



**STATEMENT BY DENNIS WELLER**  
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**Ethiopia New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition Meeting**  
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Thank you to the Government of Ethiopia, particularly to the Ministry of Agriculture for hosting this workshop along with the Agricultural Transformation Agency and the Joint Sector Working Group for Rural Economic Development and Food Security which is co-chaired by the Ministry, the World Bank, and USAID. Welcome to all participants, particularly my fellow G-8 colleagues, private sector partners, and other new and potential partners in this grand New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in Ethiopia.

It's my honor to be here today on behalf of the U.S. Government and the G8 members. As many of you know, during the annual G8 Summit, at Camp David in May of this year, the G8 members and more than 35 private sector entities partnered with the African Union and Governments of Ethiopia, Ghana, and Tanzania to form the *New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition*.

The *New Alliance* is a shared commitment by G8 members, African countries, and private sector partners to achieve sustained and inclusive agricultural growth and help raise 50 million people out of poverty over the next 10 years by aligning:

- First, the commitments of Africa's leadership to drive effective country-led plans and policies that promote food security, especially policies that create an environment to stimulate greater private investment in agriculture;
- Second, the commitments of private sector partners to increase investments where the conditions are right; and
- Third, the commitments of the G8 to support Africa's potential for rapid and sustainable agricultural growth.

The 2009 G8 Summit in L'Aquila was a pivotal moment for hunger and poverty reduction, when President Obama pledged \$3.5 billion in U.S. support over three years to advance global food security, resulting in an additional \$18.5 billion from other donors to help countries reduce hunger and undernutrition by developing their agricultural sectors.

Three years later, with measurable successes and a clear continued commitment from the public sector, we've arrived at a critical turning point.



The commitments made at the 2009 G8 Summit in L'Aquila were about so much more than funding – they showed that we can marshal aid resources and that African countries can develop credible, comprehensive plans. Now's the time to accelerate our progress, which we can do by mobilizing private capital, taking innovation to scale, and managing risk.

The importance of the private sector's role here cannot be overemphasized. The private sector brings necessary investment and needed technology for countries, communities, and citizens to create opportunities for new businesses, stronger farms, and more vibrant markets.

By bringing its significant resources to the table, a strong private sector, both local and international, can help build long-term economic growth in many ways:

1. It can help **provide better inputs** to farms such as seeds and chemicals that help protect crops;
2. It can **expand and introduce agro-processing business** that add value to agricultural produce, provide markets for farmers, and create new jobs;
3. It can partner with the Ministry of Agriculture and others to **help build capacity** of development agents and others who bring extension knowledge and service to farmers;
4. It can **bring new technologies** that have the potential to dramatically increase production and productivity through mechanization, better farming practices, or higher yielding seeds and saplings;
5. It can **work with cooperatives and unions** to help them become more professional and efficient organizations so they can identify and take advantage of new business opportunities;
6. It can help local companies understand and **improve quality and standards** so Ethiopian exports are more competitive in the global marketplace;
7. And it **contributes to a thriving economy** where aid funding is no longer needed.

*So how will we make this all work?*

We have what are called “Cooperation Frameworks.” Through the *New Alliance*, African governments, donors, and private sector entities endorsed individual country Cooperation Frameworks that outline government policy priorities, donor resource commitments, and private sector investment intentions that, combined, will help lift an anticipated 3 million people out of poverty in Ethiopia over the next ten years.

- Through the Cooperation Framework, the U.S. Government has committed **\$95 million** in agriculture funding and **\$220 million** to support the Productive Safety Net Program between FY 2011 and 2012. To support country-led agricultural development in FY 2013, the



U.S. Government commits **\$50 million** in agriculture funding and **\$98 million** in support to the Productive Safety Net Program.

Through the *New Alliance*, the G8 has announced its support as African countries develop the tools necessary to create an environment conducive to private sector investment in agriculture:

1. **Mobilizing private capital** for critical agricultural infrastructure;
2. Getting productive **technologies and innovations** to the field and marketplace;
3. **Improving nutritional outcomes**, especially for women and children; and
4. **Reducing and managing risk** at the national and household level.

Today's workshop is just the first step in the process of transforming the *New Alliance* into a solid plan of action that will yield real results. The outcome of today will be a clear understanding of:

This workshop is – again – just the first step. Success will depend on continued collaboration across partners in the *New Alliance*. Progress will be systematically reviewed and presented at key events, including a special event during the upcoming UN General Assembly meetings in New York in September.

At that event, we also hope to announce an expansion of the *New Alliance* to additional countries. As the first countries in the *New Alliance*, however, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Tanzania will serve as the motivators to take this initiative to scale in the future. Your progress will encourage additional players, and allow us to achieve our very ambitious goals for better serving and equipping smallholder farmers in Africa.

Before I close, I want to emphasize an important point: **the *New Alliance* is not intended to be a stand-alone, separate initiative**. It's grounded in the existing CAADP process and in countries' priorities as defined in their investment plans.

All of this work is especially critical here in Ethiopia, a country that's enjoyed several years of sustained economic growth while simultaneously continuing to suffer from periodic climatic shocks that threaten the livelihoods of many vulnerable smallholder farmers and pastoralists. Collectively, we want our efforts to reduce the impact of such shocks, build resilience, and sustain poverty reduction over time.

I congratulate the **Government of Ethiopia** for joining the *New Alliance* and thereby committing to make some important policy changes that will facilitate more private sector investment in their country.

- o I'd also like to acknowledge the **G8 members** who outlined their resource commitments and agreed to better align these resources with the Government of Ethiopia's priorities in the agricultural sector.



- The **14 local and international private sector companies** - many of whom are here today – are also to be commended for signing letters of intent describing their planned investments in agriculture in the country.

I'd like to reiterate what President Obama said when he announced the *New Alliance* just before the G8 Summit in May. He said: "*We can do this. We're already doing it. We just need to bring it all together. We can unleash the change that reduces hunger and malnutrition.*" And through this historic commitment to partnership and progress, I'm certain that, together, we will.

Thank you.