

# A Sting in the AGRA Tale: Independent expert evaluations confirm that the Alliance for a Green Revolution has failed

Background paper on AGRA's commissioned internal evaluations  
from 2019/2020 published at the beginning of 2021





The number of people suffering from extreme hunger has increased during the AGRA years

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## Background: AGRA and the 'False Promises' report

Founded by the Bill and Melinda Gates and Rockefeller Foundations, and registered in the US,<sup>1</sup> the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) was launched in 2006 with the vision of doubling agricultural yields, the incomes of 30 million small-scale food producer households, and halving both hunger and poverty in 20 African countries by 2020. To achieve these goals, AGRA received approximately US\$1 billion, primarily from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, but also from the US, UK, and German governments. Apart from financial support, AGRA enjoyed major political support from a number of governments, including the German and US governments, as well as indirect support for its priorities through Farm Input Subsidy Programmes (FISPs) funded by many African governments, such as Ghana and Zambia.<sup>2</sup>

In a study 'False Promises: The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)',<sup>3</sup> published in July 2020, five organisations from Germany, as well as five others from Mali, Kenya, Tanzania, and Zambia, conclude that, based on investigations by researcher Timothy Wise and his team from Tufts University in the US, AGRA not only failed to achieve its goals but has fallen far short of them. The study is the first analysis to date of AGRA's results. It shows that agricultural yields in the 13 AGRA focus countries increased by only 18%, instead of doubling, from the inception of its programmes in 2006 until 2018. However, in the pre-AGRA period, yields in the 13 AGRA focus countries increased gradually by a total of 17% even without the programmes. Therefore, the increases in yields 'with-

out' AGRA and 'with' AGRA are almost identical. Instead of halving hunger, the situation in the 13 focus countries actually deteriorated since the AGRA programmes were launched. The number of people suffering from extreme hunger increased by 30% in its countries of intervention during the AGRA years.

The 'False Promises' report uses case studies from Kenya, Mali, Tanzania, and Zambia to illustrate how AGRA, under the guise of the Green Revolution, systematically contributes to the changing of political processes and laws in these countries that disadvantage small-scale food producers and detrimentally affect the environment.

Following the release of the study, AGRA attempted to discredit the results as unscientific. One such attempt was an approach to Tufts University with an accusation that Timothy Wise's work did not meet common research standards. The university countered by confirming the scientific nature of the analysis. AGRA neither took a substantive position on the study's findings, nor did it agree to a request from three African organisations (two of which were involved in the study), to publish its internal evaluations, such as the midterm evaluation of its 2017–2021 strategy.<sup>4</sup> The US-based organisation Right to Know, a non-profit investigative research group that advocates for greater transparency, obtained the documents in 2021 under the US Freedom of Information Act. AGRA then published its own midterm evaluation,<sup>5</sup> as well as eleven country-level outcome monitoring reports on its website.<sup>6</sup>



# Summary

## Key findings

**1.** The evaluations released by AGRA, after considerable pressure, comprehensively substantiate the findings of the study 'False Promises' that AGRA's approach has failed. AGRA was unsuccessful in achieving its goals of doubling agricultural yields and the incomes of 30 million small-scale food producer households thereby halving both hunger and poverty in 20 African countries by 2020.

**2.** In many cases, the AGRA methods fail to minimally provide participating farmers with incomes that are above the poverty line. This is confirmed by AGRA's own country evaluations. In Tanzania, for example, the average sales revenue from maize sales is US\$77 per household per year, yet AGRA shows no evidence that its programmes contributed to that total.<sup>7</sup> The official Tanzanian poverty line is US\$250 per person per year, or about US\$500 for a household of two adults.<sup>8</sup> By selling its AGRA-maize, an average small-scale food producing family earns approximately 15% of the income needed to even meet the Tanzanian poverty line. An average Tanzanian household comprises five members, including children, which illustrates how low the income generated through AGRA actually is. Additional expenses for costly AGRA seed, fertilizer and pesticides were not included when determining net income. In short, given the low level of additional income, farm households participating in AGRA programmes may have in fact fallen into debt.

**3.** The evaluators agree that the system of Village Based Advisors (VBAs) is unsustainable. They question whether these advisors will continue to perform their roles once the AGRA grants disappear. As key roleplayers in the AGRA concept, VBAs are tasked with advising small-scale food producers how to apply AGRA's input package. Without the VBAs, AGRA cannot reach its target groups.<sup>9</sup>

**4.** AGRA's evaluations reveal how it systematically exerts political influence on fertilizer and seed legislation in partner countries by often deploying staff or providing direct financial support to ministries or advisory bodies of African governments. In this way, AGRA itself promotes an institutional framework in a number of focus countries that legitimises its own Green Revolution approaches through laws, subsidies and frameworks in an attempt to make them binding.<sup>10</sup> The evaluation report for Nigeria, for example, clearly illustrates how AGRA's push to introduce seed laws are primarily aligned with industry interests. In Tanzania the private sector can now access seed generated by public breeding.<sup>11</sup> AGRA directly financed government agencies that worked on seven of the eight policy reforms in Ghana alone—four specifically in the area of seed and artificial fertilizer. It also developed the legislative proposals along the interests of the private sector rather than by furthering the interests of small-scale food producers. In Uganda, AGRA supported the national fertilizer platform, chaired by the Ministry of Agriculture, which paved the way for the private sector to take over the quality control of ferti-

lizer.<sup>12</sup> By exerting industry-friendly influence on political framework conditions in the AGRA countries, increased sales opportunities for Green Revolution products are secured. International corporations, such as the fertilizer company Yara, which is also an AGRA project partner, are the main beneficiaries.

**5.** AGRA's evaluations show that farm-saved seed continues to be a widespread practice in its focus countries. In Burkina Faso seed is usually farmed over five growing cycles. Instead of addressing and improving existing farmer seed systems, AGRA attempts to abolish them through new seed laws and relies on hybrid seeds that lose their productivity once they are replanted. Farmers are therefore compelled to buy seed every year. The low uptake rates of commercial seed indicate that farmers do not find it profitable.

## Conclusions

**1.** The results of AGRA's own evaluations prove its systematic failure and underscore the fact that there is no basis for the further cooperation of African governments, and those from elsewhere, with AGRA either financially or politically. They also reveal the lack of accountability in this billion-dollar project.

**2.** AGRA's claimed expertise in fighting hunger and its leadership role, such as currently at the United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS), is not warranted. AGRA neither represents the interests of small-scale food producers, nor has its approach with the Green Revolution's technology package reduced hunger or poverty in its focus countries.

**3.** The persistence of AGRA in promoting its approach is all the more problematic because there is a more effective alternative to AGRA. There is growing evidence that agroecology systematically addresses hunger and the general socio-economic wellbeing of people and territories without compromising the integrity of the natural environment.<sup>13</sup> The agroecology approach is being promoted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), among others, leading an initiative to scale up agroecology in ten West African countries that have requested assistance. Agroecology is also recommended by the United Nations High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) in their report #14 'Agroecological and other innovative approaches for sustainable agriculture and food systems that enhance food security and nutrition'.<sup>14</sup>

Based on these clear conclusions, the publishers of this background paper strongly recommend that all countries involved in AGRA programmes withdraw from them, and that governments shift their financial and political support away from AGRA and other initiatives promoting the Green Revolution, in support of agroecology as the best pathway to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## What the eleven AGRA country evaluations and the midterm evaluation reveal

These recommendations are firmly supported by the Timothy Wise review<sup>15</sup> and the publishers of this background paper who analysed the AGRA country evaluations and its midterm evaluation. The 1,365-page review reveals no new positive findings about AGRA's impact on crop yields, income, and food security. Instead, it highlights serious shortcomings in its programmes.

### Missing baseline analyses

AGRA's evaluations show that:

- it did not document baseline values at the beginning of its work from which any trends in yield, income, or food security could be scientifically benchmarked. Instead of referring to 2006, AGRA set baseline values for programme evaluations in 2018. This means that AGRA cannot provide reliable information on its own target achievements for the first 12 years. A lack of baseline analysis raises major doubts about the seriousness with which AGRA presents itself and advertises its goals and supposed successes;
- in Burkina Faso, AGRA was unable to provide data or contacts for the household surveys conducted as part of the evaluation. These contacts were provided to the evaluators by the VBAs;<sup>16,17</sup>
- from the household survey data, it appears that in many instances only more affluent farming households were interviewed by the evaluators—mostly so-called 'emerging' farmers. In Burkina Faso, these are farming households that own more than eight hectares of land. None of the households surveyed for maize were in the first or poorest wealth quintile, and only 5% of the households surveyed were in the second wealth quintile. By far the majority of households surveyed (74%) were in the fourth quintile, which represents the second wealthiest group. This strongly suggests that AGRA's activities did not reach the intended target group of marginalised small-scale food producers, or they were not included in the evaluation.<sup>18</sup>

### Low yields

The analysis of the AGRA evaluations confirms that:

- yields remain comparatively low when small-scale food producers apply the Green Revolution's input-intensive package of hybrid seed and artificial fertilizer;
- AGRA projects focus primarily on maize to the detriment of a variety of other important nutritious staples. Despite the increased use of commercial seed and artificial fertilizer, even AGRA's most strongly promoted field crop, maize, has not yielded more than three tons per hectare in any country;
- in Ghana, farmers participating in AGRA projects have a comparatively large amount of arable land (3.5 ha on average). In addition, the level of technology applied was

relatively high with 31 kg of artificial fertilizer used per hectare. AGRA mainly supports 'emerging' farmers in Ghana, rather than small-scale food producers, whom the initiative claims to reach and who own much less land. Despite this favourable starting point, average maize yields were only 0.58 tons per hectare. Additional household income from maize sales through AGRA was only about US\$36 per year.<sup>19,20</sup> Moreover, other independent studies indicate: that an increased yield of maize is often not worth the true cost of chemical fertilizer without subsidy; that huge public investments in fertilizer subsidies since 2006 have not generated significant and lasting yield increases; that most increased production has come from an expansion of land under cultivation; and that land degradation, declining soil health and effects of climate change continue to negatively affect the food security of small-scale food producers and make the purchase of expensive hybrid seed and fertilizer very risky.<sup>21</sup>

- the evaluation for Uganda is negative, too. It is also noted here that rice and maize, the only two crops included in the 2019 monitoring, have achieved low yields for several years;<sup>22</sup> and

- the evaluation for Burkina Faso shows that maize yields have not increased in the last decade, even though farmers often grow the maize varieties recommended by AGRA.<sup>23,24,25</sup> Upon closer scrutiny, the evaluators were surprised to find that open-pollinated varieties (OPVs) performed significantly better than hybrids in terms of yields. They also reported that both OPVs and hybrids were resown at least five times on average. This further explains the poor yields for hybrids. Hybrids only produce the promised high yields in the first year, thereafter yields collapse sharply.

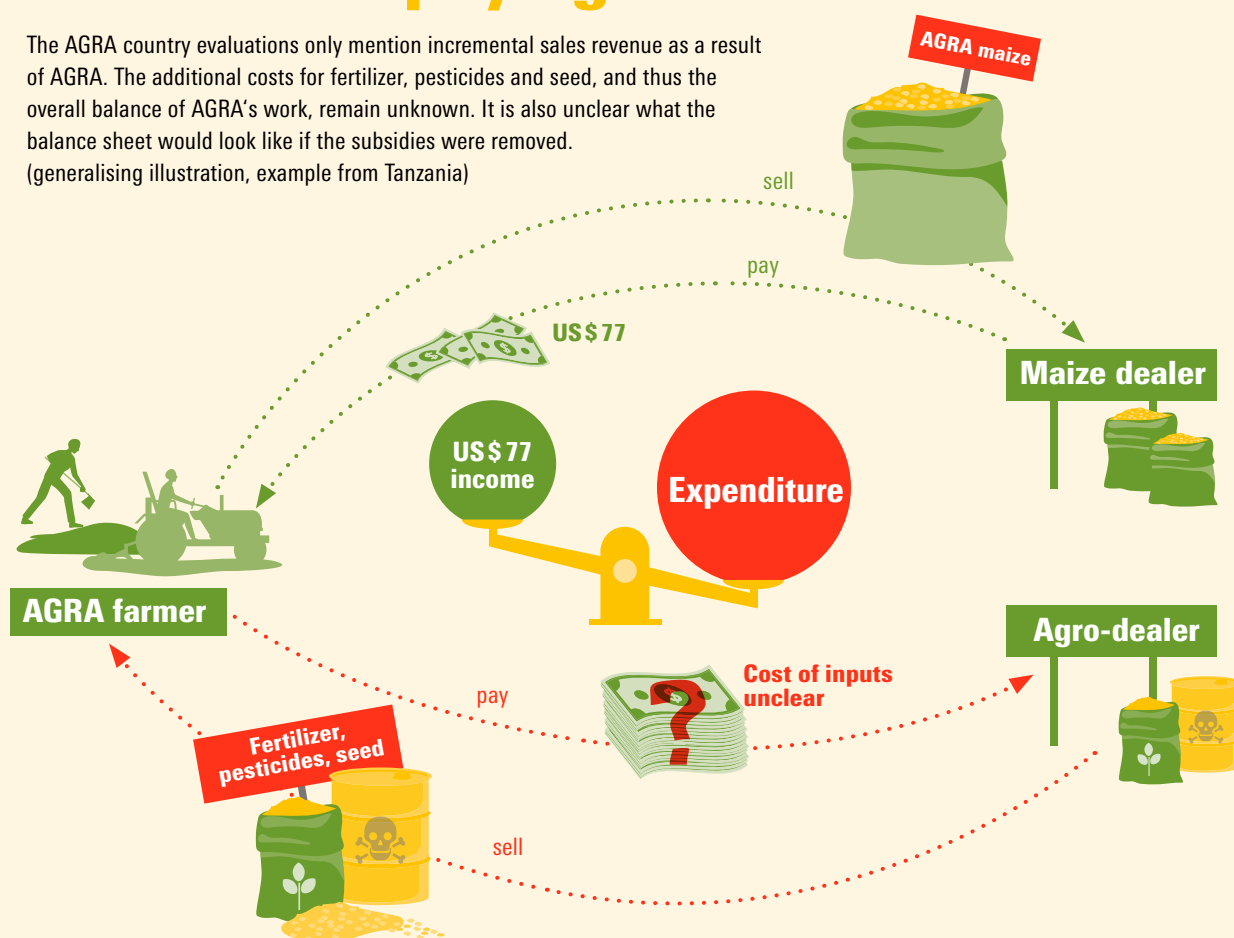
### Incomes below the poverty line, risks of indebtedness

AGRA's narrative is that by using more inputs, small-scale food producers will double their crop yields, which should effectively lead to a doubling of incomes. According to AGRA's evaluations, revenues from the sale of its main crop, maize, are very low.

In Tanzania, for example, evaluators estimated the additional revenue generated by AGRA-supported activities from maize sales at US\$77 per household per year but could not claim any of it was generated by AGRA-supported activities.<sup>26</sup> However, the increased outlay for fertilizer, seed and pesticides was not offset, leaving the question of net additional income unanswered—it cannot be ruled out that the balance may even be negative. The official Tanzanian poverty line is US\$250 per person per year, or about US\$500 for a household of two adults.<sup>27</sup> By selling a maize crop, the average small-scale food producing family earns just 15.4% of the income needed to reach the Tan-

## Are farmers paying more?

The AGRA country evaluations only mention incremental sales revenue as a result of AGRA. The additional costs for fertilizer, pesticides and seed, and thus the overall balance of AGRA's work, remain unknown. It is also unclear what the balance sheet would look like if the subsidies were removed. (generalising illustration, example from Tanzania)



Source: own illustration; graphic using content from freepik.com

zanian poverty line.<sup>28</sup> On average, a household in Tanzania has five members including children, which illustrates how low the income generated by AGRA really is.

Although AGRA and other actors, such as the German government, have publicly stated that they are unaware of any cases of indebtedness of farmers participating in AGRA projects, the Ghana evaluation cites this problem very specifically. Farmers consider the AGRA approach as very risky.<sup>29</sup> There is substantial evidence showing that when harvests are poor, farmers regularly fall into debt. The farmers interviewed said that even with good yields they have to spend over 80% of their harvest income paying suppliers for seed and fertilizer. Others even question whether this model is worthwhile at all.<sup>30</sup>

### AGRA's network of advisors: a flash in the pan

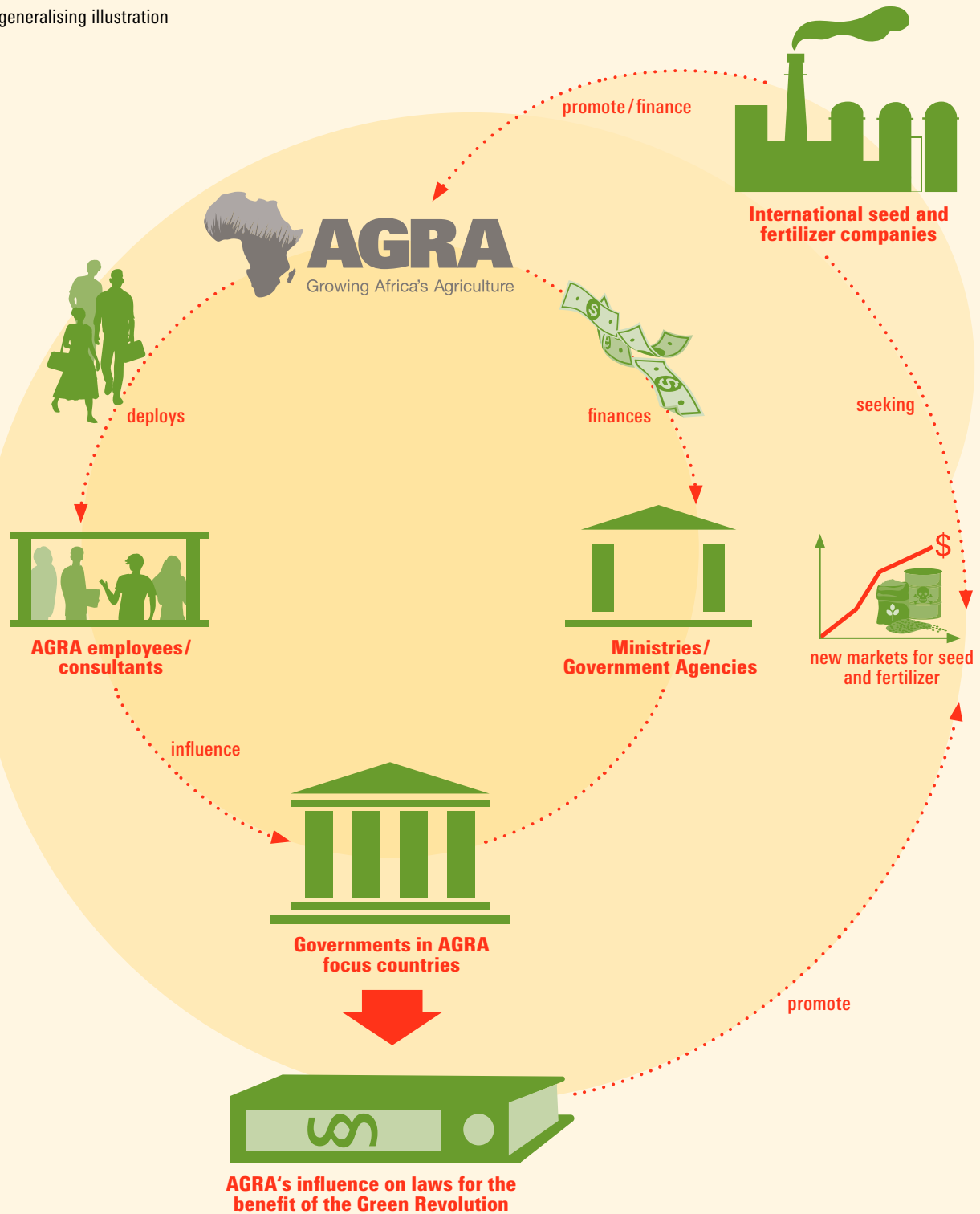
A key element of AGRA's approach is to build networks of agro-dealers and access to credit so that small-scale food producers can be rapidly supplied with the basic external inputs required for the Green Revolution, especially artificial fertilizer, commercial seed, and pesticides. In this way, AGRA, according to its own information, opens up

marketing avenues for corporations that produce agricultural inputs.<sup>31</sup> To this end, many AGRA projects include the training of Village-Based Advisors (VBAs) at local level. The VBAs teach small-scale food producers how to apply the industrial inputs of the Green Revolution. The VBAs also play a key role in AGRA's approach, as they offer the only route for dispensing advice to small-scale food producers reached in its programmes.

AGRA told the midterm reviewers that a sustainability strategy was premised on the respective governments adopting the VBA model after the AGRA funding ceased. However, none of the AGRA staff, or implementing partners, working with the VBAs at village level were aware of this strategic goal. There is no evidence of a strategy on how AGRA will successfully transition the VBAs into a government service.<sup>32</sup> Fundamentally, VBAs have no incentive to provide supplementary services to farmers after the AGRA funding ends. AGRA staff in Tanzania hope that VBAs will receive commissions from agro-dealers when farmers buy from them. In Mali, the strategy is to train VBAs to become agro-dealers, meaning the end of any supplementary services, and only providing support for

# AGRA's influence on laws in favour of the agribusiness

generalising illustration



the inputs being sold, because agro-dealers would then no longer go to the villages to visit the farmers. According to one VBA interviewed in Mali, who is now an agro-dealer: 'They (the farmers, *author's note*) can come to my shop'.<sup>33</sup>

### **AGRA's promotion of commercial seed undermines farmer control and diversity of local seed**

An important component of AGRA's activities is the transformation of farmers' seed systems into commercial seed systems with a focus on commercial or hybrid seed. For this to happen, the legal frameworks in many African countries must be changed as a starting point. AGRA documents its seed policy work in a report summarising the initiative. Its stated goal was 'seed policy and regulatory reforms that enable investment and growth of private sector seed businesses'. It also supported seed policy reforms in several countries such as Burkina Faso, Ghana, Nigeria, and Tanzania, the goal being to bring African countries under the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV91)<sup>34</sup> that guarantees 'breeders' rights' to new seed varieties.

The evaluation report for Nigeria also clearly discloses how AGRA's push to introduce seed laws are primarily aligned with industry interests. From September 2018 to November 2019, AGRA invested US\$235,470 in Nigeria's National Agricultural Seed Council to have this government body, responsible for seed issues, develop plant variety protection laws in line with the interests of major plant breeders and the restrictive UPOV91 plant variety protection agreement.<sup>35</sup> This process was preliminarily concluded in 2019, and Nigeria is currently in the process of becoming a UPOV member.<sup>36</sup> At the same time, the evaluation of the AGRA country programme indicates that only about 30% of farmers in Nigeria use 'improved' certified seed, and that farm-saved seed continues to be widely used. In particular, the right to farm-saved seed is being taken away from farmers through UPOV91-compliant legislation.<sup>37</sup> The AGRA evaluation points to this very problem and mentions a previous critical evaluation of this initiative, being that the UPOV system does not fit the farming systems prevalent in Nigeria. Nevertheless, AGRA continues to push for joining UPOV.<sup>38</sup>

The evaluation of Ghana shows that many farmers prefer their local seed and do not want to use AGRA's commercial seed. This is not out of ignorance. Over 50% of farmers have tried hybrid seed but currently only about 20% use commercial seed either partially or exclusively.<sup>39</sup> <sup>40</sup> AGRA characterised this rejection as a 'systemic problem'. Instead of identifying the reasons for this, in 2019, under the Ghanaian Government's Planting for Food and Jobs (PFJ) programme, which AGRA helped design, the seed subsidy was further increased from the already high 50% of the regular market price to 85%. In some cases, hybrid seed was even distributed free of charge, pushing farmers to use commercial seed. In addition, many farmers oppose the planned Plant Breeders Bill (PBB), pushed by AGRA, which is primarily intended to strengthen the intellectual property rights of seed companies. According to

the evaluation, farmer organisations resisted the bill out of fear that international seed companies would monopolise the Ghanaian seed market. However, AGRA continued to push activities to get the bill through parliament. This effort has succeeded. Ghana's government recently applied to join the UPOV91 seed system. Ghana would then make it a criminal offence, subject to several years in prison and a huge fine, for those exchanging or selling local seed. This contradicts AGRA's own statements that it would work with farmers. Furthermore, the evaluators have serious doubts about the sustainability of AGRA's approach. They conclude that the use of commercial seed will end once the enormous subsidies are removed.<sup>41, 42, 43</sup> This would pose a huge risk to farmers after subsidised and free seed handouts have crippled the farmer seed systems, thereby making them vulnerable and solely dependent on commercial seed systems with their many shortfalls. In addition to AGRA's efforts to change seed policies in the entire region, it is governments themselves that roll in hybrid maize in particular, as is the case in Zambia through Farmer Input Subsidy Programmes (FISPs)—a threat to the use of local farmers' varieties and the knowledge associated with these crops and varieties.

### **AGRA's success deals: to promote agricultural ministries and influence laws according to its own goals**

One area that impressed the evaluators is AGRA's influence on policy reforms in favour of the Green Revolution initiatives in its focus countries. The evaluations show how AGRA systematically influences African governments to change agricultural legislation in an industry-friendly way.<sup>44</sup> Its methods include sending staff to ministries, or ministries and government advisory bodies receiving direct financial support from AGRA. The evaluations reveal that, as a result of such financial engagement, AGRA influences legislation or regulation, actively affecting the political decision-making processes of sovereign states whose task it is to draft and enact laws. AGRA has also funded masters and PhD degrees for staff who then return to ministries and advance the AGRA agenda and narrative.

AGRA has worked on new seed and fertilizer laws in all focus countries (except Mali). One goal is to simplify the licensing and marketing of synthetic fertilizer. Examples of its influence are:

- the termination of government controls, for example, fertilizer approval in Tanzania, or placing these controls in the hands of corporations;<sup>45</sup>
- in Uganda, supporting the national fertilizer platform chaired by the Ministry of Agriculture. The private sector will now take over the quality control of fertilizer;<sup>46</sup>
- in Kenya, partnering with the local Ministry of Agriculture and the private sector to influence the development of its 10-year Agricultural Sector Transformation and Growth Strategy (ASTGS), which aims to reinforce the position of agriculture as a major driver of economic growth for the country by promoting synthetic fertilizer and hybrid seed through the Climate Smart agriculture initiative and the National Agriculture Investment Plan (NAIP). For example,





Small-scale and diverse cropping systems are lost with AGRA interventions

Photo: Joshua Gaunt

AGRA funded the first private sector consultation meeting in 2017, where advocacy strategies were discussed.<sup>47</sup> In 2018, it funded a more than US\$1 million project with consulting firm McKinsey on the ASTGS. In 2019, AGRA directly transferred US\$50,000 to the Kenyan Ministry of Agriculture to implement the ASTGS. It is notable that many of the ASTGS projects ultimately align with AGRA's goals, including the development of six major agricultural hubs.<sup>48</sup>

In the seed sector, AGRA supported and financed a number of projects with governments and other state institutions to change seed policies and regulations in favour of seed adapted to industrial agriculture:

- in Tanzania, for example, the private sector can now access seed generated by public breeding;<sup>49</sup>
- AGRA directly financed government agencies that worked on seven of the eight policy reforms in Ghana alone—four specifically in the area of seed and artificial fertilizer. It also developed the legislative proposals along

the interests of the private sector rather than further those of small-scale food producers;<sup>50</sup> and

- it also managed to ensure the elimination of import tariffs and domestic taxes on pesticides (in Ethiopia).<sup>51</sup>

These policies often undermine crop diversity and local dietary diversity while increasing farmers' dependence on expensive and climate-damaging external inputs from the agricultural industry.

AGRA's attempts in recent years to exert significant influence on the seed and fertilizer legislation of the African focus countries have contributed to the deep entrenchment of its agro-industrial Green Revolution model. A shift by African states to alternatives such as agroecology is now exceedingly more difficult. However, farmer and consumer organisations are demanding a governmental shift in this direction, which is partly mentioned in the evaluations.<sup>52</sup> To legitimise its approach and projects, AGRA refers to the results of political processes in which it was involved and partly financed in its partner countries.



# The role of AGRA in the global governance of food systems: AGRA and the United Nations Food Systems Summit 2021

In September 2021, the United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) will be held in New York at the invitation of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. AGRA leaders will be front and centre at the summit. For example, AGRA's President, Dr Agnes Kalibata, is a Special Envoy to the Summit.<sup>53</sup> Prof. Joachim von Braun, Center for Development Research (Zentrum für Entwicklungsforschung, ZEF) at the University of Bonn, Germany, is a prominent AGRA Vice President; he chairs the Summit's Scientific Advisory Group.<sup>54</sup> In addition, Sean de Cleene, a former AGRA Vice President, works for the World Economic Forum (WEF), which has entered into a much-criticised strategic partnership with the United Nations, and in this role, he is responsible for the United Nations summit.<sup>55</sup> Other key supporters of the summit include both AGRA founders, the Rockefeller and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundations.<sup>56</sup>

Based on the findings of the 2020 'False Promises' report, now confirmed by the official AGRA evaluations, it is clear that there is no basis whatsoever for AGRA being ascribed as having outstanding competence in the fields of hunger reduction and the strengthening of sustainable food systems. The absence of positive results in its approach is concerning given the political influence AGRA exerts on African governments to shape laws in its favour, as well as its collaborations with governments worldwide—a number of which regularly subscribe to AGRA position papers.

The frightening prospect is that AGRA's leading role at the UNFSS is bringing powerful private sector interests into the United Nations' decision-making processes. States, duty-bound to be accountable to the public, will surrender their influence and cede responsibility to illegitimate but powerful actors. Ironically, many of these governments finance United Nations institutions and major events such as the UNFSS.

There is a risk that the focus will shift to controversial technologies and unsustainable Green Revolution production methods at the UNFSS, instead of looking at structural inequalities, such as in trade policy. For example, the

scientific paper for 'Action Track 3' of the United Nations summit advocates for controversial technologies such as 'gene editing' in plant breeding and many other high-tech approaches related to the digitalisation of agriculture.<sup>57</sup>

Many civil society organisations, NGOs, and members of the United Nations, including the FAO that promotes agroecology, as well as the Committee on World Food Security's (CFS) own High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE), seek a holistic view of food systems in light of the numerous global crises and, specifically, the dysfunctional global food system (hunger, obesity, malnutrition, climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and growing inequalities). However, this is expected to be a side note at the upcoming UNFSS. From the beginning of the planning processes, there were several reasons for widespread civil society criticism worldwide. Among these, the lack of orientation towards the right to food and the rights-based approach. A particular point of criticism is the lack of democratic participation.<sup>58</sup> For example, there are no systematic participation mechanisms for civil society and stakeholder groups. Existing, established, and inclusive mechanisms, such as those of the CFS in Rome, were initially completely ignored. Two open letters, signed by more than 500 organisations worldwide, aptly summarise some of the criticism.<sup>59</sup>

Even though there have been some minor changes in response to the swell of criticism of the summit in an attempt to accommodate civil society, the main points of contention remain unchanged. For example, the attempt to garner the participation of more African states now that most of the important background papers have been drafted also shows little inclusivity.<sup>60</sup>

UNFSS follow-up activities<sup>61</sup> for the next five to ten years, which have been announced but remain contentious, and the methods to finance them, will divert resources away from already hopelessly underfunded official United Nations processes. These resources will be used to facilitate a problematic new multi-stakeholder initiative, the administrative and decision-making processes of which have to date demonstrated a complete lack of transparency and accountability.<sup>62</sup>

# Demands

The results of AGRA's 11 internal country evaluations, and its own midterm evaluation, confirm the findings of the 'False Promises' study. They prove its systematic failure and underscore the fact that there is no basis for the further cooperation of African governments. A turnaround in the donor countries of the Global North is therefore imperative as well. They also reveal the lack of accountability in this billion-dollar project.

## The publishers demand that:

- donor governments in the Global North cease all political and financial support for AGRA and shift their support to agroecology as the best pathway to meet the SDGs;
- African governments withdraw from AGRA and other Green Revolution programmes, and redirect spending towards the promotion of a more robust array of policies in support of agroecology that respond to the expressed needs of small-scale food producers, tackle hunger and

malnutrition, and are resilient to the impacts of climate change; and

- the UN member states at the UNFSS give major consideration to the many voices of farmer organisations, women's associations, civil society and their allies, calling for a concerted effort to better resource the CFS. The CFS is legitimised by the global community and recognised by international civil society to deal with world food issues. Governments that support the 2021 UNFSS, over which the AGRA president and other AGRA representatives have considerable sway, are sending a disastrous message to all small-scale food producers worldwide. AGRA's claimed expertise in fighting hunger and its leadership role at the UNFSS, is not warranted. AGRA neither represents the interests of small-scale food producers, nor has its approach with the Green Revolution's technology package reduced hunger or poverty in its focus countries.

## Endnotes

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