

Leadership, accountability, and setting priorities are key to end hunger and undernutrition

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Sharing experiences on the fight against hunger

High-level Side Event – Renewed Partnership to End Hunger in Africa by 2025-Five Years Later

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Your excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

First, I would like to commend the African Union Commission and partners for reconvening five years after the adoption of the Malabo Declaration in 2013. To achieve our collective aspirations, we must transform our commitments to actions.

Despite ambitious commitments made in Malabo, hunger and undernutrition in Africa is on the rise. As of 2016 nearly 23 percent of people in Africa south of the Sahara are undernourished, an increase from less than 21 percent in 2015. Similarly, the total number of undernourished population in Africa rose from 219 million in 2015 to 243 million in 2016. Africa is not on track to end hunger by 2025.

To make meaningful progress towards eliminating extreme poverty by 2030, ending hunger and undernutrition is a must. Without tackling hunger and undernutrition, the vicious cycle of poverty cannot be broken, as they negatively impact health, limit human capital development, and hinder productivity. A healthy and well-nourished population is vital for economic gains.

In order to end hunger and malnutrition, leadership, accountability, and setting priorities are essential. I am pleased to note that African leaders are genuinely committed to end hunger and undernutrition. This commitment must be sustained and translated into actions. Leadership and commitment must also be supported by accountability mechanisms. The peer review mechanism undertaken by African leaders has produced positive results, but they must be supported by reliable and timely data.

African countries must fulfill its CAADP commitments to allocate 10% of national budget on agriculture. In particular, increasing investment in agricultural research and development (R&D) to produce more nutrition with less resources must be a priority. Biofortification is critical tool which can improve yields and nutrition outcomes for many food crops. HarvestPlus, for example, is now working closely with 12 African countries to include biofortification in their national agriculture and nutrition plans.

In this regard, IFPRI is committed to continue supporting the African Union by providing research and evidence to inform policies and decision-making. IFPRI has been supporting CAADP through data, capacity building, and monitoring and evaluation through ReSAKSS. We will continue to support the biennial review of the Malabo declaration by improving data and capacity and by assisting in developing the African Agricultural Transformation Scorecard. Furthermore, IFPRI's Compact2025 initiative will work to bring stakeholders together to set priorities, innovate and learn, fine-tune actions, build on successes, and synthesize lessons to accelerate progress in ending hunger and undernutrition by 2025.

Thank you.