



This newsletter provides information on the FAO project “AgrInvest - Enabling inclusive and efficient private sector investment in agri-food systems” (AgrInvest-FS), which may be of interest to you. The newsletter is a core tool for sharing knowledge among members of the project.

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## WELCOME

Welcome to the first issue of AgrInvest-FS Flash News, a quarterly newsletter to keep you updated on the project.

The AgrInvest-FS Project aims at attracting private investments into agri-food systems aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by leveraging public funds.

This newsletter will share information and knowledge about the project, through several different features, such as: weekly results and achievements; alerts for new publications; success stories; messages from the team; upcoming events; links to project videos and photos; links to online discussions; and much more.

In this issue you will find:

1. Introduction to the project
2. The FAO AgrInvest Umbrella Initiative
3. Our interventions in times of COVID-19
4. Article about a workshop on aquaculture
5. Partnering with ADA to develop an e-learning programme on agri-finance
6. Webinar: COVID-19 and Agri-Investments in Africa

Enjoy your reading!

*The AgrInvest-FS Team*

## 1. Introduction to the AgrInvest-Food Systems Project

**WHY?** In developing countries, and particularly in Africa, farmers, food processors and other actors in agri-food systems struggle to access the financial resources needed to accelerate progress towards the SDGs and to increase their resilience to global shocks. The inability of financial institutions and private investors to identify profitable opportunities within agribusiness markets is just one of the barriers that hinder investment.

**WHAT?** The AgrInvest-FS Project promotes SDG-aligned investments in agri-food systems in Africa to contribute to sustainable economic growth and boost rural employment, particularly for women and youths.

**HOW?** The project analyses agri-food value chains and food systems at national level; it seeks innovative ways of promoting private sector financing while encouraging SDG-compliant investments; and it convenes and facilitates meetings, fora, events, and fairs to bring together value chain stakeholders, private investors and public actors. The project also works to create a conducive environment for private investment and shares knowledge to promote sustainable investments for food systems transformation across Africa.

**WHERE?** Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Kenya and the Niger.

For further information and updates: <http://www.fao.org/in-action/agrinvest-food-systems/en/>





## 2. The FAO AgrInvest Umbrella Initiative

The AgrInvest- FS falls under the broader AgrInvest initiative, launched by FAO to attract private investments aligned with the SDGs into agri-food systems, by leveraging public funds. This initiative intends to contribute to national development strategies, and to the upcoming Food Systems Summit, to be convened by the United Nations Secretary-General in 2021.

AgrInvest's overarching goal is to help stakeholders better understand and manage the complex choices that affect the sustainability of agri-food systems and to accelerate progress toward the SDGs achievement.

Read more about the AgrInvest Initiative: <http://www.fao.org/3/ca3825en/CA3825EN.pdf>

## 3. Our interventions in times of COVID-19

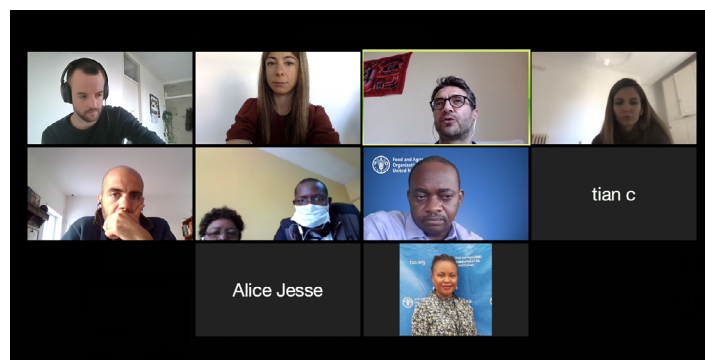
In the context of a global pandemic like COVID-19, where the disruption of supply chains and their food systems are a major concern, projects such as AgrInvest-FS have become key, as they bring together development impact and risk reduction for investors, and support to food supply chains, creating sustainable and resilient mechanisms to support food systems transformation.



**Figure 1** Field visit under the AgrInvest-FS Project in Kenya to assess local market disruptions caused by lockdown measures in the aftermath of the pandemic

Interventions under FAO's AgrInvest-FS Project are being adapted to the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic in the target countries, by integrating these new aspects into their food systems analyses as a basis for policy advice and for the identification of private investment in more resilient and sustainable food systems contributing to, among other things, healthier local diets.

The project has registered significant progress in the overall implementation and achievements, notwithstanding the limits to movements imposed by the COVID pandemic. In this respect, as soon as the lockdown was imposed in all the concerned countries, the project team decided to keep carrying out activities as envisaged in the work plan, and to anticipate some of the activities that could be done remotely, while postponing those that required missions or just physical presence.



**Figure 2** The AgrInvest-FS project team from HQ and country offices in Africa

The presence of senior experts coordinating the project at country level is helping to speed up activities in the field, even under the context of the lockdown. Such experts are facilitating the exchange of key information with stakeholders at country level, which would have been impossible otherwise, and are dramatically contributing to keeping the momentum of the projects' relevance among stakeholders, nationally.





#### 4. Roundtable discussion on “Solutions for the challenges facing the Kenyan aquaculture sector”

Kenya’s fisheries sector plays an important role in the country’s economic and social development, albeit well below its potential.

On the 11th September 2020, as part of the AgrInvest-Food Systems project, a Roundtable discussion on “Solutions for the challenges facing the Kenyan aquaculture sector” was held in Nairobi, Kenya.



**Figure 3** Introductory remarks at the National Workshop on Aquaculture in Kenya

The meeting brought together public and private stakeholders involved in the aquaculture value chain to discuss possible solutions for main challenges facing the sector. The aim was to align these actors in tackling key issues affecting the sector and contribute in shaping the marketing strategy of the Kenya Fish Marketing Authority (KFMA).

#### 5. Partnering with ADA to develop E-learning programme on agri finance

Considering the importance of distance learning in times of pandemics, the project has worked with the Appui au Développement Autonome (ADA) to develop an e-learning training for domestic financial institutions to develop financial products and services for agribusinesses. The training will be launched in November 2020, to make sure that the capacity building activities envisaged by the project will be granted even under lockdown and movement limitations.

The programme is intended for the senior managers of financial institutions and public bodies who are in a position to use the principles and tools provided to formulate strategies to design and deliver products which contribute to the financing of agricultural value chains.

For more information visit: <https://rb.gy/d3tkjy>

#### 6. Webinar: COVID-19 and Agri Investments in Africa

The pandemic imposes the agri-food industry to rethink its modus operandi, creating opportunities for private investments to pursue a transformation of food systems towards an economic, social and environmental sustainability. Against this background, a Webinar: COVID-19 and Investments in agriculture, Challenges and opportunities in Africa was organized on the 2nd of July 2020 to promote the project and discuss challenges and opportunities raised by the pandemic to transform food systems and make them more sustainable through SDG-aligned investments. Recordings are available at the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XlyrWHQnNqk&feature=youtu.be>



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For more information visit:  
<http://www.fao.org/in-action/agrinvest-food-systems/en/>

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