

Towards Africa's Agricultural Transformation

# Impact



2016 AGRF Bumper Edition



AFRICAN  
GREEN  
REVOLUTION  
FORUM 2016  
NAIROBI, KENYA





### AFRICAN LED

We understand that African farmers need uniquely African solutions designed to meet their specific environmental and agricultural needs to sustainably boost production and gain access to rapidly growing agriculture markets.



### FARMER CENTRED

AGRA invests in our continent's family farmers—millions of hardworking men and women typically farming on less than a hectare of land. They are the heart of African agriculture, our economies and our future.



### PARTNERSHIP DRIVEN

All of AGRA's work is conducted through partnerships—with farmers, farmer organizations, agricultural researchers, national governments, businesses, civil society groups, philanthropies and donors



### IMPROVED AGRONOMY

Since inception, AGRA has focused on improving access to inputs, chiefly high quality seeds and properly formulated fertilizers—mineral and organic—that are the foundation of a successful farm.



### AGRO-DEALERS

AGRA has trained and certified more than 25,000 agro-dealers in technical & business management in 12 countries in Africa.



### FARMER GROUPS

9900 groups have been trained in governance, group dynamics, leadership and business development since 2006.



### FARMERS SOLUTIONS

AGRA is building on its experience, expertise and partnerships to help farmers confront local constraints to production and emerging threats such as climate change.



### TECHNOLOGY

We support innovative approaches that connect smallholder farmers to information for production, post harvest management and access to markets. This includes investments in technology enterprises to deliver the necessary in scale solutions.



### FINANCE

AGRA is committed to unlocking financing for small agricultural businesses by pursuing initiatives to overcome financiers perceptions of risks and returns from agriculture in Africa.



### INVESTMENT FUNDS

More than 9000 new agribusinesses have emerged from funding given by the African Enterprise Challenge Fund - a partnership between AGRA, DFID, Australian Aid, SIDA, DANIDA, The Netherlands, IFAD and C-GAP



### YOUTH

Unlocking Africa's agricultural potential will also unlock its development. Engaging Africa's youth bulge is integral to this. AGRA is empowering youth involvement in Agriculture value chain enterprises and investment in providing markets for farmer produce.



### WOMEN

The focus of our work is in growing and sustaining the economic potential of family farm households with women playing important and significant roles as catalysts for the intensification transformation.



# AGRA's Package of Interventions

## Inputs

AGRA is supporting and partnering with both the public and private sectors to develop the systems that ensure sustained availability, delivery and adoption of improved seed and fertilizers, with a particular focus on getting these inputs into the hands of women farmers. AGRA believes that once a farmer can profitably invest in seeds, fertilizers and associated good agronomic practices, the market becomes the real driver of agricultural transformation.

Through Farmer Solutions, AGRA is building on its experience, expertise and partnerships to develop new crop varieties and new soil and crop management techniques, to help farmers confront local constraints to production and emerging threats such as climate change.



## Agriculture Enterprise & Finance

AGRA is working to develop the capacity of local agri-businesses to access markets, support local and national financial institutions to provide more affordable financing to common groups of smallholder farmers and local SMEs and transform their farms and businesses into sustainable and profitable enterprises. In its interventions AGRA catalyzes public investments impact in supporting farmers and leveraging private sector investment in agriculture to build sustainability and contribute to overall economic development.

Critical to this is the participation of both in providing solutions for Public Private Partnerships in the agriculture sector. AGRA has a clear role in catalyzing and facilitating the realization of public and private investments in specific value chains where the private sector has shown interest by helping to get these value chains functioning efficiently.



## Policies

At the heart of our approach is the technical support to the implementation of The Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) goals, helping countries hold themselves accountable to their farmers. This includes assisting countries in the harmonization of national agriculture development plans and effective national level engagement to drive agriculture transformation.

As agricultural development is significantly influenced by national level policies, investments, and institutional arrangements, AGRA has developed custom-tailored business plans for individual countries and within each agro-ecology. By Analyzing and advocating for critical policy reforms, AGRA is working with governments to strengthen national capacities to deepen and sustain the gains made through policy decisions and encourage significant investments of public resources into the agriculture sector.



## Process, Storage & Markets

AGRA is promoting interventions that enhance the resiliency of the production system to climate change and climate variability. This includes developing more efficient marketing systems, introducing post-harvest technologies to close yield gaps and ensure farmers can sustainably sell quality product to consumer markets.



### ENTERPRISE

AGRA is dedicated to changing the reality of agriculture in Africa, from farming as a solitary struggle to survive, to farming as a business that thrives.

### CAPACITY BUILDING

623 specialists in plant breeding and soil management have been educated at MSc- and PhD-level to support national research organizations and to build capacity for agricultural systems across countries.



### MARKETS

AGRA is developing market opportunities and access to enable hard working farming families to lift themselves out of poverty by opening functional and reliable revenue streams from their high yields.

### RESILIENCE

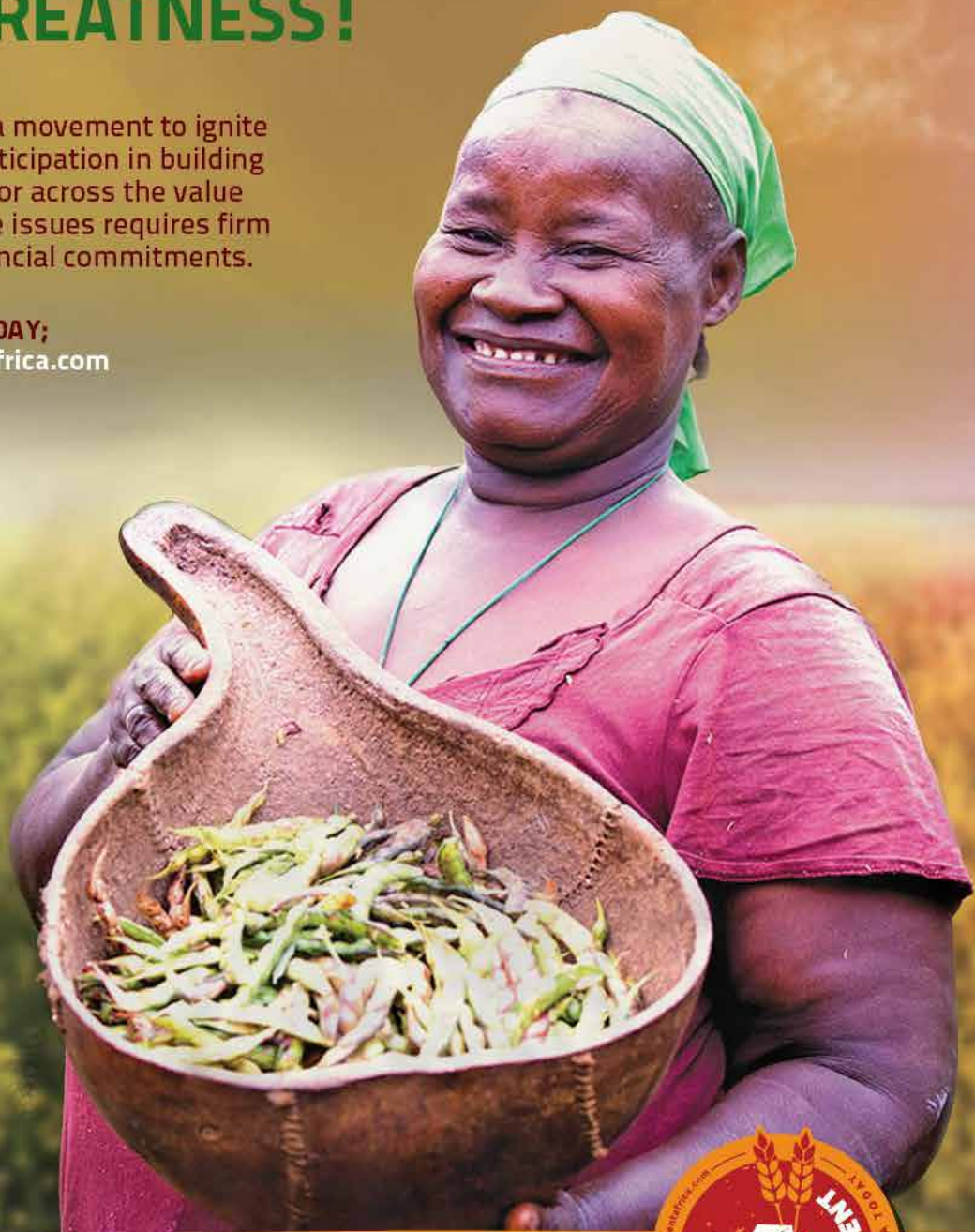
AGRA's focus is helping farmers use environmentally sustainable practices. We are integrating our interventions, implementing them simultaneously for targeted groups of farmers in targeted countries, with the goal of fundamentally transforming their lives.



# A REVOLUTION IN AFRICAN AGRICULTURE IS ARISING-**BE PART OF THE GREATNESS!**

"Seize the Moment" is a movement to ignite change, growth and participation in building Africa's agriculture sector across the value chain. Addressing these issues requires firm political, policy and financial commitments.

**JOIN THE MOVEMENT TODAY;**  
[www.seizethemomentafrica.com](http://www.seizethemomentafrica.com)



# The President's Note



**T**he 2016 African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) hosted in Nairobi by the Government of Kenya, AGRA and its partners, delivered a massive infusion of both financial, political and policy commitments to African farmers and agriculture businesses on a continent eager for new, more inclusive opportunities for economic growth.

The Forum attracted more than 1,500 delegates from 40 countries, including African Heads of State, global business leaders, government ministers, farmers, agribusiness firms, financial institutions, NGOs, civil society groups and scientists, as well as international development and technical partners. They pledged more than US \$30 billion dollars in investments over the next 10 years to increase production, income and employment for smallholder farmers and local African agriculture businesses.

This is the largest single package of financial commitments ever delivered to African agriculture. It is backed by the broadest coalition ever assembled to support a transition from subsistence to income-earning agriculture in Africa. The AGRF partners concluded the meeting by embracing a detailed action

plan that commits them to achieving specific milestones over the next 16 months as part of the “Seize the Moment” campaign that served as the theme for AGRF 2016.

“Seize the Moment” was first launched in April at the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Plan (CAADP) Partnership Platform in Accra, Ghana. It has quickly become a rallying point for accelerating work around the African Union’s 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). I am very excited about the prospects of an agricultural renaissance for Africa. We are setting off on the journey to bring it home. It is time.

Agnes Kalibata  
**AGRA President**

@agnes\_kalibata



## Editor's Take



**A**lthough Africa's agricultural transformation seems to have tallied, the 2016 AGRF provided a glimpse of a new awakening, a surge, a desire to get there faster than ever before. It is noteworthy that the 2016 Africa Agriculture Status Report, launched at the Forum, finds that many African economies are undergoing dramatic agricultural transformation—marked by higher agricultural productivity and a shift in the workforce from farming to off-farm sectors—as poverty rates are also falling in some countries in the region.

With the rallying call to “Seize the Moment”, governments, development partners, the private sector and the AGRF delegates made inroads towards the necessary financial and policy interventions to raise the profile of African agriculture as an engine of inclusive growth and sustainable economic progress. The level of commitments made was unprecedented not only in Africa but globally as well.

This is a special bumper edition capturing the moments, the thrills and the highlights of the 2016 AGRF. I invite you to take note of this palpable moment. Africa must resolve to bring to bear the immense goodwill shown at the 2016 AGRF to irrevocably move the needle and attain this long awaited dream.

*David Maingi,*  
Head of Communications, AGRA

@raslimali



**This campaign is a moment for private sector to unite key stakeholders in the agricultural landscape around a common agenda of stimulating the acceleration of agriculture-led structural transformation at country and regional level that would ensure better lives for millions of farmers and families especially women and the youth.**

**It is a moment for governments to strengthen execution; to move beyond bold strategies, reforms and policies and focus on stronger implementation and accountability mechanisms that can drive investments, partnerships and actions to catalyse an inclusive agricultural transformation.**

**It calls on Non-State Actors to unite and convince African governments, regional institutions, development partners and other key stakeholders that our future lies in the speedy transformation of our nations' agricultural sectors through the commitments agreed to under the 2014 CAADP Malabo Declaration.**

**Join the Campaign:**  
**[www.seizethemomentafrica.com](http://www.seizethemomentafrica.com)**







AFRICA'S RISE THROUGH AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

2016 KENYA 2016



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## Contents



**7-8**

*More than US\$30B  
promised in new  
commitment to  
African agriculture*



**9-10**

*2016 AGRF  
Key Highlights*



**11-18**

*Impact Source*



**19 -20**

*New Report makes  
case for betting big on  
Africa's agriculture*



**21-22**

*Dr. Kanayo Nwanze  
becomes the first  
Africa Food Prize  
Laureate*





**23-24**

*Four Ways to end  
hunger in Africa*



**25-31**

*2016 AGRF Photo  
Gallery*



**33-34**

*Country Focus:  
Somalia and Kenya*



**35-36**

*The 2016 AGRF  
Communique*



**37-38**

*Borlaug's dream is  
within reach in  
Africa*



**39-40**

*IFAD Chief on why  
Africa leaders are  
failing*

# More than US \$30 Billion promised in unprecedented commitment to African agriculture

**I**t was a blockbuster moment for African agriculture in September as African leaders, businesses, and major development partners pledged more than US \$30 billion dollars in investments to increase production, income and employment for smallholder farmers and local African agriculture businesses over the next ten years. The collective pledges at the AGRF are believed to represent the largest package of financial commitments to the African agricultural sector to date, backed by the broadest coalitions ever assembled in support of food production on the continent.

The commitments were made at the official opening of the sixth African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) that has attracted more than 1,500 influential figures from 40 countries for three days of brokering new agricultural initiatives. The historic investments represent just the first wave of support for the new “Seize the Moment” campaign, one backed by the African Union Commission, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), key NGOs, companies and donor countries.

While African agriculture has seen significant progress in the last ten years, the “Seize the Moment” campaign is a frank acknowledgment that much more is needed for African countries to achieve inclusive economic development—and ultimately realize the international community’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The campaign



**“**  
*African Leaders, Businesses, and International Donors are “Seizing the Moment” to push an aggressive economic agenda*

**Top Centre:** Presidents of Rwanda and Kenya, H.E. Paul Kagame and H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, respectively, with H.E. Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union participate in the Heads of State panel moderated by Joshua Oigara, Group CEO, KCB.

**Right (from the top):** Strive Masiyiwa, Chairman, AGRA, H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, President, of Kenya, Judith Rodin, President, the Rockefeller Foundation and Rodger Voorhies, Managing Director, Global Development, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, making their commitments at the opening of the 2016 AGRF.

is a decisive push for the political, policy, and financial commitments essential to transforming Africa’s agricultural sector. The goal: a new era of business opportunities for the 70 percent of the African population that depend on farming for food and income, yet too often face poverty and poor nutrition.

Joined by President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, Kenya’s President, His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta, officially opened AGRF 2016 by laying out a bold vision for how agriculture transformation should play out in Kenya and across Africa. Committing himself to deliver on both the political and policy agenda, President Kenyatta announced his government will invest US \$200 million so at least 150,000 young farmers and young agriculture entrepreneurs can gain access to markets, finance, and insurance. He then called on his fellow heads of state across Africa to step-up and invest aggressively over the next five years in agriculture-related endeavors.

Gayle Smith, Administrator of the United





States Agency for International Development (USAID), set the tone for the day with a call for investors and donors to be bold and do their part to achieve “A Food-Secure 2030”. The US government already has invested more than \$6.6 billion in global food security and nutrition efforts through its Feed the Future initiative. This commitment is now locked in for the long-term following approval in July of the bipartisan Global Food Security Act legislation. Smith noted that the initiative “signals the US government’s enduring commitment to global food security and nutrition and is the largest development authorization the US Congress has made in a decade.”

Other agriculture investors and development partners announcing new financial and policy commitments included: The African Development Bank, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) Group, OCP Africa, World Food Programme, Yara International ASA, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Additional new investments are expected at the three-day forum. Strive Masiyiwa, AGRF Partners Chairman and Founder and CEO of Econet recorded the specific commitments in detail and called for other investors and partners to join the “Seize the Moment” campaign during the year ahead.

President Kenyatta, as Chair of the African Peer Review Mechanism concluded the ceremony by calling for a continental scorecard that will measure and track the commitments to agriculture transformation and ensure they translate into action.





# AGRF Overall Commitments



AGRF 2016 championed the "Seize the Moment" campaign - an opportunity for governments, regional and global players, the private sector, non-state actors and development partners to advance policies, actions, partnerships and secure investments that accelerate Africa's agricultural transformation.

"Seize the Moment" recognizes the significant progress African countries have made over the last decade to build

a foundation for a renaissance in the agriculture sector both on and off the farm across the entire value chain.

## A NUMBER OF CHALLENGES STAND IN THE WAY OF AFRICA'S GREATNESS



**Rapid Urbanization**



**Chronic Malnutrition**



**Climate Change**

Generating stressful growing conditions



**Unemployment**

one in three Africans from 15 - 35 years old is jobless

## AFRICA'S CHAMPIONS STOOD UP AND PLEDGED TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Actualize commitments by the private sector into African agriculture and broader investment

The Kenya Government  
The Rwanda Government  
USAID  
African Development Bank  
Yara International ASA  
International Fund for Agricultural Development



To attract additional resources from private sector and other partners

Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation  
Rockefeller Foundation  
World Food Programme  
KCB  
OCP Africa

## AFRICA'S CHANGE WILL COME THROUGH IMPLEMENTING THESE ACTIONS



Identify and unlock main policy and regulatory bottlenecks per country



Establish and support agriculture transformation delivery mechanisms



Strengthen capacities in agriculture transformation leaders



Develop and launch innovative financing mechanisms

## WE WILL WATCH AND TRACK AFRICA'S ROUTE TO SUCCESSFUL TRANSFORMATION



**Produce and use an agriculture transformation scorecard**

- CAADP biennial review process
- Snapshot for Heads of State



**Meet and Evaluate**

Hold at least two Ministerial peer review roundtables prior to the 2018 African Union Heads of State and Government Summit to challenge and validate emerging biennial review reports and actions





# AGRF Individual Commitments



UN AGENCIES ■ GOVERNMENTS ■ MULTILATERALS ■ BILATERALS ■ PRIVATE SECTOR

## UN AGENCIES



**\$120 million**

A commitment by the World Food Programme (WFP) to purchase its agricultural products each year from smallholder farmers through a partnership called the Patient Procurement Platform.

## PRIVATE SECTOR



**BANK**



**\$350 million**

From Kenya Commercial Bank Group (KCB) to finance agriculture business opportunities that could reach some 2 million smallholder farmers, which is 5% of the bank's overall lending portfolio.

**\$200 million**

Will go toward improving market infrastructure and mobilizing farmers.

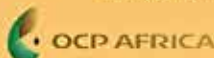
**\$150 million**

Through the KCB Foundation to support livestock farmers.



**\$30 million**

KCB will also work with the MasterCard Foundation, contributing each year to help smallholder farmers access credit and market information via mobile devices.



**Pledge**

To support local fertilizer distribution, storage and blending in Africa. \$150 million spending over the next 5 years.



**Capacity**

OCP also will focus on building fertilizer plants in other countries in sub-Saharan Africa and is in discussions with five countries at a cost of US \$1 million per plant.

## GOVERNMENTS



**Kenya**

**\$200 million**



To invest in agriculture.



**150,000**

For young farmers and young agriculture entrepreneurs to gain access to markets, finance and insurance.



**Rwanda**



**Inspiration**

Building on his long-standing leadership in putting agricultural transformation at the center of Rwanda's economic transformation, President Kagame challenged the continent and other world leaders.

## MULTILATERALS



**\$5.6 billion**

To be invested in global food security and nutrition efforts through its Feed the Future Initiative.



**\$24 billion**

Pledged over the next ten years towards:

**Technology**

Technologies for African Agricultural Transformation (TAAT program), which is scaling up various agriculture technologies for millions of farmers.

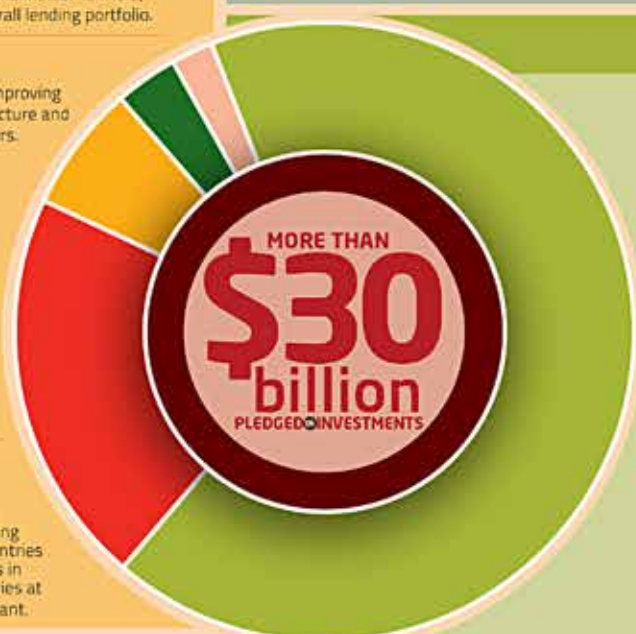
**Financing**

Supporting access to commercial financing, with approaches proved to reduce risks of commercial lending to smallholder farmers and agribusinesses.



**Linkage**

Yara has pledged to continue with significant investments that can link smallholder farmers to lucrative value chains and grow Africa from being a net importer to an exporter of food.



## BILATERALS



**\$5 billion**

Contribution to African development over the next five years.



**Co-funding**

The Gates Foundation also promised to match "dollar for dollar" other development partner support for AGRA programs.



**Expansion**

Of the Gates Foundation's work in crop and livestock research, strengthening data for decision-making, and improving systems to deliver better tools, information and innovations to farmers.



**\$180 million**

**\$130 million**

**\$50 million**

AGRA and its efforts

Yieldwise initiative that is deploying better storage, handling and processing capabilities to reduce the significant post-harvest losses on African farms due to spoilage or pests.



Investing in rural people

**\$3 billion**

Support for African agriculture over the next six years to generate jobs in farming and food production, particularly for African youth and African women.



## *“Seize the Moment” now to transform Africa’s agriculture, leaders tell Africa*

The 2016 AGRF Heads of States and leaders panel was a resourceful discussion that focused on issues which are critical to the transformation of Africa’s agriculture.

The panel discussion – “Seize the Moment” had Kenya’s President Uhuru Kenyatta, Rwanda’s President, Paul Kagame and Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union and moderated by Joshua Oigara, group CEO, KCB Group.

“In Kenya 70% of the population rely on agriculture, while the youth form more than 60% of the country’s population,” said President Uhuru. He noted that the challenge was to sell agriculture as a viable enterprise to this youth in order to lure them from viewing farming as a subsistence way of life. He told the participants that it was crucial to devise innovative ideas that will entice young people to play a profitable part in the entire agriculture value chain. “It is time to give agriculture the attention that it deserves,” said the President.

Taking up on Uhuru’s sentiments on African agriculture and its transformation, H.E. Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, the Rural Economy and Agriculture Commissioner, Africa Union, emphasized on the need to not only “walk the talk”, but “seize the moment” through action and result oriented programs which she said would yield results in Africa’s Agricultural Transformation process.

While African governments have critical roles to play, Uhuru emphasized on the need to have all stakeholders on board the transformation vehicle. “Governments cannot transform agriculture on their own because they do not have all the resources to do so, but

will need key partners such as the financial institutions among other partners” he said.

This was confirmed by Joshua Oigara, Group CEO, KCB who explained that the banking sector had made tangible commitments to financially support the transformation process. “To support the Africa’s agricultural transformation process, KCB is disbursing US\$350 million as loans to Kenya’s agricultural sector,” said Oigara.

The panelists also further emphasized the need to include other valuable stakeholders in the transformation journey to such as farmers, development partners, government and the private sector. They noted that the role played by these partnerships are vital in transforming Agriculture.

“Agriculture has a lot of potential and what we need to do is to work on the materialization of that potential by integrating different players and services needed in the sector” said H.E. President Paul Kagame of Rwanda.

President Kagame shared his country’s success story, which he said includes a quarterly review mechanism that brings different leaders from various sectors together to review progress in the regions. “The results are read out which also means the leaders are ranked by performance and this has incentivized the leaders because they would like their regions to progress and perform well,” explained President Kagame. He also emphasized on the importance of involving communities in not only sharing of ideas but also in the decision making process.

He told the audience that his government has also in place a system for the dissemination of extension services through farmer groups. “This system has been successful because it is based on delivery

of services and holds the farmer groups accountable for any slackness,” explained President Kagame.

At the continental level, explained Commissioner Tumusiime, AU ensures that the decisions and commitments are taken forward to the countries for implementation. “The Commission plays a role in empowering the countries by explaining the decisions made, and a structured implementation approach is then developed at the country level,” she told the attentive audience, adding that the countries that push for proper planning, coordination, implementation and management and review are able to achieve results and impact as has been evident in countries such as Rwanda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana among others.

“Women are critical players in agriculture and there is a need for the woman to also move up the ladder and not remain at the lower levels of engagement” said the Commissioner. She also emphasized on the need for African governments to integrate all players.

Just as women were key to the transformation in Agriculture, so was technology, which according to the panelists plays a vital role in today’s agriculture. They noted that technology is useful in facilitating market access, enhancing production, reducing the cost of inputs and maximizing on yield. They also emphasized on the need to mechanize farming.

“It is now time to act, and move forward the discussions of this forum (AGRF 2016). “We keep talking about this, we already know what we should be doing and we just need to go ahead and do it.” emphasized President Kagame on the need to “Seize the moment”.





## *How demand is driving production for smallholder farmers in East Africa*

It is possible for smallholder farmers to supply the required quantities of raw materials and in desired qualities to processors if they are adequately facilitated and assured of market, and more importantly a good price for their produce. Smallholder farming too, does not have to be subsistence; it is commercially viable and profitable with proper training, provision of farm inputs and access to finance.

“Smallholder farmers can become competitive suppliers in the inclusive value chains if they organize themselves into farmer business groups and gain the skills and knowledge to increase the yield and quality of their crop, stated Bob Okello, while setting the stage during the side event. He noted that new market opportunities for their produce can generate meaningful income for households and improve their quality of life. The theme for the side event was Toward Demand Driven Smallholder Agriculture: Creating Inclusive Value Chains through Supplier Development.

“Smallholder farming, if properly structured, is very profitable but it requires public private partnerships, and more importantly, philanthropy,” stated Mr. Enock Chikava, Deputy Director, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. He however noted that philanthropy does not have to be viewed in terms of freebies for smallholder farmers, but as an investment that has returns. The Director said the success of the PPPs depended on clear definition of roles of the partners.

Many examples were shared during the session on how the PPPs had indeed built the capacity of smallholder farmers not only to supply materials in required quantities and qualities, but how they were helping farmers make decent incomes, profits and living.

Okello gave the example of the partnership forged between Coca-Cola

Company, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and TechnoServe that aimed to help more than 50,000 small-scale mango and passion fruit farmers in Kenya and Uganda, which was very successful because of the clear definition of roles.

Under the partnership, TechnoServe facilitated training of the smallholder farmers in best farming practices. TechnoServe advisors also worked with farmers to improve business skills and form and strengthen farmer business groups. This gave the farmers access to inputs and finance, sell their fruit collectively and improve their bargaining power. At the same time, TechnoServe worked with exporters and processors to improve market linkages, and with financial institutions to improve access to credit for smallholder farmers. Coca Cola Company provided the right market for the fruits.

“By the end of the project last year, smallholder farmers had increased their incomes by an average of 142 percent,” stated Okello.

In his key note address at the session, Mr Omondi Kasidhi, Head of Sustainable Sourcing at Diageo, illustrated how the demand they had created drove production in East Africa. “We have developed a structured package for each of the raw materials because each product has its own unique production and quality requirements. Through a comprehensive package that finally ends up with a purchase contract, smallholder farmers in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda have doubled production.”

The comprehensive package, which is being delivered through PPPs, has been successful in the three countries. In Ethiopia, the 5,000 smallholder barley farmers under the comprehensive package have had 100 percent delivery over the last 3 years. In Kenya, smallholder farmers are now producing

sorghum on 15,000 acres under the structured supply chain, under 100 percent financing contract from East Africa Breweries Limited.

“Through these comprehensive packages, we are now getting 73 percent of our raw materials locally. Our target is to source 80 percent of our materials locally within four years. In Ethiopia, the target is to have 100 percent local supply of barley by 2020,” stated Kasidhi.

The comprehensive package under the structured supply chain development encompasses provision of farm inputs – seeds, fertilizer and chemicals; training on good agronomic practices, credit access and finally a supply contract.

Dr Vimal Shah, Founder Director, BIDCO shared with the audience how they had turned an ugly PPP into a successful one. “Initially, we provided all the inputs to the smallholder farmers but they would end up selling to others creating unserviceable debts. Now, we link them directly to input suppliers and finance institutions. We are very encouraged by the results that we are planning to increase the number of smallholder farmers we are contracting from the current 10,000 to 20,000 and finally 30,000 in Kenya in the next five years,” said Dr Shah.

Ms Sandi Roberts, Head, Smallholder Development Unit, AgDevCo called for success principles: Availability of ready and good markets; Smallholder assurance to make profits; and capacity building for smallholder farmers in all aspects of business management, and effective partnerships that basically transform smallholder agriculture into a form of a business hub.

“As a philanthropic organization, our role is to create the path of the private sector and the government to thrive, and have the ability and capacity to fight poverty,” she stated.



## *Call to optimize technology to lift agriculture*

For Africa to attain maximum productivity in the agricultural sector, all stakeholders must be on board when formulating mechanisms aimed at enhancing the productivity of smallholder farmers.

This stood out at the - Taking Technologies to scale: No Farmer Left Behind session. Participants heard of the need to employ digital technology inclusively in the value chain, especially when dealing with rural farmers. This would ensure a significant digital impact as witnessed in other sectors of the economy.

The participants acknowledged the efforts made by digital service providers to digitally connect farmers despite challenges. These challenges include an inadequate response mechanism and an inefficient impact tracking platform that ensures a precise impact assessment method of the services being offered.

To counter these challenges, African governments were urged to urgently channel more investment that would avail requisite infrastructure that promotes technology uptake among the rural farming population.

During the discussion, the panelists highlighted the need to have robust technology platforms. Technology can be used in mapping all agro dealers and farmers' organizations in a single data base which will provide a platform to access information on the skills and inputs used in the farming ventures. Furthermore, technology could be key to ensuring ease of distribution of farm produce for the farmers.

However, to attain the vision of a food secure continent, the participants pointed out the need to address the challenge posed by unscrupulous traders who run networks that hoard farm inputs and hike the prices or worse distribute counterfeit farm inputs.

## *Harnessing investments in Africa's agricultural sector*

Lending, access to insurance and investment in agricultural sector, including smallholder financing is not new in Africa. Indeed, there are many financing opportunities and mechanisms in place. However, many of these mechanisms or solutions have never been scaled up. They are still in pilot phase.

"There is an urgent need to scale up these financing mechanisms or solutions for smallholder farmers. These can be achieved by bringing on board mainstream financial institutions to invest in agricultural financing for smallholder farmers, explained William Asiko, the Executive Director, GROW AFRICA during discussions on a side event on finance titled: Harnessing Lending, Access to Insurance and Investment in Africa's Agricultural Sector.

The participants heard that creating commercial interest in mainstream financial institutions is a challenge, considering that most mainstream financial institutions did not understand smallholder farmer dynamics.

However, this challenge can be overcome through segmenting the clientele base by mainstream financial institutions as was done by micro-finance institutions. There was too, the need to understand the dynamics faced by smallholder farmers – their potential, their assets and their risks.

After these interventions are put in place, the participants heard, there is need to develop flexible products that meet the demands of the smallholder farmers. These demands must embrace the risks associated with smallholder farming and farmers. Another solution is for the mainstream financial institutions to have credible lenders.

"There is an urgent need to scale up these financing mechanisms and opportunities, to move them from pilot to fully fledged projects if smallholder farmers are to realise agricultural transformation", stated Mr Jason Wendle, Director, Rural and Agriculture Finance Learning Lab, adding that the gap between smallholder finance supply was quite significant"

He noted that the credit currently being provided by both informal and formal financial institutions, as well as value chain actors, only met an estimated USD 50 billion of the more than USD 200 billion needed for smallholder finance in the regions of sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and South and Southeast Asia. In addition, agricultural insurance is accessible to only 10 percent of smallholders. Fewer than 15 percent have access to a formal savings account. Wendle mentioned three overarching barriers that currently constrain the growth of the sector as follows: The mismatch between farmer need and demand; The low financial returns of financial service providers' business models; Limitations in the available supply of capital; Regulatory and ecosystem factors—for example, poor contract enforcement; and Underdeveloped customer information ecosystems that back the growth of smallholder finance.

"Overcoming these barriers and closing the gap will require harnessing the power of today's diverse and dynamic ecosystem to fundamentally change the sector's growth trajectory. It will require concerted activity around three main themes: customer centricity, progressive partnerships, and smart subsidy," he concluded.





## *For women and youth seeking opportunity in agriculture: It will not be given, it must be taken*

**A**s Africa looks for new horizons to ensure it meets the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, the participation of women as producers, consumers, business owners, and key decision makers will be vital for the transformation of Africa's agriculture. Research has shown that educating and empowering women economically is one of the most cost-effective means to accelerate economic growth

Why is it that there is a huge funding gap for women-led business and why are women not able to access and secure funding from banks, investors and other sources? Why is that financiers are not seeing the opportunity to fund women agribusiness entrepreneurs?

These were the critical points of discussion during the - Supporting Women, Transforming Business, Growing Africa session that was hosted by the Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund (AECF), an initiative by AGRA at the 2016 AGRF.

During the session, participants heard that AECF has achieved ground breaking success in providing access to finance to SMEs. This support is for smallholder farmers and the communities they represent in Africa. The Fund works with "the best bet practices" with a focus on innovations,

excellence and integrity.

"The board seeks to ensure that it represents all regions in its pan African region and though we are barely scratching the surface, we know we have an enormous task ahead, judging from the loan and grant applications that we receive," said Dr Paul Greener, Executive Manager, AECF.

He noted that tremendous progress achieved by key stakeholders and the support from donors, meant that AECF was ready to "seize the moment" to help in the agricultural transformation process. "The focus is to empower women as without them, this great transformation cannot happen", noted Hugh Scot, Director, AECF & KPMG Advisory, adding that agribusiness in Africa is also a woman's business.

Divine Ndhulukula, Founder and MD, Securicor, said that there was need for committing to initiatives that support female farmers and entrepreneurs' in their business. She noted that the process of accessing funding is rigorous and challenging. "Women have brilliant ideas but are sometimes inhibited by prejudice when accessing huge credit, where they are faced by stereotypical beliefs that women cannot manage funds," said Divine. She applauded AGRA for setting up AECF which supports women to access grants and loans for their businesses.

Other challenges facing women agribusinesses is lack of business skills including technical and leadership and management, inadequate knowledge, support and mentorship which limits their chances in terms of packaging their ideas and businesses, market access, family roles among others. Under such situations, explained Dr Green, AECF can create a level playing field by providing training to businesses that are applying for the fund.

"Women need an extra push because of the barriers in order to push their ideas and businesses and not give up," noted Dr Wanjiku Kamau-Rutenberg, CEO, AWARD. She said that there should be deliberate effort to invest in women. "AECF only finances a handful of businesses from the large pool of applications submitted and therefore, we need to look at the list of rejections to link them up with other private equity funds as there could be diamonds in there as well", said Dr Greener.

"Agriculture is the engine for economic growth, the private sector is the vehicle to reach the smallholder farmers and since women play an integral part in making this a reality, there is need to "seize the moment" and have all-inclusive policy that will drive the green revolution to conclusion" noted Anne-Marie Chidzero, AECF Board Member.



## One piece of research at a time for agriculture

“We can’t transform African agriculture on the backs of women with children on their backs. We need technology.” This nugget by

Dr. Segenet Kelemu, the Director General of ICIPE, summarised the *raison d’être* of IDRC’s side event at the 2016 AGRF. The sessions through the day provided a platform for players in the agricultural industry to hold conversations on strategies that are contributing to an African agricultural renaissance.

Themed around the role of science, research and innovation in transforming African agriculture, the side event drew over 250 participants from across the agricultural sector. The discussions focused on different solutions and initiatives - such as building partnerships including with women and youth, capacity building, using research to innovate, taking impact to scale - that will contribute to transforming African agriculture.

The meeting was hosted by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and its collaborating partner, the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR). The two partners are co-funders to the Cultivating Africa’s Future Fund. The 15 million Canadian dollar programme is implemented in Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Eight projects in the programme are supporting the development and testing of 24 innovations to improve food and nutrition security, increase productivity and profitability for smallholder farmers. Results from the project are revolutionary at best, and exciting at worst! They include production of pre-cooked beans targeted at low income earners, reduction in post-harvest fish losses thanks to a revolutionary solar drying technique, and integration of insects in fish and poultry feeds.



## Private sector partners brief ministers on how smallholder farmers can gain commercially

African agriculture ministers past and present gathered for a briefing at AGRF 2016 where leaders in the private sector eager to do business with African farmers offered new options for linking smallholder producers to lucrative market opportunities.

“I am here because I believe there is a tremendous opportunity for the African agriculture sector to grow from being a net importer to an exporter of food,” said Svein Tore Holsether, CEO of Yara International ASA, the Norway-based global firm specializing in agricultural products.

Holsether said it’s all about scale for African farmers, and providing the infrastructure and business relationships that allow them to rapidly expand their operations. For example, Yara is part of an ambitious effort to provide the cold storage, technical advice and other assistance required to help farmers in East Africa take advantage of what Holsether believes is major market opportunity to build a regional commercial potato industry.

Bob Collymore, CEO of Kenya’s pioneering telecommunications firm Safaricom, said he sees mobile phones and mobile payment services like Safaricom’s M-PESA as the “connective tissue” that is linking African farmers, even those working in very remote areas, to knowledge and affordable capital that can boost incomes.

“One simple example is our partnership with Green Dreams, which is providing simple agriculture information that is helping thousands of farmers improve productivity,” he said. The links to farmers

are established through an app called iCow that includes features like a cow gestation calendar, livestock market information, and access to extension service experts.

Jai Shroff CEO of UPL Ltd., said he is increasingly optimistic about the commercial prospects of African farmers because “most people” in the public and private sector are “singing the same tune” about the need to connect smallholder farmers to a “value chain” in a particular commodity, like potatoes and maize

He has partnered with AGRA on an ambitious plan to build cold storage facilities across Africa that would give smallholders desperately needed options to limit postharvest loss and gain the capacity to sell fresh produce to buyers located far from their fields.

Khalid Bomba, CEO of Ethiopia’s Agriculture Transformation Agency, talked about the benefits of establishing an agency like ATA that provides a hub that coordinates all of the various government actors that help create an enabling environment for agriculture businesses. He noted that, within governments, the people who need to part of that enabling work include not just officials from the agriculture ministry, but also officials from the trade, finance, transport, and environment ministries.

Bomba also noted Ethiopia’s recent progress in commercial agriculture has been facilitated by ATA’s insistence on establishing a five year action plan “with clear deliverables and quarterly milestones.”





## *For women and youth seeking opportunity in agriculture: It will not be given, it must be taken*

**O**n a continent with the world's largest population of people under 35— often referred to as the “African youth bulge”—the future sometimes appears to be a choice between the very bright and the exceptionally bleak.

“Either we have a Malthusian nightmare where we can't feed ourselves or we are going to have a labor force the size of which the world has never seen and the potential of which has never been realized.”

That was stark prediction from Dr. Wanjiru Kamau-Rutenberg, head of the African Women in Agricultural Research and Development (AWARD)—an organization dedicated to strengthening science and leadership skills among women agricultural scientists. She led a panel at AGRF 2016 focused on women, youth and African agriculture.

The session included women, most of them young, who offered insights (often from personal experience) about the twin challenges of an agriculture sector where women frequently work more but earn less than men—and young people tend to view farming as a career of last resort.

Kamau-Rutenberg warned that it would be foolish to pursue major growth in Africa's agriculture sector without addressing its chronic gender inequalities. These include unequal access to farm inputs and land, which causes women to produce less than men. Women also are less likely than men to own mobile phones, she said, and that's a problem in a sector where mobile phones are increasingly critical to connecting farmers to market opportunities.

“We need to wake up and say ‘this is ridiculous,’” said Kamau-Rutenberg, adding that closing the productivity gap in gender would greatly increase overall agriculture production across Africa.

Beauty Manake, CEO Kungo Farms, which produces vegetables and livestock in central Botswana, told the attentive participants that there were many opportunities in the agricultural sector that were open for women and the youth. “Part of the problem is that many young people today look at agriculture only in terms of production and fail to understand the many other options that exist along the value chain, such as in processing and marketing,” said Manake.

Karen Musikoyo-Nguru, Agribusiness Program Manager, GAM & EC, at the United States International University-Africa, said in her experience, young women tend to be more resilient in creating agriculture ventures than men. She said the key need at the moment is for young women to have the training and business skills that allow them to “take agriculture as a business to the next level.”

On the other hand, Elizabeth Mbogo, Director of Botanic Treasures, said she found success by working with smallholder farmers to produce the fresh herbs and other plants required for her company's product line of dietary supplements.

But Edson Mpyisi, an economist with the African Development Bank, noted that if young people are to develop creative business concepts like Botanic Treasures, they needed the basic business skills required in the job market.

“We need to create education and training programs that teach the skills required to work in today's agriculture value chains,” he said.

Kamau-Rutenberg said ultimately, if women and young people in Africa today want to succeed in agriculture, they need to understand the fundamental concept that “power is not given, it is taken.”

“If you have a direction you want to take, there is no one from whom you need to beg permission,” she said. “It's on us to make the future.”

## *Growing & sustaining ICT for Africa's Agriculture*

**T**he Information, Communication and Technology, has revolutionized many economic sectors, agriculture being one. ICT has turned around businesses turning around, making them to reach their maximum potential

In a session that centred on maximizing the use of technology in Africa's agriculture and attended by farmers from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ghana among others, participants were told how ICT for Agriculture has evolved in the past decade.

“In Africa, ICT for agriculture presently has more than 150 ICT for Agriculture (ICT4Ag) solutions that have been developed to deliver information and marketing services to the agricultural sector through mobile phones and other ICT platforms”, Ms. Carol Kyazze Kakooza, Chief Technical Advisor & Chief Party for G4AW-MUIIS, Uganda, told the participants while opening the session.

The major challenge that faces the growth of ICT4AG, the participants heard, was the sustainability of the solutions developed. According to an Assessment commissioned by AGRA, only 5 out of 15 ICT4Ag solutions providers in Kenya, Tanzania and Ghana were sustainably delivering services.

The assessment conducted by Joseph Waruingi and Eric Muriithi from Advantech Consulting Ltd, identified several factors that are hampering ICT4Ag solutions to grow. These include smallholder farmers' unwillingness to pay for the services; mobile network operators' unfavourable revenue sharing models; difficulty in finding affordable capital to finance scaling of solutions; limited segmentation of customers, and weak relationship with management. Others were: limited customer feedback mechanisms that reduce uptake and retention, and solution providers' insufficiency in tracking financial key performance indicators as a measure of sustainability.



## *Mechanization through Lease Finance Key for African Agriculture Growth*

The AGRF session on Lease for African Agriculture Lease heard that promoting sustainable agricultural mechanization in Africa and sending the hoe to the museum was key in the transformation of Africa's agriculture.

Moderated by Richard Jones, Chief Party, Scaling Seeds and Technologies Partnerships in Africa (SSTP), AGRA the panelists stressed on the need for Africa to embrace mechanization in transforming its agriculture. This, the participants heard, has revolutionized agriculture in other continents and continues to do so.

"It is true that agricultural mechanization is a key pillar and contributor for making farm operations efficient and productive," said one of the Panelists, noting that Mechanization was a major contributing factor to the efficiency and productivity of other inputs used in crop production such as seeds, fertilizer, water, labor and time.

"It will remain a pipe dream, if African agriculture remains dependent on primitive technologies and implements like the hoe and still expect to feed an ever growing population while playing a competitive and significant role in international markets for value-added agricultural products," said Dr. Subrata Rana, Founder and CEO, EcoDev.

The discussants noted that mechanization in Africa was still at the early adoption stage with a large majority of farmers still using

rudimentary methods. However, they said, there was a ready market from the smallholder farmer to the tune of USD200-500 for organizations that offer lease finance. The market demand was to manage post-harvest losses.

The market demand for lease finance also came from aggregated small holder farmer groups such as self-help groups, cooperatives and SMEs that are putting business structures and systems in place. In addition, there are also potential entrepreneurs' that provide services along the value chain who can also be integral players in mechanization adoption and dissemination of technologies.

"When it comes to lease finance not every equipment is leasable and there is need to find optimal solutions that can generate a return to the investors," said Kinoti Kaburu, Start Up Technician & Regional Manager (EA), Insta-Pro international, adding that the lease finance models therefore, need to factor both return on investment and social impact.

David Resnik, COO, Innovare Advisors explained that for mechanization to be a success, there was need to involve all stakeholders. "Implementation frameworks therefore, must invite other players to actively get involved in the process," he noted. These players include; donors, partners, private sector, farmer organizations among others.

Other key components of a successful mechanization process included: identifying the right equipment, a working service system,

training, risk management, security systems among others.

Mechanization was not about heavy machinery, but included hand held implements, tractors, irrigation systems, processing, value addition equipment and integrating intermediaries that can play a critical role in mechanization. The panelists listed challenges to the mechanization process as huge (billions of dollars) capital base, accessing credit among others. Sadly, smallholder farmers did not have access to finance as agriculture was considered a risk business. However, the benefits of mechanization were enormous. For mechanization to achieve scale the role of public funding was vital in generating traction in the various value chains and sectors of Agriculture.

In "Seizing the Moment" to transform Africa's agriculture, the good news was that there were role models to enumerate "It has been proven that there is a strong correlations between economic growth and mechanization of agriculture where countries that have achieved significant economic growth and worked on resolving their food problems have also advanced in agricultural mechanization, while countries with stagnating economies and deeper poverty have lagged behind in areas such as mechanization, Dr. Richard Jones, said in his closing remarks for the session



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# *New Report makes case for betting big on Africa's agriculture*



A decade of intense domestic attention to farmers and food production has generated “the most successful development effort” in African history, with countries that made the biggest investments rewarded with sizeable jumps in both farm productivity and overall economic performance, according to a new report released today by the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) at AGRF 2016 in Nairobi.

These are among the key findings noted in AGRA’s 2016 African Agriculture Status Report (AASR), “Progress towards an Agriculture Transformation of Sub-Saharan Africa.” (Press release [here](#)). The document provides an in-depth and unsparing review of an incredibly active ten-year period for African agriculture — one that AGRA frames as a prelude for potentially big things to come. The

analysis serves as a curtain raiser for this week’s high-powered African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) in Nairobi, which is attracting heads of state and high-level officials from around the world.

“This report is really a description of a journey we have been on for the last ten years and about how we can seize the moment today for the agriculture sector and the people of Africa,” said AGRA President Agnes Kalibata, addressing a packed hall at the United Nations Africa headquarters. “I hope we can come here to AGRF ten years from now and say that today was the turning point for African agriculture — and I was there.”

The report finds that “after decades of stagnation, since 2005 much of Africa has enjoyed sustained agriculture productivity growth,” and as a result, poverty rates have declined in places like Ghana, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Burkina Faso. The report notes that agriculture has had its biggest impact in countries that moved quickly to embrace the African Union’s Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme or CAADP, which was created in 2003.

Early adopters of the CAADP goals have seen productivity on existing farmlands rise by 5.9 to 6.7 percent per year. This boost in turn helped spur a 4.3 percent average annual increase in overall GDP. Those later to the game achieved anywhere from a 3 to 5.7 percent growth in farm productivity and a





# Africa Agriculture Status Report 2016

PROGRESS TOWARDS AGRICULTURAL  
TRANSFORMATION

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2.4 to 3.5 percent increase in GDP.

Former AGRA President Dr. Namanga Ngongi, who chairs the Board of Trustees for the African Fertilizer and Agribusiness Partnership (AFAP), said this growth reflects increased attention from the private sector. Ngongi lauded the emergence of private sector players as positive partners for increasing food production while expanding employment and income-earning opportunities.

"The private sector used to be seen as the enemy, now the private sector is moving forward with concrete proposals for African agriculture development, and that is wonderful," he said.

Ngongi said that major challenges remain, including land tenure, infrastructure, and research. And he said that while agriculture growth overall has been promising, most countries are falling short of their CAADP

commitment to invest ten percent of national budgets in the agriculture sector.

Also, the 2016 AASR points out that Africa remains "the world's most food insecure continent" and that while there has been progress in reducing malnutrition rates and boosting agriculture productivity, African countries continue to lag behind other developing regions like East Asia. But the prevailing mood at Tuesday's gathering was optimism that agriculture in Africa is in a position to overcome these challenges.

"You will see in the report that in farm productivity, finance, use of digital technology, research and development — there has been progress," said David Ameyaw, one of the report's lead authors who is head of Monitoring and Evaluation for AGRA. "We have a long way to go, but with this report, we are taking stock of our accomplishments so that we have a foundation to stand on as we move forward."

Thomas S. Jayne, a professor of agricultural, food, and resource economics at Michigan State University and a co-author of the report, reminded the audience that over the next 20 years there will be roughly 300 million young Africans entering the job market. He said the burden will be on agriculture to provide a source of income and employment.

"The success of agriculture is going to determine whether this region prospers," he said.



# *Dr. Kanayo Nwanze becomes the first Africa Food Prize Laureate*



The Africa Food Prize began as the Yara Prize, and was established in 2005 by Yara International ASA in Norway to honor achievements in African agriculture.

The Yara Prize recognized individuals from Kenya, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Uganda, Malawi, Senegal, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and Mozambique for their success in making African farms more productive, profitable and resilient.

Moving the Yara Prize to Africa in 2016 and rechristening it the Africa Food Prize gave the award a distinctive African home, African identity and African ownership.



**D**r. Kanayo F. Nwanze, President of the Rome-based International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), was awarded the inaugural Africa Food Prize during the African Green Revolution Forum in Nairobi.

The Africa Food Prize Committee, chaired by Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria, selected Dr. Nwanze for his outstanding leadership and passionate advocacy in putting Africa's smallholder farmers at the center of the global agricultural agenda.

"Dr Nwanze is a model for how a great leader can make a difference in the lives of people on the ground," said Obasanjo. "Whether that leader is the head of a global institution, a head of state or a head of small organization, Dr Nwanze's accomplishments on behalf of African farmers are a reminder of what's possible when you combine passion, good ideas, commitment, focus, hard work and dedication".

Alongside his tireless advocacy, Dr. Nwanze is credited with reorienting IFAD's work to focus more on making small-scale farming a viable business, as well as expanding IFAD's presence in developing countries to increase the organization's effectiveness. The Prize also acknowledges Nwanze's courage in reminding African leaders to go beyond promising development and change to delivering it.

"I would like to dedicate this award to the millions of African women who silently toil to feed their families," said Dr. Nwanze. "No nation has been able to transform itself without giving women the same rights and opportunities as men. Our hope for future generations rests with African women who bear and raise our young people who will shape the African continent in the years to come."

Congratulating the laureate, Dr. Agnes Kalibata, President of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), said that Dr. Nwanze's achievements reflect extremely well the ideals the award represents, putting a bright spotlight on bold initiatives and technical innovations that can be replicated across the continent to create a new era of food security and economic opportunity for all Africans.

"By calling attention to the exemplary leadership of Kanayo Nwanze and to the compelling ideas that have guided him," said Kalibata, "we wish to encourage many others to follow in his footsteps and boldly use the opportunities available to them to change the reality of African farming—from a struggle to survive to a business that thrives."

"In honoring Kanayo Nwanze, the Africa Food Prize Committee could not have made a better choice as the former Yara Prize takes on its new and authentic African identity," said Svein Tore Holsether, President and Chief Executive Officer of Yara International ASA (Yara). "Since its inception in 2005, the Yara Prize has honored special people who have contributed in different ways to transform African agriculture. The first Africa Food Prize recognizes an outstanding African leader who has dedicated his work to improve the lives for smallholder farmers. With 80 percent of farms run by smallholders, the key to transforming African agriculture lies in empowering the smallholder farmer, enabling rural value creation and providing jobs for rural youth."

The Prize recognized Nwanze not only for his individual leadership, but also for the results of successful efforts at IFAD in the years he has been at the helm. IFAD, a specialized United Nations agency and International Financial Institution dedicated to eradicating rural poverty, is not the same organization today that it was in 2009, when Nwanze took office as President. Despite a major global economic downturn, he succeeded in growing the Fund's overall resources, with significant increases in commitments from member states. As a result of this overall increase in IFAD's portfolio of loans and grants, its ongoing investments in Africa more than doubled—from US\$1.3 billion at the start of Nwanze's tenure to \$2.7 billion in 2015—benefiting more than 75 million rural people.

Nwanze has also presided over far-reaching changes in the way IFAD approaches its work, with a focus on shifting activities from headquarters in Rome to offices in dozens of developing countries. With only six country offices in Africa a decade ago, these now number 20 in Africa with a total of 40 globally. The local offices have been key in reshaping IFAD's business model, increasing farmers' access to resources and improving the deployment of funds to projects.

Under Dr. Nwanze's leadership, IFAD has also taken up a more active role in the global policy dialogues. Together with its partners, it advocated for an emphasis on smallholder farmers in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted last year by world leaders, arguing successfully that these farmers have a central role to play in achieving a world free of hunger.

***"The first Africa Food Prize recognizes an outstanding African leader who has dedicated his work to improve the lives for smallholder farmers."***

# Four Ways to end hunger in Africa

*Kofi Annan, Former Secretary General  
of The United Nations*

**F**or the first time in human history, the end of hunger is well within our reach. While courageous and passionate individuals have been working to end this scourge for decades, a recent confluence of political will, public-private partnerships and funding has made this ambition possible.

We have, of course, a long way to go. Almost 800 million men, women and children will not have enough food to eat today. But the achievement of halving the proportion of malnourished people since 1990 has shown us just what can be achieved.

Look, for example, at Africa. Twelve years ago, when I was UN Secretary-General, I called for a “uniquely African Green Revolution” to transform agriculture and the life chances of hundreds of millions of people on the continent. Progress has been remarkable.

For over a decade, African countries have put a much greater emphasis on investment in agriculture and supporting the continent’s farmers. The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP), launched by African leaders in 2003 and reiterated in the Malabo Declaration of June 2014, provides a clear framework to accelerate investment and coordinate countries’ efforts.

International donors have thrown their weight behind these national efforts. From a surge in donor investment

stemming from the 2009 G-8 Summit in L’Aquila, Italy, to the agreement by the global community to prioritize hunger and malnutrition in last year’s Sustainable Development Goals, the tide is turning.

With the help of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Rockefeller Foundation, the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) was created in 2006. In just a short period of time, it has become a preeminent leader in transforming Africa’s agriculture and food systems. Thanks to the partnerships it has formed, the research and development it has supported and the initiatives on the ground it has launched, smallholder farmers have obtained access to better seeds, sustainable agricultural techniques and financing, while thousands of agri-businesses have been created and expanded.

## **A green revolution for Africa?**

The last few weeks have given more reason to celebrate. In a rare show of bipartisan cooperation, the United States Congress in July passed the Global Food Security Act. This significant legislation reaffirms the United States’ commitment to ending global hunger, poverty and child malnutrition through President Obama’s Feed the Future Initiative by supporting developing countries to improve their agriculture and broaden food systems. It is hoped that the passing of the Act encourages other traditional donor countries to take similar actions.





This latest good news comes as African heads of state, international donors and hunger advocates from around the world gather in Nairobi, Kenya, for the African Green Revolution Forum. It is an opportunity not only to celebrate collective progress but also to commit ourselves to step up the battle against hunger and malnutrition.

We must seize on this critical moment and build on the incredible progress that's been made in recent years. We all gain if we get this right. Increasing food security not only lifts the shadow of hunger from hundreds of millions of our fellow human beings. It also builds up economies and trade and minimizes the risk of political instability.

I believe there are four main keys to tipping the scales and sentencing global hunger to extinction.

#### **Keep hunger on domestic and international agendas**

First is the continued political will to keep this issue high on domestic and international agendas, for no country can be strong when its people are weakened by hunger. The role of civil society in constantly encouraging governments to make agriculture a priority is vital here as well.

#### **Build effective partnerships**

No single individual, group or government can take on this monumental challenge alone. We have seen over the last few years just how quick and significant progress can be when we have the vision to work together.

#### **Help countries become self-sufficient**

We must retain and strengthen country ownership. Developing countries -- who suffer disproportionately from food insecurity -- must take the lead in defining their own path to prosperity.

#### **Find more money**

Finally, the recognition of the critical importance of financing. The impressive progress so far will not be sustained and accelerated without new investment from both the private sector and developing countries themselves, in addition to traditional donors.

Developing country leaders, private sector companies, donors, NGOs and others now have the chance to achieve something incredible within our lifetimes. This week and into the future, I challenge my colleagues working in global development, especially heads of state and private sector leaders, to prioritise this issue. Working together -- across sectors and disciplines -- we can make hunger history.

Source: CNN (<http://edition.cnn.com/2016/09/05/opinions/kofi-annan-how-to-stop-hunger-in-africa-opinion/index.html>)

## 2016 AGRF Photo Gallery



The 2016 AGRF delivered a massive infusion of both financial, political and policy commitments to African farmers and agriculture businesses on a continent eager for new, more inclusive opportunities for economic growth. A key highlight from AGRF 2016 included the launch of the 2016 African Agriculture Status Report. The report detailed progress over the last decade and identified key priorities for moving ahead.







The Forum attracted more than 1,500 delegates from 40 countries, including African Heads of State, global business leaders, government ministers, farmers, agribusiness firms, financial institutions, NGOs, civil society groups and scientists, as well as international development and technical partners. Dr. Kanayo Nwanze, IFAD's President was feted as the first winner of the Africa Food Prize.





## 2016 AGRF Photo Gallery



*The AGRF partners concluded the meeting by embracing a detailed action plan that commits them to achieving specific milestones over the next 16 months as part of the “Seize the Moment” campaign that served as the theme for AGRF 2016.*







*"Seize the Moment" was first launched in April 2016 at the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Plan (CAADP) Partnership Platform in Accra, Ghana. It has quickly become a rallying point for accelerating work around the African Union's 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).*





## 2016 AGRF Photo Gallery



*In the final communiqué from the meeting, delegates pledged over the next 16 months to focus on smallholder farmers to achieve significant growth in agriculture productivity and profits in at least 20 countries while unleashing US \$200 billion in investments in the agriculture sector. The action plan also commits countries to developing a public “scorecard” that would track progress and hold them accountable.*







*Specific commitments include unlocking 10 percent of public expenditures for agriculture, as many countries agreed to do when they first joined the CAADP partnership. Actions steps also will involve launching innovative approaches to providing finance for smallholder farmers and agribusinesses.*





## 2016 AGRF Photo Gallery



*This year's AGRF was special as it coincided with AGRA's 10th Anniversary that was commemorated in partnership with the Rockefeller Foundation through a standing exhibition themed Shared Success - a unique anthology of photographs capturing moments in the 10 year journey towards Africa's agricultural transformation. The Exhibition was unveiled by David Rockefeller Jr in the presence of many dignitaries.*







*The photo exhibition depicted AGRA's contribution to agricultural transformation impact on the continent and its people, with a focus on five areas of accomplishment: reducing food waste and spoilage; farmer training; seed production; improved market access; and innovation. AGRA also hosted a VIP dinner event, officiated by H.E. William Ruto, Kenya's Deputy President.*





## *Somalia: A fragile state with great potential for agricultural transformation*

Throughout two decades of conflict in Somalia, following the collapse of the central government in 1991, the private sector has remained active, even in a difficult environment, filling the void left by government institutions.

Now, attention is focused on how the country's private sector can drive and sustain agricultural growth. The sectors that have thrived, despite the war, are agriculture, livestock exports, remittance services and telecommunications, as reported in a session at the African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) in Nairobi, Kenya. Titled "Agricultural Transformation in Somalia", the session was organised by the USAID/DFID/Somalia Agriculture Technical Group and H.E. Abdullahi Sheikh Ali Ibrahim, Somalia's Deputy Minister of Planning and International Cooperation.

Key requirements for boosting agricultural investment in Somalia are to better exploit regional linkages and create strategic partnerships for state building. The private sector can contribute importantly by taking the lead in product certification for export markets and by investing in technology and skills. In the meantime, the federal government has unveiled a 3-year national development plan that includes a comprehensive strategy and action plan for kick-starting the country's development, with agriculture at the center.

"We know these sectors are the best drivers for taking our country forward quickly and effectively," said Ibrahim in his keynote

address to the session. "Our focus now is on building partnerships between government, Somalia's highly entrepreneurial private sector, development partners and ordinary citizens."

Somalia has considerable productive resources, which offer huge potential for delivering rapid economic growth, with important impacts on people's livelihoods. These resources include 8.5 million hectares of arable land, more than 50 million livestock and about 1.8 million tons of fish annually for export. But currently, only 2.3 million hectares are under rainfed agriculture plus another 630,000 hectares under irrigation.

Efforts to transform the country's productive sectors are bearing fruit, with the livestock sector showing some of the biggest gains during recent years. In 2015, Somalia exported 5.3 million animals, after the lifting of an international ban imposed in 2008 on beef and related exports.

Other important products are sesame, lemon and bananas. Moreover, for the last 3 years, over 100 farmers have been growing guava in preparation for the opening of a guava processing plant before the end of 2016. This is but one sign that the country's agriculture is recovering.

Sesame is one of Somalia's flagship export crops, but productivity is low. The country produces 300 kg per hectare, on average, compared with 1800 kg in Ethiopia. This is because farmers in Somalia do not have access to improved seeds and other inputs.

"Increasing productivity will require the collaborative efforts of all stakeholders in the agricultural value chains to test and take up new and improved technologies," said Dr. Hussein Haji, Director of Somalia Agricultural Technical Group.

Turning to food crops, Haji noted that Somalia produces about 150,000 tons of maize annually, with average yields of 1 ton per hectare. But with the right agricultural inputs and improved farming practices, farmers should be able to harvest 5 tons per hectare.

"Moving national annual production from 150,000 to 750,000 tons is the transformation we are looking for, but this requires testing and adoption of new and improved technologies. Besides productivity increases, the transformation of Somalia's agriculture depends on investments in infrastructure and markets," noted Ibrahim.





## Kenya: Commitments by Processing Companies to Buy 600MT of Potatoes per Month

Companies producing potato products in East Africa have announced a commitment to purchase 600 metric tonnes (MT) of potatoes per month to meet rapidly growing consumer demand. This commitment will help to unlock much-needed investment in the regional potato value chain to achieve its production potential and benefit thousands of smallholder farmers. The market opportunity for potato processing in the East African Community (EAC) is estimated to represent up to US\$1.2bn by 2025.

The announcement was made at the 2016 African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) in Nairobi, where potato value chain stakeholders convened to further their collaboration through an existing regional potato consortium co-convened by the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and Grow Africa.

The goal of the consortium is to increase regional production and supply of this high-potential commodity by addressing bottlenecks across the value chain through coordinated action. Farmers will be assured of a ready market for their produce and processors will get a steady supply of quality potatoes. To achieve this, the consortium brings together farmers, inputs companies, processing companies, county and national governments for provision of supporting infrastructure and finance providers.

Speaking at the announcement of the consortium, the President of AGRA, Dr. Agnes Kalibata welcomed the collaboration terming

it as good news for the farmers. “In order to achieve a uniquely African green revolution, we have to support farmers to do what they do very well and potato growing is one thing that our farmers do well. Provided with additional support, African farmers can increase potato production from the current 5 tons per hectare to 35-40 tons per hectare. It is the aim of this consortium to drive the right partnerships to increase farmers production, improve marketing and increase farmers income in Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda”.

Dr. Richard Lesiyampe, Principle Secretary, State Department of Agriculture, lauded the collaboration and promised the government support to upscale it. “Potato is the second most important crop in Kenya employing about 2.5 million Kenyans. It is an industry we have to protect, expand and add value for food security”, he said. “The government cannot succeed alone. We need all the actors involved across the entire value chain to play their part. That is why we are delighted to be part of this consortium”.

William Asiko, Executive Director of Grow Africa added: “To secure higher levels of investment in agriculture and improve farmers’ incomes, there has to be coordination and alignment of efforts right across commodity value chains, and to achieve meaningful scale this needs to happen at the regional level. Grow Africa is committed to driving this through multi-stakeholder value chain partnerships, and we are delighted to be working with AGRA on realising the vast potential of the potato value chain in East Africa.”

Average potato consumption in the East African Community has grown by approximately 300% over the past two decades, yet farmers have largely failed to benefit from this with low farm-gate prices due to highly fragmented supply chains, and continuing low yields due to lack of access to quality inputs and expertise. Addressing these shortcomings and strengthening the value chain to meet the rapidly growing demand has the potential to more than double farmer incomes in the region.

The regional potato consortium will work through focused ‘clusters’ to address jointly agreed priority constraints in the value chain, informed by the outcomes of a recent market study on the opportunities and challenges across the East African potato value chain.





## The Nairobi Communiqué

### Decisions and Commitments from the 2016 African Green Revolution Forum



1. The Sixth African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 5 to 9 September, 2016. It attracted more than 1500 delegates from 40 countries. The AGRF once again proved to be a multi-stakeholder forum bringing together a diverse range of influential change agents from across the African agriculture landscape and around the world. They included African Heads of State, global business leaders, ministers, farmers and farmer organizations, private agribusiness firms, financial institutions, civil society groups and scientists, as well as international development and technical partners.
2. The theme of this year's AGRF was "Seize the Moment: Securing Africa's Rise through Agricultural Transformation." The forum built on a campaign to "Seize the Moment" that was launched at the 12th Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Partnership Platform meeting in Accra, Ghana in April 2016. The campaign is backed by the African Union, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), along with key civil-society groups, farmer groups, companies and development partners.
3. "Seize the Moment" recognizes the significant progress African countries have made over the last decade to build a foundation for a renaissance in the agriculture sector both on and off the farm across the entire value chain. But it also recognizes that much more needs to be done. Countries still have a long way to go to achieve food security and ensure equal access to economic opportunity for all Africans. Africa today is facing strong headwinds. The challenges include rapid urbanization, climate change that is generating more stressful growing conditions, significant unemployment in which one in three Africans from 15 to 35 years old are jobless and chronic malnutrition that has left 58 million children stunted. AGRF partners understand that addressing these issues requires firm political, policy and financial commitments, guided by a clear agenda and strong mechanisms for measuring progress.
4. The ambition of the forum is to accelerate the progress on agriculture's contribution to economic growth and transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods for all, in line with delivering on the Malabo Goals and targets. Over the course of the five-day forum, delegates put forward and began to coalesce around a set of important commitments that the AGRF platform can pursue in the medium-term to realize the ambitious goals laid out in the 2014 Malabo Declaration and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). During the next 16 months before the African Union Heads of State and Government Summit and CAADP biennial review in January 2018, the AGRF partners pledged to: pursue a political, policy and business agenda intended to accelerate smallholder-inclusive agricultural transformation in at least 20 countries; unlock at least US \$200 billion in investment in African agriculture; and develop a concise agricultural transformation scorecard for accountability and action under the leadership of African Union institutions. They are captured in the following nine action points:
  - i. Refresh investment plans to **unlock 10% of public expenditure on agriculture** that can be clearly leveraged to attract significant additional resources from private sector and other partners.
  - ii. Actualize commitments made by the private sector through platforms such as Grow Africa or others to bring **at least US \$20 billion of private investment** into African agriculture and galvanize broader investment.
  - iii. Develop and launch **innovative financing mechanisms**, including Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) agricultural financing mechanisms such as incentive-based risk-sharing facilities for agricultural lending, social impact bonds, catalytic financing facilities and agriculture-relevant e-wallet and digital financing mechanisms.
  - iv. Support **at least 20 countries to develop their agriculture transformation agenda**, including identification and significant scaling up of five priority value chains per country with strong links to smallholder agriculture, strong focus on youth employment and a commitment to building resilience to shocks to the agriculture system.
  - v. Identify and unlock **five main policy and regulatory bottlenecks** per country that are inhibiting agriculture sector growth.
  - vi. Establish and support **agriculture transformation delivery mechanisms** appropriately tailored to the national context and needs in at least 10 countries.
  - vii. Support countries to strengthen capacities, including the cultivation of a new wave of public and private sector **agriculture transformation leaders**.

Welcome  
Karibu  
Bienvenido



viii. Produce and use an **agriculture transformation scorecard at the heart of the CAADP biennial review process**, including a one-page snapshot for Heads of State.

ix. **Hold at least two Ministerial peer review roundtables** prior to the 2018 African Union Heads of State and Government Summit to challenge and validate emerging biennial review reports and actions.

5. At AGRF 2016, many of Africa's steadfast champions of agriculture stepped forward with significant and concrete commitments that have already begun to put this nine-point plan into action. They pledged more than US \$30 billion in investments to increase production, income and employment for smallholder farmers and local African agriculture businesses over the next 10 years. The collective pledges are believed to represent the largest package of financial commitments to the African agricultural sector to date, and they are backed by the broadest coalition ever assembled in support of the entire agribusiness value chain.

6. African governments represented by H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya, H.E. President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, Cabinet Ministers and senior government officials from more than 20 countries across the continent laid out a bold vision for how agriculture transformation will drive economic transformation.

i. H.E. President Kenyatta put forth concrete proposals that included a call for governments to refresh multi-year plans for agriculture development; a push to mobilize a combination of US \$400 billion in public and private sector resources; and an effort to put in place the continental agricultural transformation scorecard that would measure and track all commitments to ensure they trigger action. H.E. President Kenyatta stepped forward as one of the first champions of the "Seize the Moment" campaign, committing himself to deliver this agenda. He announced his government's commitment to invest US \$200 million so at least 150,000 young farmers and young agriculture entrepreneurs can gain access to markets, finance and insurance.

ii. H.E. President Kagame stepped forward as the other initial champion of the "Seize the Moment" campaign. Building on his long-standing leadership in putting agricultural transformation at the center of Rwanda's economic transformation and improvements in human well-being, President Kagame challenged the continent and other leaders around the world. He noted that, "We should not only seize the moment but continue momentum for transformation of agriculture and economies of our continent. Agriculture is not just one sector of the economy

amongst others – it's the backbone of the economy. We need to strengthen the involvement of other parts of the value chain, especially the private sector. Let's have more action and less talk."

7. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) launched a global report entitled "A Food-Secure 2030" and set the tone for supporting Africa's agricultural transformation agenda with its political and financial commitment through the Global Food Security Act, which is the largest development authorization the US Congress has made in a decade.

8. Other development partners including the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the MasterCard Foundation, and the World Food Programme (WFP) recommitted and intensified their long-standing support for African agriculture.

9. A representative set of private sector partners including AGCO Corporation, Kenya Commercial Bank Group (KCB), Equity Bank, OCP Africa, UPL and Yara International ASA (Yara) committed to significant new investments to boost production for smallholder farmers and link them to lucrative agriculture value chains. Their work is expected to deliver, among other things, a major increase in financing for smallholder farmers and SME agribusinesses; an increase in use of seeds, fertilizers and other inputs; an increase in manufacturing capacity oriented around smallholder farmers; and the development of efficient and sustainable value chains, such as potatoes and pulses in East Africa.

10. Regional institutions led by the African Union Commission and NEPAD Agency committed to driving the CAADP biennial review process and implementing the scorecard on agricultural transformation for tracking progress in the "Seize the Moment" campaign and beyond.

11. The actions taken over the next 16 months until the January 2018 AU Summit will be critical to delivering on this agenda and contributing to achievement of the goals laid out in the Malabo Declaration. The AGRF partners intend to build on the momentum established at AGRF 2016 by developing a work plan that will tie together the most important moments and forums of the African agriculture community to secure further commitments to the "Seize the Moment" campaign and ensure progress.

12. The AGRF Partners Group concluded AGRF 2016 with an agreement that the 2017 AGRF will be co-hosted by the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, AfDB and AGRA in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

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AGRF2016BIENVENUE





A close-up portrait of Dr. Norman Borlaug, an elderly man with glasses, smiling. He is wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a red tie. The background is a blurred green and yellow pattern.

## Borlaug's dream is within reach in Africa

*Dr. Norman Borlaug  
The Father of the Green Revolution*

By Marshall Matz

**N**orman Borlaug, the father of the World Food Prize and the winner of the 1970 Nobel Peace Prize, had a dream. His dream was to extend the Green Revolution to Africa. His work introducing high-yielding wheat and modern seed breeding started in Mexico and then spread to Asia.

Borlaug knew that his biggest challenge lay ahead, in Africa, as the structure of African agriculture was unique and would require a different approach. In 2007, he wrote in the Wall Street Journal, “Africa’s political commitment to agriculture and rural development has been much weaker than what existed in Asia” and there had to be much more research and development.

Things have changed since that time, the pace is quickening and a food-secure Africa is within reach.

At the 2016 AGRF, 1500 delegates from all over the world convened at the United Nations in Nairobi, Kenya, with one single goal in mind: to scale up African agriculture. The African Green Revolution Forum included heads of state (and former heads of state), leaders of the

African Union, the business community and civil-society all seeking to grow the agriculture economy and fundamentally change the human condition.

Howarth Bouis of the United States talks about his team’s research focused on providing food and nutrition through biofortification – the process of breeding critical vitamins and micronutrients into staple crops such as wheat, rice and potatoes.

The focus of the forum, which was coordinated by the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) along with many partners, was to seize the moment by making the political, policy and financial investments needed to achieve the ambitious goals laid out by African heads of state through the African Union and its African Agriculture Development Program (CAADP).

The opening speaker at the forum was Julie Borlaug, Borlaug’s granddaughter, who presented Borlaug’s vision for Africa. President Paul Kagame of Rwanda captured the consensus of the meeting: “Agriculture is not just one sector of the economy amongst others — it’s the backbone of the economy.” The president of AGRA, Agnes Kalibata, was the minister of agriculture in Rwanda before she moved to the helm of AGRA.

The African Union now urges all 54 African countries to devote at least 10 percent of their budgets to agriculture. The countries that were the first to meet the goal in terms of budget allocation — including Ghana, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Burkina Faso — have been making the most progress.

In Burkina Faso, for example, maize production increased from 1.5 tons per hectare (2.5 acres) to 5 tons per hectare with the introduction of new varieties of hybrid seeds. In all, some 555 new certified varieties of hybrid seeds have been released for a wide variety of crops.





*Julie Borlaug, delivers Borlaug's dream  
at the 2016 AGRF opening ceremony*

At every level of education, capacity has been increased. Markets are being established and expanded. Country governments are establishing policies that are business friendly. Akin Adesina, the new president of the African Development Bank, has made agriculture development a top priority. But progress across the continent is still quite inconsistent.

The forum concluded with the minister of agriculture in Kenya, Willy Brett, quoting Norman Borlaug and his plea to "take it to the farmers." But that is easier said than done in Africa.

Privately owned agro-dealers are playing an important role. They are selling small bags of seeds and inputs to farmers and, on occasion, combining it with extension services. There are some 17,000 certified agro-dealers, but that number needs to increase by hundreds of thousands to reach the majority of smallholder farmers.

Then it must be combined with a dose of education through public-private cooperation. Once a farmer starts using certified, improved seeds (as opposed to those seeds left over from last year) coupled with a micro-dose of fertilizer and some education, the yields increase dramatically.

The agro-dealers may also be in the best position to bring mechanization to smallholder farmers. Individual farmers don't have the capital or the need for a full-time tractor. The local agro-dealer could purchase the tractor and make it available to his customers.

AGRA for its part will be using a new integrated approach at the farmer level, the national level and the system level. Further, AGRA will be implementing this program, on the ground, establishing offices in 11 countries to reach the maximum number of farmers.

This is not of course a comprehensive list of what is needed. Irrigation, credit issues, crop insurance and other components of a vibrant farm economy will have to be addressed. "The goal," as outlined by President Kenyatta of Kenya "is for smallholder farmers to become profitable businesses so they can improve the quality of life for their families."

AGRA has become the sparkplug pulling all this together. They bridge the private and public sectors as well as the universities, the civil society and the growing list of funders around the world. Based on the progress of the last 10 years, and the momentum coming out of the forum, there are very high expectations for scaling up the African green revolution during the next 10 years and fulfilling Borlaug's dream.

*Marshall Matz specializes in agriculture and global food security at OFW Law in Washington, D.C. He serves on the board of directors of the World Food Program, USA and the Congressional Hunger Center.*



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## *IFAD Chief on why Africa leaders are failing*

**D**r. Kanayo Nwanze, president of the Rome-based International Fund for Agricultural Development, is a tireless advocate for putting Africa's smallholder farmers at the center of the global agriculture agenda.

During his tenure at IFAD, Nwanze has opened more country offices in Africa, in an effort to move the organization closer to the people it serves, and has ensured IFAD has taken an active role in global policy dialogues. For this work — as well as reorienting IFAD's mission to focus more on making small-scale farming as a viable business — he was awarded the inaugural Africa Food Prize in early September at the African Green Revolution Forum in Nairobi, Kenya.

Africa's agriculture has made great strides, he told Devex, but he's looking to all stakeholders — government, private sector, international organizations and development institutions — for stronger leadership.

Devex caught up with Nwanze following his award to talk about everything from the most promising initiatives to support women in agriculture to what innovations he wants to see take off in the next five years.

*You rattled off many numbers while addressing press at African Green Revolution Forum — only 6 percent of cultivated land in Africa is irrigated, over \$35 billion is spent every year on food imports, total food losses in sub-Saharan Africa are estimated to be worth \$4 billion per year. Do those numbers motivate or discourage you?*

Over the last decade, Africa's agriculture has made great strides, though progress has been uneven, and many challenges remain. Against this background, I think we are justified in being optimistic that we can make further progress in the years to come.

The key is building greater momentum behind our efforts to raise agricultural productivity sustainably, improve rural infrastructure, and strengthen policy and institutional support for agriculture. If all partners persist in these efforts — government, the private sector, international organizations and development institutions — there is every reason to believe that Africa, with its huge land and human resources, can meet growing domestic food demand and one day even become a global food supplier again, exporting key staples such as rice. The key of course will be leadership. And this is where my frustration and disappointment come from. I believe our leadership in Africa has failed, failed woefully in this regard. Our partners cannot do it for us.



***You dedicated your African Food Prize award to “the millions of African women who silently toil to feed their families.” What, in your opinion, are the most promising initiatives to support women in agriculture on the continent? Is there a moment that stands out as a sign of progress in this realm?***

Economic empowerment is hugely important for rural women and it is IFAD's top priority in our work to promote gender equality. Economic empowerment means enabling women to earn a fair income from their labor and their produce, and to decide how that income will be spent. It also means having access to financial services such as microcredit and insurance, and being able to acquire assets and to start businesses.

Secure access to land also makes a key contribution to improving the livelihoods of rural women. Encouragingly, some countries have introduced progressive legislation and policies over the last decade or so that strengthen women's rights to own and inherit land — at least in theory. An IFAD-funded project in Ethiopia is supporting the issuing of land certificates, which have been given to all women heads of households in the target area. In married households, family land is being registered and certificates are being issued with husband and wife as co-owners. The project is directly benefiting 450,000 households. We need to encourage such measures in other countries. We must also support interventions — such as information campaigns, training, and enabling women to organize collectively — that help them to take full advantage of the new rights given to them on paper.

***You've advocated strongly for smallholder farmers and small business. What, in your opinion, will the role of rural agro-dealer play in the future of Africa's agriculture?***

Many organizations, including IFAD, are working to improve delivery of new seeds and other inputs such as fertilizers and extension services to smallholder farmers in Africa. There is now a clear consensus about the vital role that networks of certified rural small and medium enterprises can play in delivering inputs and knowledge, especially to smallholder farmers who are beyond the reach of more formal providers. These enterprises are therefore key actors in our efforts to transform African agriculture. But entrepreneurs do not appear from thin air. They appear when the conditions are right for energetic and imaginative people to seize opportunities. And these opportunities depend on the actions of governments, donors, and other institutions.

Rural people need a commitment by government to establish and enforce policies that encourage higher food production by smallholders. This includes policies that offer incentives for investment in agriculture and reduce the risks for farmers and private sector partners alike. It requires policies that encourage inclusive business models, and that increase the ability of poor farmers to access finance and technology and that protect their rights to water and land.

***What innovation would you like to see take off in agriculture in the next five years?***

Agricultural science has built a well-deserved reputation over the last several decades for delivering specific technical innovations, such as improved seeds and practices, which offer smallholder farmers clear benefits. Certainly, we need to maintain the flow of such technologies. But my hope is that, rather than just deliver more innovations to farmers, we will make real headway over the next five years in helping rural people benefit from innovations and even become innovators themselves. Many effective approaches have been pioneered in recent years to accomplish this. I believe such approaches are vital for enabling smallholders not just to make incremental gains but to transform agriculture, so that it can be competitive in markets, environmentally sustainable, and resilient in the face of climate change. Agriculture is the main source of livelihoods in rural areas. Transform smallholder agriculture and you can foster an inclusive rural transformation, both social and economic, that will go a long way towards eliminating poverty and hunger.

***You've ensured the growth of IFAD's country offices, of which there are now 20 in Africa where there were six a decade ago. What has this proximity to the people IFAD serves meant for the way it operates? What have you learned from it?***

Opening more country offices in Africa moved IFAD closer to the people it serves, and this motivated and enabled our staff to work more effectively with rural communities and the local organizations that serve them. In the process, we have learned a lot about adapting and targeting our investments to create more benefits for smallholders and their families. Recent studies carried out by our independent office of evaluation show that the programs and projects supported by IFAD have greater impact where we have country offices. Our staff also have greater influence on policy issues related to rural development and partnership-building is also more effective with our expanded presence on the ground.

***Your research background has shaped your leadership at IFAD. And Joachim von Braun, director of the Center for Development Research, said during AGRF that “scientists can be successful change agents.” What do you say to that — and to today's young African scientists? Any advice for them?***

My advice for young African scientists is to cultivate and put into practice the ideas that my generation inherited from Norman Borlaug and other Green Revolution architects. One is our deeply felt conviction that problem-solving science for development can ultimately defeat hunger and poverty. Another is our sense of urgency about solving problems by working hard alongside partners in the field. I would add one further recommendation from experience: Think beyond your own discipline, and embrace a holistic view that takes into account not only biophysical factors but the economic, social, and political dimensions as well. This kind of thinking is essential for confronting the complex challenges that agriculture faces today. And we have to remember that the people we are trying to help have valuable knowledge themselves, and we must work in partnership with them.

**AGRA was set up to work with various partners to bring about a uniquely African Green Revolution to unleash the continent's agricultural potential. We thank them for 10 years of Shared Success.**

**10**

**YEARS OF  
SHARED SUCCESS**



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