AFRICAN UNION
INTERAFRICAN BUREAU
FOR ANIMAL RESOURCES

FACT SHEET

Africa's Feed and Fodder Crisis in Numbers

A data snapshot of the scale, drivers, and implications of feed and fodder shortages across Africa

By AU IBAR

The big picture

Africa's feed and fodder crisis is not a marginal livestock issue. It is a continent-wide structural constraint affecting livestock productivity, food and nutrition security, resilience, jobs, and rural incomes. Recent RAFFS evidence shows that the sector remains under-structured, weakly coordinated, and highly exposed to the combined shocks of climate change, COVID-19, and conflict.

By the numbers

- **42 of 55 AU Member States** responded to the continental RAFFS survey, showing that feed and fodder stress is a broad African concern rather than a localized problem.
- **339 respondents** participated in the survey, giving the project one of the strongest recent multi-country snapshots of feed and fodder constraints across the continent.
- **6 core countries** were selected for deeper assessment: **Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, Uganda, and Zimbabwe**. These were chosen because livestock plays a major role in livelihoods and because coordinated action and investment could be mobilized quickly.
- **19 stakeholder categories** were covered in the continental survey, helping capture evidence from across the value chain rather than from a single actor group.
- **60–70% of livestock production costs** are accounted for by feed and feeding. This means feed scarcity and high feed prices directly undermine profitability, productivity, and the affordability of livestock-sourced foods.
- **Kenya: 55 million metric tonnes of dry matter needed vs 46 million available** This leaves a **9 million metric tonne shortfall**, illustrating how serious feed deficits can be even in relatively strong livestock economies.
- **97% of livestock rely on traditional grazing systems** while only **3% use improved pastures**, showing how dependent much of the sector remains on fragile, climate-sensitive systems.
- **5 of 6 assessed countries ranked below 50% at project initiation**: In the RAFFS country ratings, Nigeria (35%), Uganda (35%), Somalia (39%), and Kenya (44%) were rated unstructured, while Zimbabwe (51.5%) was only marginally above 50% and described as emerging. This highlights how weakly organized the sector remains across multiple contexts.
- **24% of youth in Africa's agri-food systems** are involved in the animal resources sector. Since feed accounts for such a large share of production costs, feed and fodder systems are also a major, though poorly documented, youth employment issue.

- **USD 4.5 billion** is the value of Kenya's feed and fodder sector investment profile, showing that the crisis is not only about shortages, but also about an under-recognized economic opportunity.
- **USD 228 million** in fodder export-related deals were presented through Nigeria's 2024 Agriculture Summit deal room, demonstrating that where systems begin to organize, investment appetite emerges quickly.

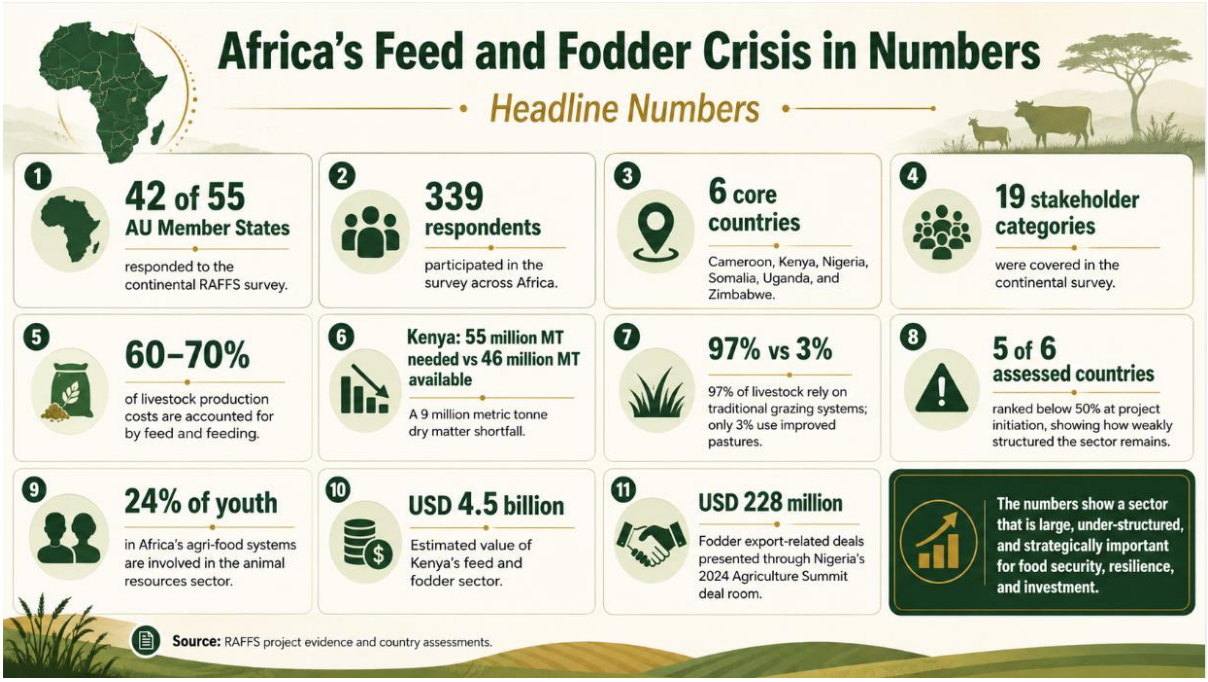


Figure 1: Africa's Feed and Fodder Crisis in numbers

What the numbers tell us

Three patterns stand out.

First, the crisis is continental in scope. Responses from 42 AU Member States and evidence from six in-depth country assessments show that feed and fodder shortages are not isolated events. They reflect deeper structural weaknesses in data systems, policy visibility, market organization, and investment.

Second, the crisis is economically destabilizing. When feed accounts for 60–70% of livestock production costs, every disruption to feed supply reverberates through the entire value chain — from producers to processors to consumers. The annual reports explicitly note that the Triple C crises reduced feed production, disrupted imports, increased prices, and contributed to closures of firms processing livestock-sourced foods.

Third, the crisis is also a systems and policy problem. The project's own findings describe widespread policy blindness and low institutional support despite feed and fodder being central to livestock sector performance. Country-level policy reviews found fragmentation and incoherence across all six countries.

Why this matters

Feed and fodder shortages do not stop at livestock. They affect:

1. **Food and nutrition security:** Low feed availability reduces livestock productivity and contributes to lower availability and affordability of milk, meat, and other livestock-sourced foods. In Zimbabwe, for example, chronic feed shortages help drive high milk production costs and contribute to poor dietary access among low-income households.

2. **Livelihoods and business continuity:** The project's early evidence shows that feed deficits undermine livestock production, erode livelihoods, and disrupt downstream enterprises.
3. **Women's participation:** In Zimbabwe, women in the feed and fodder value chain were found to face high barriers to markets, capital, and participation, showing that the crisis also has gendered dimensions.
4. **Resilience and preparedness**: The crisis has exposed the weakness of relying on reactive, drought-triggered responses rather than regularized data, feed balances, and institutional coordination. The project repeatedly points to the need for feed inventories, feed balances, and multi-actor data systems.

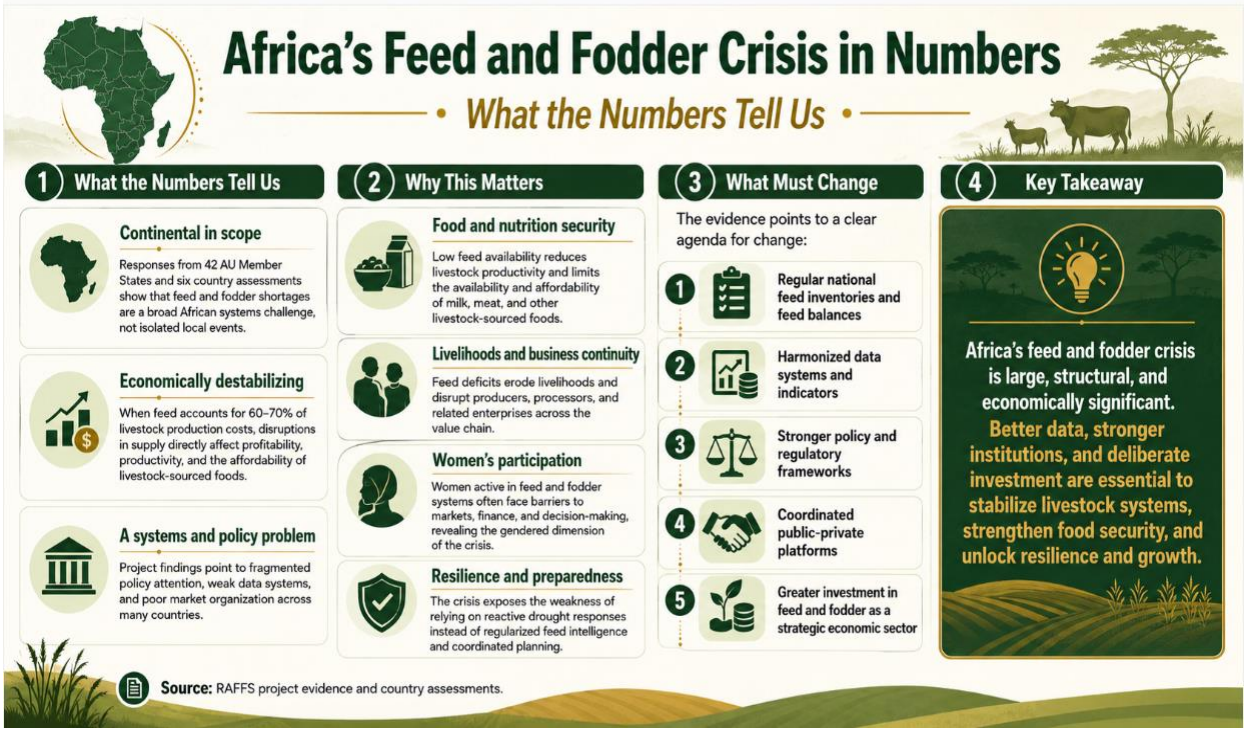
What must change

The numbers point to a clear agenda.

Africa needs to move from fragmented, ad hoc responses to **structured feed intelligence**. That means:

i) regular national feed inventories and feed balances,
ii) harmonized data systems and indicators,
iii) stronger policy and regulatory frameworks,
iv) more coordinated public-private platforms,
v) and greater investment in feed and fodder as a strategic economic sector.

The evidence also shows that where the sector is better organized, opportunities open up — whether in investment profiling, contracting, commercialization, or data-driven planning. Kenya's USD 4.5 billion sector profile and Nigeria's USD 228 million export-related deals suggest that the crisis is not only about shortage. It is also about missed growth, missed jobs, and missed resilience gains.



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