



EMPOWER WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE INITIATIVE PRESS RELEASE

HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE ON THE INITIATIVE TO EMPOWER WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE (EWA)

Dakar - Senegal, November 6th, 2013 - Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS), Gender is my Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) Network and the **African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)**, in partnership with **Africa 2.0** and the **African Media Initiative (AMI)** will conduct a high level dialogue on the initiative to Empower Women in Agriculture (EWA) in Africa.

The origin of the initiative also emanated from the conference "*3 F (Food- Fuel-Finance) Crises in Africa: Women at the Forefront*". The conference was organized by FAS in December 2011 in Dakar, resulted in recommendations placing **women at the heart of solutions for sustainable development in Africa**.

The EWA initiative was set up in response to studies which revealed that African women account for approximately 70% of all Sub-Saharan Africa's agricultural workers, and roughly 80% of actors in the food processing value chain. The studies further highlighted that women own less than 1% of the land and benefit from only 1% of total agriculture credit in Africa. The realization that women play a vital role in agriculture and nutrition, yet faces significant challenges. As prompted the EWA initiative partners to focus on building the capacity of women farmers to maximize their critical role in the agricultural sector to promote their fair access to agricultural inputs (land, financing, and technology); thus improving their livelihoods and amplifying their contributions to Africa's development.

EWA initiative was officially launched on the sidelines of the 19th AU Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 15th July 2012 and co-chaired by H.E. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President of Liberia and H.E. Blaise Compaore, President of Burkina Faso. Several African Heads of State and Governments, have been identified as Champions for promoting women's empowerment in agriculture in their countries, in support of the EWA initiative under the leadership of H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf - President of Liberia. Among them, H.E. Paul Kagame - President of Rwanda, H.E. Macky Sall - President of Senegal, H.E. Ismail Omar Guelleh - President of Djibouti and H.E. Blaise Compaoré - President of Burkina Faso. Key actors of the private sector in Africa also accepted to patron and support the EWA initiative, such as Mo Ibrahim – Chairman of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation and Mostafa Terrab – Chairman of Office Cherifien des Phosphates (OCP) Group.

Based on the preliminary results of the ACBF baseline studies and research, a presentation was made on the progress of the mapping survey in January 2013, on the sideline of the 20th AU Summit, under the chairmanship of His Excellency Olusegun Obasanjo.

A High-Level Dialogue will be held on **November 8th, 2013 at 8:00 am at the African Union Headquarter** in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) on the margins of the **Mo Ibrahim Governance week** scheduled from November 7th to 10th.

This High-level Dialogue is meant to be a follow-up to the recommendations from the 20th AU Summit on EWA, in collaboration with Africa 2.0, the dialogue will be held during November 6th to 8th to increase awareness on the importance of the initiative.

Dr. Frannie Léautier, Executive Secretary, African Capacity Building (ACBF) will be a key speakers of this dialogue which will also include representatives of the **African Development Bank (AfDB)**, the **United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)**, the **World Bank (WB)**, the **African Union Commission (AUC)** and the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**.

The media would have the opportunity to address the panelists at the end of the dialogue from 9.30 to 9.50 am.



For further information, please contact:

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About ACBF: Established in 1991, the African Capacity Building Foundation is the outcome of collaboration between African governments and the international donor community. Its mission is to build sustainable human and institutional capacity for sustainable growth and poverty reduction in Africa. ACBF's vision is for Africa to be recognized for its socio-political and economic capabilities and endowments – a continent with effective institutions and policies acquired through sustained investment in people and institutions.

<http://www.acbf-pact.org>

About GIMAC: Gender is my Agenda Campaign Network was designed during the 6th Women's Pre-Summit Consultative meeting held in Tripoli (Libya) in order to collectively advocate, on one side, for the implementation of the AU *Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA)* by the Heads of State, and on the other side, to inform and mobilize the civil society around the SDGEA. The Campaign was officially launched in June 2006, at the 8th Women's Pre-Summit held in Banjul, Gambia.

<http://www.genderismyagenda.com>

About FAS: Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) created in 1996 to "*mobilize the power of women to forge peace & drive prosperity in Africa,*" along with the core values of solidarity, inclusiveness, commitment and accountability. Its main objective is to engender peace processes for the attainment of human security and durable peace in Africa.

<http://www.fasngo.org>

About MIF: Mo Ibrahim Foundation (MIF) was established in 2006 with a focus on the critical importance of leadership and governance in Africa. The Foundation, which is a non-grant making organization, helps to define, assess and enhance governance and leadership in Africa using the following tools: Ibrahim Index of African Governance, Ibrahim Prize, Ibrahim Forum, Fellowships and Scholarships.

<http://www.moibrahimfoundation.org>

About Africa 2.0: Africa 2.0 is a Pan-African Civil Society organization founded as a result of the first Africa Leadership Retreat held in South Africa in July 2010. Its purpose is to influence thoughtful change in Africa by bringing together thinkers and actors from the private sector and civil society to develop and implement practical strategies that will produce positive outcomes for millions of Africans.

<http://www.africa2point0.org>

About AMI: The African Media Initiative (AMI) is a pan-African programme that seeks to strengthen the continent's private and independent media sector from an owner and operator perspective to promote democratic governance, social development and economic growth. AMI's overall goal is to promote the development of pluralistic media as a necessary and critical ingredient of democratic governance, as well as economic and human development in Africa.

<http://africanmediainitiative.org>