



AFRICA FOOD SECURITY: A POTENTIAL RESPONSE – ImagineAfrica Alliance March 2015

The Background

Issues associated with Africa food security are well documented. Over the next 35 years, the global population will grow by more than two billion people, with more than half of this population growth in Africa¹. To feed Africa's fast-growing population, its annual food production will need to increase by at least 70% by 2050. Even with advances in technologies and efficiencies, projections are that food production will fall far short of this requirement.

The Geography and the Response: ImagineAfrica Alliance

The scope of this issue is dramatic, and ImagineNations' response is as well. ImagineNations proposes the formation of an ImagineAfrica Alliance, a public-private partnership of government, multilateral, commercial, and non-profit partners to address African food security issues. Its vision is ambitious, to have an impact across the African continent on the food security issues. To address these issues, ImagineAfrica will take a long-term approach, achieved in phases over the next decade – starting first in Tanzania – then expanding systematically over time to other “high opportunity” countries in East Africa, including Kenya, Ethiopia, Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique. In Tanzania, there is significant support at the highest levels of government and from a wide range of key stakeholders.

The History

The ideas and strategies of ImagineAfrica Alliance have been developed over the past 30 months, starting in early 2012, through an extensive process of consultation and due diligence – engaging dozens of companies, investors, governments, donors, universities, NGOs and thought leaders across more than 30 countries. Funding for this process and strategy development has been provided primarily by DuPont, MasterCard Foundation, Alwaleed bin Talal International Foundations, Inter-American Development Bank, BXR Group, Agriterra, ImagineNations Group and Gallup.

As the primary catalyst, the ImagineNations Group has led a dynamic process including dozens of focus groups and one-on-one in-depth interviews with food-related agribusiness executives, suppliers, retailers, logistics operators, farm managers, small-holder farmers, young people, academics, investors and donors, thought leaders, skeptics and visionaries. In addition, it conducted extensive desk research and analysis of more than 20 recent studies by the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the African Union, the IFC, the World Economic Forum, USAID, McKinsey, Rand, UNDP, FAO, PWC, World Food Programme, the Clinton Foundation and the Gates Foundation – all of whom are actively engaged in advancing food security, economic development, agriculture and food systems, youth employment, access to financial services, education and health in Africa.

¹ United Nations, 13 June 2013.

In addition, during early/mid 2014 a small pilot was conducted including 70 smallholder farmers in central Mozambique – all growing maize mostly to supply feed to a growing cattle operation. DuPont, DECA, Agriterra, Pannar and ImagineNations Group worked together to conceive the plan. Pannar provided modest farmer training and an improved seed. This pilot resulted in significant improvements in yield per hectare, improved motivation of the farmers, and improved milling extraction rates. A second pilot has begun in the Salima District of Malawi, focused on mangoes and banana production, which is funded by BXR Group and MasterCard Foundation.

And in Tanzania, under the direction of President Kikwete, government and other key stakeholders have been engaged in identifying potential land concessions and existing potential partners to establish a regional hub of ImagineAfrica and Food University in that country – including a network of catalytic farms and Food University affiliate campuses across the country.

The Approach

Through a public-private partnership approach, the ImagineAfrica Alliance is bringing together a diverse group of key actors across the food value system. Operationally, ImagineAfrica Alliance will work through inter-related strategies:

- I. Food University** will focus on matching the supply and demand of skills, providing on-site applied educational opportunities, including skills training and qualifications. Starting in Tanzania, Food University will become a vibrant network of affiliated, hands-on “campuses”, including farms, factories, retail stores, universities and other settings. Through online education, apprenticeships and classroom learning, it will develop talent across all key disciplines related to the food value chain, from agriculture, to business, finance, management, entrepreneurship and other technical skills through a “learn while you earn” curriculum.
- II. ImagineAgriculture** will see the development of catalytic farms operated as public-private partnerships, in concert with alliance partners, would set examples as a cutting-edge model of agricultural development in Africa that delivers both an attractive mix of financial and well-being returns for investors, businesses, communities and local government stakeholders. Starting in Tanzania, ImagineAgriculture will establish up to five “place-based” catalytic agri-business operational investments that positively impact the “well-being” of communities and increase economic prosperity in local markets, while also producing attractive returns for investors.
- III. ImagineAfrica Capital** could be a primary source of investment and debt funding for the ImagineAfrica Alliance. ImagineAfrica Capital could leverage existing and new partnerships to establish a revolving fund to address capital shortages that often have dramatic impact for smallholder farmers, on the ground. Structure of this fund, the pace of its formation and its investment activity, and the participation of investors are subject to discussion.

For More Information

ImagineNations invites like-minded organizations and individuals to consider partnering to address the challenge of food security in Africa through the ImagineAfrica Alliance. Please contact us at Tel: +1 410 439 4800 or info@imagine-nations.org, and we look forward to talking about how we might together make a difference on these critical issues.