



Remarks of Ruth Rawling  
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Cargill  
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Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all let me say how much I appreciate the honour of being able to speak at the CFS about the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition and our approach to agriculture and rural development.

Cargill has been active in developing agricultural value chains in certain sub-Saharan African markets for more than forty years. We are linking farmers to markets both locally and globally and, in several markets, undertaking local value-added processing. We have a thriving cocoa business providing livelihoods to 350,000 smallholder cocoa farmers in Ivory Coast and Ghana, a growing cotton and grain business in Zambia and Zimbabwe which provides a secure market for 140,000 smallholders and a grain business in South Africa and Mozambique. We work with farmers at all levels of productivity, providing them with the necessary inputs, extension services and training to help improve agricultural practices, productivity and therefore incomes. For example, in cocoa we have achieved average income growth of more than 30%. We do not work alone – the outreach to smallholders is done in collaboration with partners such as CARE, Technoserve, Solidaridad and The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, particularly in providing training and support to these smallholders. I would like to highlight one particular success: our women's cotton clubs in Zambia. There are now more than 800 of them where women farm leaders help to train other women farmers in their neighbourhoods, reaching 32,000 women farmers overall.

The creation of the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition is something Cargill wholeheartedly supports. A platform focused on food security, environmental sustainability, and the generation of economic opportunity and growth for all parts of a value chain – from farm gate to factory - excites us. Engagement with this platform is a natural fit due to our background and history of working in partnership on agricultural development. Cargill has made several commitments under the New Alliance for investments in Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, and Mozambique. Cargill investments range from strengthening agricultural vocational education for youth to farm models which are inclusive and help develop a future generation of farmers. Such examples include our investments in Mozambique where we are looking at commercial grain production at scale and in Nigeria where we are looking at cassava production and processing at scale.

Our intention is to help subsistence farmers – whether women, men or youths – graduate into commercial farmers. To move these concepts forward we need to work with the farmers, communities, national and local governments, and donors to

address the significant investments needed to develop rural infrastructure, training programs, and mechanisms to help farmers manage the risk of being part of a local and global marketplace. Our primary role is one of bringing the market to the farmers and helping them access it. We are also engaging in the Scaling up Nutrition movement to identify where Cargill could support nutrition-sensitive interventions as part of our agricultural programming.

Key elements for effective multi-stakeholder engagement are patience in working through different options for moving forward, clarity around roles and responsibilities in the projects which provides accountability, engagement with local leaders to build long term support for the projects locally, full assessment of the local environment, clarity around the land rights for the farmers involved. Given the multiple interests involved in any major development project it is not surprising that it takes time to clarify different perspectives and work through how compatible they are. Many face to face meetings are needed to build trust. It is also essential that all parties involved do not make assumptions but seek clarity in writing about what each party is bringing to the project and against what timeline. Getting clarity at the beginning is the key to success, even if it does take a little longer to see visible signs of the start of the project.

There are clearly challenges in getting these projects underway, as with any project at scale. We have experienced governments who have exhibited a passion for transforming their agricultural sectors, but lack real capacity to make their visions a reality. For instance, we've seen significant delays in obtaining the basic permits and licences needed to do everything from hiring people in country to establishing an office to paying for materials. We would welcome any help that could be given to national and local governments to improve their capacity to handle the requests that come to them in an expeditious manner. We have seen some help of this kind given through consultancy services to the governments concerned and we welcome that as a temporary solution but hope that training of officials could lead to a more permanent capacity building in the countries concerned. We have also experienced a lack of capacity at local levels to establish well-functioning co-operatives which can help smallholders access training, inputs, finance and markets.

In terms of monitoring progress, the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition commitments are published in an annual report detailing progress across all the projects. Within projects, partners need to keep each other informed of progress very regularly in order that the project plan can be corrected as new information comes to light.

As to linkages to CFS, it would seem appropriate for the New Alliance report to be made available to all CFS members. The New Alliance projects can be thought of as case studies to illuminate the work of the CFS.

How could the New Alliance initiative be strengthened? As detailed earlier, capacity building in the national and local governments in New Alliance countries seems a key requirement. As the projects get underway it should be possible to visit them and learn from the experience and see how applicable they might be in other countries. Learning from bringing projects to scale are going to be an important factor in meeting post 2015 development goals, notably those concerned with

reducing poverty and hunger. The private sector is a key actor in helping to drive economic growth that can support the Post-2015 framework and the New Alliance could provide a helpful channel to leverage private sector participation in shaping this agenda.

Finally, we are aware that there has been some criticism of the New Alliance because of the perceived absence of involvement of civil society. We find this criticism somewhat puzzling since civil society has been present and is welcome at the table. Transformative agricultural development requires action, alignment, and partnership. Civil society has a critical role to play in helping the private sector, donors, and governments implement their commitments and in sharing their expertise and “know-how” to make projects work.

In Cargill, we actively collaborate with partners in the public and private sectors to find long-term solutions to hunger and ensure all people have access to safe, nutritious and affordable food. Over the last five years, Cargill has contributed more than \$81 million to reduce hunger and improve nutrition around the world through partnerships with a diverse group of global, national and local organizations. Working in a multi-stakeholder environment can help deliver solutions that may be difficult for one partner to deliver. So we welcome the opportunity to work with others and develop innovative solutions to address the complex challenge of food security.