



Towards a Uniquely African 'Green Revolution'

Some Reflections on Key Issues and Priority Themes Emerging from the International Conference

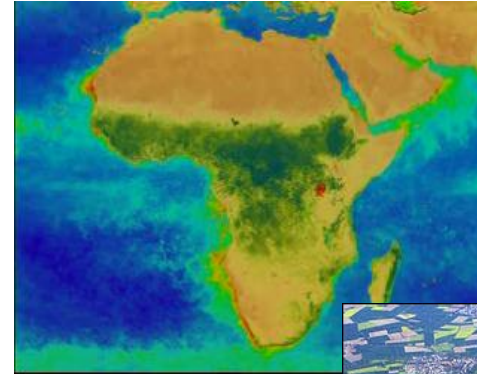
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**Presentation for the International Seminar on
A 'Green Revolution' in Africa:
What Framework for Success?**

**Salzburg Global Seminar, Salzburg, Austria
30 April – 2 May 2008**

Purpose of Conference and Seminar

1. **Assess the most critical issues and set out an agenda for a 'uniquely African Green Revolution'** within a sustainable development framework → essential ingredients, guiding principles, critical paths and leverage points
2. **Identify opportunities for adding value to strategic alliances and partnerships** → with a view to enabling the articulation and implementation of an '***African paradigm***' growing out of African conditions and solutions



Two Overarching Questions

- 1. How can new interest and investment in African agriculture be used to bring about sustainable and equitable change?**
- 2. How can these efforts be aligned strategically with other investments and development activities, be they from private donors, public aid or private business, to ensure long-term success?**

Six Priority Themes

- 1. Institutions and Innovations**
- 2. Markets, Trade and Investments**
- 3. Environmental Sustainability and Biodiversity**
- 4. Equity, Rights and Empowerment**
- 5. Governance and Policy Processes**
- 6. Responding to New Threats and Opportunities**

Multiple Perspectives on the African GR Agenda

- A wide variety of sometimes complementary and sometimes conflicting understandings of the ‘uniquely African Green Revolution’:
 - **Rights and Equity/Sustainability Focus** – recognise fundamental social and environmental concerns raised by critics of the Asian Green Revolution and promote completely different ways of increasing agricultural productivity in Africa.
 - **Growth Focus** – emphasise investment in agricultural development around regional and global trade in commodities to promote economic growth
 - **Productivity Focus** – draw inspiration from the Asian Green Revolution to promote increasing food crop production through technical change and increased use of fertilisers and high yielding crop varieties.
 - **Uniquely African GR** – mix of all of the above...

Common Points of Agreement?

- Responding to current food price crisis – urgent need to address – options being explored at nat'l & int'l levels – but shouldn't divert attention from long-term goal
- Need for convergence and alignment with key processes and initiatives – e.g., African Union's NEPAD/CAADP Programme, AGRA, other public & private efforts...
 - Need to ensure policy processes we support enhances the compact and roundtable processes
 - Policy stability, transparency and coherence – at nat'l & reg'l levels
 - Need for strategic partnerships involving range of public and private actors, with good practice by all partners (transparency w/o corruption or inefficiency)
- Making markets – and trade – work
 - Encouraging market coordination and selective state interventions
 - Transformation and value-addition
 - Supporting focused input and other support programmes that optimise ensure long-term sustainability
 - Focus on staples for domestic and regional markets
 - Emphasis on integrated value-chain approach for staples, as well as high-value crops and biofuels
 - Infrastructure – necessary precondition

Common Points of Agreement?

- Agricultural biodiversity to increase resilience of diverse, complex, risk-prone systems; improve nutrition; enhance better agronomic management (e.g., pest control, soil fertility); and don't forget livestock – small & large – or pastoralists!
 - Ensure 'biodiversity through use' – benefits sharing is crucial
 - Emphasise diversity of approaches – 'rainbows' and 'mosaics', not 'silver bullets', but...
 - Push for major investments and key inputs *now* – improved seeds, inorganic and organic fertilisers, soil & water management – to address nutrient deficiencies and boost productivity
 - Introduce 'Resilience audit' – to avoid 'lock in' to single pathway; improve efficiency and reduce waste; avoid access; check on possible impacts of interventions, including distributional and welfare issues; and enhance ability to cope with shocks and stresses



Common Points of Agreement?

- Linking policy and implementation to *demand-led processes* - putting the interests of farmers – both women and men – *and* poor consumers first
 - Strengthen capacity of farmers organisations and other civil society actors to understand, engage with key processes
 - Also question of ‘economics of attention’ – can’t load it all on farmers’ organisations
 - Addressing asymmetries of power and information – markets, policies...
 - Creating conditions for peace and stability – can’t ignore
 - Inclusion at heart of new agenda – taking equity, rights and power seriously



Common Points of Agreement?

● Demand-oriented R&D

- set up African Agricultural Technology and Innovation Fund (AATIF) – farmer-owned fund to commission demand-driven research and development activities
- Improving collection and availability and use of quality data to monitor progress, assess impacts and outcomes, and reflect on future options
- Strengthening statistical services, research networks and universities
- Producing reliable and timely data to inform policy and investments;
- Foresight and horizon scanning – to identify future threats and opportunities; recognise and factor in dynamic into decision-making processes



Common Points of Agreement?

- Capacity and empowerment at all levels...
 - Strengthening '*the politics of demand*' among farmers and their organisations and other civil society groups – giving 'voice' to articulate priorities and negotiate with state, market and R&D actors → issue of accountability
 - But there is also a question of interests and representation of deficit producers (consumer farmers), not just big producers
 - Negotiating skills of government representatives on trade and standards issues vital for enhancing ability to engage successfully in Doha trade round
 - Strengthening of government agencies' capacity to respond to demands from producers and consumers – research, extension, services, etc. - resource constraints are real, but targeted investment can make a difference



New Directions?

- Avoid generalised diagnosis and prescription
→ recognise **dynamics and diversity** of agri-food systems
- Understand dynamic interactions of economic, social and political **processes**
- Locate change processes in particular **contexts**
- Focus on **politics** – avoid simple fixes
- Recognise multiple pathways – **negotiate trade-offs**
- **Avoid reinventing the wheel!**

Thank You