

## INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

Press Release No:

Date: 22 December, 2025

Venue: Kampala, Republic of Uganda

### **African Union Convenes High-Level Dialogue to Strengthen Africa's Research, Extension and Development Systems for Resilient Food Systems**



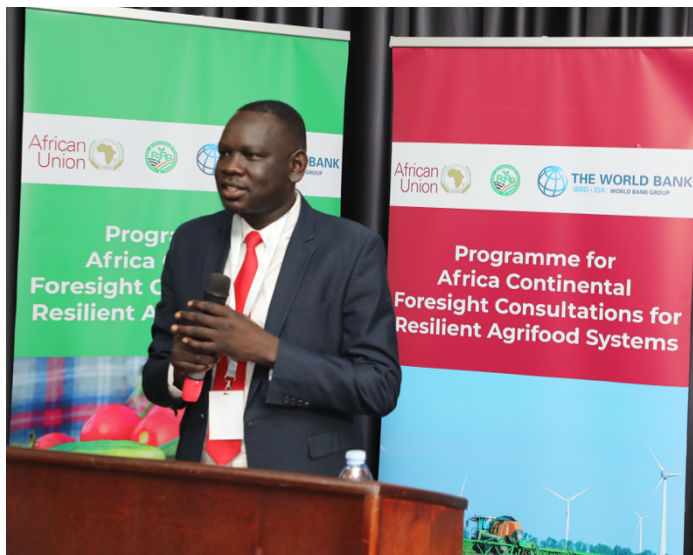
The African Union Commission (AUC) has convened a high-level Multistakeholder Workshop on Strengthening Research, Extension and Development (R-E-D) through Subregional Organisations in Kampala, Uganda. The meeting, which was held 22-23 December 2025, brought together continental, regional, and national institutions to advance Africa's transition toward resilient, digitally enabled, and market-responsive food systems.

The workshop concluded with a shared outcome and strong consensus on the need to strengthen coordination, accountability, and coherence across Africa's agricultural research, extension, education, innovation, and market systems in support of the CAADP Kampala Declaration and Strategy (2026–2035). Participants agreed on the importance of institutionalising integrated approaches that link national and regional agricultural investment plans to resilient food systems implementation, underpinned by robust data, interoperable digital and knowledge systems, and inclusive multi-stakeholder engagement. The discussions reaffirmed peer learning and strengthened

regional cooperation as critical drivers for translating CAADP commitments into measurable impact across the continent.

The two-day workshop, anchored in the Food Systems Resilience Program (FSRP) and aligned with the CAADP Kampala Declaration and its 2026–2035 Action Plan, builds on the achievements of the CAADP-XP4 Programme (2019–2025) and focuses on institutionalising effective linkages across research, extension, education, innovation, and markets.

Delivering an opening remarks on behalf of H.E. Moses Vilakati, AU Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment, Mr. Kennedy Ayason, Policy Officer at the AUC underscored that Africa has made a clear political choice under the Kampala CAADP Declaration to move beyond fragmented interventions toward integrated, resilient, and market-oriented agrifood systems, stressing that “what now matters is institutional execution.”



Mr. Ayason highlighted the immense challenges facing Africa’s food systems, including climate shocks, market disruptions, conflict, and global supply chain volatility, which expose underlying vulnerabilities in agricultural production. However, he also emphasized the unprecedented opportunities emerging from digital innovation, youth-led agripreneurship, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), and the Food Systems Resilience Program (FSRP), which

together provide a continental platform to strengthen preparedness, resilience, and long-term transformation.

Delivering his remarks, Dr Aggrey Agumya, Executive Director of the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), described the workshop as a strategic transition platform from a successful programme to a permanent continental architecture. He highlighted that while CAADP-XP4 had strengthened institutions, knowledge systems, foresight, partnerships, and monitoring and learning frameworks, its most important lesson was that projects end, but institutions must endure. Dr Agumya emphasised the need to institutionalise the full Research–Extension–Education–Technology Adoption–Production–Processing–Market continuum under African leadership, noting that

effective coordination by the African Union is essential to sustaining transformation at scale.

In her part, Dr. Lilian Lihasi, Executive Director of the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), warmly welcomed participants to Kampala and assured them of the full logistical and technical support required for productive deliberations. She highlighted Uganda's role in regional agricultural policy dialogue and reaffirmed AFAAS's commitment to ensuring that research and innovation translate into farmer-level impact through effective, inclusive, and demand-driven extension systems. Dr Lihasi also expressed appreciation to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the European Commission for their support in making the workshop possible through the CAADP-XP4 Programme.

The Executive Director of the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), Dr Sylvester Baguma, underscored the importance of subregional coordination in addressing shared challenges such as climate shocks, transboundary pests, and market disruptions, and called for stronger alignment between regional research systems and continental priorities.

The workshop, among others, featured presentations of the CAADP-XP4 Bilan, highlighting achievements in institutional strengthening, knowledge management, digitalisation, foresight, partnerships, and monitoring, evaluation and learning. A high-level panel of Executive Directors from Africa's Agricultural Research and Innovation Ecosystem (AARIEs) further explored pathways for shaping a next-generation REE4D architecture, focusing on institutionalising linkages, advancing digital public goods, and strengthening regional market integration in line with AfCFTA and FSRP priorities.

Furthermore, the workshop discussed on digitalisation and knowledge systems, regional market integration, resource mobilisation, and the co-design of flagship initiatives, including AgricAgriTradeLink. Deliberations are expected to culminate in the adoption of a Kampala R-E-D Communiqué, outlining concrete resolutions and institutional commitments for submission to the African Union Commission.

The Multistakeholder Workshop reaffirms Africa's collective resolve to move from project-based successes to durable continental systems that convert knowledge into resilience, innovation into income, and markets into shared prosperity.

**For further information, please contact:**

**Dr. Janet Edeme** – Head of Division, Rural Development Ag Head of Agriculture and Food Security Division Directorate (ARD) African Union Commission Email: [EdemeJ@africanunion.org](mailto:EdemeJ@africanunion.org)

**Mr. Mukulia Kennedy Ayason**; Policy Officer; Rural Infrastructure and Marketing, African Union Commission Email [Ayasonm@africanunion.org](mailto:Ayasonm@africanunion.org)

**For media inquiries, please contact:**

**Molalet Tsedeke**, Information and Communications Directorate, AU Commission Tel: +251 911-630631; Email: [molalett@africanunion.org](mailto:molalett@africanunion.org)

**Benjamin Abugri**, Knowledge Management, Digitilisation and Learning Cluster Lead, FARA; Tel: +233201734038; Email: [babugri@faraafrica.org](mailto:babugri@faraafrica.org)

**Information and Communication Directorate**, African Union Commission | **E-mail:** [DIC@africanunion.org](mailto:DIC@africanunion.org) | **Web:** [www.au.int](http://www.au.int) | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia | **Follow Us:** [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#)

