



Paris Peace Forum – November 10, 2023

Roundtable – *South-North Dialogue to help achieve SDG 2 & 13 in Africa: An Agricultural Revolution for Sustainable Food Security*

Moderator:

- Elisabeth Claverie de Saint-Martin, CEO, CIRAD

Speakers:

- Hicham El Habti, President, UM6P
- Charles Tellier, Chief of Staff of the President, IFAD
- Jennifer Baarn, Director of Partnerships, AGRA
- Marjeta Jager, Deputy Director General INTPA, EU Commission
- Bertrand Walckenaer, Deputy Executive Director, AFD
- Hanane Mouchid, Sustainability and Green Industrial Development Director, OCP
- Patrick Dupoux, Senior Partner, Director Africa, BCG
- Ségolène Halley-des-Fontaines, Director of International Partnerships, INRAE

Replay: [South-North Dialogue to help achieve SDG 2 & 13 in Africa - YouTube](#)

SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION

Africa is confronted with challenges, notably a growing issue of food insecurity exacerbated by the degradation of 65% of arable land (with desertification at 45%) and the loss of 4.4 million hectares of forest between 2016 and 2020. A significant portion of African households (60%) relies on agriculture, with smallholder farmers producing 50% of the food using only 10% of the land.

The central question emerges: **how can Africa address the rising population's nutritional needs while adopting environmentally friendly, sustainable, and inclusive practices?**

- ⇒ **Consensus among participants asserts that the food security and climate crises are interconnected and can be tackled simultaneously.** Participants advocate for African-centric solutions, leveraging the soil's carbon sequestration capacity to address both challenges. Despite Africa's vast potential, the yield gap is substantial, with only 10% of the global average fertilizer usage. Noteworthy efforts, such as OCP's science-based approach in developing tailored fertilizers, exemplify the potential for improvement.
- ⇒ Several sub-goals were highlighted, encompassing the enhancement of inputs and seeds, reduction of food losses, integration of smallholders into regional value chains, and more. However, participants emphasized that **meeting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2 and 13 should not come at the expense of SDG 1.** A green revolution in Africa should prioritize poverty reduction for smallholder farmers while empowering local communities.
- ⇒ **The role of research and universities is pivotal in driving a green revolution.** Emphasis was placed on researching soil knowledge in Africa as a key asset to achieving both food security and climate objectives. Initiatives like UM6P's soil-mapping programs (Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Rwanda),

partnerships with universities aim to build knowledge and capability (UJALA partnerships with J-PAL in 5 African countries¹). UM6P also works for the deployment of agents on the ground to help farmers apply the right amount of the right nutrients for the right crops, at the right time. The TSARA initiative², involving collaboration between INRAE, CIRAD, and African partners, seeks to deepen the impact of agricultural research on agrifood and environmental challenges.

- ⇒ **Governments and the private sector must collaborate for the successful implementation of long-term agricultural policies.** Creating conditions for public and private long-term investments, developing skilled farmers, and establishing storage and transportation infrastructures were highlighted. Energy infrastructures adapted to contexts (solar panels, mini-grids, etc.) should be prioritized and financed. Strong partnerships, particularly with SMEs, smallholder farmers, and inclusive businesses, are deemed essential for success.
- ⇒ **Financing this transition is a critical aspect, with a call to close the annual \$40 billion investment gap in African agriculture.** The emphasis is on the importance of investing in African agriculture for achieving various SDGs: the dollar put in African agriculture is the best dollar you can invest in SDGs (poverty reduction, climate, food security, nutrition, health, gender equality, etc.). The financial engagement of the European Union was underscored, along with the need for enhanced coordination among international donors to facilitate quicker and easier access to investments for countries and local players.

Finally, the [Call for Multi-Stakeholder Mobilization for Sustainable Agricultural Development in Africa - Paris Peace Forum](#) was reiterated, as well as the commitment of most of the organizations present.

¹ [J-PAL and UM6P launch new agriculture research lab for Africa | The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab](#)

² [African and French institutions partner up through TSARA, a research plan for food and agricultural systems | Cirad](#)