



The New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition

Standard Note: SN06892

Last updated: 20 May 2014

Author: Chloe Challender and Jon Lunn

Section International Affairs and Defence Section

Overview

US President Obama launched the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition at the May 2012 G8 summit at Camp David. It aims to address years of underinvestment in agriculture, and to meet the financing gap for global food security, in order to help pull 50 million people out of chronic poverty over 10 years. It is a [joint initiative](#) between African leaders, the private sector and G8 and other donors. In its first year, more than 50 companies agreed to invest \$3 billion in agriculture in Africa and to sign up to a new code of responsible investment. These companies include multinationals such as Monsanto and Unilever.

Critics of the New Alliance, including the [World Development Movement](#), question whether it will help poor farmers. They say the Alliance will make it easier for multinational companies to do business in Africa through the easing of export controls and tax laws, and through governments putting aside tracts of land for investment. There have also been charges that the New Alliance represents a “[new form of colonialism](#)” and that, under the scheme, African governments have had to agree to change seed, land and tax laws to favour private investors over small farmers.

How does the New Alliance work?

Under the New Alliance, countries develop [Co-operation Frameworks](#) listing policy reforms that will help accelerate agricultural growth, private sector investment in agriculture and implement donor funding commitments for the sector. Policy commitments made under the New Alliance include pledges on: land and water; seeds and other inputs; tax; finance; infrastructure; and food security and nutrition. Ten countries have joined so far: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria; Tanzania; and Senegal.

Under these Co-operation Frameworks, all parties must take account of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of Food Security adopted by the Committee on World Food Security in May 2012, as well as the principles of responsible agricultural investment (rai), which are currently under consultation.

Stance of the UK Government

The UK's Department for International Development (DFID) is [providing](#) £395m to the New Alliance over its first three years (to 2015), including through existing or planned programmes in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Ghana and Mozambique. By the end of 2018, DFID plans to have spent £600m in total.

The Government says that there is a wide range of companies engaged with the New Alliance, “from the very small to the very large”. [It claims](#) that the majority of investment proposals registered under the New Alliance are from African-based firms, and that many investment proposals are received from Small-to-Medium Enterprises. The Government [adds](#) that, rather than favouring the private sector and threatening ‘food sovereignty’, the Alliance will help more smallholder farmers in the following ways:

- Assist market access by, for example, linking smallholder farmers to markets by improving rural roads;
- Extend insurance services to smallholder farmers to help protect them ‘shocks’ including droughts and crop failures;
- increase access to new agricultural technologies; and
- create new jobs.

The Government says that many small-scale family farms in African countries already produce a surplus for local and regional markets. It also argues that New Alliance Cooperation Frameworks are [developed in consultation](#) with farmer organisations to ensure policy reforms and investments respond to the specific needs and opportunities of small-scale farmers.

Below is a recent [parliamentary exchange](#) about the scheme:

HC Deb 28 April 2014 c565-6W

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much support her Department is giving to the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition. [196345]

Justine Greening: The UK has committed a total of £600 million to the New Alliance for Food, Security and Nutrition. This includes £480 million in funding commitments made through Country Cooperation Frameworks; a £76 million contribution to the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme and a further £44 million for enabling actions. The New Alliance was launched in May 2012 and the full £600 million will be spent by the end of 2018.

Further information

UK Government, [The New Alliance for Food and Nutrition Security](#)

The New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition, [2013 Progress Report](#)

WDM's [campaign website](#)

[The New Alliance: a new direction needed](#), Oxfam International, September 2013

B. Vorley, L. Cotula and M-K Chan, [Tipping the Balance: Policies to shape agricultural investments and markets in favour of small-scale farmers](#), Oxfam and IIED, December 2012

[The G8 and the fight for the future of African farming](#), *Guardian*, 18 February 2014

House of Commons Library briefing SN06516, December 2012, [Large-scale land acquisitions in developing countries - camouflage for 'land grabbing'?](#)