

**ASSURING FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY IN AFRICA BY 2020:
Prioritizing Action, Strengthening Actors, and Facilitating Partnerships**
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SUMMARY NOTE

**What Industrialized Countries Can Do to Support Implementation of Action for
Food and Nutrition Security in Africa: Perspectives from USAID**

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Industrialized countries must work hand-in-hand with African countries to bring about the changes required to assure food and nutrition security for all Africans. Market access, science and technology, and good governance are three fundamental areas where positive change will achieve the greatest benefits. The potential benefits of global trade liberalization for Africa are enormous within the context of the WTO negotiations, but more intra-African trade liberalization is also needed. A recent World Bank study showed that by 2015, gains to developing countries from trade liberalization in high income countries would be \$31 billion. However, the additional gains from liberalization in developing countries would be an even higher \$111 billion. Thus, the global community, including Africa, needs to act together to reduce tariffs and subsidies that distort and hamper trade. The United States continues to stand by its 2002 proposal to set a goal of total elimination of trade-distorting agricultural subsidies and barriers to market access.

We are all familiar with the traditional picture of a subsistence farmer working a small plot of land for an uncertain crop yield. But this is not the future of farming in Africa. Science and technology is opening up avenues for new crops and improved production of traditional crops. For example, horticulture is now one of Kenya's top exports, integrated pest management has been used to combat devastating pests in cassava, and biotechnology holds the promise of imbuing plants with greater resistance to pests and increased tolerance to environmental stresses. Food quality can also be improved through science. Cutting-edge research that draws upon the latest developments in genetic and nutritional science is bringing iron, Vitamin A, and zinc to staple crops. Science and technology in the processing sector is also improving trade prospects by allowing African exports to meet the quality demands of European and American markets. The new opportunities for agricultural growth through science and technology have helped to bring agriculture back onto the development agenda, but we need to do more. After years of declining funding for agricultural assistance to African countries, the trend started to turn around in 2000. However, 2001 and 2002 saw the declining trend resume.

Trade liberalization and increased aid to agriculture will not create economic growth, however, without a commitment to good governance. Good governance means, among other things, government effectiveness, reduced corruption, and rule of law — better and smarter regulation, contract enforcement, and the protection of property rights. In addition, civil liberties and political rights must be

protected. Such principles have been incorporated in the new Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) that has been established by the United States to boost its foreign assistance. Countries will be selected for access to this special fund based on their demonstrated commitment to ruling justly, investing in people, and encouraging economic freedom.

We recognize, however, that improved governance does not happen overnight. Some countries in Africa are emerging from conflict; others are struggling to put new governance systems in place even as they are trying to cope with recent droughts or other disasters. In these countries, food aid plays an important, temporary role, although it cannot be the basis for sustained food and nutrition security. We are, for example, working with the Government of Ethiopia, other donors, and NGO partners to build a new approach to food security in Ethiopia — with a productive safety net complementing more aggressive approaches to stimulating economic growth. Working together, we can build a brighter future for the children of Africa.

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