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## Agricultural Progress in Africa: Fast Facts

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### Agricultural Investment

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- In 2003, the African Union adopted the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP), which calls on African governments to dedicate 10 percent of their national budgets to agriculture and strive for 6 percent annual agricultural growth, with the aim to contribute to the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) to eradicate poverty and hunger. As of May 2011, the CAAPD compacts have been signed by 26 African countries and incorporated into their agricultural agendas.
- Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Malawi, Mali, Niger and Senegal have exceeded the target to allocate 10 percent of their national budgets to agriculture. Other countries have made significant progress towards this goal.

### Agricultural Growth

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Over the past decade, African governments have been increasingly investing in agriculture and showing that progress is possible on a large scale.

- The agriculture GDP growth rate in Sub-Saharan Africa increased from an annual average of 3 percent in the 1990s and 2000s to 5.3 percent in 2008.
- Ghana has made the fastest progress in Africa on reducing hunger, cutting hunger levels by 75 percent between 1990 and 2004 and cutting the percentage of people living in poverty from 52 percent in 1991/92 to 28.5 percent in 2005/06.
- Due in large part to agricultural investments, Ethiopia's hunger levels decreased from 71 percent to 46 percent from 1990 to 2004.

### Agricultural Potential

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- Agriculture plays a key role in Africa's development in terms of economic growth, enhanced living standards, poverty reduction and increased food security. Roughly 30 percent of Africa's total GDP comes from agriculture. About 70 percent of Africans depend on agriculture for their livelihood. Agriculture accounts for approximately 40 percent of Africa's foreign currency earnings.

- More than half of the world's uncultivated, arable land is in Africa. The continent will be critical to feeding a world population projected to increase from 7 billion today to 9 billion by 2050.
- Studies show that investments in agriculture have four times the economic impact than investments in other economic sectors. At the same time, while development aid to Africa has increased by 250 per cent since the early 1980s, the allocation to agriculture has been cut in half.
- Roughly 80 percent of the food consumed in Africa is grown by smallholder farmers, most of whom are women.
- Crop yields in Africa have remained at one-third of those produced by farmers in other developing countries. One of the reasons for low yields is the high rate of soil nutrient depletion.
- Africa uses less than 3 percent of the global fertilizer production. If this is only doubled to 6 percent, when combined with improved seed, Africa could increase its crop production by 50 percent. This would eliminate the current food deficit, turning Africa into a net surplus producer.

*Sources: NEPAD, IMF, World Bank, African Development Bank, and United Nations data.*