

Closing the Gap between Africa's Agri-farms & its Plate: GAIN and AGRA Strengthen Partnership

AGRA & GAIN signs Letter of Intent (LoI) to strengthen a joint-push to make Africa's food systems more nutrition centric

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Across Africa, agricultural production has grown steadily over the past few decades. Much of the continent's yields from its food systems is strong.

However, this growth has not converged on the plates of Africans into healthy diets. Millions of households still cannot access safe, affordable and nutritious food. There is a significant gap in what Africa grows and how Africa eats. With a renewed agenda to close this gap, the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN)

and the AGRA, on the sidelines of The Africa Food Systems Forum (AFSF), signed an LoI to make healthier diets more accessible, affordable, desirable and from more sustainable sources for all Africans.



Dr. Lawrence Haddad (Executive Director, GAIN) and Dr. Alice Ruhweza (President, AGRA) shake hands after the signing of the Letter of Intent, on the sidelines of the Africa Food Systems Forum 2026 in Kigali. Photo Credit: Peddy Oniango

The core of this renewed partnership will focus on 5 pillars:

1. Mainstream nutrition into the strategic direction of the African Food Systems Forum (AFSF).
2. Support AGRA's nutrition mainstreaming agenda by embedding nutrition more systematically across AGRA's core investment areas.
3. Generate evidence and data for scale in Africa's food systems.
4. Assist countries in accelerating food systems transformation by 2030 through the Accelerator Initiative; and
5. Promote gender inclusion, agripreneurship, and job creation pathways that deliver nutrition outcomes in the communities through supply chains.

“No single organisation can close the gap between Africa’s farms and its plates. AGRA was founded as an alliance because transformation depends on many actors moving together; governments, businesses, farmers, financiers and researchers. Working with GAIN, we are bringing nutrition into that alignment by building markets for nutrient-dense foods, mobilising private investment behind them, and measuring whether diets, not just harvests, are improving,” said Ms. Alice Ruhweza, President, AGRA.

This GAIN-AGRA partnership also intends to help generate actionable data identifying which agricultural investments deliver the greatest nutrition impact, and to scale what works, developing know-how, raising awareness and producing joint publications and convenings that strengthen food systems thinking across governments, investors and practitioners.

“In 2024 number of Africans who could not afford a healthy diet broke through the 1 billion barrier. This means 2 in 3 Africans cannot afford a meal that will promote their health. That is bad for nutrition, but also for economic productivity, entrepreneurial activity, job creation, innovation capacity, the resilience of food systems, the stability of supply chains and health system burdens. Making healthier diets more accessible is the “no regrets” action to combat all those forms of malnutrition. By working together, using sustainable practices, GAIN and AGRA’s partnership will make nutritious whole foods more available, affordable and desirable for all Africans. We are committed to pooling our know-how and aligning our action programmes so that 1+1 equals an impact of 3. Anything less would be a dereliction of our duty to our stakeholders,” said Dr. Lawrence Haddad, Executive Director, GAIN.

Through this partnership both GAIN and AGRA will also support countries working to accelerate food systems transformation by 2030 through the Accelerator Initiative, engaging governments, businesses, development finance institutions and public development banks to build collective capacity, support financing efforts and help governments drive systemic change for people and planet. Alongside this sits a commitment to gender inclusion, agri-preneurship and job creation pathways that deliver nutrition outcomes in communities along supply chains.

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About GAIN

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition is a Swiss-based foundation dedicated to tackling malnutrition worldwide. With a focus on increasing consumer demand, accessibility, and market incentives for nutritious foods, GAIN is at the forefront of the fight against malnutrition. For more information, please visit www.gainhealth.org

About AGRA

AGRA is a proudly pan-African institution focused on scaling agricultural innovations that help small-scale farming enterprises towards increased incomes, better livelihoods and improved food security. Since 2006, AGRA has worked with its partners, governments, non-governmental

organisations, private-sector businesses and others to deliver proven solutions to small-scale farming enterprises and indigenous African agricultural enterprises. These partnerships work to inclusively transform agrifood systems, enabling small-scale farming enterprises to prosper. For more information, please visit www.agra.org

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