

## €33million ClimDev-Africa Special Fund launched

### New initiative will help finance efforts to harness information to fight climate change

By Kofi Adu Domfeh

**T**he African Development Bank (AfDB) has launched a fund drive worth €33million to be used for building regional capacities in climate information gathering and dissemination in order to overcome challenges posed by climate change.

The ClimDev Africa Special Fund, launched on the sidelines of CCDA-IV in Marrakech, Morocco, will be managed by the Climate for Development in Africa (ClimDev-Africa) Programme, an initiative of the African Union Commission (AUC), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the AfDB.

Private and public sector institutions and organizations are now expected to submit proposals to ClimDev Africa to enable them access the financing, which is intended to build viable, reliable and regular climate information sources.

During the launch, the coordinator for Special Initiatives at the AfDB, Mr. Ken John, expressed his optimism that despite the fact that the Fund may not be enough to meet the entirety of Africa's climate information needs, it will "be demonstrative enough that others can also benefit and learn from such experiences".

Climate change has become a major driver for poverty in Africa, especially among smallholder

farmers who are increasingly becoming vulnerable – with about 37% of the continent at risk desertification.

There is therefore the need to stimulate growth through the translation of climate information into practical action.

The AfDB has committed to support countries adapt to the negative effects of climate change, ensure food security and support good land, water and forestry management good practices.

Climate information services enable better integration of the water, energy and land nexus, which are critical along the entire agricultural commodity value chain, says Ms. Fatima Denton, Coordinator of the Africa Climate Policy Center (ACPC).

"Our deepest conviction is that climate change remains a double-edged sword," she said. "It constitutes the greatest challenge of our times, but it is also Africa's greatest opportunity to widen out ripples of prosperity across our continent."

ClimDev-Africa is entrusted with a mandate to improve climate information services in support of African development agenda.

Consolidating the potential for agriculture, using climate information services, will have a multiplier effect in catering for our youth, shared prosperity, and providing food, water and energy security, observed Ms. Denton.



Cultural entertainment Moroccan style!

### Boosting fertiliser use crucial to upping production

By Busani Bafana

**F**or Africa to feed itself it needs to increase the use of improved inputs such as fertilizer to address poor productivity and help farmers cope with challenges one of which is climate change.

Greater use of fertilizer is being touted as one of the tools in Africa's arsenal to fight poor agriculture productivity and food insecurity.

Fertilizer use in Sub Saharan Africa is on average below 10 kg/ha, says the International Fertilizer Industry Association (IFA). Among other things, the poor use of fertilizer is attributed to a lack of infrastructure, poor distribution networks as well as local blending. These factors ensure the cost of fertilizer remains significantly higher than in other regions of the world.

In addition to helping Africa boost the productivity of its farmers, fertilizer is strategic to helping the farmers cope with climate change.

"Fertilizers can have a positive impact on climate change," says Charlotte Hebebrand, IFA Director-General. "Because fertilizers contribute to plant growth, and plants absorb carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), fertilizers can

help reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to the atmosphere. The use of fertilizers directs carbon from the atmosphere to the plant, and then from the plant to the soil, where it can be trapped in soil organic matter."

According to the IPCC Fourth Assessment report, 89% of agriculture's future mitigation potential is based on soil carbon sequestration. Fertilizer use helps restore land degraded by deforestation through adding nutrients to the soil, promoting crop production, and thereby capturing carbon. Overall, when used appropriately, fertilizers are one of the tools that can help farmers become more resilient to climate change by increasing their production in a sustainable manner that reduces GHG emissions.

IFA, together with the African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP), has launched a campaign to persuade African leaders to act on input access to farmers for agricultural transformation and economic development. Prof. Richard Mkwandawire, AFAP Vice-President, says working with its many partners in Africa, AFAP is taking the campaign to the UN Committee on World Food Security in Rome this year.

### To feed the continent, Africa needs to 'walk the talk' – IGAD official

By Violet Mengo

**T**he Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has challenged Africa to put in place measures that will breathe life into the mantra of 'Africa feeding Africa'.

According to Mr. Zachary Atheru, the IGAD representative at the climate change conference in Morocco, it is possible for Africa to feed the continent but only when measures aimed at producing food are in place and embraced by all governments.

"If Africa wants to develop a green economy way, smart agriculture and taking into account productivity and mitigation, then Africa has to walk the talk," said Atheru.

He said that it is time for Africa to start sourcing money domestically in order to boost food production.

"Governments should show dedication towards Africa contributing to feeding the continent by putting aside a certain amount of money for development of the agricultural sector," he said.

Atheru said if all countries devoted 10% towards agriculture development and with proper strategic plans, then the continent will be a hive of food production in the next five years.

He said feeding Africa is also about implementing the strategies that are put on paper.

"There will be need to use climate information which can enhance agricultural production up to four times the previous yields," he said.





By Aaron Yancho Kaah

# ‘Refugees may be driven to Morocco by climate change’ - Minister

According to the authorities, most of the refugees seeking entry into Morocco as a means of gaining entry into Europe come from sub-Saharan African countries where agricultural production had drastically dropped due to scarce rainfall.

Experts see a clear correlation between the effects of climate change – such as irregular and reduced rainfall – and the migration of populations.

“When people feel a stress in their natural resources and they cannot adapt, they are many times forced to move to other places where they can find help”, Dr. Abdellatif Khattabi of the IPCC Adaptation Unit and National School of Forestry Engineering in Rabat told CCDA-Live.

Ahead of the forthcoming 20th Conference of Parties (CoP) in Lima, Peru, Ms. Hakima believes only concerted and collective action by the African Group to negotiate a global agreement that reduces emissions and helps African countries adapt can address concerns such as these.

Morocco is a leading exponent of food security, including through its two-phase ‘Green Plan’ programme, which is reportedly registering significant impact in improving agricultural production in the country.

The government has also constructed approximately 135 large dams and 100 mini dams to overcome water scarcity and ensure sustained agricultural production.



**T**he number of refugees heading to Morocco from sub-Saharan African countries due to climate-related issues at home is likely to hit the 50,000 mark in the next two years, a high ranking government official has told delegates at CCDA-IV, being held in Marrakech this week.

According to Ms. Hakima El-Haite, the Minister Delegate in the Ministry of Energy, Mining, Water and Environment in Morocco, the country received in excess of 35,000 refugees who had been displaced from neighboring countries due to climate-related disasters last year. The Government of Morocco says the number is likely rise to 50,000 by the year 2015.

“This is a new dimension that our country is facing and we must be unified in our actions to tackle these issues as a continent,” said Ms. El-Haite.

## Jury still out on GMOs

By Atayi Babs

**E**xperts attending the Climate conference in Marrakech, Morocco have restated Africa’s capacity to feed itself now and in the future without genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

They however warned that it will require increased investment in climate change research, development and innovation to make technology accessible and affordable for farmers, to enhance opportunities for easy access to agricultural finance and insurance, to facilitate trading and access to markets at all levels, and to create an enabling environment for private sector investment in the agricultural value chain.

Ms. Olushola Olayide, representative of the Africa Union Commission at the conference, stated that the absence of an official AU position on GMOs does not manifestly translate into an endorsement of the organisms as “the continent has recorded good success stories in local food production and conservation methods in Benin and Malawi. Such efforts are currently being up-scaled in Africa, and that will comfortably feed Africa.”

For Mr. Abdalla Hamdok, the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the GMO issue is “a debatable one as they are problems in addressing biodiversity and loss but its potential to create enhancement in productivity cannot be discounted.”

### Civil Society Concerns

Mithika Mwenda of the Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA), representing more than 800 African civil society organizations including small scale farmers, faith-based organizations and indigenous peoples at the Marrakech conference, declared emphatically that Africa can only feed Africa when we translate words into action, put in place mechanisms and frameworks aimed at putting more money into agriculture in line with the Abuja Declaration, and ensure extensive implementation of the CAADP framework as well as integrate climate change adaptation strategies into agriculture.

According to Mwenda, African civil society



is concerned about GMOs because the interest of the multinationals promoting them is at variance with the long-term interests of African farmers. “GMOs constitute a threat to the survival of smallholder farmers across Africa as [they] will create more poverty and food insecurity.”

### FAO Warning

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations recently warned African countries against the use of genetically modified organisms, insisting they are not needed to improve food production and may not be suitable for many countries in Africa.

According to Jose Graziano da Silva, FAO Director General: “Our position as FAO is not that we are against GMOs, but we are saying we don’t need them now.”

He further expressed concerns about the impact of GMOs on the environment as “we don’t know what will happen to areas of production and the crops.” He added: “It is risky for continents whose crops have GMOs. We want to ensure that proper security measures related to environment contamination are taken.”

GMOs are organisms whose genetic material have been altered using genetic engineering techniques and those modified include micro-organisms such as bacteria, yeast, insects, plants, fish and mammals.

## Seeking local technological solutions to climate challenges

By Friday Phiri

**A**s the climate discourse evolves, different ways are being sought and developed on how to tackle the phenomenon, which cuts across all developmental sectors.

Among the theories emerging is the technology transfer and innovation model, which largely refers to new ways of doing the same thing differently to achieve different results.

But how should it be done and whose responsibility should it be? This is one of the themes being discussed at the on-going climate change conference in Marrakech, Morocco.

Mr. Kebby Kabunda, a Humanitarian Programme Coordinator at Oxfam’s Zambia office, says the grassroots approach is the best model as it addresses the needs of the affected communities directly.

“At Oxfam, we believe in the grassroots approach to addressing impacts of climate change in relation to innovation and technology transfer. Our experience working with smallholder farmers in Zambia is that if indig-

enous knowledge and community needs are ignored, the risk of failure is very high”, he said.

“It is therefore important to take a holistic approach because adaptation has become a necessity and it cannot be achieved without innovations and technology transfer to enhance productivity”, he added.

Earlier, in a panel discussion chaired by Mr. Ken John of the African Development Bank (AFDB), there was widespread agreement that Africa needed strong political will and vision to translate innovation and technology transfer into action for enhanced agricultural growth.

The discussion panel – which included Dr. Mclay Kanyangarara of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa-COMESA and Dr. Youba Sokona of the South Centre in Swaziland among others – was unanimous on the need to develop technologies that answer to the needs of the local communities.

The discussants also underscored the importance of working in collaboration regarding climate smart technology financing to maximize on the available financing opportunities.

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# Climate Information Service aims to reduce Kenya's vulnerability

By Jane Kiiru

**Are scientific climate information services adequate and reliable in reducing vulnerability to climate change?**

This is a question that has been posed by communities in the Arid and Semi Arid lands of Kenya (ASALs), who acknowledge that they still continue using indigenous knowledge to monitor weather patterns. The communities in ASALs have conceded that due to weather changes and change in seasons, the indigenous methods are becoming less reliable and thus the need for alternative methods to disseminate climate information.

In a bid to ensure that 'Africa can feed Africa now: translating Climate Knowledge into action', the theme of this year's CCDA, organizations are devising ways of working with communities in disseminating climate information to end-users.

A case scenario in Kenya is the Kenya Meteorological Services (KMS) working together with partners under the Adaptation Consortium in developing user-driven Climate Information Service (CIS) to better support planning across county governments in Kenya as well as those whose lives and livelihoods are directly impacted by weather and climate.

The new service provides information about the weather and climate together with useful advice on actions to take in dealing with possible

impacts. During the plenary panel discussion session on 'Climate data, information and knowledge for agricultural production, water resources management and food security', Mr. Fetene Teshome noted the importance of mainstreaming climate information into decision-making. The statement was echoed by Ms. Anne Kitheka a farmer in Kitui who noted that "getting reliable timely information will be beneficial in planning her farm and what to plant", she said.

"Climate change is with us and we cannot run away from it. The only way we can survive through it is by adapting and we can only adapt with information about climate," said Mr. Ayub Shaka, Assistant Director of KMS.

The county climate information will be disseminated through local and regional radio, short messages services and secondary intermediaries who are respected, influential individuals in their counties of implementation. The intermediaries will ensure seasonal, monthly, weekly and daily forecasts and weather warnings support farming and livestock activities is being disseminated.

Drawn from across the County Government Administration and the Ministries of Agriculture, Livestock and Cooperation, as well as religious and community leaders and NGOs, the process aims to establish a network of 1,500 intermediaries in each county and so ensure one intermediary for every 500 people.

# Africa welcomes low carbon financing coalition

By Violet Mengo

**Governments, global business communities, finance institutions, and civil society organizations have formed a coalition that will see them mobilize approximately \$200 billion for financing projects aimed at reducing carbon emission and increasing climate resilience.**

Ms. Olushola Olayide, representing the African Union Commission (AUC), told delegates at CCDA-IV that the plan for the coalition is a build on earlier promises by wealthy nations to raise \$100 billion to help developing nations shift to renewable and adapt to extreme environmental conditions.

"World leaders at the just-concluded UN Summit on Climate Change in New York promised to curb greenhouse gas emissions, reduce and ultimately halt tropical deforestation, and increase the share of electric vehicles in cities," Ms. Olayide said.

Given that Africa's agriculture is yet to match the needs of a growing population, climate change is expected to complicate efforts in finding solutions to the problem as it causes severe disruptions to agricultural production systems, the environment, and



the biodiversity that supports food production systems.

"Africa must look into options that can turn climate challenges into opportunities, especially those that improve agricultural performance and enhance capacity to facilitate broad-based poverty reduction and food security for all," she said.

Ms. Olayide stressed that agriculture would remain a key driver of African economic growth, with a prime responsibility of providing employment opportunities for a rapidly growing and predominantly youthful population.

As such, an agricultural value chain therefore provided multiple entry points and pathways for advancing Africa's transformative agenda toward a green economy and low carbon development.

Empowering people with climate change information and knowledge was therefore critical to enhancing the performance and sustainability of African agriculture. Therein lay the relevance and key role of the ClimDev-Africa Programme, Ms. Olayide concluded.

## Interview

# Senegal takes great strides in reconfiguring agriculture

By Busani Bafana

**Senegal, a major producer of groundnuts in Africa, is harnessing research and integrative policies in helping farmers adapt to the impacts of climate change.**

Lying in the drought-prone Sahel region of Western Africa, Senegal battles with annual floods, persistent droughts and soil erosion which combine to reduce its capacity to produce enough food for its people. The second major rice importer in Africa after Nigeria, Senegal counts sugar cane, groundnuts and cotton as important cash crops in addition to primary crops of sorghum, rice millet and maize.

A major government research and development programme focusing on the development of better crop varieties, efficient water use and management and better technologies for farmers is helping the country turn around its food fortunes.

Abdoulaye Balde, Senegal's Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, and previously in charge of the agriculture and planning portfolio, spoke to CCDA-Live's Busani Bafana about his country's experiences with climate change in agriculture.

**Q: What are the environmental problems faced by Senegal?**

A: We are actually feeling the impact of climate change across all the sectors of our economy in terms of droughts, floods and erosion and pollution. But our major challenge is land degradation which has reduced our production capacity. We get little rain which sometimes is not enough. Over time it becomes difficult and this is a result of climate change.

**Q: What is the government doing about it?**

A: Government has implemented a programme of sustainable land development. This has helped us improve the potential of the land which is threatened by acidification and salinity as well as the pressure of people on the land.

Research is fundamental for the question of climate change. Through research we have been able to develop short cycle rice varieties that are also salt tolerant at a certain level as rice is the principal food in Senegal. Research has been fun-



Mr. Abdoulaye Balde, Senegalese Minister of Environment & Sustainable Development

damental in helping our people to adapt to climate change. We also have short cycle maize and bean varieties as we depend on rain fed agriculture. 80 percent of our groundnut produce depends on rain-fed agriculture. We have another programme on water management which in the long term will help support food security for farmers.

Currently we are exploiting 10% of our surface water and 15% of our ground water resources. We have more water and this programme of water management will ensure that people produce food all year round. Right now farmers work for only three months. With more water, it is possible to increase revenue and have food

security so that our farmers can sell the excess.

**Q: What are the success stories of Senegal in dealing with climate change adaptation?**

A: It is too soon to evaluate the programme of adaptation. This year we have started research on beans and sesame to help farmers adapt. Our National Agronomic research Fund (NARF) under the Institute of Agricultural Research in Senegal (ISRA) is helping farmers with the development of short season maize variety. Through research, farmers have been able to grow better groundnuts. This is a research success in that this year we had rain for two months but the harvest helped farmers cover their needs.

Your advice for Africa in the countdown to the climate change negotiation in Lima?

Africa needs to have an interactive agenda to harmonise our position on the impact of climate change so that we can demand that industrialised countries responsible for the greenhouse has emissions contribute the necessary finance for adaptation. This is a question of equity and justice but it also needs good leadership from Africa.

Also there is need for country support for research programmes in agriculture in order to benefit from adaptation and that we can manage technology and promote innovation to deal with the challenge of climate change.



## VOX POP

# “We have to go to Lima and Paris with a united voice”

Dr. Tolbert Thomas Jallah, a representative of the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA) from Liberia, spoke to Kofi Adu Domfeh of CCDA-Live on the journey from Marrakech to Lima and Paris.

**Q: What was the expectation of a civil society umbrella body like PACJA?**

A: The agenda is to build the awareness and to raise critical issues on behalf of the citizens and one of those issues that we want to voice here is how to adequately position small scale farmers so that we are able to feed Africa. The impact of climate change on local communities, those who produce food for us, is a major concern.

**Q: Going by Conference discussions so far, do you get the feel that this objective is being realized?**

A: It seems we are still far away from the realization of our objectives and even the commitments and pledges that are being made by our leaders. It is disappointing that our leaders are yet to fulfill to those commitments and we want to hold them accountable by raising a united voice by calling on them to sure that pledges, commitment are brought to realization. We are disappointed that the pledges made to curtail the impacts of climate change by the international community are also weak.

**Q: Has it been worthwhile meeting as a continent to deliberate on issues of climate change in relations to agriculture and food production? What is your level of satisfaction?**

A: At the moment we cannot be satisfied with the Conference at all cost because it has been

business as usual. We've heard from the experts over and over again but we want to hear that the commitments have come to reality. We cannot be satisfied until the situation of small scale farmers have changed. We cannot be satisfied until our governments have made those pledges to commit 10% of their annual budgets to agriculture reality. We cannot be satisfied until the money to finance climate adaptation is reaching local communities.

**Q: What then do we need to do as a continent to achieve something significant as we head for COP in Lima in December and Paris in 2015?**

A: We need to go to these conferences with a united voice and an Africa position to ensure that Africa must have the solution for Africa. We need to ensure that our colleagues from the West, the industrialized nations, will see reason to accept their historical responsibility as polluters and they will not infringe on us as a continent to pay back what we have done little to create.

**Q: In what ways do you expect African negotiators to drive this goal?**

A: We need to ensure that Africa and African negotiators will be stable at the table and that they'll continue to listen to civil society and the voice of civil society will be heard with the help of our negotiators. As we end this phase by 2015, we need to reach an agreement and this must be a global agreement that must have the support of all countries, including the industrial countries who are the major polluters. We want to see our people move from abject poverty to live in prosperity in a continent of abundant natural resources.

## Feature

# How a farmer cooperative in Rwanda helped increase food production

By Steven Nsamaza

**B**efore the cock crows and darkness has cleared, Jean Damascene Nkuzwenimana would wake up and head to his small plot of land for a day's hard labour – working the whole morning up to midday. Year-in year-out, the produce from his plot would only feed his family leaving nothing for paying his bills, his children's healthcare or even school fees.

But in 2007, Nkuzwenimana and his fellow farmers in Nyagatare District, Eastern Rwanda were encouraged by the Government to form a cooperative so they would be supported as a group. At the inception of the cooperative on rented farms, they started by producing 1.5 tonnes of maize per hectare of which 20 percent could be lost in the post harvest handling.

However, in 2008 the government of Rwanda – with support from non-governmental organisations – started supporting the group through trainings and advisory support, a trend that saw the harvests steadily increase. Nkuzwenimana started producing as much as 2.5 metric tonnes per hectare by 2010. And with time, as they improved their farming practises, group members were able to produce up to three tonnes per hectare in 2012.

Nkuzwenimana's experience provides a strong indication that 'Africa can feed Africa now', which is the theme for CCDA-IV.

The conference in Marrakech has been told that Africa has massive potential to feed itself and the rest of the world – but only if right interventions are put in place at the right time. The continent accounts for more than 60% of the world's arable land.

Mr. Abdalla Hamdok, the Deputy Executive Secretary UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), told the conference that African leaders were fully conscious of the need to act to address the challenges posed by food insecurity to their countries. He pointed to their pledge to increase investment in agriculture to 10% from their national budgets, as well as to take actions to address climate change, including transfer of affordable technologies for adaptation and mitigation to allow Africa space for sustainable development.

By adopting the provisions of the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP programme), added Mr. Hamdok, countries such as Ghana, Ethiopia and Rwanda were able to register remarkable progress in the area of food production.

“Rwanda, one of the first countries to adopt the

## View from the Newsroom

# Milking the Cow



By Sellina Sheena Nkwanani

**M**any Malawians will probably laugh at the mention of the ‘one cow per family’ initiative. It is not because they have a great sense of humour, but because they still remember the failed initiative launched by former President Joyce Banda.

President Banda had dreamt about how the much-touted initiative would uplift the lives of poor Malawian farmers from abject poverty but the implementation method was questioned and quashed by many who believed it was a mere political gimmick aimed at gaining political capital.

With no scientific or social research done to prove the initiative's potential to transform the lives of poor farmers, maybe the laughing is justified. Political nuances overshadowed a rather good initiative.

However, in Rwanda, the initiative is said to have worked wonders in transforming the lives of

poor farmers by enabling them to increase agricultural production, food stock, nutrition and income of the beneficiaries.

How did Rwanda managed to achieve this?

Speaking during a panel discussion at CCDA-IV on enhancing Africa's capacity to mobilize and access climate finance and investment for climate resilient agricultural transformation, Professor Jean Nduwamungu of the University of Rwanda said proper procedures are followed in identifying the right beneficiaries and this is done at the local government level.

“The reason for this is that we don't want to just give cows to anyone but only those with capacity to feed the cow,” he said.

Farmers' enthusiasm is also one driving force for the success of the project.

Nduwamungu added that from one cow farmers are able to get manure as well as milk – which they sell. From the proceeds they are able to buy other foodstuffs, making them food sufficient.

Farmers are given one cow. After the cow gives birth to a female calf, that calf has to be passed on to another family. The rest of the offspring remain with the donor family.

With the majority of Africa agriculture being practiced at the subsistence level, Nduwamungu said the initiative is one way of practicing sustainable smart agriculture because farmers usually use manure as fertilizer hence reducing the use of chemical fertilizer, which is hazardous to the soil and environment.

However, Nduwamungu stressed the need for countries to invest in research for development especially in the agriculture sector.

“No country can develop without research. Governments need to invest in research in order to develop agriculture as this will help government and policymakers to make decisions that are informed by research findings,” he said.



programme in 2007, was able within a five-year period to raise its maize harvest by 213% - from 0.8 tonnes per hectare to 2.5 tonnes per hectare,” Mr. Hamdok noted.

Maize has become leading crop in production and ranks first among pulse and grain crop production in Rwanda. In 2011, 525,679 tonnes of maize were produced from 223,414 hectares with an average yield of 2.35 t/ha, according to 2012 data from the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda. With further intervention, experts at the climate change conference in Morocco say this figure can increase three fold.

However, increasing agriculture productivity alone is not sufficient to ensure food security. Mr. Hamdok says that agriculture must gradually transition from subsistence agriculture to agriculture as a business in order to achieve the objective of ending hunger and eliminating poverty.

Transforming agriculture into a more dynamic, commercial-oriented and competitive sector will improve productivity as well as create jobs, generate incomes and enhance livelihoods. This is the surest way in which agriculture can contribute to rural development, food security and poverty eradication.

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