

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

- [Bill Gates: Stop Telling Africans What Kind of Agriculture Africans Need](#), by Million Belay and Bridget Mugambe. *Scientific American*, July 6, 2021
- [Africa at the Crossroads: Time to Abandon Failing Green Revolution](#). Million Belay and Timothy A. Wise, IPSNews, Sept. 23, 2020.
- [Africa Says “I Can’t Breathe”: An African Civil Society Perspective on Systemic Racism](#), by Million Belay. *Common Dreams*, June 10, 2020
- [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.

- [Industrial Agriculture Is No Solution for Africa](#), by Francesca de Gasparis and Gabriel Manyangadze, *Capital News Kenya*, August 31, 2021
- [African faith communities tell Gates Foundation: “Big farming is no solution for Africa,”](#) Southern African Faith Communities’ Environment Institute press release, August 3, 2021

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](#).)
- [AGRA Update: Withheld internal documents reveal no progress for Africa’s farmers](#), Timothy A. Wise, IATP blog, February 25, 2021.
- [New AGRA Reports Offer Little Evidence to Justify Continued Donor Support](#), Timothy A. Wise, IATP Policy Brief, July 21, 2021.
- [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](#), 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](#) 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](#) and higher incomes for farmers, while also [building climate resiliency](#).
- AFSA’s [agroecology case study collection](#).

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
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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

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Copied to:

Neil Watkins, Deputy Director, Program Advocacy and Communications,

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Laura Birx, Deputy Director Agricultural Development, Strategy, Planning and Management,

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Tom Kehoe, Deputy Director Agriculture, focus on Africa, Tom.Kehoe@gatesfoundation.org

SAFCEI sent letter to:

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Rockefeller Foundation

Dr. Rajiv J. Shah, President, rshah@rockfound.org

Copied to:

Roy Steiner, Senior Vice President, Food Initiative, rsteiner@rockfound.org,

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Mehrdad Ehsani, Managing Director, Food Initiative, (former AGRA leadership)

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Betty Kibaara, Director, Food Initiative, Director Africa Regional Office, bkibaara@rockfound.org

William Asiko, Managing Director, Africa Regional Office, wasiko@rockfound.org

Raikes Foundation

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Mastercard Foundation

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USAID

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UKAID (now FCDO)

The Rt Hon. Dominic Raab MP dominic.raab.mp@parliament.uk

Copied to:

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Germany: Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

Dr. Maria Flachsbarth

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