



Policy Paper on Integrating Food Security into the Global Climate Action Agenda

Prepared for :

The UN Climate Change High-Level Champions and Marrakech Partnership Secretariat

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To: The UN Climate Change High-Level Champions

The World Food Forum Youth Policy Board of Africa presents critical recommendations for integrating food security as a central pillar of the Global Climate Action Agenda (GCAA), with specific focus on the climate-food nexus that disproportionately affects Africa. This paper addresses the consultation questions through the lens of food systems transformation, drawing on evidence from across 54 African countries where climate change threatens to reverse decades of development progress.

FIVE PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GCAA FOOD SECURITY INTEGRATION

1. ESTABLISH FOOD SECURITY AS GCAA SUCCESS METRIC

- Integrate food system resilience indicators into all GCAA tracking mechanisms
- Target 50% reduction in climate-induced food insecurity by 2030 through NPS action
- Measure NPS contribution to achieving SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) alongside emission reductions

2. CREATE PARTY-NPS FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION PARTNERSHIPS

- Establish formal food security dialogues in all NDC development processes
- Mandate food system assessments in National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)
- Connect 1 million smallholder farmers to climate action commitments by 2030

3. ENSURE INCLUSIVE FOOD SECURITY ENGAGEMENT

- Guarantee 40% representation from food-insecure regions in all GCAA governance
- Create direct access mechanisms for smallholder farmer organizations
- Establish youth-led food systems innovation networks across Global South

4. ENHANCE FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Integrate agricultural monitoring into Global Climate Action Portal
- Track food system NPS commitments with satellite-based verification
- Publish annual Food Systems Climate Action Report alongside GCAA Yearbook

5. MOBILIZE CLIMATE FINANCE FOR FOOD SECURITY

- Channel 30% of GCAA-facilitated climate finance to food systems by 2030
- Create simplified access mechanisms for agricultural climate projects
- Establish performance-based payments for verified food security outcomes

EVIDENCE BASE: THE AFRICA CRISIS AS GLOBAL WARNING

Africa demonstrates the urgent need for food security integration in climate action. With over 307 million Africans chronically undernourished in 2024¹—more than one in five people—the continent faces the world's highest hunger prevalence in 20 years. Current projections show that without transformative action, nearly 60% of the world's 512 million hungry people in 2030 will be African².

Yet Africa also represents the greatest opportunity: employing over 60% of its workforce in agriculture, possessing the world's largest uncultivated arable land, and hosting a youth population (60% under 25) ready to drive agricultural transformation³. The GCAA can harness this potential by systematically integrating food security into climate action frameworks.

1. REDEFINING GCAA SUCCESS THROUGH FOOD SECURITY LENS

1.1 Food Systems as Climate Action Multiplier (HIGH PRIORITY)

Quantitative Success Indicators

- Food Security Impact Metrics: Reduce climate-induced food insecurity affecting 2.3 billion people globally by 50% through GCAA-coordinated action by 2030⁴
- Agricultural Emission Reductions: Achieve 25% reduction in agricultural greenhouse gas emissions while increasing productivity by 30% through NPS climate-smart agriculture commitments
- Resilience Building Targets: Reach 500 million smallholder farmers with climate adaptation support through GCAA-facilitated partnerships⁵
- Food System Finance Mobilization: Channel \$100 billion annually in climate finance to food systems transformation through GCAA mechanisms

Integration with Existing GCAA Frameworks

- Align food security indicators with Race to Resilience campaign metrics, ensuring climate adaptation benefits vulnerable food producers
- Connect food systems transformation to Race to Zero sectoral pathways, particularly in agriculture, land use, and supply chain decarbonization
- Embed food security outcomes in 2030 Climate Breakthroughs, establishing clear targets for agricultural transformation
- Link food systems resilience to GST implementation support, ensuring NDCs address climate-food nexus

1.2 Evidence-Based Impact Measurement

Satellite and Technology Integration

- Deploy satellite monitoring systems tracking both agricultural productivity and emission reductions from GCAA food system commitments
- Implement AI-driven early warning systems connecting climate data to food security alerts, enabling rapid response coordination
- Create blockchain-based traceability systems verifying sustainable food production practices and climate impact
- Establish mobile data collection platforms enabling real-time reporting from smallholder farmers participating in GCAA initiatives

Attribution and Accountability Mechanisms

- Develop methodologies attributing food security improvements to specific GCAA interventions, ensuring credible impact claims
 - Create standardized metrics enabling comparison of food system climate action across different regions and contexts
 - Implement third-party verification systems for all major food security commitments registered through GCAA platforms
 - Establish correction mechanisms for non-performing food system commitments, including support for implementation challenges
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2. PARTY-NPS ENGAGEMENT THROUGH FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

2.1 National-Level Food Security Integration (HIGH PRIORITY)

NDC Enhancement Mechanisms

- **Mandatory Food System Assessments:** Require all NDC updates to include comprehensive food system vulnerability and adaptation assessments
- **Smallholder Integration Protocols:** Establish standardized frameworks for incorporating smallholder farmer commitments into national climate plans
- **Agricultural Emission Accounting:** Develop harmonized methodologies for tracking agricultural sector contributions to national emission reduction targets
- **Food Security Co-benefits Tracking:** Create systems measuring how climate mitigation actions contribute to improved food security outcomes

National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Food Security Mainstreaming

- **Agricultural Adaptation Priorities:** Ensure all NAPs include specific targets for climate-resilient agriculture and food system transformation
- **Early Warning System Integration:** Connect national climate monitoring systems with food security alert mechanisms

- Disaster Risk Reduction: Embed food system protection measures in all national disaster preparedness and response plans
- Rural Livelihood Strategies: Integrate climate-smart agriculture promotion into national rural development and poverty reduction strategies

2.2 Sectoral Transformation Partnerships

Agricultural Value Chain Collaboration

- Producer Organization Engagement: Create formal mechanisms for smallholder farmer cooperatives to participate in GCAA sectoral initiatives
- Supply Chain Decarbonization: Establish partnerships between multinational food companies and producer organizations for emission reduction
- Technology Transfer Networks: Facilitate knowledge sharing between developed country agricultural innovators and developing country farmers
- Market Access Facilitation: Connect smallholder producers with climate-conscious consumers and institutional buyers through GCAA platforms

Regional Food Systems Coordination

- Cross-Border Agricultural Cooperation: Support regional initiatives addressing transboundary food security challenges through climate action
- Shared Infrastructure Development: Coordinate investment in climate-resilient agricultural infrastructure serving multiple countries
- Knowledge Exchange Platforms: Create regional networks enabling farmers to share climate adaptation experiences and innovations
- Joint Emergency Response: Establish rapid response mechanisms for climate-related food security emergencies affecting multiple countries

2.3 Innovation and Technology Partnerships

Digital Agriculture Integration

- Precision Farming Technology: Connect smallholder farmers with affordable precision agriculture tools reducing both emissions and production costs
 - Climate Information Services: Provide farmers with actionable climate forecasts enabling better planting and harvesting decisions
 - Market Information Systems: Create digital platforms connecting farmers directly with buyers, reducing food waste and transportation emissions
 - Financial Technology Solutions: Develop mobile-based payment and credit systems enabling farmers to invest in climate-smart practices
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3. INCLUSIVE FOOD SECURITY ENGAGEMENT IN GCAA

3.1 Geographic and Demographic Representation (HIGH PRIORITY)

Food-Insecure Region Prioritization

- Leadership Quotas: Ensure 40% representation from food-insecure regions (sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, small island states) in all GCAA governance bodies
- Capacity Building Investment: Allocate 60% of GCAA capacity building resources to organizations from regions with highest food insecurity prevalence
- Resource Allocation Equity: Guarantee minimum 50% of food security-related GCAA funding flows to least developed countries and fragile states
- Language and Cultural Access: Provide interpretation services in local languages and culturally appropriate engagement mechanisms

Smallholder Farmer Organization Empowerment

- Direct Participation Rights: Grant formal recognition to smallholder farmer confederations as GCAA stakeholders with decision-making authority
- Simplified Registration: Create fast-track processes for farmer organizations to register commitments on Global Climate Action Portal
- Technical Support: Provide free technical assistance for farmer organizations developing climate action plans and accessing finance
- Advocacy Platform: Establish formal mechanisms for smallholder voices to influence GCAA policy recommendations and priorities

3.2 Youth and Gender Integration

Youth Agricultural Leadership Development

- Next-Generation Farmer Networks: Create youth farmer leadership programs connecting emerging agricultural leaders across continents
- Innovation Challenges: Establish annual competitions for youth-led solutions addressing climate-food security nexus
- Mentorship Programs: Connect young farmers with established agricultural leaders and climate practitioners for knowledge transfer
- Economic Empowerment: Provide preferential access to climate finance and markets for youth-led agricultural enterprises

Women's Empowerment in Food Systems

- Women Farmer Recognition: Ensure women's agricultural contributions are visible and valued in all GCAA food security programming

- Gender-Responsive Climate Finance: Design financial mechanisms addressing specific barriers women face in accessing agricultural credit and technology
- Leadership Development: Create pathways for women farmers to assume leadership roles in food system climate action initiatives
- Care Work Recognition: Account for women's unpaid care work in agricultural development and climate adaptation programming

3.3 Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge Integration

Traditional Agricultural Practices

- Knowledge Documentation: Support initiatives recording and sharing indigenous climate adaptation practices with broader farming communities
 - Rights Protection: Ensure indigenous peoples' land rights and traditional farming systems are protected and supported through GCAA initiatives
 - Collaborative Research: Partner with indigenous communities for research on climate-resilient agricultural practices and biodiversity conservation
 - Benefit Sharing: Establish equitable mechanisms for sharing benefits when traditional knowledge contributes to climate solutions
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4. FOOD SYSTEMS TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ENHANCEMENT

4.1 Technology Platform Integration (HIGH PRIORITY)

Global Climate Action Portal Food Systems Module

- Agricultural Commitment Tracking: Create dedicated portal section tracking food system and agricultural climate commitments with real-time progress updates
- Supply Chain Transparency: Enable traceability of agricultural products from farm to consumer, showing climate impact at each stage
- Farmer-to-Market Connections: Integrate marketplace functionality connecting climate-smart farmers with conscious consumers and institutional buyers
- Impact Visualization: Develop interactive maps showing food security improvements attributable to GCAA-coordinated climate action

Satellite-Based Monitoring Integration

- Crop Productivity Tracking: Use satellite imagery to monitor agricultural productivity changes in areas with GCAA food security interventions⁶
- Deforestation Prevention: Track forest conservation commitments by agricultural companies and producer organizations

- Water Resource Management: Monitor irrigation efficiency and water conservation practices adopted through GCAA partnerships
- Carbon Sequestration Measurement: Quantify soil carbon improvements from climate-smart agriculture practices using remote sensing technology

4.2 Independent Verification and Quality Assurance

Third-Party Food Security Verification

- Impact Assessment Standards: Develop standardized methodologies for verifying food security improvements claimed by GCAA participants
- Academic Partnership Network: Engage agricultural universities and research institutions for independent evaluation of food system interventions
- Farmer Feedback Systems: Create mechanisms for smallholder farmers to provide feedback on effectiveness of climate action programs
- Grievance and Remedy Procedures: Establish complaint mechanisms for farmers and communities affected by GCAA food system initiatives

Performance Rating and Recognition

- Food Security Leadership Awards: Recognize organizations demonstrating exceptional performance in combining climate action with food security outcomes
- Improvement Pathway Development: Provide technical assistance for underperforming participants to enhance their food security impact
- Peer Learning Networks: Facilitate knowledge sharing among organizations working on similar food security and climate challenges
- Public Accountability Mechanisms: Publish annual scorecards showing performance of all major food security commitments registered through GCAA

4.3 Enhanced Reporting and Communication

Annual Food Systems Climate Action Report

- Complementary Yearbook Publication: Produce specialized food security report alongside general GCAA Yearbook, highlighting agricultural climate action
- Regional Deep Dives: Include detailed analysis of food system transformation in different regions, with emphasis on developing countries
- Success Story Documentation: Feature case studies of successful Party-NPS collaboration on food security and climate action
- Policy Recommendation Synthesis: Compile annual policy recommendations from food security practitioners for consideration by High-Level Champions

Accessible Communication Strategy

- **Multilingual Content:** Translate key findings and recommendations into languages spoken by major farming communities
 - **Mobile-Optimized Platforms:** Ensure all information is accessible via mobile devices commonly used by smallholder farmers
 - **Visual Storytelling:** Use infographics, videos, and interactive content to communicate complex food security data to diverse audiences
 - **Community Radio Integration:** Partner with rural radio networks to disseminate food security and climate information to remote farming communities
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5. CLIMATE FINANCE MOBILIZATION FOR FOOD SECURITY

5.1 Dedicated Food Security Finance Mechanisms (HIGH PRIORITY)

GCAA Food Security Finance Facility

- **\$50 Billion Annual Target:** Mobilize dedicated financing for food system climate action, representing 30% of total GCAA-facilitated climate finance
- **Blended Finance Innovation:** Combine public climate finance with private investment to de-risk agricultural climate investments
- **Micro-Finance Integration:** Create pathways for smallholder farmers to access climate finance through existing microfinance institutions
- **Performance-Based Payments:** Establish results-based financing mechanisms rewarding verified food security and climate outcomes

Direct Access Mechanisms

- **Simplified Application Processes:** Remove bureaucratic barriers preventing smallholder organizations from accessing climate finance
- **Local Currency Financing:** Provide climate finance in local currencies reducing exchange rate risks for developing country farmers
- **Rapid Disbursement Systems:** Ensure climate finance reaches farmers within seasonal planting cycles when needed most
- **Technical Assistance Integration:** Combine financing with capacity building support helping farmers effectively utilize climate technologies

5.2 Private Sector Engagement and Innovation

Impact Investment Mobilization

- **Food Security Investment Standards:** Develop clear criteria for private investors seeking to combine financial returns with food security impact

- Risk-Sharing Mechanisms: Use public climate finance to share risks with private investors supporting smallholder agriculture
- Carbon Credit Integration: Enable farmers to generate revenue through carbon credits from climate-smart agricultural practices
- Supply Chain Finance: Connect large food companies with smallholder suppliers through climate-focused supply chain financing

Technology and Innovation Finance

- Agricultural Technology Funds: Support development and deployment of affordable agricultural technologies for developing countries
- Digital Agriculture Investment: Finance mobile platforms and digital tools enabling smallholder farmers to access climate information and markets
- Research and Development Support: Fund collaborative research addressing climate challenges specific to food-insecure regions
- Startup Incubation: Support agricultural technology startups developing solutions for climate-smart food production

5.3 Insurance and Risk Management

Agricultural Climate Insurance

- Index-Based Insurance Products: Develop weather index insurance protecting smallholder farmers against climate-related crop losses
- Parametric Insurance Innovation: Create rapid payout mechanisms triggered by specific climate events affecting agricultural productivity
- Cooperative Insurance Models: Support farmer cooperatives developing collective insurance products reducing individual farmer costs
- Government Partnership: Work with national governments to subsidize agricultural insurance premiums for vulnerable farmers

ANNEX A: STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS AND COALITION BUILDING

A.1 Key Supporters and Natural Allies

Strong Advocates for Food Security Integration

- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and Rome-based agencies with direct food security mandates
- African Union Commission and regional economic communities facing acute food insecurity challenges

- Small Island Developing States highly vulnerable to both climate change and food import dependency
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and agricultural development organizations
- World Food Programme with operational experience connecting climate action to food assistance

Conditional Supporters Requiring Engagement

- Large agricultural companies seeking to balance profitability with sustainability commitments
- Developed country governments concerned about additional financial obligations for food security
- International financial institutions requiring demonstrated returns on agricultural investments
- Trade-focused organizations potentially viewing food security measures as barriers to agricultural trade

A.2 Implementation Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

Technical and Capacity Constraints

- Limited technical capacity in developing countries for sophisticated climate-agriculture programming requiring graduated implementation approach
- Weak agricultural extension systems necessitating parallel investment in farmer education and support services
- Insufficient data collection and monitoring infrastructure demanding technology-enabled solutions adapted to local contexts
- Coordination challenges across agriculture and climate sectors requiring integrated institutional frameworks

Political and Economic Barriers

- Competing priorities for scarce climate finance requiring clear demonstration of food security co-benefits from climate investments
- Agricultural sector resistance to emission reduction requirements necessitating positive incentive structures rather than punitive approaches
- Trade policy conflicts between climate action and agricultural export promotion requiring careful policy coherence analysis
- Short-term political cycles versus long-term agricultural transformation requiring sustained multi-stakeholder commitment

A.3 Success Factors and Enabling Conditions

Critical Requirements for Success

- Strong political leadership recognizing food security as essential climate action outcome rather than competing priority
- Adequate financial resources mobilized through innovative mechanisms addressing both climate and development objectives
- Technical expertise combining climate science with agricultural development practice
- Robust partnerships connecting international climate institutions with local agricultural organizations
- Effective monitoring systems demonstrating clear linkages between climate action and food security improvements

REFERENCES AND EVIDENCE BASE

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CONCLUSION AND CALL TO ACTION

The integration of food security into the Global Climate Action Agenda is not merely an opportunity—it is an imperative. With over 2.3 billion people facing food insecurity globally, and climate change threatening to worsen these conditions, the GCAA cannot achieve its objectives without systematically addressing the climate-food nexus.

Africa's experience demonstrates both the urgency and the potential. Where over 300 million people face chronic hunger today, the continent also possesses vast agricultural potential and a young population ready to drive transformation. But this potential can only be realized through coordinated action that recognizes food security as central to climate resilience and mitigation.

The recommendations presented in this paper offer a realistic pathway for transformation.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS FOR HIGH-LEVEL CHAMPIONS

By December 2025:

1. Integrate food security indicators into all GCAA success metrics and reporting frameworks
2. Establish formal food security dialogue mechanisms in NDC and NAP development processes
3. Launch pilot food security transparency modules on Global Climate Action Portal
4. Mobilize initial \$10 billion in dedicated climate finance for food systems transformation

By COP30 in Brazil (November 2025):

1. Announce GCAA Food Security Action Plan with specific targets and timelines
2. Demonstrate measurable progress in connecting smallholder farmers to climate action commitments
3. Showcase successful Party-NPS food security partnerships as replicable models
4. Secure political commitments for sustained food security integration in GCAA

For the 2025-2030 Implementation Period:

1. Reach 500 million smallholder farmers with climate action support through GCAA mechanisms
2. Reduce climate-induced food insecurity by 50% through coordinated Party-NPS action
3. Mobilize \$100 billion annually in climate finance specifically targeting food systems transformation
4. Establish food security as permanent pillar of GCAA with dedicated governance and resources

THE AFRICA IMPERATIVE FOR GLOBAL ACTION

We, the youth of Africa, understand that food security is not just about feeding our continent—it is about feeding the world sustainably while protecting our climate. Africa will host 2.5 billion people by 2050, representing 25% of global population. Our food systems must transform to feed this growing population while reducing emissions and building resilience.

The GCAA has the unique opportunity to harness Africa's agricultural potential as a force for global climate action. But this requires recognizing food security not as a side benefit of climate action, but as its central purpose. Climate action that leaves people hungry cannot succeed. Food security that ignores climate change cannot endure.

We call upon the High-Level Champions to embrace this integration with the urgency and ambition the crisis demands.

The choice before us is clear: integrate food security into the heart of the GCAA, or watch climate action fail to address the most fundamental human need. We choose integration. We choose transformation. We choose to ensure that the race to zero emissions becomes a race to zero hunger.

The time for action is now. The opportunity is before us. The future depends on our courage to act.