Resources for journalists

African groups ask donors to stop funding ‘Green Revolution’ effort to expand corporate industrial agriculture in Africa

The Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa (AFSA), is calling on the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, U.S. government and other donors to stop funding harmful industrial agriculture and shift their funding and policy advocacy to support African-led efforts to expand agroecology.

AFSA is a continental alliance of national and regional networks representing small-scale farmers, pastoralists, fishers, indigenous peoples, faith based institutions, women’s organizations, youth groups, consumers and environmentalists active in 50 African countries.

● See African groups’ letter to AGRA (Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa) donors
● Press advisory for Sept. 2 event to discuss defunding AGRA
● Over 200 organizations from over 40 countries around the world are supporting AFSA's call to stop funding the African green revolution
● The letter will be delivered next week to the African Green Revolution Forum, a fundraising event sponsored by private donors, chemical companies and other business interests claiming they will present a “single coordinated African voice” to the UN Food Systems Summit.

Key articles by the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa

● Seeds Of Neo-Colonialism: Why the GMO Promoters Get It So Wrong About Africa, Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa, May 2018

African faith leaders ignored by Gates Foundation

In June, the Southern African Faith Communities’ Environment Institute and nearly 500 African faith leaders sent an open letter to the Gates Foundation asking them to stop funding industrial agriculture in Africa. They received no response.
University research confirms Green Revolution’s failures

Research published last year confirmed that AGRA was “failing on its own terms,” with slow productivity growth, persistent poverty, and rising hunger. AGRA has failed to provide evidence to refute the findings.

- **False Promises: The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa**, a report from Rosa Luxemburg-Stiftung based on Wise’s research, July 2020
- **Africa’s Choice: Africa’s Green Revolution has failed, time to change course**, Timothy A. Wise, IATP Policy Brief, July 2020. (Also available in [French](https://www.iatp.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/africa_s_choice.jpg).)
- **Selling the Past as Innovation**, Timothy A. Wise, Food Tank, February 10, 2021.

Worsening hunger

Hunger in AGRA’s target countries rose more than 30% since 2006, according to UN data. The sharp rise in hunger occurred even as African governments spent as much as $1 billion per year subsidizing the “green revolution” package of commercial seeds and agrichemicals.

According to the [2021 UN hunger report](https://www.fao.org/3/c7526e/index.html), two thirds of the people in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2020 did not have reliable access to adequate food, and nearly a third of them suffered severe food insecurity.

UN experts urge shift to agroecology

- In 2019, a [high level UN panel of experts](https://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/319286/icode/) on food security and nutrition called for a shift away from industrial agriculture and toward agroecological practices and policies that address social needs and inequality.
- Recent research shows that agroecology can [increase productivity with lower costs](https://www.fao.org/3/c7526e/index.html) and higher incomes for farmers, while also [building climate resiliency](https://www.fao.org/3/c7526e/index.html).
More Resources

- **Video: farmer voices** on food sovereignty vs. industrial agriculture in Africa
- **Full list of farmer short-films** on threats to seed rights, the impact of corporations and harmful seed laws, agrochemicals in Africa

AGRA funders contacted by AFSA in June:

**Private foundations:** Gates Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Raikes Foundation; **Corporate foundations:** IKEA Foundation, Mastercard Foundation, Yara; **Bilateral Donors:** U.S. Agency for International Development; the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (UK); Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Germany); Global Affairs Canada, International Development Research Centre (Canada); Kingdom of the Netherlands; the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)

AGRA Funders who have not replied to AFSA or SAFCEI letters:

**Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF)**
Bill Gates, Bill.Gates@gatesfoundation.org
Melinda French Gates, Melinda.Gates@gatesfoundation.org
Copied to:
Neil Watkins, Deputy Director, Program Advocacy and Communications, Neil.Watkins@gatesfoundation.org
Nick Austin, Director Agricultural Development, Nick.Austin@gatesfoundation.org
Laura Birx, Deputy Director Agricultural Development, Strategy, Planning and Management, Laura.Birx@gatesfoundation.org
Tom Kehoe, Deputy Director Agriculture, focus on Africa, Tom.Kehoe@gatesfoundation.org

SAFCEI sent letter to:
susan.byrnes@gatesfoundation.org,
connie.collingsworth@gatesfoundation.org,
mark.suzman@gatesfoundation.org

**Rockefeller Foundation**
Dr. Rajiv J. Shah, President, rshah@rockfound.org
Copied to:
Roy Steiner, Senior Vice President, Food Initiative, rsteiner@rockfound.org,
roy@roysteiner.com (personal email)
Mehrdad Ehsani, Managing Director, Food Initiative, (former AGRA leadership)
mehsani@rockfound.org
Betty Kibaara, Director, Food Initiative, Director Africa Regional Office, bkibaara@rockfound.org
William Asiko, Managing Director, Africa Regional Office, wasiko@rockfound.org
Raikes Foundation
Jeff and Trisha Raikes
info@raikesfoundation.org

Mastercard Foundation
Reeta Roy, President (rroy@mastercardfdn.org)
Copied to:
Toni Tiemens, Director, Corporate Communications (ttiemens@mastercardfdn.org)

USAID
Samantha Power, USAID director (spower@usaid.gov)
Copied to:
Jim Barnhart, Deputy Coordinator for Development for Feed the Future, Assistant to the Administrator for USAID’s Bureau for Resilience and Food Security, jbarnhart@usaid.org
Mark Huisenga, Senior Program Manager, mhuisenga@usaid.gov
Rob Bertram, Chief Scientist in USAID’s Bureau for Resilience and Food Security, rbertram@usaid.gov
USAID Chief of Staff Gideon Maltz, gmalcz@usaid.gov
Jenifer Chow, Senior Policy Advisor jchow@usaid.gov

UKAID (now FCDO)
The Rt Hon. Dominic Raab MP dominic.raab.mp@parliament.uk
Copied to:
The Rt Hon. James Duddridge, Minister for Africa at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office james@jamesduddridge.com

Germany: Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
Dr. Maria Flachsbarth
Parliamentary State Secretary to the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) maria.flachsbarth@bmz.bund.de
Copied to:
Michael Krake, Director General, Global Health, Private sector, Trade. Rural development, (acting) Michael.Krake@bmz.bund.de

Canada: Global Affairs Canada
The Honourable Karina Gould, MP, Minister of International Development, Global Affairs Canada Karina.Gould@international.gc.ca
Copied to
Christine Campbell, DG for Food Security and Environment christine.campbell@international.gc.ca
Nikita Eriksen-Hamel, Dep Director for Agriculture & Food Systems - Nikita.Eriksenhamel@international.gc.ca