



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

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African Green Revolution Forum Makes the Case for Investment in African Agriculture



AGRF

Melinda Gates (left) attended the African Green Revolution Forum, hosted by President Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania (center) and former UN Secretary-General and AGRA Chairman Kofi Annan (right).

The 2012 African Green Revolution Forum was held in Arusha, Tanzania, from September 26-28, bringing together more than 1,000 African heads of state, ministers, farmers, private agribusiness firms, financial institutions, NGOs, civil society groups, and scientists to discuss the best way to scale up investments and innovation for sustainable agricultural growth and food security on the continent.

Focusing on smallholder farmers, attendees worked to develop concrete action plans for developing Africa's agriculture sector, covering such topics as:

- Access to finance
- Reducing risk
- Public-private partnership
- Building capacity in science and technology
- Improving regional agricultural markets

The forum also included a heavy emphasis on scaling up investment in agricultural research, which can lead to the improved technologies, seeds, and other farm inputs that yield big gains in agriculture.

"The average Tanzanian farmer doesn't think about the priorities of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture," said Melinda Gates of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. "But if she wants to sell enough cassava to send her child to school, then she's depending on cutting-edge cassava research to fight brown streak and mosaic disease."

Among the outcomes of the forum was a new, \$10 million grant agreement between the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) to support the development of innovations to boost agricultural growth in Africa. The grant will enable African entrepreneurs to submit new and innovative business solutions to accelerate the development of the agricultural sector, with a focus on the empowerment of women and environmental sustainability.

"The international community is beginning to realize that smallholder farmers are entrepreneurs and farming is a business,"

said AGRA President Jane Karuku toward the end of the event. "The forum inspired tremendous discussions and developed actionable plans to bring us closer to achieve food security. It is critical that we move forward with these real, practical and pragmatic actions."

Learn more about [AGRA](#) and the [African Green Revolution Forum](#) or watch USAID Administrator Shah's [video address](#) to the forum.