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The New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition:

a ©oup for co®porate capital?

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Executive Summary

The New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition, a new "co-operation framework" launched at the 2012 G8 Summit in the US and boosted at the 2013 Summit in the UK, now covers 10 African countries[1] and brings well over 100 companies[2] to the table as donors, in addition to the G8 governments and the European Union. This initiative "aims to accelerate responsible investment in African agriculture and lift 50 million people out of poverty by 2022" through a partnership that "includes specific commitments from African leaders to refine policies in order to improve investment opportunities and drive their country-led plans on food security; Private sector companies, who have collectively committed more than $3 billion to increase investments; Donor partners, who will support Africa's potential for rapid and sustained agricultural growth, and ensure accountability for the New Alliance"[3]. It has been heavily criticized by civil society for promoting the interests of the corporations rather than those of African small-scale food producers and citizens. This paper sheds light on where the New Alliance comes from, the faulty rhetoric on which it bases its claims to fight food insecurity, and the counter movements underway in Africa and in the Committee on World Food Security.

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Consummate con-man Joseph "Yellow Kid" Weil is said to have attributed his professional success to a potent mixture of ingenuousness and self-interest on the part of those he hoodwinked. "When people learn – as I doubt they will – that they can't get something for nothing," he wrote in his autobiography, "crime will diminish and we shall live in greater harmony." Whether or not the architects of the New Alliance for Food and Nutrition Security would attribute the same blend of traits to the African governments and members of the international community whom they have swayed is a matter for conjecture. What seems certain is that they are well on their way to surpassing the performance of a colleague of Weil's, George Parker, who sold Brooklyn Bridge twice a week for years, undisturbed, while his victims were picked up by the police for trying to install toll booths on public property.

The context

In what context has the New Alliance game unfolded? Long-term tendencies in the global food system came to a head in the food price crisis of late 2007/2008, provoking social unrest in cities around the world. The crisis discredited the failed food security strategies that had been adopted up to then, and opened up chinks in the dominant paradigm that had supported the corporate takeover of a globalized food regime closely tied to an industrial agriculture model favouring input-intensive production of commodities destined for international markets. The preceding two decades had seen a rapid acceleration of the tendency towards concentration of market activity in a reduced number of increasingly powerful conglomerates. The weight of corporations in global food systems and governance is well documented and apparently unassailable[4 5 6 7]. For example, the five largest traders in grains are estimated to control 75% of international grain trade[8], while the top three seed companies claim almost 50% of the global proprietary seed market[9]. By 2007 the top 100 global food retailers had combined sales representing 35% of all grocery retail sales worldwide[10].

According to the textbooks this "increased market efficiency" ought to have benefited everyone, but something went wrong. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund – longtime champions of neoliberal, free market-based solutions to social ills – were obliged to admit that they had made a bad mistake in counseling African governments to exploit their "comparative advantage" by exporting raw commodities and purchasing food for their populations on the world market. This advice, together with heavy conditionalities imposed by international financial institutions and binding WTO regulations, had transformed Africa from a net food exporter to a net food importer in the space of a decade, leaving governments and citizens out on a limb when food prices shot up and started to fluctuate wildly in 2007 and 2008. The crisis generated a fairly universal recognition of the need to support smallholder food production for domestic markets although, as we shall see, the rhetoric of supporting smallholder production and local markets sometimes twists like a contortionist when it is translated into practice by aid programmes and international institutions.

At the same time as the food crisis erupted, a series of interrelated environmental, health, and economic crises unmasked the systemic flaws in the current world food regime and turned a spotlight on its tendency to reward a small club of privileged economic actors and their political allies. The un-sustainability of a food system based on intensive use of petrol products and chemical inputs has been dramatically highlighted by climate change and the energy crisis. The conventional agriculture model that prevails in the global food chain accounts for at least 14% of the total annual greenhouse gas emissions, mostly due to use of nitrogen fertilizers[11]. The entire globalized distribution process of the currently dominant world food system is dependent on being able to discount or externalize the energy and petrol cost of whisking food around the world. At the same time, burgeoning problems of obesity and unsafe food have sensitized public opinion and policy-makers to the fact that a malfunctioning food system impacts the North as well as the South. As has the revelation of the scandal of food waste, most of it attributable to the retail sector's food chain management practices and its persuasive injunctions to consumers to buy more than they need[12 13]. As if that wasn't enough, evidence is accumulating that the chemical input and GMO-intensive route to increased productivity is running out of steam[14].

Crises are bad moments for con-men since they shake people out of complacency and prompt them to ask serious questions. Someone might even turn all three shells over at once and discover the bottom line of what is happening. Quite simply, capital is obliged to constantly find ways in which it can be invested and turn a profit, and this motivating force can be sorely out of sync with the needs of the world's population and its natural resource base. In fact, with the global financial crisis in 2008 it became increasing evident that dwindling opportunities in other areas like housing had re-oriented capital towards land and food, turning these into objects of investment and speculation. It had "financialized" these prime necessities by putting a price tag on them and transforming their value from use to exchange[15 16]. Speculation had contributed to the volatility of food prices, although to what degree was a matter of debate. The seizure of property that has been popularly termed "land grabbing" was converting large areas of land to the production of crops to be processed into agrifuels or food exports for rich, food deficit countries, often expelling local producers and pastoralists[17 18 19]. Corporations and financial actors were main drivers of this process, but they were operating in strong complicity with governments in both the North and the South, who were defending particular political and financial interests over those of the present and future citizens to whom they ought to be accountable. This was a set of uncomfortable truths if ever there was one. But, as in all moments of crisis, there were opportunities as well as threats for corporate capital and its allies, and they were well prepared to take advantage of them.

Actors and trajectories

Corporate actors new and old take centre stage in development

The "New Alliance narrative" that has stepped into the breach opened up by the crisis has repackaged a number of old favorites of modernization discourse, as we shall see below, but has also introduced some relatively new components. Chief among the novelties is the emergence of the private sector as a, if not the, key actor in agricultural development and food security. Which private sector? Could it be that this represents a long overdue recognition of the fact that small-scale producers are responsible both for the bulk of investment in agriculture – on their farms day-by-day – and for producing most of the food consumed in the world? It could be, but it isn't. The private sector in the limelight today is the corporate private sector. These actors' investment in agriculture in the developing world has been marginal up to now. Their agricultural production and food system approaches are in crisis. Yet they have been able to normalize themselves as aid actors under a development paradigm that focuses on narrowly-defined "effectiveness" and "results-based management". The financial crisis and the downturn in Official Development Assistance gave the corporations a hand. G8 governments' failures to meet the aid commitments they had made at the 2009 G8 Summit at L'Aquilla was one factor that induced them to open their arms to the private sector.

Aided by these factors, corporate actors and their political allies are seeking to hijack discussions of agricultural development in Africa, using a wide variety of forums and institutions to give legitimacy to their agendas. A clear understanding of the various and complicated mechanisms that multinationals are using to influence policy reveals the depth of their involvement even in African-led organizations.

Unaccountable funding and philanthrocapitalism

The food and financial crises may have provided an opportunity for corporations to consolidate their position, but this was not the start of corporate involvement in agricultural development. Corporate interests had been making inroads into the agricultural development world for several years by the time the food crisis erupted. A particularly important new player was a category of philanthrocapitalist foundations with unprecedented financial power to shape the agricultural development agenda. The Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation made its first grant in the field of agriculture in 2006. By the end of 2009 it had invested more than $ 1.4 billion in promoting a strategy whose formulation is accountable solely to its two co-chairs[20]. By way of comparison, the FAO, the UN agency mandated to attend to normative work and policies regarding food and agriculture, had a budget of $ 1 billion for 2010-2011[21], debated approved and monitored by its 192 member governments. The Gates Foundation wields power through the money it is able to put behind its vision of agriculture, whose productivist and free market bases were recently exposed in down-to-earth terms by Gates himself in explaining how to fight poverty in Africa:

> *"The metrics here are pretty simple. About three-quarters of the poor who live on these farms need greater productivity, and if they get that productivity we'll see the benefits in income, we'll see it in health, we'll see it in the percentage of their kids who are going off to school. These are incredibly measurable*

> *things. The great thing about agriculture is that once you get a bootstrap—once you get the right seeds and information—a lot of it can be left to the marketplace. This is a place where philanthropy and government work, and market-based activity, meet each other."*[22]

It is difficult to overestimate the influence of this unaccountable actor in terms of its capacity to influence the strategic and policy orientations of agriculture at all levels. It does so through the programmes it develops and funds both directly and through bodies like the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). Equally important, however, are the money-backed partnerships into which it enters with a host of organizations and institutions ranging from more or less unsuspecting farmers' associations and NGOs[23] to cash-strapped international organizations like the FAO and The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). Among the particularly pernicious investments are those that generate supportive inputs to "evidence-based policy" from opinion-leaders like Harvard University, where the "Agricultural Innovation in Africa" programme reliably defends biotechnology[24], and that make pro-biotech consultants available to advise governments in East African countries on delicate biosafety laws.

In the eight years since it made its first agricultural grant the Gates Foundation has gained itself seats at just about all the tables that count and it uses them to good effect. Participants at the 2014 edition of the Farmers' Forum, the institution through which small-scale producers' organizations interface with IFAD, were shocked to learn that one-third of the costs of the meeting had been met by the very Foundation whose operations many of them denounce. Meanwhile civil society members of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), which had been trying for months to get a handle on the complicated process of including a food security goal in the UN post-2015 agenda, learned to their astonishment that the Gates Foundation had proactively sat down with FAO technicians to help translate the putative goal into targets and indicators, taking off from the quantitative "scorecard" approach the Foundation is promoting.

Professional associations and "industry co-operation"

The Gates Foundation has not been the sole private sector voice in the choir. Food and agriculture corporate players, grouped together into professional associations which count as International NGOs in UN parlance, have also been active. This involvement is not new but had suffered a severe setback in 1978 when the FAO Industry Cooperative Programme, accused of exploiting its relation with FAO to obtain profits for its members, was shut down by the then FAO Director General Eduardo Saouma, described in a 1976 US State Department telegram as a man who "harbors many LDC biases – against multinational corporations and international banks and for increased grants by developed countries to LDCs"[25]. But by 2003 these actors seemed to have regained a foothold: civil society organizations and social movements denounced the positions taken in the 2003 edition of FAO's flagship publication, The State of Food and Agriculture, for being influenced by privileged dialogue with the biotech industry, which had succeeded in placing advocates within the organization[26].

In the meantime corporations had also made inroads into the governance of the World Health Organization, thanks in good part to the Gates Foundation, the second largest donor to the organization's budget after the US[27]. According to some civil society organizations and former staff, WHO core public health policy and financing tasks have been outsourced and removed from the democratic control of its member states by programmes like the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI)[28]. This activity in a non-agricultural forum was relevant to the emergence of the "New Alliance" vision given the increasing attention that is being paid to the nutrition and health side of the food question and the promotion of fortified foods by programmes like Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN)[29]. Corporations had also become active participants in the joint FAO-WHO Codex Alimentarius which sets standards applied by the WTO for international trade in food products. Of the nine-person US delegation to the 36th session of the Commission in 2013, five were from the food industry and only four from government, while there were no representatives of consumer or farmer organizations.

The 'open sesame' for what was to become the New Alliance was Kofi Annan's appeal for "a uniquely African Green Revolution", pronounced at a high-level event on hunger in Addis Ababa in July 2004[30]. First off the starting blocks to respond to the call was the Norwegian fertilizer colossus Yara. In 2005 it announced the establishment of the Yara Foundation to support the fight against hunger in Africa. Yara had an evident interest in promoting an approach that would stimulate fertilizer sales in a continent where its use was particularly low. In 2006 it organized the first of three annual African Green Revolution Conferences in Oslo, whose "unique focus was to engage the private sector, with its human as well as financial capital, and its institutional competence and capacity for innovation, in public-private partnerships in support of the African Green Revolution[31]". Yara was rewarded for its efforts by the outcome of the African Fertilizer Summit held in Nigeria later that year: a commitment to boost fertilizer use through an African Fertilizer Financing Mechanism in whose Governing Council the International Fertilizer Industry Association, of which Yara is a member, has a seat. The Oslo Conferences built up momentum for the launch in 2010 of a more structured partnership platform, The Africa Green Revolution Forum. The Forum holds its annual meetings in Africa and is co-sponsored by Yara and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) which saw the light in 2006 with support from the Gates and Rockefeller Foundations.

The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa

Headed up by Kofi Annan after he retired from the UN in December 2006, AGRA is, at least in appearance, a more credible narrative weaver than the corporations themselves. As such it has played an important role in reinvigorating modernization discourse, wrapping it in a humanitarian, hunger-fighting mantle, and assigning a prime role to corporations. AGRA's vision statement illustrates the contortionist tactics of those who seek to pay lip service to smallholders while maintaining a productivist orientation: "AGRA's strategy focuses on smallholder farmers while working for change that strengthens the entire agricultural system and focuses on high-potential breadbasket areas and countries"[32]. Its operations have been repeatedly and convincingly critiqued by civil society organizations and social movements. A well-researched treatment that goes far beyond generic denunciation to examine in detail the nature and impact of major AGRA programmes frames its conclusions in this manner:

> *AGRA is undoubtedly laying the groundwork for the commercialisation of African agriculture and its selective integration into global circuits of accumulation. Benefits will be unevenly spread and we should expect accelerated divergences in farmer interests. This will lead to greater class differentiation and a deepening commodification of African agriculture (subordinating agricultural products to the imperatives of exchange for the realisation of surplus value, rather than as use values in their own right). The shadow of Monsanto, DuPont, Syngenta and other seed and agrichemical multinationals, and equity funds lie just behind the scenes of AGRA's show. Building new markets and market infrastructure for commercial seed in Africa opens the door for future occupation by multinationals… AGRA and other capitalist interests have identified a profitable ('bankable') investment opportunity in smallholder agriculture in Africa, linked to Green Revolution technologies. They are now acting on that*[33].

The intricate links between the Gates Foundation, AGRA and individual corporations like Monsanto are being mapped by civil society and academic researchers. The diagram below shows the Kenyan institutions affiliated with AGRA that both the Gates Foundation and the Monsanto Corporation fund, as well as the direct link through Rob Horsch, a senior manager of Monsanto for years and now a director of the Gates Foundations Agricultural Development Program. A missing actor in this diagram are the bilateral aid programmes that partner with the foundations and corporations[34]. In Uganda USAID does the front running, using its material, institutional and discursive power to promote the spread of biotechnology while the corporations take a back seat and reap the profits[35]. In Malawi, USAID and DFID fund a US-based organization, CNFA, to implement an AGRA-supported input programme through a local affiliate whose trustees include Monsanto and other seed and chemical suppliers[36].

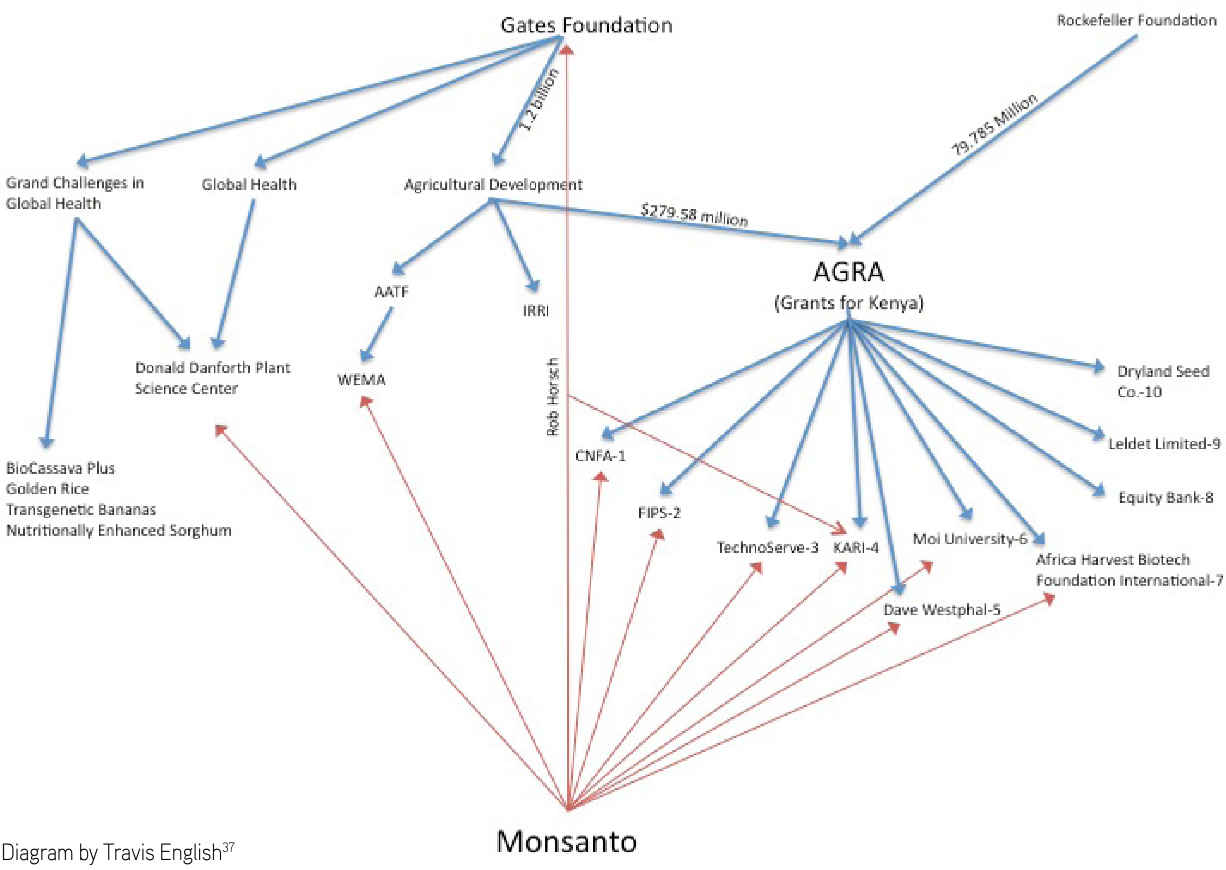


Diagram by Travis English[37]

The World Economic Forum

The World Economic Forum (WEF) with its annual meetings at Davos, Switzerland has been another important locus for forging partnerships and laying the foundations for a corporate-led approach to agricultural development and food security. In 2009 seventeen global companies[38] prepared a report that opened the way to the proclamation of a New Vision for Agriculture. The "Roadmap for Stakeholders" presented to the WEF in 2010 illustrated the corporations' capacity to turn the very weaknesses in the global food regime that had been revealed by the global food crisis into renewed arguments to legitimize their leadership. The need for industry to engage was justified by the fact that:

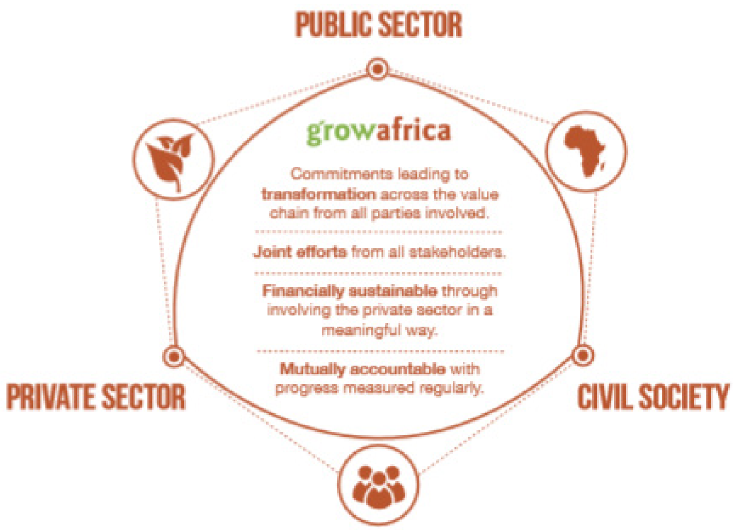
> *"the sector is entering a new era, marked by scarcer resources, greater demand and higher risks of volatility. Since agriculture accounts for 70% of water use and up to 30% of greenhouse gas emissions, it contributes to and is threatened by environmental degradation. This will be exacerbated as the growing population demands more food – nearly double today's levels by 2050 – and more resource-intensive produce such as meat and dairy"* [39].

The roadmap's portrayal of the roles of various stakeholders might have brought greater satisfaction to the farmers of the world if the space reserved for them had borne less of a resemblance to the bulls eye in a target.

Grow Africa

The New Vision was the launch pad for the 'partnership platform' Grow Africa, which would become in turn a major force in developing the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition. Grow Africa was launched at the WEF in 2011 under the sponsorship of the WEF, the African Union Commission and the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), for whose Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) it declared its support. The new platform marked a fundamental step in naturalizing corporate-style agricultural development since it enabled the companies to operate under cover of an "African-owned, country-led, multi-stakeholder platform"[40], a status that neither the New Vision nor AGRA could claim. African authorities were in, but farmers were out. Although smallholders were evoked throughout the Grow Africa literature as the ultimate beneficiaries of its action, they had disappeared altogether from the organigram of the partnership strategy, reproduced below.

During its busy first year of life Grow Africa was called upon by the WEF, meeting in Davos in January 2012, to prepare for the launch of the New Alliance for Food and Nutrition in Africa at the up-coming G8 Summit. The following month it used its hybrid governance to bring together ministers from 7 African countries to prepare to receive the G8 benediction. In early May it held its first annual Investment Forum. On 18 May it was present at the US G8 Summit to herald the birth of the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition of which it was a co-parent, bringing as a dowry its skillfully constructed, if doubtful, legitimacy. In September the Leadership Council of the New Alliance held its first meeting on the outskirts of the UN General Assembly, and in the same month Grow Africa was an active participant in the African Green Revolution Forum sponsored by AGRA and Yara[41].



GROW AFRICA'S INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO PARTNERING FOR AGRICULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

This list of promiscuously interlinked initiatives would not be complete without mentioning the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (GAFSP) commissioned by the G20 in Pittsburgh in 2009 and established under World Bank administration in 2010 as a channel for those donors who wished to pool part of the resources they had pledged at the L'Aquila G8 Summit in 2009. The GAFSP originally focused on funding of public sector programmes, but a controversial "Private Sector Window" administered by the International Finance Corporation was opened in 2012 with funds from Canada, the US and The Netherlands. Civil society analysis of this Window has pointed out that the resources that have been allocated so far are more beneficial for private companies than farmers themselves, despite the fact that the GAFSP is supposed to be privileging food security and smallholders[42].

In short, the corporate-led approach to agricultural development and food security in Africa has been crafted in forums dominated by the corporate private sector (WEF) and by the rich economies (G8/G20) with occasional forays into the world of the UN for legitimation purposes. The main actors have been the multinationals themselves, with a particularly active role by some like Yara, in partnership with the Gates Foundation and some bilateral aid programmes, USAID, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation (NORAD) in particular. The World Bank has played its usual supportive role, while international institutions like IFAD and FAO, and African authorities, have been brought on board primarily through the promise of funding, although sincere belief in the well-foundedness of the effectivenesss narrative has also played a role. So has the confusing mix of characters, from Gates to AGRA to New Vision to Grow Africa to New Alliance, which makes it difficult to follow just what is being legitimated.

Concepts and components of the New Alliance narrative

Before looking at the nuts and bolts of the New Alliance it is useful to review the concepts and models which form the basis of its vision of development. None of these paradigms are original to the New Alliance and their acceptance in other forums gives an added lustre of legitimacy to this vision.

Modernization and productivism

The idea of "modernization" has dominated development theory and action for decades and been retooled to meet changing political environments and emerging crises. It remains a central pillar of the New Alliance's narrative, implicitly or explicitly suggesting that "traditional" societies must develop or progress into "modern" ones, which are generally construed as industrialized and urbanized, with little or no role for peasant agriculture and localized food systems[43]. At the heart of modernization thinking is productivism, with its narrow focus on increasing agricultural yields, which we have already encountered in Bill Gates' homespun rendition.

Productivism, too, has been with us for decades. Those of us who sit today in negotiations about how to solve the world's food problems with a memory that stretches back to the '70s could doze off and wake up to think we were listening to McNamara's famous Nairobi speech in 1973 when he introduced the basis of the World Bank's Integrated Rural Development strategy: "The question is what can the developing countries do to increase the productivity of the small farmer….so as to stimulate agricultural growth and combat rural poverty on a broad scale?"[44] The answer – in productivist-framed discourse – has to do with transiting smallholders from the traditional to the modern and linking them to the commodity markets that are considered to be the pulsing engine of the latter. It involves discounting the many forms of social and ecological wealth, other than the monetary, that sustain smallholders' livelihoods[45]. It involves transforming the characteristics of the agricultural practices and livelihood strategies of smalholders from strengths on which to build into constraints that need to be overcome in order to attain "development".

The version of productivism applied in the AGRA-New Vision-Grow Africa-New Alliance narrative has been revised and corrected to take into account criticism of industrial agriculture's impact on the environment and on climate change. It has re-emerged from the spin doctor's bag as "sustainable intensification", opportunely opening a big window for GMOs and disguising chemical fertilizers and other inputs under epithets like "sustainable crop nutrition". That the productivity recipe will lead to significant expulsion of smallholders from agriculture is not dwelt upon in the New Alliance narrative, but it is candidly admitted in the graph on page 9 published by the Syngenta Foundation. Small-scale producers are expected to "get big or get out" following the famous motto of US Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz. Either they leave agriculture entirely or they adapt to the productivist model of agriculture, purchasing more inputs, working more land per person, and selling increasingly into global markets until they become what Syngenta describes as "advanced farmers". As the graph illustrates, "advanced farmers" are not only "better" producers but indisputably better customers for companies like Syngenta: the transition from smallholder to "advanced" agriculture is synonymous, in this representation, with a shift from traditional, local, resources often obtained outside formal markets, to purchased inputs. The use of "multi-trait hybrid seeds" marks the highest level of "advancement" in this diagram. African civil society organizations did well to title their recent statement on AGRA and the New Alliance "Modernising African Agriculture: Who Benefits?"[46].

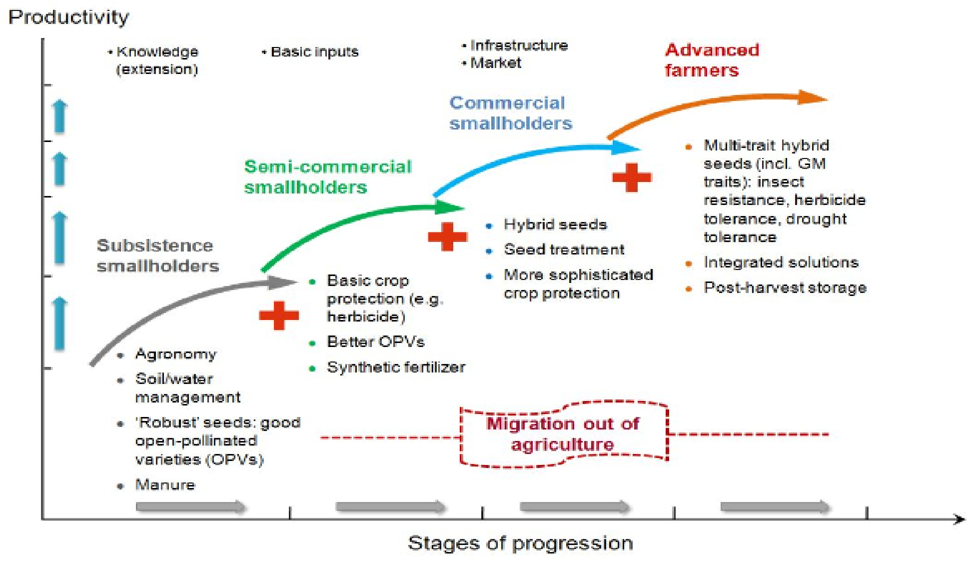


Diagram by Y. Zhou, Syngenta Foundation[47]

Value chains

Corporate input-assisted production is important in the New Alliance vision, but concepts and approaches linked to the marketing side of the equation are equally significant. The need to "link smallholders to markets" is a buzzword in the narrative, obscuring the fact that purely subsistence farming is a thing of the past and that practically all producers participate in markets of some kind[48]. The market to which the New Alliance narrative refers is "the" (unique) market dear to neoliberal hearts, and not the vibrant and diverse local food systems that ensure the sustenance of the majority of Africa's population today[49].

The preferred way to link smallholders to the market is through the value chain approach, popularized in general terms in the 1990s and applied to agricultural financing and marketing in the first decade of this century. Concepts that involve the word "chain" tend to conceive of food provision as a kind of highway or pipeline between the first link and the ultimate customer. Explicitly or implicitly they view the market and its mechanisms of supply and demand as the main regulator of flows along the highway. A fundamental question left unasked and unanswered in value chain discourse is that of what is being "valued", by whom and according to what criteria. USAID's purely economic interpretation is aimed at promoting "competitive operations" led by "catalyst firms", targeting "high potential areas" and operating under conditions in which "the target food staple crop can be produced, distributed and marketed in greater volumes, with higher quality and for lower cost, thereby contributing to increased food security and higher rural incomes"[50]. As always the word "thereby" is an invitation to examine assumptions closely, as McMichael does in a recent article which characterizes value chains as a generator of debt on the part of smallholders and of fatal dependence on external inputs and markets[51].

The value chain approach can be applied to inputs, like seeds or fertilizers. The Gates and Rockefeller Foundations had already experimented with this manner of using aid to structure markets in the health field through the GAVI programme to which we referred above. The AGRA Program for Africa's Seed Systems (PASS) "structures the entire value chain of hybrid seeds and inputs by financing research, company start-ups and the creation of a marketing network"[52]. A field assessment of this approach as applied in Burkina Faso revealed that smallholders are excluded from the process[53], although the coordinator of the PASS program, Joseph DeVries, is on record as having declared enigmatically that "whatever is good for the seed companies is good for the peasants"[54]. The AGRA-funded Malawi Agro-dealer Strengthening Progamme (MASP) is supplied principally by Monsanto, responsible for 67% of all inputs[55]. "MASP project literature makes no secret of the fact that the agro-dealer network is designed to create demand by farmers for the products of multinational corporations"[56]. The Gates Foundation, which holds stock in Monsanto, funds the World Food Programme's operation of purchasing grains from local farmers, without which it would not be profitable for them to use the more expensive hybrid seeds that Monsanto puts on the market through the MASP [57]. It is difficult for farmers to un-do the step of abandoning their own saved seeds. They are getting hooked into use of external inputs through a time-bound, externally –funded programme over whose destiny they have no control.

Value chains can also be constructed around single commodities like soya or sugar cane. The products of these chains are often destined for export. They can involve monocultural plantations sited in what is fallaciously claimed to be "unused" agricultural land. The bad press occasioned by landgrabbing and the violence it inflicts on local communities has motivated corporations and their partners to develop alternatives, principally outgrower schemes and contract farming. However, despite the aura of social responsibility with which they are framed, these models may actually enhance the benefits to corporate players on the chain by leaving small-scale producers on their land to shoulder climatic and other risks, while at the same time subjecting them to corporate control over what they plant, when and how, and what price they receive. The problem is not with the concept and practice of contractual arrangements as such, but with the partners in the contracts, their respective interests and power, and the regulatory frameworks within which they operate[58 59]. Value chain linkages have been found to work for only the top 2-20 per cent of small-scale producers, mostly men[60].

Agricultural growth corridors

The concept of "agricultural growth corridors" is the ultimate combination of industrial agricultural production and value chain management under the banner of effectiveness. Launched by Yara International at the UN General Assembly in 2008 and integrated into the WEF New Vision for Agriculture, agricultural corridors are intended as a means "to develop underutilized land areas in Africa that have great potential to enhance food production and economic growth"[61 62]. One of the most thoughtful explorations of the concept and practice of agricultural corridors in Africa published thus far defines them in the following terms:

> *"Central to the development of the corridors concept are roads, railways, ports, irrigation, and farming hubs, nucleus farms or irrigated farm blocks. According to the theory, these nucleus farms will provide processing and storage services, inputs (seed, fertilisers and pesticides) plus machinery to smallholders or outgrowers and their communities living in the surrounding area. The idea is that all these should be concentrated, along with other service providers such as extension and credit, into clusters of companies, defined as geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers and associated institutions"[63].*

Agricultural corridors are currently being implemented in Mozambique (Beira Agricultural Growth Corridor and the Nacala and Zambesi Corridors under the Pro-Savana Programme) and in Tanzania (SAGCOT), with the potential for extending to Zambia, Malawi Zimbabwe and the Democratic Republic of Congo and beyond[64]. In contrast to the glowing terms in which its promoters describe them, the assessment cited above concludes that:

"while claiming to increase agricultural productivity, these projects are likely to facilitate the appropriation of land and the displacement of small-scale farmers, while imposing high-scale industrial agriculture using hybrid and GM seed. The vision of the Corridors is to replace local small-scale agriculture producing for domestic markets and using local seed resources with an export-led focus. That focus is likely to put Africa's land, water and seeds under the control of international traders and investors" [65].

A discussion paper based on field research undertaken by the European Centre for Development Policy Management highlights the risk that they become "corridors of power rather than of plenty". Local actors have largely remained outside the corridor processes, which are driven by high-level politicians and international companies. In particular, "the challenge to help small-scale operators benefit from corridors is enormous, whether in agriculture or other sectors"[66]. Small-scale producers themselves are more outspoken in their condemnation of the corridors. At a meeting held in October 2012 the National Peasants' Union of Mozambique analysed the ProSavana programme and condemned it as the result of a top-down policy which aims to resettle communities and expropriate the land of peasants to give way to mega farming projects for monocrop production. In their view it can be expected to have the following impacts:

- "The appearance of landless communities in Mozambique, as a result of land expropriation and resettlement;
- Frequent social upheaval along the Nacala Corridor, and beyond;
- The impoverishment of rural communities and a reduction in the number of alternatives for survival;
- An increase in corruption and conflicts of interest;
- The pollution of water resources as a result of the excessive use of chemical pesticides and fertilisers, as well soil degradation;
- Ecological imbalances due to vast deforestation for agribusiness projects."[67]

In Tanzania the small-scale farmers' federation MVIWATA is well aware of the threats posed by national agricultural policies that see no future for family farmers outside of private sector-led value chains and/or out-grower schemes like the SAGCOT in whose design they have not been involved[68]. A new study commissioned by MVIWATA shows that large scale investment is likely to disadvantage the small producers due to the existing legal framework[69].

Public-private partnerships

Corporate -led agricultural development initiatives are implemented through Public-Private-Partnerships" or PPPs, another key buzz word of the New Alliance narrative. IFPRI defines PPPs as "collaborative mechanisms in which public organizations and private entities share resources, knowledge, and risks in order to achieve more efficiency in the production and delivery of products and services"[70]. PPPs are billed as win-win affairs since, in theory, they make it possible to profit from the capacities and resources of private entities and shift some of the risk of service provision to them while anchoring accountability solidly in the public sector. In reality, accountability tends to drop out of the picture altogether while corporations manage to evade the bulk of the risks involved in agricultural investment by pushing governments to twist rules and regulations to their advantage. The Sygenta Foundation delicately hints at what this can entail in suggesting that "partners need to jointly protect and benefit from intellectual property, and work towards a unified vision of enhanced farm productivity"[71]. The real risk-takers are the small-scale producers, excluded from PPPs except as suppliers or workers. But not to worry. As the head of strategy at Yara puts it, the companies themselves have the interests of small farmers at heart. "We take a certain share of the profits but it makes no sense for us to screw the farmer. It is short-sighted if you are an input supplier"[72].

A New Vision for Agriculture report presented to the WEF Davos meeting in 2013 spoke of "smallholder-inclusive" partnerships[73], but as a critique published in The Guardian put it:

> *"partnership, as envisioned in this report, is clearly a David-meets-Goliath-type alliance. Although local businesses and farmers frame the picture, it is global agribusiness that dominates the view. Can smallholders* really have a voice when faced with the collective *bargaining power of Bunge, Cargill, Coca-Cola, Diageo, DuPont, Unilever, and Walmart – just a few of the 28 partner companies that drive the initiative? All too often, the rhetoric of development partnerships masks the vast asymmetries of power between participants"[74].*

In the words of an African peasant leader,

> *"we do not believe a word of the commitments of responsible behaviour on the part of multinationals. Who will control the responsibility of practices in the field? Who can claim that, in such an unbalanced relationship between a multinational and a small African farmer, one will not lose? What serious and reliable recourse do we offer to farmers in case of excesses?"[75].*

Patient capital

Accompanying the notion of PPPs is the idea of "patient capital", justified in the minds of its proponents by the unquestioned benefits that corporations bring to the table. Catalytic Funds supported by DFID and an Agriculture Fast Track launched by USAID in 2013 in cooperation with the African Development Bank and the Government of Sweden encourage companies to invest by providing "up-front funding" to cover costs – particularly infrastructure – that the companies themselves are not willing to support. The torturous reasoning behind this use of public or aid funds was set forth in a recent FAO publication:

> *Most companies need relatively rapid returns to their investment and their time frame is not compatible with that of local economic development. There is a need for 'patient capital' provided by investors with a longer time horizon initially to ensure that the expected benefits materialize. Such investors are usually from the public sector (e.g. governments, development banks and sovereign-wealth funds) …"* [76]

The publication recognizes that that far more research into the impacts of foreign direct investment in developing country agriculture is required, particularly regarding its impacts on food security[77]. Yet despite this gap in the evidence it is assumed that foreign direct investment is beneficial and hence ways of making it work must be sought. Another way to look at the question would be to reflect on whether the public sector resources used as "patient capital" to reduce corporations' transaction costs could be better employed to directly support the investments of small-scale farmers themselves in other ways that would be more beneficial to food security and local economic development.

The added value of the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition

With this arsenal of mechanisms and narratives already in place, what is the added value of the New Alliance for corporations and their allies? The New Alliance strategy for "expanding Africa's potential for rapid and sustainable agricultural growth" comprises:

- Working in partnerships by launching national cooperation frameworks that align with priority activities in the CAADP national investment plan and partnering with the AU and NEPAD/CAADP through Grow Africa;
- Mobilizing private capital by supporting the preparation and financing of bankable agricultural infrastructure projects through multilateral initiatives including the Fast Track Facility for Agriculture referred to above;
- Taking innovation to scale by such action as launching a Technology Platform jointly with the CGIAR and the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa and a Scaling Seeds and Other Technologies Partnership housed at AGRA;
- Reducing and managing risk, in particular by supporting the World Bank Platform for Agricultural Risk Management;
- Improving nutritional outcomes by supporting the Scaling Up Nutrition movement and increased consumption of biofortified crop varieties;
- Ensuring accountability by creating a Leadership Council which will report to the G8 and AU[78].

For each of the African countries a donor acts as a lead development partner. The US heads the list, with responsibility for Ghana, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Mozambique. France (Burkina Faso and Senegal) and the European Union (Cote d'Ivoire and Malawi) come next, followed by Germany (Benin) and the UK (Nigeria). The lead partner takes focal point responsibility for working with the host government, the private companies, and the other donors to develop a Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA)[79]. In no country thus far have other national stakeholders – including smallholders' organizations – been involved in the negotiations[80]. These documents commit the donor countries to little beyond single figures stating overall levels of support without indicating whether or not they represent already pledged assistance or fresh funding. Private sector companies sign "Letters of Intent" describing their investment intentions. These documents are briefly summarized in an annex to the CFA but are not made public in order to respect business confidentiality. The only commitments that are recorded in full detail are the policy reforms which the host governments have pledged to take in order to create an enabling environment for business.

This is not surprising, considering that this is really what the whole New Alliance game is about. The value added of the New Alliance is that it has given agribusiness companies unprecedented access to African decision-makers in a structured platform in which donors have put their weight behind obtaining desired policy changes. What are these changes? The commitments laid out in CFAs are instructive[81]. Land laws and policies are at the top of the list (43 commitments out of a total of 209 in the 10 countries). Action ranges from demarcating and registering lands to establishing or streamlining procedures for land leases to encourage long-term leases, to strengthening land markets. The push towards the privatization of land and facilitating corporate access is evident. The CFAs add insult to injury by paying lip service to the guidelines on land tenure adopted by the Committee of World Food Security in May 2012 in the name of defending access to land by smallholder and local communities, but using them to do just the opposite[82 83].

The majority of the CFAs also feature revisions to national seed and other inputs policies "that encourage greater private sector participation in the production marketing and trade in seeds and other inputs" (36 commitments). These measures generally limit the rights of farmers to multiply, use, exchange and sell their own seeds by such means as the adoption of UPOV-compliant legislation. These national commitments are reinforced by the cross-cutting "Scaling Seeds and Other Technologies Partnership" implemented by AGRA, which aims to increase "the adoption of improved seed varieties, fertilizers and other technologies"[84] Strengthening investment codes, lowering tax and trade barriers and streamlining the licensing procedures needed to start up businesses are included in a number of CFAs. In some cases the success of these reforms is measured by an improved ranking in the World Bank's Doing Business Index, "a tool the Bank's own Independent Evaluation Group has criticized as failing to illuminate trade-offs between increased deregulation and development outcomes"[85]. Several CFAs make explicit reference to the Scaling Up Nutrition Initiative (SUN) which promotes marketing of private sector-produced fortified foods[86] In short, the emphasis is on increasing private sector investment in the agricultural sector rather than on food security, despite the programme's title[87].

Contrasting the New Alliance

The New Alliance has been critiqued by civil society organizations, public figures like the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food[88] investigative journalists like those of The Guardian's Global Development section[89] and – most importantly – by African small-scale farmers themselves:

> *Beyond the pious intentions of the promoters of the New Alliance, their greed for Africa's natural resources is increasingly evident. This is no longer a suspicion: private sector interests are clearly revealed, sadly confirming the land grabbing strategies we have recently observed in Africa. They have moved beyond the mining sector – where we thought they were concentrated – to transfer to the field of agriculture the same patterns, the same economic power relations, the same monopolistic tendencies. It is time for us to learn from more than thirty years of privatization and liberalization of the rural economy under foreign constraint before opening the agricultural sector even more to the appetites of investors. I believe these issues should be be brought to bear on our analysis of initiatives like AGRA, Grow Africa or the "New Alliance"[90].*

The policy changes reviewed above – that benefit businesses and (further) penalize the peasants who are the basis of the food security, the economies, the environment and the social texture of their countries – are a good part of what's wrong with the New Alliance. Another part is the fact that these changes are being enacted without any process of consultation with national stakeholders. Considering the fact that the small-scale producers who are adversely affected by these changes constitute the majority of the population of the countries concerned, the New Alliance is in effect launching an attack against the fragile bases of democracy in these countries that the G8 governments rhetorically pat themselves on the back for defending. Small-scale producers' organizations have engaged strongly with their national governments, their Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) and CAADP to build agricultural and food security policies that benefit small-scale food producers, rural economies and urban consumers alike[91 92]. The CAADP framework and the process of its implementation by the RECs and national governments is open to criticism, but it has the immeasurable advantages of being an African framework and of offering a platform in which national and regional actors can debate and build towards consensus. The New Alliance and the Grow Africa corridors have managed to get high-level African politicians on board, but local actors and the "ultimate beneficiaries" are left out[93]. In pure con man style, the UK government seems to think it can get away with stating a patent untruth so long as it does so with aplomb, as in a fact sheet on the New Alliance: "New Alliance Cooperation Frameworks are developed in consultation with farmer organizations to ensure policy reforms and investments respond to the specific needs and opportunities of small-scale farmers"[94].

Some New Alliance promoters are aware of the initiative's legitimacy problems. A leading G8 government figure participating in the negotiation of the Tenure Guidelines in the CFS admitted that adequate consultation with small-scale producers' organizations had not taken place. The New Alliance Leadership Council is expected to provide oversight but is unlikely to function as a credibly legitimate governance mechanism. In the estimation of OXFAM[95]:

> *In practice the [Leadership Council] has been delegated a limited advisory function with no concrete decision making or oversight responsibilities. At present it lacks Terms of Reference (ToR) and a mandate outlining roles and responsibilities for members and clearly articulating how the [Leadership Council] relates to New Alliance decision making functions[96].*

The only list of Leadership Council membership on line is contained in a footnote to the OXFAM document[97]. It notes that the Council is co-chaired by the African Union and the UK as current G8 president[98] and that all G8 countries are members, while the CEOs of 7 agribusiness companies represent the private sector. The note states that producers' organizations are represented by the East African Farmers Federation and the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions, both of which include strong representation of large-scale commercial farmers. No mention is made of the West African Network of Peasant and Agricultural Producers' Organizations (ROPPA), representing small-scale family farmers, despite the fact that 6 of the 10 New Alliance countries are located in West Africa. This cherry-picking of African organizations has the effect of undermining the efforts of the five sub-regional networks of producers' organizations to build a common platform – the Panafrican Farmers' Organisation - to interface with continental authorities like the AU and NEPAD.

The Leadership Council has held only three ceremonial half-day meetings since the New Alliance was launched in May 2012. At the latest, in September 2013, it broadly endorsed an accountability and monitoring framework. The aggregate outcomes proposed in the draft framework were three: (1) improved enabling environment for investment, (2) increased responsible private sector investment in agriculture, and (3) increased agriculture sector growth. The proposed aggregate impacts seemed more in line with the title of the programme: poverty reduction, improved food and nutrition security and economic empowerment of women. However, the narrow range of the indicators suggested for improved food security and nutrition would clearly preclude any serious assessment of the impact of New Alliance funding: access to dietary diversity, prevalence of child stunting under the age of five, and minimum acceptable diet for children aged 0-24 months. The framework is being circulated to country governments and development partners for validation as is, although New Alliance promoters recognize that there are substantive pieces on which further work is needed. These include developing a theory of change linking increased private sector investment to food security and nutrition, supporting independent monitoring, facilitating effective participation of stakeholders at the country level, and promoting greater transparency and access to information. It is outrageous that anyone would be allowed to fiddle with the future of a country and its citizens without having given serious attention to such fundamental matters.

Sometimes African government representatives have the courage to tell things like they are. When USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah (ex-Gates Foundation) made a lightning trip to Rome in May 2012 to pay a semblance of deference to the Rome-based UN food and agricultural organizations, all of the accredited government representatives were called to a briefing session. The long moment of silence that ensued after Shah finished his PR-perfect presentation of the about-to-be launched New Alliance was finally broken by one of the most authoritative of the African ambassadors, who wearily and rhetorically asked: "When are you people going to stop coming into our continent with your recipes for solving our problems rather than supporting our own solutions?" But often governments keep silent and urge African producers' organizations and civil society organizations to declare the truths that they can't or don't dare to.

The truth is that family farms and local food webs are vitally important to the food security and the livelihoods of the majority of African citizens, yet they have been under-supported for decades. Starting under colonialism, continuing after Independence and exacerbated by structural adjustment, official policies and programmes have drained wealth from the rural areas to feed urban development, the central administration, and elite interests[99]. Producer prices have been kept low to ensure cheap food in urban centers, where protesting crowds are more likely to hit the streets than in the rural areas. Until recently what support there has been for agriculture has concentrated on male-managed export crops, leaving women largely in charge of handling the "invisible" task of producing food for the sustenance of the family[100]. In 2003, at a Summit of the African Union, African Heads of State recognized that they had neglected agriculture and pledged to dedicate at least 10% of the national budget to this fundamental sector, a target that only a very few countries have met 10 years later.

CAADP, established as an Africa-owned instrument for defining agricultural priorities and programmes, inspired great expectations at the outset. However, it has ended up being oriented towards external aid rather than the mobilisation and effective use of domestic resources[101].

African government representatives can be capable of recognizing that "it is Africa's smallholder family farmers - women in particular - who produce Africa's food, create jobs for the majority of the population, and maintain the social peace" and that "if the cost of these services were factored into the economic calculations there would be no doubt about what model of agriculture should receive the lion's share of investment."[102]. If you ask any tie-and-suited person on the streets of Nairobi where he sources the staple maize that his household consumes he will answer without hesitation, "from the family shamba (farm) up-country". Despite this reality many African governments seem to be convinced that "traditional" family farming is not capable of ensuring agricultural development and might, at the most, be maintained for social reasons alongside of a "modern" "business-oriented" agriculture

What model of production to invest in?

Family farming is the basis for modern food provision and rural futures in Africa. Its multi-functionality and sustainable productive potential is confirmed by extensive research. Family farms generate food and well-being for the majority of the population and the wealth of the region, conserve its natural resources, and ensure employment for young people. Innovative family farming, backed by appropriate research, supportive investments and adequate protection, can out-perform industrial commodity production. It can increase its productivity without making the environment, biodiversity and food quality pay the price.

What kinds of markets and food systems? Promoting food sovereignty.

In Africa most food reaches those who consume it through informal and often "invisible" trade channels that operate outside commercial commodity markets[106]. The challenge for family farmers is to fill the growing demand for food in Africa through market arrangements that allow them to add value without engaging in production models and value chains that undermine the autonomous, diversified, sustainable basis of their resilience. When the issues of who wields power and who benefits are not addressed, approaches like contract farming and out-grower schemes can marginalize small-scale producers or incorporate them as subordinate units of a system that escapes their control. Investing in local food systems, on the contrary, dynamizes rural economies, creates employment, and promotes rural intermediary urbanization.

What kinds of investments are needed to promote these models/markets?

- guaranteeing local peoples' rights of access to and control over resources including farmers' seeds;
- providing sustainable sources of credit, social protection and grain reserves, and livestock resources;
- putting in place the necessary infrastructure and support measures to build and protect local, national and regional markets that benefit family farmers and provide quality food for consumers at accessible prices;
- promoting participatory research in support of, and determined by, small-scale food producers;
- ensuring the effective engagement of small-scale producers in policy processes and implementation;
- prioritizing data collection and research on informal production, processing, trade within the food system.

Family farmers are the major investors in African agriculture. "PPPs" should be "Public-Peasant-Partnerships"

The tendency for decision-makers to develop "public-private partnerships" (PPPs) with the corporate private sector impairs the potential alliance between governments and small-scale producers which ought to be the foundation of food security and sustainable agriculture in Africa. It is essential that the public sector effectively play its role of orienting policies, differentiating between the incentives required by different categories of producers.

National policies and accountability

The public sector has the responsibility of establishing appropriate policies, frameworks and regulatory mechanisms and making the necessary investments to provide public goods and ensure national/regional food sovereignty. National investment plans should be based on agricultural policies that have been formulated with the participation of affected groups, ensuring that agricultural investments – domestic and foreign - are useful and relevant and that they are coherent with the visions expressed in the agricultural policies. Governments too often fail to protect the rights of small-scale producers and communities to land, water, and seeds.[107]

based on large-scale capitalistic farming. This conception may be partially the result of cultural acclimatization in Western institutions and a real conviction that this approach to modernization is best for the nation. However, the pressure exercised by the proponents of the corporate-led food regime, and the benefits they afford to national elite and capital, also weigh in very strongly.

Africa is a particularly attractive target for corporate investments and financial speculation. As the World Bank states the case: "Africa represents the 'last frontier' in global food and agricultural markets. It has more than half of the world's uncultivated but agriculturally suitable land and has scarcely utilized its extensive water resources. As Africa's population, incomes, and cities grow and spur the development of domestic markets, the prospects for agriculture and agribusiness will be better than ever."[103]. Initiatives like the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition and the "Grow Africa" programme, clothed in language of fighting hunger, aim at opening up the last major agrifood market on the world scene that has not already been brought under the control of multinationals[104]. The challenge over the coming years will be to see whether, with appropriate support from public policies and investment programmes, this rising demand for food can be met by Africa's family farmers and domestic food systems instead of an increasingly "modernized," industrialized, and internationalized food system.

Some of the pieces necessary for this to happen are already in place. African smallholders are doing their share by developing convincing alternatives to the New Alliance narrative. Sub-regional networks of African smallholder producers in West, Central and East Africa have documented the "invisible" local food systems that are responsible for feeding the majority of Africa's populations in a recent report entitled "Family Farmers for Sustainable Food Systems"[105]. There are a host of African producer organization statements and reports, summarized in the box on page 14, that address the key questions: what production systems and products to support? Which markets to target? Who should benefit?

Conclusion

At global level, the reform of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in 2009, in reaction to the food crisis, has set in place the first ever world-wide forum for food issues in which all stakeholders are in the room and participate on an equal footing with governments[108 109]. With a mandate to defend the right to food of the world's population and the voice it guarantees for organizations directly representing those sectors most affected by food insecurity, the CFS constitutes a focal point for developing the kind of alternative narrative that African smallholders advocate.

The CFS document, The Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition, of which a first version was endorsed in 2012, is conceived as a primary global reference for coordination, coherence and accountability in decision making on food, nutrition and agricultural issues[110]. The guidelines on tenure of land and other natural resources, adopted by the CFS in May 2012 and constituting the first ever global framework in this delicate area, is an important normative reference. Principles ensuring that investment in agriculture promotes food security, the right to food and smallholder livelihoods, which are currently being negotiated in the CFS, will be another key reference[111]. The challenge is to bring these instruments to bear at continental, regional and country level. It is a big challenge, but not an insurmountable one. AU leaders have let themselves be won over by the New Alliance, but they have also adopted a framework and guidelines on land policy that defend communities' rights to the land on which their livelihoods depend. NEPAD has launched an African Rural Development Forum aimed at enhancing poverty reduction, employment possibilities, vibrant rural economies and environmental sustainability, objectives in which corporate capital has no interest[112]. With persistence and acumen Africa's smallholder platforms are seeking dialogue with their national authorities, and mobilizing when they don't get it.

What does all of this imply for foreign aid in general and the New Alliance in particular? Olivier De Schutter, who is just stepping down after six years of strenuously defending the right to food in his role as UN Special Rapporteur, notes that "the smallholder-led, country-led approach, is the type of aid that has the greatest multiplier effects for the poorest, and presents the lowest risks of dependency… It remains to be seen whether private firms, in partnership with public donors, will be willing to support approaches that look more like this, and less like the rest of their investment portfolios"[113]. If this seems unlikely on a voluntary basis we need to look for a more constraining approach. We opened this discussion by recounting the experience of a con-man who was allowed to ply his trade undisturbed for years while the forces of order went after his victims. Better targeted and rigorously enforced regulatory action is what is needed to curb corporate behavior. As African peasant leader Mamadou Cissokho puts it: "We don't want 'responsible investors'. We want a legislative framework that protects us effectively and investors who are obliged to respect the law"[114]. A combination of normative pressure from above – as in the reformed CFS – and political pressure from below – from organized and articulate citizens – may well be the best way to get there.

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Terra Nuova is an Italian NGO, with almost 50 years of experience in partnerships with small-scale producers' organizations, pastoralists, women's groups, and Indigenous Peoples in a number of African and Latin American Countries. Its current sectors of strategic focus include agroecology and sustainable management of natural resources, local food systems, intercultural and migrant issues, traditional knowledge, participatory processes and the achievement of basic rights.

Over the last 10 years, Terra Nuova has acted as focal point for the research, sensitization and advocacy activities carried out by the EuropAfrica campaign, co-funded by the EC since 2005. Within Europafrica, a network of European CSOs and farmers' organizations has interacted and exchanged with three regional networks of Africa producers' organizations: ROPPA (the platform of peasant organizations and agricultural producers in West Africa), PROPAC (the peasant platform of Central Africa and EAFF (East African Farmers' Federation). This campaign has led to common positioning on issues and processes impacting both Europe and the Africa such as regional agricultural policies, trade regulations, land grabbing, and the need to promote agro-ecological family-based peasant production linked in to local food systems.

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AGRARIAN JUSTICE PROGRAMME

In recent years, various actors, from big foreign and domestic corporate business and finance to governments, have initiated a large-scale worldwide enclosure of agricultural lands, mostly in the Global South but also elsewhere. This is done for large-scale industrial and industrial agriculture ventures and often packaged as large-scale investment for rural development. But rather than being investment that is going to benefit the majority of rural people, especially the poorest and most vulnerable, this process constitutes a new wave of land and water 'grabbing'. It is a global phenomenon whereby the access, use and right to land and other closely associated natural resources is being taken over - on a large-scale and/or by large-scale capital – resulting in a cascade of negative impacts on rural livelihoods and ecologies, human rights, and local food security.

In this context TNI aims to contribute to strengthening the campaigns by agrarian social movements in order to make them more effective in resisting land and water grabbing; and in developing and advancing alternatives such as land/food/water sovereignty and agro-ecological farming systems.