

## **Towards a “Green Revolution” for Africa - E-Forum Discussion Outline -**

### **Objectives**

The Salzburg Global Seminar (SGS), in partnership with the Future Agricultures Consortium (FAC) and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), has undertaken a series of events on the theme of an “African Green Revolution”. The main purpose of these initiatives is to assess the most critical issues and to review, refine and articulate an agenda for a new sustainable “Green Revolution” for Sub-Saharan Africa. The series of events began with a high-level Conference (30 April – 2 May 2008) and subsequent Seminar (3 – 7 May 2008) where delegates were tasked with answering the question: What are the core elements of a “uniquely African Green Revolution”? The Salzburg report represents a summary of the week-long deliberations, highlights key points of agreement and divergence, and sets out a number of recommendations for follow-up and future action.

In light of the considerable interest generated by the conference and seminar, SGS, FAC, and IDS are creating a space for people to contribute to and extend this important discussion.

We will be holding a moderated discussion on substantive action-oriented issues over a seven-week period during the months of September and October, 2008. The debate will focus on three central themes raised by the conference/seminar delegates and outlined in the report.

### **E-Forum Process**

The exchange of informed ideas and opinions, based on sound knowledge and practical experience, is a prerequisite to understanding what should be the core actions needed to ensure an equitable and sustainable “Green Revolution for Africa”.

***The aim of this moderated E-Forum is to focus the discussions on action-oriented approaches to address the “how” part of the equation.***

Thus, detailed reference to specific elements of the *Conference* report are discouraged in favour of more detailed commentary on next steps and fleshing out the recommendations reached in Salzburg.

We ask all contributors to send their names, organisational affiliations, and contact details (including e-mail address) with their submissions (see below). Please mark clearly to which theme you are responding. *Anonymous postings will not be accepted.*

The submissions will be posted in full or in part under the relevant discussion theme. We encourage submissions of no more than 500 words in length, and only one submission

per individual or group. Where a submission addresses two or more themes in any detail, it will be divided into sections and each section will be placed under the appropriate theme.

We regret that due to time and funding restrictions the E-Forum will be conducted in English only.

### **Discussion Themes**

The three broad discussion themes will be considered sequentially and will address the overarching question – What are the core elements of a “uniquely African Green Revolution?” that will bring about a holistic development framework within which new investments in African agriculture can be positioned and other new efforts and investments in Africa streamlined, to bring about a reduction in poverty and a sustainable increase in economic growth and opportunity? Participants are asked to address this question under the following three themes and to highlight the best actions that can be taken to address these issues:

#### **1. *Making Farmers’ Voices Heard* – October 13<sup>th</sup> – October 24<sup>th</sup>**

Inclusion is seen as crucial to the new agenda for African agriculture. Governments, donors, farmer organisations and NGOs, must consider the particular issues surrounding small-scale farmer and issues of equity. An equitable Green Revolution requires an increased ability to facilitate inclusive approaches in which farmers, especially the small-holder, women and the poor, can access training develop new knowledge and skills in organisational leadership, business management, innovation processes, policy engagement and advocacy, and performance monitoring and learning. Contributions on this theme should revolve around concrete actions – indicating who the key actors are - to address the following questions: Which of the recommendations set forth best achieve the goal of amplifying farmers’ voices in policy debates and decision-making processes? How can we ensure that measurable targets are set for gender and equity? How can we build capacity of grassroots organisations for basic skills (e.g., organisations and business skills) and leadership (to influence policy and negotiations)? How do we strengthen horizontal and vertical linkages and partnerships/networks with other organisations? And how can we increase access to resources and services for small-scale farmers and marginalized groups?

#### **2. *Making Science and Technology Work for Small-scale Farmers* – October 27<sup>th</sup> – November 7<sup>th</sup>**

The role of appropriate science and technology that meets the need of the small-scale farmers was identified as a crucial component for an equitable and sustainable Green Revolution for Africa. Making science and technology work for the poor calls for a multiplicity of approaches to establish links to diversity and complexity, across a range of different environments and systems throughout the continent. This requires

an urgent push for major investments and key inputs *now* – such as improved seeds, organic and inorganic fertilisers, and soil and water management – to address nutrient deficiencies and boost productivity. Contributions to this theme should revolve around concrete actions to address the following questions: Which of the recommendations and what specific actions should be pursued to ensure that appropriate technologies are developed to assist small-scale farmers and establish inclusive processes that engage farmers throughout? What policy measures and incentives are needed to influence the governance of both public and private sector R&D systems to make them more responsive to the needs and priorities of small-scale farmers?

### 3. *Partnerships and Coherence* - November 10<sup>th</sup> – November 21<sup>st</sup>

There has been much debate about the importance of coordination and alignment of initiatives and institutions. It is recognized that there are many actors involved in the “Green Revolution” and that the challenge lays in linking up various agendas to make sure we are moving in the right direction and not working at cross purposes. Contributions on this theme should focus on concrete actions to address the following questions: Which of the recommendations and proposed actions will enable coherence and encourage strategic partnerships and alignment? What are the best methods to coordinate actions among the key process and initiatives, such as CAADP, AGRA, and other public and private efforts? How can we ensure that the policy processes enhance the compact and roundtable processes of these initiatives and ensure that policy stability, transparency and coherence are created at national and international levels? What are the best methods to ensure bottom-up (i.e. locally driven) initiatives are incorporated into these alliances?

The final summary of all the discussions will be posted on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

#### **Participants**

The E-Forum aims to involve all interested and informed contributors, including representatives of community-based organisations, as well as staff of NGOs, government departments, international donor agencies, private companies, universities and research institutes. Practitioners and researchers who are conversant with participatory research and development approaches are particularly encouraged to share their insights and experiences.

#### **Moderator**

Ms. Nalan Yuksel (IDS, University of Sussex), who was one of the lead authors for the UN Millennium Project’s Task Force on Hunger Report and author of “Achieving a Uniquely African Green Revolution” the final report of the Salzburg Global Seminar, will moderate the E-Forum discussion.

The moderator reserves the right to edit contributions on the basis of relevance/focus and language, but not in relation to content, view or opinion (see Principles of Engagement). Contributions will be posted several times per week. At the end of topic discussion, submissions will be drawn together in a short summary, with the moderator highlighting any new points for further discussion. At the end of the process the moderator will synthesise the contributions into a short document which will be sent to all participants.

### **Principles of Engagement**

The following Principles of Engagement embody the values that govern the way we are approaching this E-Forum.

Those involved in this E-Forum do so with the assurance that SGS, FAC and IDS are committed to providing the opportunity for participants to interact, with these expectations:

1. This E-Forum provides a space for people to exchange constructive opinions and experiences to assess the most critical issues and to review, refine and articulate an agenda for a new sustainable “Green Revolution” for Sub-Saharan Africa.
2. We hope to identify and understand the diversity of perspectives, values and interests that can help contribute practicable insights and experiences on both policy and practice.
3. The SGS, FAC and IDS have no authority to impose our points of view on any contributor and will not seek to edit any submissions in relation to their thematic content or opinion.
4. We will, however, reserve the right to edit submissions according to their relevance to the discussion and for language. Slanderous, obscene or incomprehensible correspondence will not be admitted.
5. The E-Forum will strive to identify where it can best help to guide the flow of discussion. The objective will be to help develop areas of common ground on topical themes, understand where differences exist and the underlying reasons for them.
6. Participating in and contributing to this exchange of views does not and will not be portrayed as an endorsement of the Salzburg Conference report or related project, or the work of SGS, FAC or IDS.
7. To assure a free, open and constructive debate, only fully credited submissions (where authors give their full name and contact details) will be accepted.
8. Contributors may, if they so choose, request to make alterations or additions to their submissions after they have been posted on the E-Forum website and we will endeavour to update their contributions efficiently.
9. At the end of this E-Forum, we will ensure that all contributors will receive a synthesis report of the discussion.

