



african green revolution
forum

Kofi Annan calls for united effort to accelerate African Green Revolution

Accra, Ghana, 12 August 2010 - African heads of state, industry representatives, the international donor community and farmers will meet in Ghana at the African Green Revolution Forum (AGRF) in the first week of September. Delegates will create an action plan on the acceleration of a Green Revolution in Africa. Chaired by Kofi Annan, chair of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), this is the first time the forum will be held in Africa. It is expected to be one of the continent's major gatherings of both public and private players to focus solely on agriculture development.

"We will be looking to governments for leadership to create an environment that will enable agriculture to prosper and grow and we will be looking to the private sector to drive and sustain that growth," says Kofi Annan. "Working together we can achieve a food secure and prosperous Africa."

The AGRF promotes investments and policy initiatives that will drive income growth for African farmers in an environmentally sustainable way. The AGRF will also show progress in unlocking Africa's agricultural potential and facilitating sustainable economic growth thanks to new investment and public-private partnerships.

"As Secretary General of the United Nations, I called for a uniquely green revolution in Africa to meet the Millennium Development Goal of halving hunger by 2015. And six years later, I am encouraged to see that the Green Revolution has taken hold and is gaining momentum. We have reached global consensus that agriculture is Africa's lifeline and, from that realization, we are gaining global support and funding commitments as well as the support of African governments and the attention of the private sector. But we need an action plan to translate this momentum into tangible support for Africa's farmers," says Mr. Annan.

To substantially increase food production in Africa requires a comprehensive and integrated approach to improve the productivity, profitability and sustainability of smallholder farmers. The new expansion must take into account its effect on climate change – the warming planet is expected to reduce yields by 20-30 percent by 2050 if left unchecked.

A number of private players will take leading roles at the AGRF.

Jørgen Ole Haslestad, Chief Executive, Yara International ASA, says: "At the African Green Revolution Forum in Ghana we expect to continue the momentum from other recent summits. We need both the entrepreneurship attitude from business and political leadership to create environments that enable financing and smallholder farmers to flourish."

Clive Tasker, Chief Executive, Standard Bank Africa, says: “Commercially viable agriculture can yield food for millions and eliminate hunger. Farmers, NGOs, public and private partners will sit at the same table at the African Green Revolution Forum. Together we will support the real progress on the ground.”

The NEPAD Agency Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, says “Africa has the potential to become a major food producer ensuring food security on our continent and beyond. This opportunity can only become reality if systemic transformation takes place at the farmer, NGO, policy and continental level. Moving AGRF to Africa, is a clear statement on the need for rooting the Green Revolution on the ground, and will be a key driving force, in eliciting stakeholders’ commitments to transformation.”

"Governments must create the right policy environment to allow for appropriate investments in research and development to enhance productivity and increase production" says Kanayo F. Nwanze, President of the International Fund for Agricultural development (IFAD).

Judith Rodin, President, The Rockefeller Foundation, says “The Rockefeller Foundation is proud to continue our almost century long commitment to food security around the world. As we look back on the lessons of our own Norman Borlaug and his colleagues, we are proud to now work with dedicated partners to bring a Green Revolution to Africa. The African Green Revolution Forum is an enormous opportunity to connect partners from governments, foundations, NGOs and the private sector to find new ways to increase food security in an era of climate change and establish Africa as a thriving and innovative global agricultural market.”

The Ministers, private sector partners and donor representatives at the AGRF will launch national breadbasket projects for Ghana and Mali. The projects, which enable agricultural areas with high production potential to gain access to new markets, are a model for delivering on the AGRF’s aims to achieve food security through sustainable agriculture and to reduce poverty in Africa.

The AGRF will also review progress of the Beira Agricultural Growth Corridor in Mozambique, and the second corridor project in Tanzania.

About the AGRF

- Brings together high profile African heads of state, ministers, farmers, private agribusiness firms, financial institutions, NGOs, civil society and scientists to an African-led event.
- It is supported by public and private institutions including the following strategic partners: African Green Revolution Alliance (AGRA), Yara, New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD Agency), Standard Bank, the Rockefeller Foundation and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).
- The AGRF runs from 2-4 September in Accra. It will be chaired by former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, and hosted by H.E. John Atta Mills, President of Ghana.

- Confirmed speakers include heads of state, CEOs and leaders in donor and development finance, including: Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of Tanzania; Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria; Kanayo Nwanze, President, IFAD; Judith Rodin, President, Rockefeller Foundation; Dr Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, Chief Executive, NEPAD Agency; Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, African Union.

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For full details of the program and speakers list, visit: www.agrforum.com

For more information:

Ingrid Helsingen Warner
Communications
E-mail: media@agrforum.com
Phone: +41 79 548 3880
Twitter: @agrforum

Arne Cartridge
Executive Co-Producer
Email: arne.cartridge@leidar.org
Phone: +47 47 900 900