



**For immediate release**

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**FARM-Africa calls on donors to invest in agricultural development to end the unacceptable hunger in sub-Saharan Africa**

80% of Africa's people are farmers and depend on the food they grow and the livestock they keep for survival and yet for the past two decades investment in agricultural development for Africa has declined by a massive 66%, from \$3billion in 1985 to \$600,000 in 2004.

FARM-Africa, an NGO that has been working with rural African farmers to find agricultural solutions to their poverty for over 20 years, is calling for donors to prioritise their investment in agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa to end the shameful hunger that blights a third of the population in this area.

Only now, when countries across the globe are struggling to quell growing disquiet about the increasing cost of food among poor populations, are the international community waking up to the short term nature of food aid in hunger reduction. Given the alarm that the global community are witnessing from those who are hungry it is essential that food aid is not provided as a short term "sticking plaster" to quieten those voices rather than looking the role that investment in agriculture must play to end hunger in the long term.

In 2003, FARM-Africa launched a campaign to raise the profile of agriculture as a development priority for the UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID). The NGO published *Reaching the Poor - A Call to Action: Investing in Smallholder Agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa* which called for boosting smallholder production to kick start self supporting, self-sustaining growth.

FARM-Africa was part of the NGO consultation group that contributed to the publication of the *World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development*. As the first World Development Report that focused on the role of agriculture in poverty reduction in 25 years it was long overdue.

FARM-Africa works with smallholders and herders to find local solutions to increase the productivity of fragmented and degraded land through technological advances and lesson learning. FARM-Africa has developed models of best practice to share the collective

knowledge gained from working with hundreds of thousands of farmers for over two decades to reduce rural poverty and allow communities the dignity to feed themselves.

A socio-economic impact study of four of FARM-Africa's Maendeleo Agricultural Technology Fund projects showed the NGO's work with small-scale farmers is having a significant impact, for each dollar invested farmers were receiving returns of between \$2.80 and \$24.30 – real proof of the positive impact of this approach to new technologies to increase agricultural productivity.

Dr Christie Peacock, CEO of FARM-Africa, said, "I can only welcome the attention that is finally being given to agriculture and its role to reduce the unjustified hunger that encumbers much of rural Africa. After a generation of underinvestment in agriculture I must urge donors to heed the voices of the global hungry and look to permanent solutions to this intractable need through major investment."

**For more information about FARM-Africa please go to [www.farmafrica.org.uk](http://www.farmafrica.org.uk) or contact [ngaiob@farmafrica.org.uk](mailto:ngaiob@farmafrica.org.uk) or call 020 7067 1252.**

***Reaching The Poor* is available for download at [http://www.farmafrica.org.uk/reaching\\_the\\_poor.cfm](http://www.farmafrica.org.uk/reaching_the_poor.cfm)**