



THE CRAWFORD FUND

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# Crawford Fund

## 2009 Annual International Conference

# World Food Security

### Can Private Sector R&D Feed the Poor?

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE AND ABSTRACT FOR

## Dr Namanga Ngongi



Namanga Ngongi has had extensive experience in agriculture and management of international organizations. He worked in Cameroon as an Extension Officer and deputy head of projects in the ministry of agriculture before being assigned in 1980 as Representative to the UN food agencies in Rome. He joined the World Food Program in 1984 and became Deputy Executive Director in 1994. In 2001 he was appointed Special Representative of the UN Secretary General to the Democratic Republic of Congo, and led the peace keeping mission (MONUC) for two years. He helped put together the transitional government. Dr. Ngongi retired from the UN in 2003. He joined the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) as its President, in November 2007. Namanga obtained a BS in agriculture from the California State Polytechnic University in 1968, and MS (1973) and PhD (1976) degrees, from Cornell University.

### **An African Green Revolution Leading to Development**

Africa has been food insecure for decades. Food production has lagged behind population growth. Per capita food availability has declined. Malnutrition still stands at 33 per cent. Agricultural imports are on the increase especially for rice, wheat and maize. Yet African governments allocate only about 5 per cent of national budgets to agriculture. However, African governments have set up CAADP - a Comprehensive framework for investments in agriculture, and have undertaken to allocate at least 10 per cent of national budgets to agriculture, though few have achieved that target. The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), an African led partnership initially set up by The Rockefeller Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and now joined by DFID, works across the agriculture value chain with both public and private sector to promote rapid adoption of productivity enhancing technologies by smallholder farmers, most of them women. AGRA supports programs in seed systems, soil health, market access, policy implementation and innovative financing. Improved seeds bred in public research institutions in Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda are multiplied by private seed companies, and publicly financed input support programs are accessed by smallholder farmers through agro-dealers. Agro-dealers are financed through credit guarantee schemes with private banks. Future investments to strengthen public/private partnerships in climate change adaptive research and extension will be critical to sustain an African Green revolution. The development of Africa's agriculture, especially the smallholder staple crop sub-sector, to dramatically increase productivity, production and incomes of the majority of Africa's population who are engaged in agriculture, will stimulate rapid economic growth as evidenced by countries such as Malawi and Rwanda. However, to transform African agriculture into a highly productive, efficient, competitive and sustainable system that leads to overall rapid economic growth, requires nothing short of a green revolution.

*Dr. Namanga Ngongi*

Gemeiner Vordenkirsche.