

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

April 27, 2022

Dear Chairwoman Lee and Ranking Members Rogers,

We write to express our concerns about USAID's funding for the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and to request report language in this year's State and Foreign Operations bill to address those concerns.

AGRA was founded in 2006 with the goal of bringing high-yield agricultural practices to 30 million smallholder farming households in 11 countries in Africa, setting the ambitious goal of doubling crop productivity and halving food insecurity by 2020. But with the self-imposed deadline having passed, a host of African and international civil society organizations have concluded that AGRA has done more harm than good.¹

One independent study conducted in 2020 found that yields were increasing slowly and only for a few supported crops, farmers' incomes were not rising significantly and the number of hungry people in AGRA's 13 focus countries had increased 31%.² Researchers have also found "Strong evidence of negative environmental impacts, including acidification of soils under monoculture cultivation with fossil fuel based synthetic fertilizers."³ They have further found that, in practice, AGRA programs have benefited medium-scale farmers who already owned land at the expense of small farmers, undercutting its anti-poverty goals and having a disproportionate impact on women.

A wide range of African civil society organizations, including alliances across the countries where AGRA operates, have called on donors including USAID to stop funding AGRA and transition to a genuinely sustainable and democratic model of combating food insecurity. These calls have come from groups including the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa⁴ and hundreds of faith leaders from across the continent.⁵

Our proposed language to include in this year's report is:

The Committee expresses serious concern about U.S. funding for the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). The Committee understands that both African and international researchers have found that AGRA has failed to meet its topline goals, while having potentially damaging effects on food security, the environment, and anti-poverty goals in the countries where it operates.

Further, the Committee directs the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to submit a report to the Committee on Appropriations, not later than 90 days after

¹ See, for example: <https://safcei.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Gates-Foundation-appeal-from-SAFCEI-African-faith-Leaders-September-2020.docx.pdf>

² https://sites.tufts.edu/gdae/files/2020/07/20-01_Wise_FailureToYield.pdf

³ https://www.rosalux.de/fileadmin/rls_uploads/pdfs/Studien/False_Promises_AGRA_en.pdf, p. 7

⁴ <https://afsafrica.org/press-release-200-organisations-urge-donors-to-scrap-agra/>

⁵ <https://safcei.org/press-release-african-faith-communities-tell-gates-foundation-big-farming-is-no-solution-for-africa/>

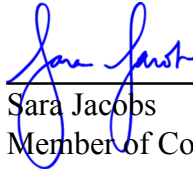
the enactment of this act, detailing USAID's funding of AGRA since its inception in 2006, as well as any documented outcomes as they relate to food insecurity, climate, gender, and poverty alleviation.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



Tom Malinowski
Member of Congress