

**PSM Plenary Session – State of Food Security and Nutrition in the
World 2021, its policy implications and the role of CFS in the
context of COVID-19**

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Good [morning / afternoon], my name is Lucy Muchoki, I am the CEO of the Pan African Agribusiness and Agroindustry Consortium PanACC. At PanACC, we are promoting sustainable Agribusiness in Africa through enhanced productivity and competitiveness at National, Regional and Global Markets. I am honored to speak today on behalf of the Private Sector Mechanism.

The 2021 SOFI Report continues to expose the glaring realities in our food systems that must be addressed for transformation to occur:

- COVID-19 continues to deepen the inequalities in our food systems with women being disproportionately affected. The practical and game-changing solutions coming out of various policy processes including the Food Systems Summit and the ongoing development of the voluntary guidelines on women's empowerment need to be implemented. Conviction and urgency are critical to removing the underlying systemic, cultural norms and barriers to gender equality.
- For most rural poor, agricultural technologies, data, and innovations are still out of reach. Yet these have enormous potential for building resilient food systems. Disruptions in food supply chains during the COVID-19 pandemic have underscored the need for greater investments in digital agriculture. The public and private sector must

work together to drive innovation, invest in infrastructure, promote data sharing and transparency. These must be hinged in innovation policies which will serve as catalysts and frameworks for innovative technology.

- Addressing external drivers of food insecurity such as low productivity and inefficient food supply chains requires investments in Micro -Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). In the case of Africa, MSMEs account for the largest share of businesses and are key contributors to job creation for the rapidly increasing youth population. In specific, agribusiness MSMEs are the main players in the provision, supply, distribution of agricultural produce and food for human consumption thus ensuring Food Nutrition and Security for the African population. It is thus critical to address the challenges that face MSMEs. Investments must be made in increasing financing, adequate technical capacity, access to pre-established markets, strong policies, and political stability.

Thank you.