

**2026**

# Virtual Knowledge Forum on Sustainable Food Systems

## CONCEPT NOTE

*Linking Evidence, Policy, and Action: Online Knowledge forum Series for Sustainable Food Systems*

**20-22 May 2026**



# BACKGROUND

Governments worldwide invest in policies addressing food and nutrition security, but often a gap exists between policy goals and outcomes. In Africa, this challenge is particularly pronounced due to fragmented policy environments and limited integration of research evidence. The Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN) plays a key role in bringing together policymakers, researchers, and stakeholders to strengthen evidence-based policymaking and support sustainable and inclusive food systems across Africa.

The Strengthening Evidence-Based Policy Practice for Sustainable Food Systems (StEPPFoS) project is a key initiative implemented in collaboration with FANRPAN and aligned with PANAP efforts. StEPPFoS seeks to bridge the gap between research evidence and policy action in African agri-food systems. The project leverages FANRPAN and PANAP's research and economic analysis capacities and collaborates closely with the Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) agenda to enhance policy coherence, capacity development, and digital innovation in evidence-based policymaking.

## Key Partners of the StEPPFoS Project:

The project is implemented in collaboration with a broad spectrum of partners across Africa and Europe. Lead coordinating partners include PANAP and FANRPAN. Regional and continental institutions such as FARA, ASARECA, CORAF/WECARD, and AFAAS provide strategic guidance and policy engagement support. Research and academic institutions including CSIR-GH, RUFORUM, Universität Hohenheim, UNIVE, and Universite Felix Houphouet Boigny contribute evidence, technical expertise, and analytical support. European research and development partners, including ECDPM, Agrinatura, Stichting Wageningen Research, LifeWatch ERIC, and the EC-JRC provide global knowledge, comparative experience, and innovation support. Policy and practice institutions such as KIPPRA and EAFF facilitate integration of evidence into actionable policies and ensure engagement with stakeholders across governments, civil society, and the private sector. Collectively, these partners enable the StEPPFoS project to strengthen evidence-based policy practice for sustainable food systems in Africa.



# THEME



The Knowledge Forum, themed “Linking Evidence, Policy, and Action: Online Knowledge Forum Series for Sustainable Food Systems,” aims to bridge the gap between research and policy implementation to address Africa’s food and nutrition security challenges. It promotes evidence-based decision-making and collaboration among governments, research institutions, and development partners. Supported by the StEPPFoS project and implemented with African and European partners—including PANAP, FANRPAN, FARA, ASARECA, CORAF/WECARD, AFAAS, ECDPM, and Stichting Wageningen Research—the forum emphasizes partnerships, innovation, and shared expertise to drive sustainable and inclusive food system transformation.

The discussions will also address market access and financing, with a focus on continental trade integration, technology transfer, climate adaptation policies, and investment in resilient agricultural systems.

## SUB-THEMES

### DAY 1

Digital Innovation, Technology Transfer and Climate Adaptation for Resilient Food Systems

### DAY 2

Nutrition, Food Safety, Value Addition and Sustainable Food System Transformation

### DAY 3

Continental Trade, Market Access, Finance, Youth and Gender Inclusion

## VIRTUAL FORUM OBJECTIVES

The Knowledge Forum aims to:

- Promote policy coherence across national, regional, and continental frameworks.
- Advance inclusive policy reforms that expand access to resources and decision-making for marginalized groups, including youth and women.
- Mobilize strategic investments aligned with sustainable food systems transformation.
- Catalyze innovation, partnerships, and technology transfer for resilient agricultural systems.
- Strengthen linkages between African and global agendas, including CAADP, AfCFTA, Agenda 2063, UNFSS, and UNFCCC.



# VIRTUAL EXHIBITION SESSIONS



The Virtual Innovation Exhibition will provide a dynamic platform for showcasing innovative research, technologies, and community-driven solutions that advance sustainable and inclusive food systems in Africa. The exhibition will be organised into daily thematic sessions, each focusing on a key dimension of food systems innovation—such as digital agriculture, climate-smart technologies, nutrition and food safety, market access and finance, or youth and gender inclusion. Within each theme, selected innovators—including researchers, technology developers, farmer organisations, youth enterprises, and policy institutions—will deliver 30-minute presentation segments consisting of a demonstration, evidence of impact, and interactive Q&A to support knowledge exchange and engagement.

The session format is designed to encourage practical discussion and collaboration, with each day concluding in thematic breakout rooms to deepen networking between innovators, policymakers, private sector actors, and practitioners. By translating innovation into actionable insights for policy and practice, the exhibition aims to accelerate the adoption and scaling of solutions that contribute to resilient, sustainable, and inclusive food system transformation across the continent.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Consensus on priority areas for aligning national, regional and continental food systems policies.
- Actionable strategies to mobilize and align investments (public, private, blended).
- Synthesized knowledge resolution capturing key messages, commitments and calls to action.
- Reinforced commitment from regional bodies, national governments, development partners and civil society.

## PARTICIPANTS

- Policymakers and government representatives from the AU, RECs, and national ministries.
- Researchers, academic institutions, and think tanks.
- Private sector actors and farmer organizations, including agribusinesses and cooperatives.
- Development partners, international organizations, and donor agencies.
- Media practitioners, knowledge intermediaries, and advocacy groups.





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Submit your application to host a session!

**DEADLINE: 31 MARCH 2026**

For more information, contact:  
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## CONSORTIUM PARTNERS



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