



Feed the Future Country Fact Sheet

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African Nations Lead the Way on Country-Owned Development



Forty years ago, Africa was exporting food. Today, it is a net food importer. But there's no reason African countries can't achieve greater growth in the agriculture sector to lift their people out of poverty and contribute to global food security.

By 2050, it is projected that we'll need to increase food production by up to 60 percent to meet the growing world population's demand for food. And we'll have to do so with less water and potentially less land than we have now. Enter Africa—with 60 percent of the world's uncultivated arable land, largely farming-based economies, and vast natural resource endowments, Africa has the potential to feed not only itself, but the world.

In 2003, African nations came together under a common vision to increase Africa's growth, development, and participation in the global economy through agriculture-led development. The African Union's [Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program](#) was born out of this vision—a program aimed at improving economic growth and food security by addressing key policy and capacity issues affecting the agricultural sector and by increasing government spending on agriculture by 10 percent and agricultural productivity by six percent in each country. CAADP, as it is called, would reverse underinvestment in agriculture and put Africa on a new course toward sustainable development and a greater role in the global economy.

The world followed suit in 2009, urged on by food price spikes in 2007 and 2008 that threatened global gains in poverty reduction. Recognizing the urgency of food security, G8 leaders, led by U.S. President Barack Obama, committed to increasing investments in agriculture, which had steadily dropped in past years.

What followed was a new way of doing development, driven by countries themselves rather than donors, and embodied in the [Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security](#). CAADP itself is a country-led and country-owned process. Donor commitments, such as ours, follow the lead of African countries and the priorities they've set for achieving their own agricultural development and food security.

So far, more than 20 countries in Africa have developed country-owned investment plans that involve not just government ministries but a broad collection of local stakeholders including the private sector and civil society. One of the tremendous innovations of CAADP, as a regional platform, is the process of peer review of these plans, encouraging learning across the continent that ultimately improves the quality of the plans.

We've seen tremendous advances in the way development is being done through CAADP, such that other regions outside of Africa have taken up the process. And we're thrilled to have been a part of a broader donor network supporting the growth of CAADP and building our own plans for investment around strategic priorities outlined by the countries, both through the U.S.

Government's [Feed the Future](#) initiative and the G8 [New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition](#). The sustainability of our programs depends on having country ownership so we've built our approach to food security in Africa around CAADP.

This week, I traveled to Ethiopia for the annual [CAADP Partnership Platform](#) meeting. This year's meeting emphasized a number of the themes we stressed last year in the New Alliance: policy actions to stimulate greater private investment in agriculture and mutual accountability for results.

A new development paradigm

CAADP recognizes that although significant progress has been achieved in the last 10 years, the coming years must be focused on accelerating implementation and results on the ground. To do this, this year's CAADP Partnership Platform meeting focused on strengthening institutional structures that can deliver results and be held accountable for them. Also, like the New Alliance, CAADP is focusing much more on creating a policy environment that will drive greater private sector investment in agriculture.

In the new development paradigm, it's not all about donor and host government resources. In many cases, private resource flows dwarf what we are all doing, so the real questions are:

- How do African governments and donors use their resources and convening power to encourage private investment that benefits smallholder farmers, thereby reducing poverty?
- How do we create incentives so businesses see African countries, particularly their rural areas, as viable places to invest their resources?
- And equally important, how do we ensure that the policy environment encourages smallholder farmers themselves, who are most often women, to invest their own resources in improving their farms?

That's why creating an enabling environment—one where farmers and small, medium and large businesses feel they can take risks in the agriculture sector and see a return on investment—is so important, particularly for governments who play a key role in a country's policy environment. CAADP is grappling with these issues along with the New Alliance and Feed the Future. We also discussed agricultural finance and land policy.

We're supporting CAADP as it works to create an accountability framework too. This includes Joint Sector Reviews, which are consultative processes involving local stakeholders like civil society.

The CAADP meeting this week included robust participation from both the private sector (African and multinational) and civil society. Like us, these groups see the great potential and opportunity in Africa and are excited to participate in its transformation.

As the process led by Africans and for Africans turns 10 years old, we look forward to the next 10 years and to supporting real, measurable progress in lifting people out of poverty and hunger through agricultural growth.

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