

Short Report of the Webinar on Sustainable Financing of Research and Innovation to Improve the Performance of Africa Food System Held on 7th June 2021 as a Side Event of the Science Day for UNFSS

1. **Webinar Title:** Sustainable Financing of Research and Innovation to Improve the Performance of Africa Food System
2. **Attendance:** 202 Participants joined via zoom and 74 participants joined on Facebook live
3. **Proceedings**

The opening session of the webinar started at 9.00 am GMT with opening remarks from two distinguished personalities including **Dr. Jacqueline Hughes** (Director General of ICRISAT), and **Dr. Alioune Fall** (Board Chair of FARA).

4. **Keynote Paper**

A keynote paper was presented by Ms Carin Smaller, (IISD) on the topic ***“Scale of investment gap in African Agriculture Research and Innovation and Potential Sources of Investments”***. Her presentation sought to provide an answer to an important question What the financing gap is like for Africa in the next ten years and the amount of funding that is need in the continent in ending hunger. The presentation indicated that \$33 billion per year is needed for 10 years to end hunger and double the income and increase productivity of small-scale producers while maintaining GHG emission below the commitments made in the Paris agreement. Out of the \$33 billion, \$14 billion per year is needed for 10 years from external sources while \$19 billion from domestic sources is needed. She further indicated that Africa need about \$9 billion per year to support the continent in on-farm activities to help end hunger in the next decade. She highlighted countries where spending needs to be prioritized. She highlighted that the condition to the success of this gap is improved capital in all its forms including knowledge capital (R & D), financial capital, social capital (farmer networking) and human capital (education and training).

5. A panel discussion on “Sustainable Financing of Research and Innovation to Improve the performance of Africa Food System” commenced after the keynote address. Six panellists discussed the subject and a handful of comments and question were entertained from the participants. Also, questions and comments on the chart box were considered in the discussions. The Panel discussion led to the following conclusions as take-home messages.
 1. Africa does not need to outsource its future by depending entirely on external source of funding for AR4D. This will ensure sustainability of resources for AR4D.
 2. Resources are already available on the continent to fund research, what is needed is for Africa leaders and policy makers to set their priorities right to increase investment in AR4D from the current 1% of GDP.
 3. There is the need for a paradigm shift from the traditional approach for strengthening NARS and NARIS towards a mixture of grants, green farms, and tackling climate change.
 4. The private sector needs to be engaged to contribute to AR4D. Also, remittances from abroad needs to be looked at and assessed as another potential source of funding opportunity for AR4D.

The convener (Dr. Nwanze Kanayo) assured participants of his support to linking up with the AfDB and IFAD to involve Presidents and Policy makers to champion the provision of sustainable finance to support Africa AR4D.

The ED of FARA closed the Webinar with a vote-of thanks at 11.00am GMT.