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Centre for African Leaders in Agriculture Launches Inaugural Leadership Programme with Virtual Leadership Forum

Inaugural cohort of 80 leaders from eight countries across sub-Saharan Africa kick-off 16-month programme focused on leadership in Africa's food security and sustainability

NAIROBI, Kenya: August 19, 2021 – With Africa's food security and sustainability playing a central role in the continent's economic growth and adaptation to climate change, the Centre for African Leaders in Agriculture (CALA), an initiative led by the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), officially launched its first cohort of 80 leaders from eight focus countries across sub-Saharan Africa. To support agriculture leaders deliver on policy priorities across the continent, this week CALA's inaugural *Advanced Leadership Programme: Collaborative Leadership for Africa's Food Security and Sustainability* kicked off with individuals from government, the private sector and civil society from Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

CALA has been established with funding from the German Development Cooperation (GIZ) through the KfW Development Bank and led by AGRA in collaboration with the African Management Institute (AMI), the Centre's lead implementer and learning partner, and USAID's Policy LINK, which has led the design and rollout of the leadership programme's coaching component. The first cohort of 80 leaders from across government, the private sector, and civil society were selected from nearly 1,000 applicants. An application process for the programme's second cohort will open in early 2022.

CALA's first three-day Leadership Forum held virtually, began this past Monday with live remarks from AGRA's Board Chair and former Prime Minister of Ethiopia, H.E. Hailemariam Dessalegn, AGRA's President Dr. Agnes Kalibata, AMI's CEO Rebecca Harrison and USAID Policy LINK's Regional Director Robert Ouma.

"The complexity of agriculture transformation requires collaborative and coordinated effort amongst all stakeholders, and that is why these kinds of initiatives (like CALA) are important," noted AGRA's Board Chair, H.E. Hailemariam Dessalegn in his remarks.

AGRA President, Dr. Agnes Kalibata added, "To move steadily towards an inclusive Agriculture Transformation in Africa, we need strong networks of leaders who can

learn together and from one another on how to advance our food systems in a way that is inclusive, equitable, sustainable and climate sensitive. CALA is an opportunity to bring agriculture leaders together to share knowledge across government, private sector and civil society, to support the implementation of agriculture sector priorities and hone leadership skills with the aim of enhancing the delivery of our commitments for the sector to contribute to ending hunger and malnutrition, poverty and improving livelihoods.”

The 16-month [Advanced Leadership Programme](#) learning journey is designed for established and emerging sector leaders spearheading priority country-level agriculture strategies to effect change. The programme focuses on developing the competencies of leaders in four core interrelated dimensions, including management skills for improved implementation, honing of leadership skills, institutional development and over time, systems change where leaders can effect change on a broader scale. The programme will also profile environmental sustainability practices which contribute to sustainable farming, food production, and resilient food systems in the face of increasing climate change impacts.

“For transformation, we know that it is collaborative leadership that will unlock results and progress for the continent in terms of food security and sustainability. Without strong and collaborative leadership, good ideas go unrealised, plans stagnate, and ultimately the opportunity for transformation can slip away,” said AMI CEO and Co-Founder, Rebecca Harrison.

“Good leadership is a factor of production, and in Africa, we need good, inspired leadership to transform our agricultural sector through motivation and influence,” said Policy LINK Regional Director Robert Ouma. “To support them in their learning and growth as leaders of their countries’ agricultural transformation, CALA’s leadership coaching will draw upon successful models of executive and team coaching.”

In addition to kicking off their practical leadership programme with facilitators and coaches, the inaugural cohort heard from agriculture Permanent Secretaries during a roundtable to discuss sector implementation issues, and from sector experts who work together to unblock implementation challenges. Speakers included:

- Hixonia Nyasulu, AGRA Board Member and Chairperson AECF;
- Jean Claude Musabyimana, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI), Rwanda;
- Mrs. Karima Babangida, Director: Federal Department of Agriculture (FDA) of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Department (FMARD), Nigeria;
- Erica Maganga, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, Malawi;
- Eden Getachew, Centre of Government and Delivery Lead, Tony Blair Institute for Global Change (TBI)
- Joyce Nyamweya, Executive Director at The Results for Africa Institute

During its first three years, CALA’s Advanced Leadership Programme will work with 160 participants from the eight focus countries. Participants will engage in Leadership Forums held once every four months, regular virtual learning labs, elective and scheduled online courses which will highlight adaptive leadership skills, case studies of agriculture transformation and performance management skills to enhance implementation skills. Over the course of the 16 month programme, CALA’s participants will partner with professional leadership coaches in a high-impact process to harness the individual’s and the team’s strengths and experiences

to catalyze learning, growth and results. Participants will also develop Action Learning Projects derived from participants' ongoing work priorities and opportunities to apply learning from the program in real-time to on-the-job challenges within country-level agricultural priority programs. Information about CALA's Advanced Leadership Programme and upcoming application dates can be found at <http://cala.agra.org>.

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About AGRA

Founded in 2006, the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), is an African-led African-based organization that seeks to catalyze Agriculture Transformation in Africa. AGRA is focused on putting smallholder farmers at the center of the continent's growing economy by transforming agriculture from a solitary struggle to survive into farming as a business that thrives. As the sector that employs the majority of Africa's people, nearly all of them small-scale farmers, AGRA recognizes that developing smallholder agriculture into a productive, efficient, and sustainable system is essential to ensuring food security, lifting millions out of poverty, and driving equitable growth across the continent.

For more information visit: www.agra.org

About AMI

AMI enables ambitious businesses and leaders across Africa to thrive, through practical tools and training. We equip leaders with tools to build their business, help companies train their teams and run work readiness programmes for young people starting their careers. AMI's programmes combine online and mobile tools with interactive workshops and on-the-job practice and support. During the COVID period AMI is delivering fully virtual programming across the continent.

AMI has worked with a range of businesses and organisations to support entrepreneurs and managers build and grow their businesses across Africa including Uber, Nestle, Radisson Blu, Mastercard Foundation, USAID, Shell Foundation and Equity Bank. AMI has directly trained over 30,000 people in over 35 countries. AMI has offices in Nairobi, Kenya, Kigali, Rwanda, and Johannesburg, South Africa.

For more information on AMI visit: www.africanmanagers.org

About Policy LINK

Policy LINK is a global Feed the Future program to advance leadership and collaboration for better policy systems. Feed the Future is America's global hunger and food security initiative, led by USAID. With regional activities in East Africa as well as an in-country presence in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and South Sudan, Policy LINK supports individuals and organizations to work better together by centering the people driving policy change, the platforms that bring them together, and the participatory learning that they generate.

For more information about Policy LINK, please visit: www.policylinkglobal.org



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