



ABRIDGED

11th ANAPRI ANNUAL  
STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE  
REPORT

[www.anapri.net](http://www.anapri.net)

# From policy to practice: Strengthening local institutions for sustainable transformation of food systems in Africa

## 11th ANAPRI ANNUAL STAKEHOLDER CONFERENCE REPORT

26-28 November 2024

At Azalai Hotel, Dakar, Senegal

Hosted By

Bureau d'Analyses Macroéconomiques de l'Institut Sénégalais de Recherches Agricoles (ISRA-BAME), in partnership with the African Network of Agricultural Policy Research Institutes (ANAPRI)

### A N A P R I C E N T R E S



## A B R I D G E D R E P O R T

The 11th ANAPRI Annual Stakeholders Conference occurred at a pivotal time for Africa's food systems and policy landscape. Being the last year of the CAADP 2.0, the Conference was as much of an introspection as it was an audit of the implementation of policies that drive inclusive agricultural transformation in Africa. A decade since the Malabo Declaration (2014), the general sentiment coming into the Conference was that despite progress, challenges persist in meeting goals like poverty reduction, hunger elimination, and improved child nutrition by 2025. And yet more continental commitments are being made, to add to the existing ones which hitherto, have not been sufficiently implemented. The Conference served as a platform to reflect on lessons learned, chart the way forward, and identify key stakeholders that can drive a “call to action”. In attendance and gracing the 11th Annual Stakeholder’s Conference were **Dr Alpha BA**, the Secretary of State for Cooperatives and Farm Management of Senegal; **Mr El Hadji Thierno CISSE**, the Coordinator of the National Council for Rural Dialogue and Cooperation (CNCR) and representative of Farmers Organizations; **Absa MBODJ**, a member of the Dynamic for an Agroecological Transition in Senegal (Dytaes); **Dr Mabouba Diagne**, Senegal's Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, and Food Sovereignty (MASAE); **H.E. Ambassador Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko**, Commissioner of the African Union's Department for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment; and other important dignitaries.

The collective message from the ANAPRI Stakeholders was clear – Inclusive Agricultural Transformation demands that African countries domesticate and localize policy action, through a bottom-up approach to ensuring that continental frameworks are grounded and implemented effectively. To that end, the 11<sup>th</sup> Stakeholder Conference was aptly themed: “From policy to practice: Strengthening local institutions for sustainable transformation of food systems in Africa”. The Conference had two main objectives, namely:

- To promote support for local institutions from governments, the private sector and international development actors, and define partnerships and mechanisms to strengthen them and enable them to play a leading role in the implementation of essential policies, programs and projects that promote an inclusive transformation of the continent's agriculture and food sector.
- To share knowledge and evidence, and seek feedback and validation from stakeholders, including policy makers, the agriculture and food sector, civil society organizations, the private sector and local and international development partners, on the various topics presented.

The objectives of the Conference were met through a series of nine (9) sessions that were strategically designed to respond to the demand for locally led policy implementation and inclusive participatory stakeholder engagement.

Session 1, titled “**Driving localization for policy action through investment in institutional capacity building**” gave the delegates an insight into key findings from an ANAPRI survey that sought to assess the institutional capacity of think-tanks, and their ability to meet the needs of policy makers in making evidence-based policy decisions. The Session revealed that contrary to common belief, local policy think-tanks actually have human and

technical capacity. However, retaining these skills is challenged by lack of financial capacity. The key messages for ANAPRI members were that policy think-tanks need to produce timely, high-quality, evidence-based policy recommendations in order to remain relevant. Strengthening engagement with governments and the private sector is crucial for resource mobilization and policy impact. Additionally, investing in capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, and knowledge-sharing platforms is essential for effective policy research and implementation.

Session 2 titled “**Promoting adaptation and resilience to climate change in Africa**” reflected on the experiences and lessons learnt from the Comprehensive Action for Climate Change Initiative (CACCI) Project in Rwanda, Senegal, Ghana, Zambia (and South Africa). The Session revealed that CACCI has enhanced government capacities to implement climate actions under Nationally Determined Commitments (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), through strengthened public-private partnerships in renewable energy. However, countries need support in resource mobilization, developing bankable projects, and engaging with institutions like the International Finance Corporation (IFC). The Session encouraged Governments to provide catalytic capital for non-bankable projects to share risks with investors. Meanwhile, the role for ANAPRI going forward should focus on promoting private sector involvement, ensure social inclusion, and incorporate farmers' voices in climate policy development and implementation.

Session 3 titled “**High-level panel discussion on domestication and implementation of the fertilizer and soil health action plan**” drew from the Nairobi Declaration (2024) which articulated the AU's Commitment to drive adoption, domestication, and implementation of a range of interventions to advance soil health and fertilizer adoption across the continent. ANAPRI is playing a key role in leading the Policy and Advocacy Coalition for the Africa Fertilizer and Soil Health (AFSH) Action Plan, by promoting locally led solutions and locally driven implementation. ANAPRI's position has been that strengthening the role of policy think tanks and local institutions is fundamental to scaling the effort of advancing implementation of the AFSH Action Plan. In addition, the need for innovative resource mobilization and strong partnerships to scale up soil health management technologies through local extension approaches was emphasized. The key takeaways were that ANAPRI must continue to gather and share evidence on Africa's soil health crisis to drive urgent government action. ANAPRI Centers should strategically (re)define their role in the policy discourse, not just as data and evidence providers, but also as country-level Secretariats for AFSH Action Plans, or implementation agents of locally driven solutions.

Session 4 titled “**Status quo of Africa's food systems and the post-2025 agenda**” provided an overview of the evolution and status of Africa's agricultural transformation journey, from the Maputo Declaration (2003) through the Malabo Declaration (2014), and the upcoming Kampala Declaration (2025). The Session delved into the key drivers and challenges of implementing CAADP, including climate change, conflict/security, and governance. The Session also noted the policy gap favoring large multinational corporations over SMEs and MSMEs, despite the latter's critical role in shaping and driving food systems. Despite the shortfalls of meeting key targets, progress under CAADP is evident, and there is a need for decisive action. Driving policy implementation will require the strengthening of partnerships

and collaborative linkages between the African Union and policy think tanks like ANAPRI and Akademiya2063 to in driving post-2025 strategies.

Session 5 titled **“Finding solutions for dwindling funding towards policy research”** interrogated the funding challenges that policy think tanks are facing, and sought to draw some key insights on how research centers can position themselves to overcome financial resource constraints. It was an interactive discussion which presented a problem statement – the funding landscape is now characterized by short-term cycles, inconsistent government support, and stiff competition from international organizations, which have inadvertently diminished the capacity for public good research and thought leadership. The lessons that came out of the session were critical. The discussion underscored the importance of a more intentional and deliberate effort to diversify funding sources, along with clear, consistent evidence-based communication to policymakers. ANAPRI centers were encouraged to leverage tools like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning, while keeping policy messages simple and clear. The need for ANAPRI Centers to be nimble and versatile in responding to policy maker requests timeously was also pitched as a strategic strength. Moreover, think tanks must understand government processes, foster stakeholder deeper collaboration, and deliver compelling research findings to secure long-term investments and drive policy action.

Session 6 titled **“Food sovereignty in Africa”** was an interactive discussion on the policy contradiction between African countries' desire to become self-sufficient in food, while advancing the regional economic integration agenda. The former typically leads to an inward-looking policy stack, which leads countries to impose trade restrictions that protect local food producers, while the latter is more of an outward-looking approach which promotes open borders, liberalization and importation of food from countries that have a comparative and competitive advantage. The Session interrogated the pros and cons, and identified the balance that African countries can strike in meeting their commitments to the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) and domestic food security policies around local food self-sufficiency. A case in point is Regional Food Reserves, which were defined as a sound practice for balancing regional integration goals and local food needs. The Session emphasized the need for African countries to defer to comparative advantages in food production, and facilitating trade to promote mutually beneficial economic growth. Ad hoc import and export bans, typically driven by droughts and other crises, call for regionally and continentally coordinated approaches, in which countries draw from regional agro-processing hubs in surplus areas. Moreover, enhancing SMEs' capacity, especially in compliance with standards, is critical for effective trade and food security.

Session 7 titled **“Prioritizing policies and investments to drive inclusive agricultural transformation”** presented and discussed some key results that were drawn from the experiences of formulating policy reforms using data, evidence and a market-led approach known as the Policy Prioritization through Value Chain Analysis (PPVC) framework. The PPVC framework is a replicable approach that has been variably applied in Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Malawi, and more recently, in Zambia, and Ghana. The PPVC toolkit – which contains a set of models, namely partial equilibrium, computable general equilibrium, geospatial analysis and value chain analysis – all combine to provide

a stack of detailed and granular interventions that can support governments to implement more focused and specific policy interventions and investments. The Session provided an overview of the impacts that “PPVC recommended policy reforms” had generated across Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia and Malawi, by tracking and assessing changes in market responses after governments adopt and implement reforms. The key lessons are that the ANAPRI Centers should continue to leverage PPVC, and support efforts to build the capacity of governments to interpret results, implement reforms, and attract further funding. A core part of the PPVC approach is involving governments from the beginning, and this requires soft skills, effective communication, and consensus-building in supporting government to understand and adopt the recommended policies.

Session 8 titled “**The 2024 OECD-FAO agricultural outlook and FAO’s support to the AUC in promoting agribusiness development towards enhancing implementation of the AfCFTA**” provided an insight into the quantum of benefits for regional economic integration. The Session noted that the AfCFTA has the potential to transform Africa by boosting cross-border trade, though it sometimes conflicts with local self-food sufficiency goals. The key takeaway message was the need for leveraging FAO data and collaborating with organizations like ANAPRI can enhance evidence-based decision-making for stakeholders. Despite regional trade challenges, there are opportunities to use technology to strengthen market interconnectedness.

Session 9 titled “**Unlocking the power of public-private partnerships**” was an interactive session that was designed to promote dialogue around how ANAPRI think-tanks can foster deeper collaborative partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders. The Session noted that effective public-private partnerships and farmer engagement are pivotal for advancing agricultural policies and sustainable development. To add, private sector has been seen as marginal in policy discourse, and there was a clarion call for the private sector to be integrated into policy processes with clear accountability, while think tanks must establish credibility through collaboration. Moreover, farmers, who represent one of the most important constituencies, and by and large, the intended primary beneficiaries of most government interventions, need to actively participate in policy discussions. However, to encourage deeper participation from private sector and farmers, it is important that they be invited to key policy platforms for their voices to be heard – and this includes high level local, regional, continental and international policy conferences. The presence of the private sector and farmers grounds the policy discussions and connects the discourse to lived experiences and realities on the ground. ANAPRI Research Centers were encouraged to capture partnerships with private sector and farmers, and use structured frameworks to engage them in order to formulate policy recommendations that address challenges, ensure effective implementation, and sustainability.

Beyond the nine (9) Sessions that were held at the 11<sup>th</sup> ANAPRI Annual Stakeholder’s Conference, two important initiatives were launched, which will form a critical part of ANAPRI’s work programme over the next few years. These include the **Farmer Know Your Soil Initiative** and the **ANAPRI Modelling Service Centre**.

Under the spin-off of work that was previously done in Zambia, the "**Farmer Know Your Soil Initiative**" was launched under the theme: "**Transforming Agriculture through Knowledge and Action**". The timing of the campaign was opportune, given that the African Union (AU) had just launched its 10-year Continental Action Plan on Fertilizer and Soil Health in Nairobi in May 2024. ANAPRI's passion for the "**Farmer Know Your Soil Initiative**" is based on the abiding truth that healthy soils are the foundation of Africa's food security and agricultural resilience. As such, the "**Farmer Know Your Soil**" initiative was established to empower farmers with the knowledge to improve soil management, boost productivity, and ensure sustainable agriculture. The Initiative was launched on the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024, with H.E. Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, Commissioner of the African Union's Department for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment, as the Guest of Honor.

Meanwhile, the **ANAPRI Modelling Service Centre (MSC)** was formally launched at a special dinner and is one of the lasting legacies for H.E. Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko, Commissioner of the African Union's Department for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy, and Sustainable Environment, who was the Guest of Honor. The MSC is a boutique policy analysis unit within the ANAPRI Secretariat, whose main function will be to support ANAPRI Centers in delivering data, evidence, and policy analysis research to governments, development partners and other stakeholders. The vision of the MSC is to become the "*go-to institution for the analysis of agricultural policies, projects and programmes, and value chains through an integrated approach to economic modelling*". This would be achieved through technical backstopping, resource mobilization and training and capacity building. As H.E. Ambassador Josefa Leonel Correia Sacko noted, the ANAPRI MSC is a unique initiative in that it is pan-African, homegrown, and meant to serve Africans first.

The 11<sup>th</sup> ANAPRI Annual Conference would not have been possible without the leadership of ISRA-BAME. Many thanks to ANAPRI Research Centers who participated in the Conference, and the unwavering support of ANAPRI's partners whose contributions – both financially and in-kind, is deeply appreciated

**To access the full conference report, please scan the QR code or visit the following link:**



<https://www.anapri.net/2024-stakeholders-conference/>

Thank you



Africa Network of Agricultural  
Policy Research Institutes  
(ANAPRI)

[www.anapri.net](http://www.anapri.net)  
[info@anapri.net](mailto:info@anapri.net)