

Alliance

for a **Green Revolution**
in **Africa**



*Lifting millions out of poverty and hunger by
increasing the productivity and profitability
of small-scale farms in Africa*

In his tenure as UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan called for a new, “uniquely African Green Revolution—a revolution that is long overdue, a revolution that will help the continent in its quest for dignity and peace.”

What Is the Alliance?

The African-led Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) is a dynamic partnership working across the continent to assist millions of small-scale farmers and their families lift themselves out of poverty and hunger. Alliance programmes develop practical solutions to dramatically boost farm productivity and incomes while safeguarding the environment and biodiversity.

To achieve this goal, Alliance partnerships focus on the full agricultural “value chain” of African agriculture: from seeds, soil health, and water, to markets, agricultural education, and policy.

The majority of the Alliance's board members are prominent African leaders, including the chair, former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan. The Alliance is committed to an inclusive partnership of small farmers, scientists, national governments, foundations and other donors, civil society groups, and private sector entrepreneurs.

It has already awarded many grants, and established partnerships with major African institutions, among them several ministries of agriculture, and with prominent plant breeders, soil health experts, and leaders of agriculture extension programmes.

The Alliance is a direct response to calls by African leaders to chart a path for prosperity by spurring the continent's agricultural development. The Alliance strongly endorses the African Union (AU) and its Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

Challenges and Opportunities



Africa has the singular and tragic distinction of being the only region where overall food security and livelihoods are deteriorating. In the past 15 years, the number of Africans living below the poverty line (\$1/day) has

increased by 50 percent, and an estimated one-third of the continent's population suffers from daily hunger. The number of underweight children in Africa has risen by around 12 percent in the past five years alone.



At the roots of this entrenched and deepening poverty are millions of small-scale farmers—predominantly women working farms of less than one hectare—who cannot grow and sell enough food to sustain their families or communities.

The challenges confronting Africa's small-scale farmers start in the field and extend across the entire agricultural value chain. Most African farmers cannot access or afford basic farm inputs such as improved seeds, organic and mineral fertilisers for replenishing depleted soils, or simple water management systems that will allow small-scale farmers to make the most of erratic rains.

Also lacking are passable roads and vital links to markets, extension, and finance systems. In addition, small-scale farmers require the support of government policies that promote sustainable and productive African agriculture and that ensure fair prices on harvests.

“We need marketing advice because we are trying to eradicate poverty. We need to be able to get our crops to a place where they can get a good price.”

*Daniel Kalii, farmer of maize, beans, cassava, pumpkins, pearl millet, and bananas
Machakos, Kenya*



Revitalizing Small-Scale Farming across Africa

Our commitment: an African-led, participatory, and comprehensive approach.

We know that through dramatic improvements to agriculture, prosperity can replace poverty. In most modern economies, no lasting success has been achieved without first building a strong agricultural foundation.

The Alliance is working to break the cycles of hunger and poverty in Africa through partnerships that will provide small-scale farmers with the tools and opportunities they need to build better lives for themselves and their families.

Our work begins in the fields with small-scale farmers to learn from them and to understand their most pressing problems. Individual farmers, women's associations, and farmer unions are key partners. Together we identify potential solutions.

Our work is comprehensive, addressing critical challenges across the agricultural value chain, from seeds to soil to markets. Our initiatives aim to improve access to farm “inputs”—high-quality seeds, organic and mineral fertiliser, and systems of reliable water management. We also aim to improve access to “output” markets—



the crop storage, processing, transport, and finance that ultimately allow small-scale farmers to sell their harvests and make a profit.

Our work is shaped by the urgent need to act now to alleviate the dire poverty holding back millions of Africans, as well as by a commitment to change conditions for the long term.

Our work is both pro-poor and pro-environment. Increased productivity on small-scale farms can simultaneously support agricultural growth and enhance the environment: rebuilding depleted, erosion-prone soil, conserving crop biodiversity, making wise use of limited water, and sparing vast expanses of forest and savannah from cultivation.

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A Plan for Change: The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa

The Alliance provides locally developed and adapted solutions that can be scaled up quickly to minimize the lag time in providing poor farmers across the continent with the options they need to improve their lives and incomes and protect the base of natural resources their livelihoods depend upon.

Our first collaborations since being launched in 2006 have focused on developing more productive and resilient varieties of Africa's major food crops, which are adapted to thrive in a variety of conditions. These will enable Africa's small-scale farmers to produce larger, more diverse, and reliable harvests.

The Alliance has also initiated programmes dedicated to enhancing agricultural education in Africa, and to monitor and evaluate all of our work. We will learn as we go forward, revise where necessary, and provide all of our partners with barometers of progress.

Over the next few years, the Alliance will systematically build on these first programmes, adding initiatives that address other key aspects of the agricultural value chain. Overall, our programs will include:

- Developing better and more appropriate **seeds**;
- Fortifying depleted **soils** with responsible use of organic matter and soil nutrients and better management practices;
- Improving access to **water** and improving water use efficiency;
- Improving income opportunities through better agricultural input and output **markets**;
- Developing local networks of **agriculture experts**;
- Understanding and sharing the wealth of **African farmer knowledge**;
- Encouraging government **policies** that support small-scale farmers; and
- Constant **monitoring and evaluating** to ensure that Alliance efforts improve the lives of small farm households and build a sustainable future for all Africans.

At the same time, the Alliance will advocate for policies that support small-scale farmers, including policies that promote rural development and environmental sustainability, and that address trade and other barriers to agricultural development.

To achieve these objectives, the Alliance will work to attract a large and diverse group of donors and other partners.



A New, Sustainable Uniquely African Green Revolution

Pursued collectively and comprehensively, these multiple efforts can make a major difference for Africa's small-scale farms and, through them, their societies.

It is a considerable undertaking, but, in the words of Mozambique's President Armando Guebuza, Africa is up to the challenge: "I am sure that we will be able to end hunger and eliminate poverty because we Mozambicans are a heroic people. If we remain united, as we were united when we fought against colonialism and in the war against destabilisation, we will also be victorious in today's fight against hunger and poverty."

The time is ripe for a sustainable and uniquely African Green Revolution.

"There is a lot to be learned from the farmer. You develop ideas about what you think the farmer should do to solve [her] problem, but maybe that is not the farmer's problem."

Dr. Jane Ininda, AGRA plant scientist, Nairobi, Kenya

Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa

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