocols can boost trade and investment in Africa's agrifood sector. While there is no dedicated agricultural Protocol, key provisions such as the Protocol on Trade in Goods aims to eliminate tariffs on 90% of intra-African trade. The Protocol on Investment also creates a harmonized continental investment regime, making it easier to establish agricultural value chains across borders. This session will discuss how countries can work together to accelerate the AfCFTA implementation and strengthen trade partnerships with the EU and other global markets to enhance agrifood value chains.

Moderation : **Roslyn Ngeno**, Senior Investment Expert, African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat

Speakers:

- **H.E. Prudence Sebahizi**, Minister of Trade and Industry, Rwanda
- **Mr. Simek Ondrej**, Deputy Ambassador of the European Union to Kenya
- **Mr. Ben-Nasar Boularbah**, Director, Agriculture and Fisheries Department, Prime Minister's Office, Morocco
- **Mr. Arthur Santosh Attavar**, President, International Seed Federation and Chairman and Managing Director of Indo-American Hybrid Seeds, India
- **Mr. Mucai Kunyiha**, Board Vice-President, COMESA Business Council and Group CEO of CKL Africa Ltd

12:30 – 13:30

Lunch

13:30 – 14:45

SESSION 3: The role of artificial intelligence and digital technologies to address climate change and water for agrifood in Africa

Africa's agrifood sector faces mounting challenges from global food system shocks, climate change, and increasing water scarcity. As major food importers, many countries are vulnerable to supply chain disruptions, rising prices, and food insecurity especially among farmers and vulnerable communities. With over 80% of water resources used in agriculture and much of Sub-Saharan farming still rainfed, the sector struggles with land degradation, climate impacts, and weak infrastructure. This session will discuss policy options to build resilience in Africa's agrifood sector, including the need to prioritise climate-smart agriculture, water management and green jobs. It will also discuss how artificial intelligence and digital technologies can be used to address the digital and green transition, and enhance resilience of agrifood systems in Africa.

Moderation : **Jonathan Said**, Vice-President, Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)

Speakers:

- **H.E. David Silinde**, Deputy Minister for Agriculture, Tanzania
- **MP Sorin Cimpeanu**, Former Minister of Education, President of Romanian Council of Chancellors, and Chancellor of University of Agro-economic Sciences and Veterinary Medicine of Bucharest
- **Mr. Abdihakim Ainte**, Director, Food Security and Climate Change, Prime Minister Office, Somalia
- **Mrs. Vymala Thuron**, Head, Fund Management Group, Shelter Afrique Bank
- **Ms. Anca Maria Stancu**, CEO, RoboHub

14:45 – 16:00

SESSION 4: Promoting skills and entrepreneurship in the agrifood sector

With over 60% of Africa's population under 25, women face persistent barriers in accessing quality employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. Micro, small and medium enterprises manage around 85% of agrifood value chains and drive approximately 80% of Africa's food economy.² They are vital for job creation, yet outdated legal frameworks and limited access to finance continue to hinder progress. This session will highlight African experiences in advancing women and youth empowerment through skills development and other inclusive policies, offering actionable recommendations to strengthen employment and innovation across the agrifood sector.

Moderation : **Nadira Bayat**, Facilitating Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Trade (FIRST), Cowater International

Speakers:

- **H.E. Ms. Susan Mangeni**, Principal Secretary, State Department for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development, Kenya
- **Mr. Tanyi Jacob Tachot**, Secretary General of the Chamber of Agriculture, Fisheries, Livestock and Forest of Cameroon
- **Mr. Tito Arunga**, Head of Agribusiness at Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations in Kenya
- **Mr. Seewraj Nundlall**, Director, AgriTech, Energy & Ocean, Economic Development Board of Mauritius

16:00 – 16:15

Conclusion and next steps

- **H.E. Korir Sing'Oei**, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Foreign and Diaspora Affairs of Kenya
- **H.E. Clara Staicu**, Secretary of State for European Affairs, Middle East and Africa, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania
- **Mr. Frantisek Ruzicka**, Deputy Secretary-General, OECD

² [MSMEs Highlighted as a Force in Building Africa's Food Systems in the Latest Leading Agriculture Report - AGRA](#)

Day 2, 10th February 2026

OECD Seed Schemes

Policy workshop on the contribution of seed to sustainable food systems in Africa

This workshop aims to initiate a discussion between African countries and the OECD Seed Schemes on the role of the OECD seed varietal certification system in food security, sustainable and resilient agriculture, and accessing to the international seed supply chain in African countries. It will also be a good opportunity to promote the OECD Seed Schemes, discuss capacity building possibilities in the framework of the program and explain the accession procedure to the Schemes.

9:00 – 9:30

Opening remarks

- **Anne-Laure Fondeur**, Chair of the OECD Seed Schemes, French Interprofessional Organisation for Seeds and Plants SEMAE,
- **Dr Yacouba Diallo**, Secretary General, African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA)

9:30 – 10:30

SESSION 1: The Role of Quality Seed in Promoting Resilient Food Systems and Security on the African Continent

Food security is a key topic on the agenda of many organisations including The United Nations/FAO and the African Union and its Member States. The global population is increasing especially in the African continent. Thus, it is crucial to prioritise feeding this growing population. The seed industry plays an integral role in providing quality seed to farmers all over the world. It is one of the most important input products to the global food system. The seed supply chain is impacted by climate change challenges, geopolitical risks and global pandemics among others. The discussion will focus on elements, actions processes and objectives implemented to ensure that high quality seed is available to the farmers and how this is being utilised to promote resilient food systems and security on the African continent.

Moderation : **Csaba Gaspar**, Head of Section, OECD Agricultural Codes and Schemes

Speakers:

- **Anne-Laure Fondeur**, French Interprofessional Organisation for Seeds and Plants SEMAE, Chair of the OECD Seed Schemes
- **Dr. Erick Rutto**, President of the Kenya National Chamber of Commerce & Industry (KNCCI)
- **Dr Yacouba Diallo**, Secretary General, African Seed Trade Association (AFSTA)
- **Clement Adjorlolo**, Head of the Division for Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security (AUDA-NEPAD) (tbc)
- **Everlyn Musyoka**, Africa Business Unit Lead at BAYER
- **Dr Canisius Kanangire**, Executive Director, African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF)

10:30 – 10:45

Coffee break

10:45 – 12:00

SESSION 2: Contributions of the OECD Seed Schemes to Sustainable Food Systems in Africa

This session will focus on the role of the OECD Seed Schemes in fostering a resilient seed system worldwide.

Moderation : **Anne-Laure Fondeur**, French Interprofessional Organisation for Seeds and Plants SEMAE, Chair of the OECD Seed Schemes

Keynote presentation: **G7-OECD Joint Initiative on Strengthening Seed Certification in Africa**, Csaba Gaspar, Head of Section, OECD Seed Schemes

Speakers:

- **Dr Theophilus M. Mutui**, Managing Director, Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service (KEPHIS)
- **Nathan Phiri**, National Designated Authority, Seed Control and Certification Institute, Zambia
- **Nadine Dushimiyimana**, Regulatory Science Lead – Africa, Bayer
- **Csaba Gaspar**, Head of Section, OECD Seed Schemes

12:00 – 13:30

SESSION 3: Seed Certification Systems for Africa: How to Facilitate or Promote a Continuous Growth in the Establishment of Seed Certification Systems for Africa

In this session, speakers will share experiences on the establishment of the seed certification system in Africa, the benefits of the OECD seed schemes and discuss how such a system can be promoted across the region.

Moderation : **Csaba Gaspar**, Head of Section, OECD Agricultural Codes and Schemes

Speakers:

- **Marius Gunga**, Seed System Group, Nairobi, Kenya
- **Arthur Santosh Attavar**, President, International Seed Federation (ISF)
- **Innocent NAMUHORANYE, Chairman**, National Seed Association of Rwanda and CEO AGRISEEDS LTD
- **Kobus Van Huyssteen**, National Designated Authority, SANSOR, South Africa

13:30 – 14:00

Conclusion

14:00- 15:00

Lunch

- OECD