

BILL & MELINDA  
GATES foundation





*“The real reason why I’m optimistic about Africa is that this continent is now in an incredible position to shape its own destiny for the better.”*

– Bill Gates

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*It started with a small  
fact in a New York  
Times article in 1997  
about Africa.*

**A snippet of text that caught the eye of Bill Gates, a man who had already changed the world with personal computing. It was a sad fact that would lead him, and his wife, Melinda, to attempt to change the world again – in a very different way.**

**The fact was this: millions of children in Africa die every year from viruses, many of which have been almost completely wiped out in developed countries. This revelation prompted Bill to send a note to his father, Bill Snr: “Dad, maybe we can do something about this.”**

**Years later, this simple appeal has led to something remarkable. Today the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works in more than 45 countries in Africa, with particular focus on the countries where we believe we can make the greatest impact. We support bold, innovative work that chips away at the small fact that started our mission.**



GRAND CHA  
ANNUAL M



*Dr Ayo Ajayi, Africa Director*



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The biggest events in human history are often born of very small things.

Tiny mosquitos and microscopic viruses still claim hundreds of lives in countries across Africa every day. These are small things that have had a dire impact on the ability of families, communities and nations to survive and thrive.

*No child should have to die of a disease for which we have the cure, or should have to go to bed hungry, stunted and unable to perform to their fullest potential because they're poor.*

Yet, at the Gates Foundation in Africa, we are learning every day that the most effective responses to some of the continent's greatest challenges are also born of equally small things – vaccines, seeds, technology, ideas – that are changing destinies of communities.

We support development efforts in a number of ways. One way is by catalytic funding that can help kick-start valuable projects and attract additional funding. We know that we don't have enough money to make the lasting impact that we want to see if we go it alone.

We also bring technical expertise and vast experience gained from our work and engagement in all corners of the world over the past two decades. We invest heavily in research and development because we strongly believe in the power of innovation. And we prioritize data-driven investments with measurable impact, so we can better understand the challenges we face and assess the effectiveness of our interventions.

We have offices in Ethiopia, Nigeria and South Africa, but have focused our efforts in the countries where we believe we can make the greatest impact.

I invite you to explore our work across the continent, and join us in working together to improve the lives of Africa's people.

*Dr Ayo Ajayi*  
*Africa Director (@DrAAjayi)*





*Bill Gates with world leaders  
at the World Economic Forum  
in Davos, Switzerland*

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OF THE WORLD

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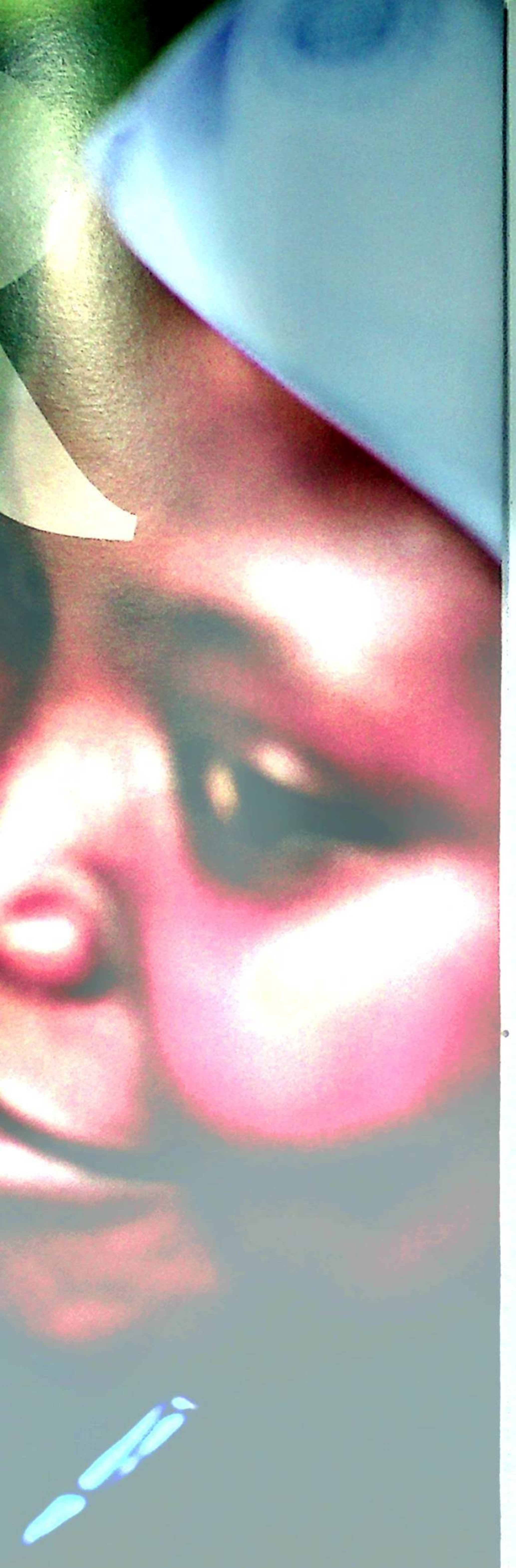
*The majority of funding for development in Africa comes from the African countries themselves.*

In 2012, tax revenue in sub-Saharan Africa was 10 times larger than the \$51.9-billion in Official Development Assistance the continent received.

The question of how to increase and channel domestic resources in Africa to support development is a key focus of our Development Policy & Finance team. We support research and analysis that tracks and shapes trends in public finance. We also partner with experts to ensure governments have the evidence they need to improve tax administration and revenue management, and identify fiscal policies that benefit the poorest.

New revenue, raised equitably and spent efficiently, can enhance the lives of Africa's citizens. And investing domestic resources in human development isn't only good for individuals and families; it also fuels economic growth. Every dollar spent on proven, high-impact health interventions – like family planning, prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, and vaccines – will return \$9-\$20 to low- and middle-income countries between 2015 and 2035.

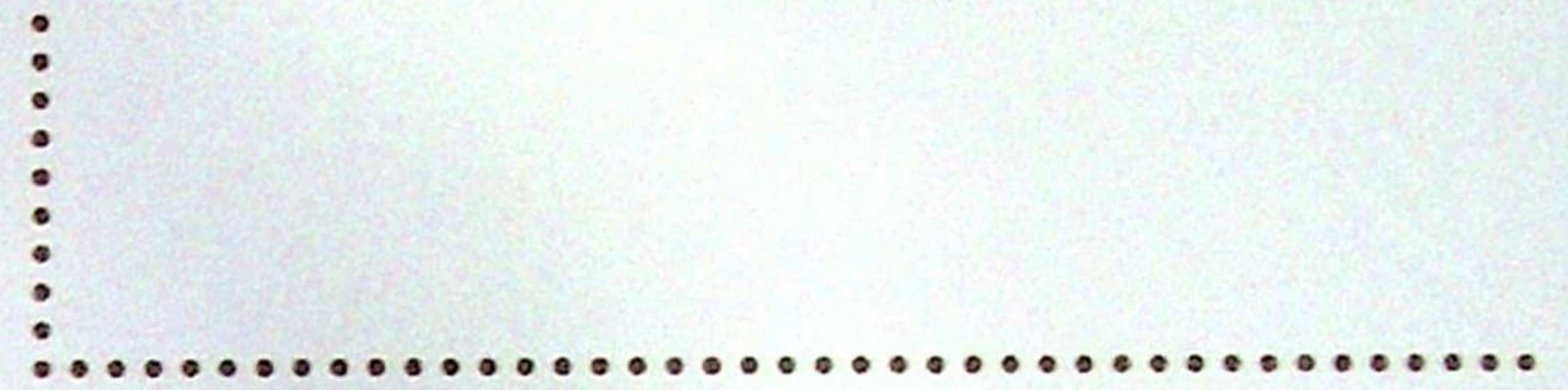




*mother brings her child to Laura's  
Maternity Home & Clinic for  
vaccinations and health checks in  
Accra, Ghana*



*In sub-Saharan Africa, the biggest challenges to leading a healthy, productive life begin at birth. In 2013, 2.9-million children under the age of five died from treatable illnesses such as pneumonia, enteric and diarrheal diseases, and a lack of access to good nutrition.*



Understandably, this region has become the frontline for one of our focus areas – ensuring that more children and young people survive and thrive.

We focus on simple interventions: access to primary healthcare, vaccines for children and innovative methods to get these life-saving treatments to communities. A combination of vaccines, malaria prevention and improved newborn healthcare has helped reduce the

under-five child mortality rate globally since 1960, reducing the rate from some 20-million lives lost in 1960 to six million in 2015 – a number we, our partners and others aim to reduce further.

We support Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, which has helped to inoculate half a billion children worldwide, saving some seven million lives between 2001 and 2013. During the same period, malaria mortality rates decreased across Africa by 54%. The results have been promising, but there is much still to be done.



**1** Nurse Birke Fisiha demonstrates how the Passive Vaccine Storage Device is used to keep vaccines cold for up to 30 days at the Achamo Health post in Ethiopia





*We backed the ingenious notion of applying a space-age solution to the transportation of vaccines: super insulation.*

Vaccines for diseases such as measles and polio have to be kept at very specific temperatures to remain effective. This presents a problem in countries where

electricity, refrigeration and quick, reliable transport are not readily available.

To find a solution, we supported the development of the Arktek device, a keg-shaped vaccine storage receptacle that doesn't require electricity to function and uses super insulation to safely store and transport vaccines for days, or in some cases, weeks.

"Often something will be invented and people won't realize that it has these uses in poor countries. So we have these thermos where the heat leaks in very, very slowly. That was invented like 15 years ago. Nobody thought: we can help poor countries with this cold chain problem," said Bill Gates, talking about the device.

The Arktek has already saved millions of lives. It was used in West Africa to transport the experimental Ebola vaccine during the recent outbreak.

Similarly, a small shift in perspective has led the Foundation to challenge innovative thinkers to "reinvent the toilet".

Only 30% of people in sub-Saharan Africa have access to proper sanitation, which fuels the spread of disease in poor communities. The **Reinvent the Toilet Challenge** was launched in 2011, to get the planet's finest minds working on an alternative to the flush toilet system, which is expensive, inefficient and uses up to 30 liters of clean water per flush.





*Bill Gates at the National Vaccine Cold Storage Facility site in N'djamena, Chad*



*We believe it is possible to end diseases and we are working to make this a reality. By 2017, we expect Nigeria to reach a historic milestone: the complete eradication of polio.*

This will be a significant achievement for a country that, in 2012, accounted for more than half of all polio cases worldwide. And it's an achievement that has been built on the small actions of more than 200 000 healthcare workers, who repeatedly immunized some 45-million children under the age of five against the virus.

It is also the result of coordinated action from religious leaders who fought stigma against the polio vaccine. Perhaps most crucially, a surveillance system has been established to test sewage samples for the virus, to prevent further outbreaks, and Emergency Operation Centers have been established across the country.

Such coordinated action is a cornerstone of our approach to meeting our goal of combating infectious diseases that particularly affect the poorest.

We also partner with programs and organizations that take bold, innovative steps to battle infectious diseases that are claiming lives in poor communities, including HIV, malaria, neglected diseases, pneumonia and tuberculosis.

We support the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which, by 2015, had disbursed some \$80-million to countries in Africa to support research and development against these deadly diseases. We also supported the development of an affordable meningitis A vaccine (MenAfriVac) in Africa's "meningitis belt", which has led to the control and near-elimination of the disease in the region.

We continue to invest in innovative solutions such as the new Rapid Diagnostic Tests (RDTs) for malaria that help prevent mistreatment and overtreatment – which can lead drug resistance and drug wastage; and the DOVE (Delivering Oral Vaccine Effectively) project, which ensures that people living in areas with a high cholera risk are effectively medicated.

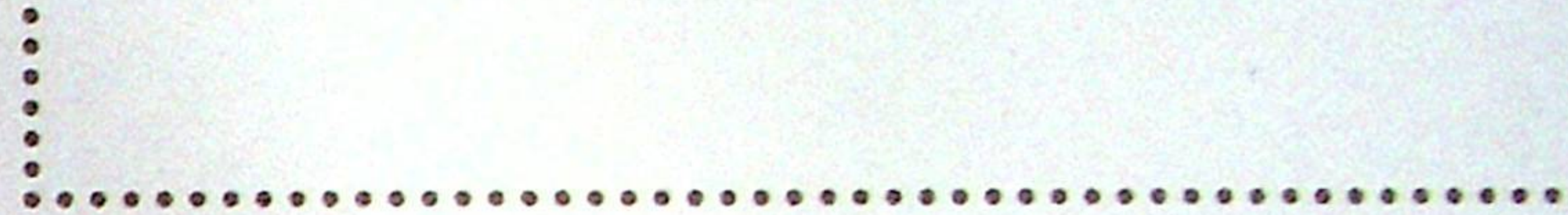




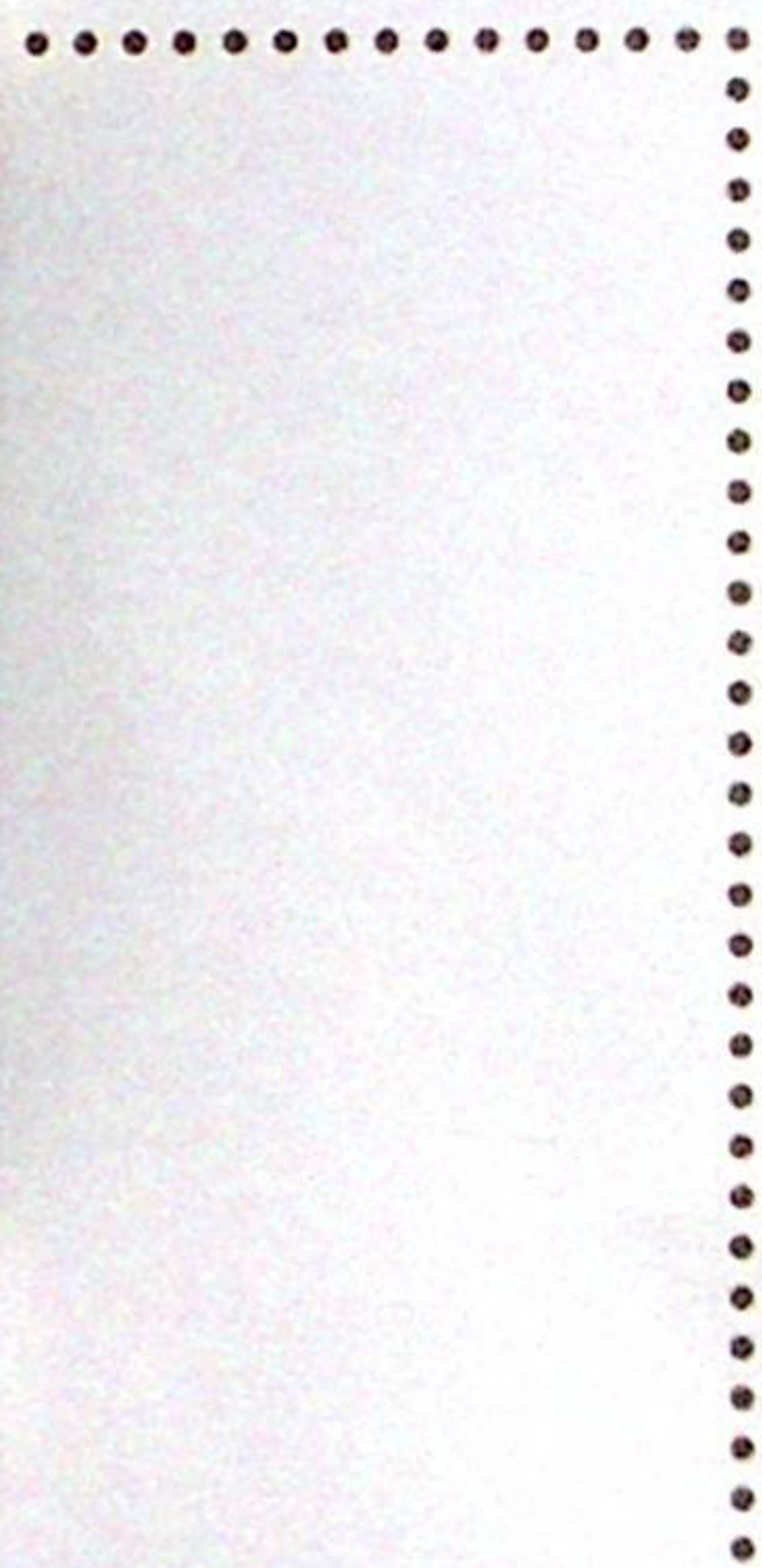
*Children at the Young Tajudeen Agbangudu Primary School in Osun State, Nigeria. Enrolment at the school has doubled since the introduction of a nutrition program*



*We support nutrition programs that focus on small interventions at a local level, which will have a profound impact on the lives of the children we reach.*



For instance, the Home-Grown School Feeding Program, one of our programs in Osun State, Nigeria, ensures that children receive nutritious meals at school in an effort to increase the level of enrolment, learner retention and completion of primary school education in the area. Since inception of the program, the Young Tajudeen Agbangudu Primary School in Agbangudu has seen enrolment double.



We're also major supporters of global efforts to increase access to nutrition for children. We work with numerous partners, including Alive & Thrive, Helen Keller International, HarvestPlus and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN). These partners apply innovative approaches to nutrition in developing countries across the world. For instance, all the wheat flour in Ghana is now fortified with eight different micronutrients, including iron.

We support the Every Woman Every Child Initiative, a global movement to address the major health challenges facing women and children. Between 2000 and 2010, Malawi reduced under-five mortality after the first month of life by 7% per year.

Access to healthcare for pregnant women and newborn babies is essential to help children reach their fifth birthdays.



*'Tupange' the Kenya Urban Reproductive Health Initiative was created in 2009 to provide access to family planning in impoverished urban areas in Kenya where only around one in three people have reliable access to contraceptives*



# TA TT O N



*Simply being able to choose when to have children can be transformative.*

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This is a key insight that underpins our work to ensure we empower the poorest, especially women and girls, to transform their lives, a cause Melinda is passionate about.

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This mission comes alive in West Africa with the **Ouagadougou Partnership** – a grouping of nine governments working to improve family planning access. By 2015, the partnership had exceeded its family planning goals by 20%.

The **Urban Reproductive Health Initiative** helps meet the growing demand for family planning. In just four years, modern contraceptive use increased by 11.4% in five urban centers in Kenya. There was a 10% increase across six cities in Nigeria.

Pamela Obuya is a senior nurse and a mentor for the initiative, which has been dubbed “**Tupange**” in Kenya. She counsels teenage mothers – some as young as 15 – who often face severe social stigma, even from their own families.

Obuya formed the **Young Mothers’ Club** as a support group, a safe space for young women to talk freely about their experiences, traumas and fears.

*“Many of these young mothers are lacking in parental guidance, or they fall prey to peer group pressure. Many of them just don’t understand the options they have.”*

*– Pamela Obuya*

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The project is operating in 68 public and private health facilities in three major urban areas of Kenya.  
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*Village-based adviser  
Hellen Nyaga, on her farm  
at Njuki-ini, Kenya*



*We strive to empower poor communities by supporting initiatives that lead agricultural innovation.*

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Africa's agricultural sector employs more than 500-million small-scale farmers, mostly women.

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The Village-based Advisor system in Kenya is an example of such an innovative initiative. This unique program, driven by the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), aims to increase farmers' access to and knowledge about agriculture, to boost productivity and profits.

Hellen Wanjuki Nyaga is an adviser with Farm Input Promotions Africa (FIPS-Africa). She works with local farmers at Njuki-ini location, located in the lush foothills of Mount Kenya. With a database of 200 active farmers, and a further 500 targeted, her influence cannot be underestimated.

She traverses the surrounding villages to share information on sound agricultural practices, improved soil and crop management practices, and the multitude of services available to support farmers.

It is an innovative solution that promotes food security and creates new opportunities for generating and sustaining increased incomes for farmers, as well as advisers such as Hellen.

*“A few years ago, I was a struggling farmer,” she reminisces. “I put in a lot of effort on the farm, but the results were always the same: poor yields, food insecurity and uncertainty.”*

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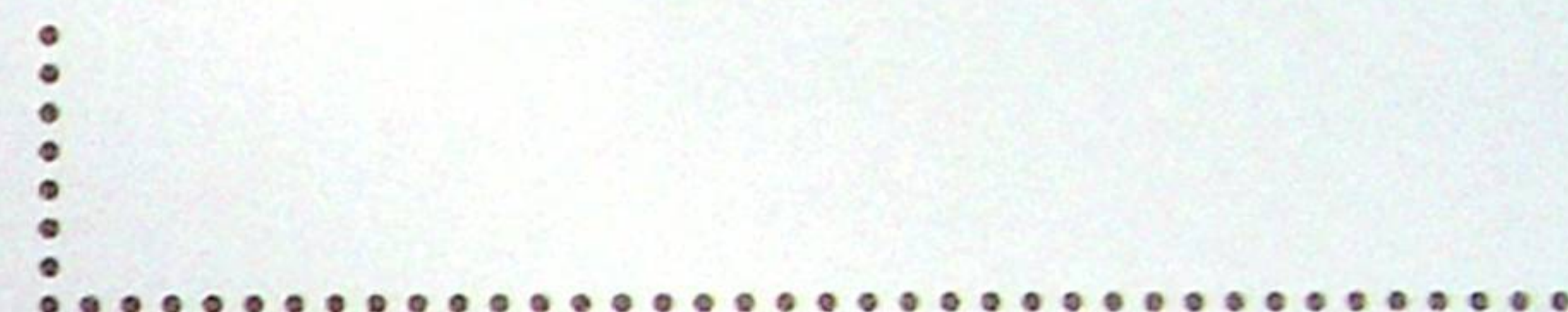


*Women join a queue to use a mobile banking unit that allows easy access to financial services in rural areas.*

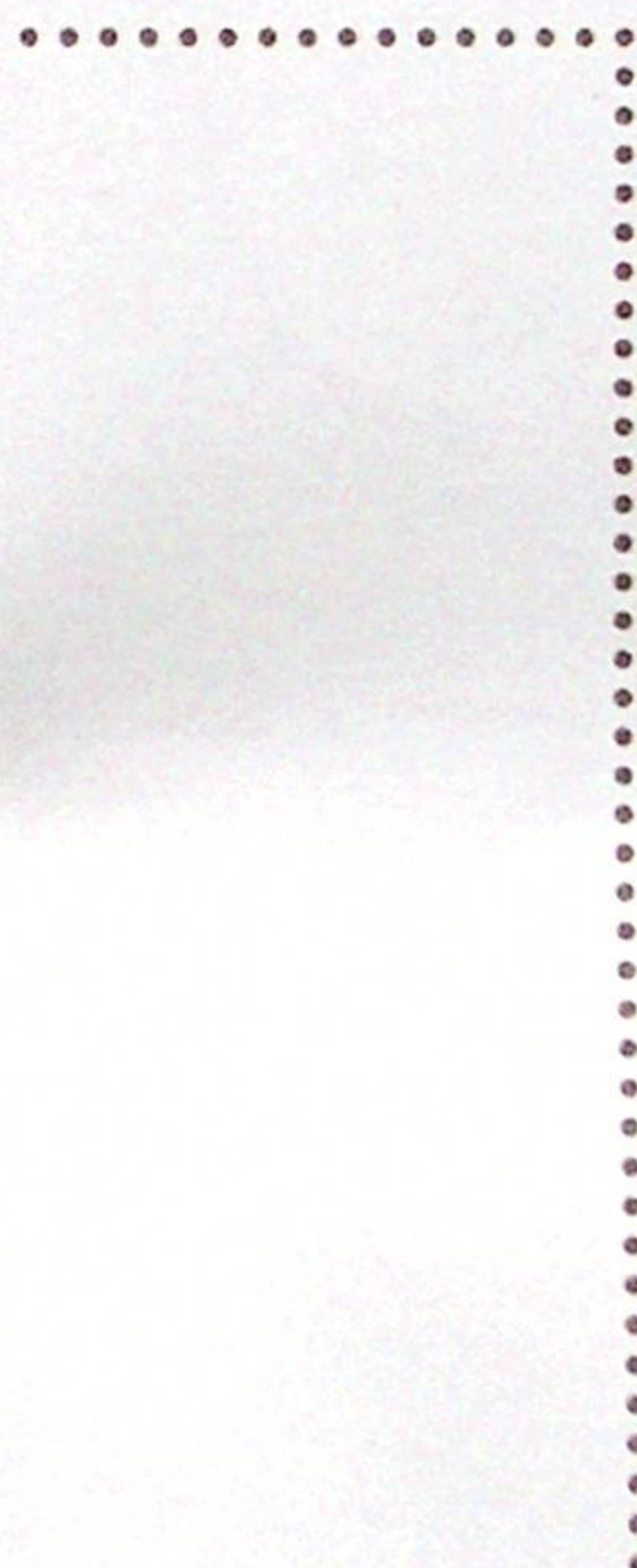


*“By 2030, two billion people who don’t have a bank account today will be storing money and making payment with their phones.”*

*– Bill & Melinda Gates, 2015*



We believe this revolution in banking will provide an unprecedented level of financial access to millions of people in countries across Africa.



We provided funding to a number of innovative projects, including TAP (Tap and Pay) in Kenya, a low-cost, contactless device for merchants to more easily accept and process mobile money transactions; and Farm Buddy in Zimbabwe – a low-cost mobile application that keeps farmers in touch with each other and with local organizations.

Innovations that bring Internet access to poor communities are also proving to be a boon for local economies. For instance, we provide support to the Arid Lands Information Network (ALIN), which sets up and runs *maarifa* centers out of shipping containers in hard-to-reach communities in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

The centers are equipped with Internet-enabled computers so local businesses and farmers can research best practice. Field officers also use the centers to document and share local knowledge.





*5th Annual Grand Challenges  
in Global Health – Arusha,  
Tanzania. Employees of A  
to Z Textile Mills manufacture  
durable mosquito nets in a  
factory outside Arusha*





*The next big idea can come out of Africa. That is why we work to inspire people to take action to change their world.*

This effort is embodied in programs such as Grand Challenges Africa, where we throw down the gauntlet to the continent's finest minds.

From mobile apps that provide banking services to rural communities, to fortified school meals, we have supported innovative thinking around age-old challenges.

For instance, we awarded a grant in South Africa to develop an **oil-based suspension of the antibiotic amoxicillin** used to treat pneumonia in children. The new method allows the drug to be stored for two years, instead of two weeks.

In Nigeria, we gave our support to a project called **Box in a Truck** – the development of a storage method to prolong the life of harvested cassava, which can spoil just days after harvesting. And in Uganda we have awarded a grant to develop a **time-saving tool** for stripping groundnut pods, to aid in this laborious and time-consuming task.



A man wearing a white turban and a blue shirt is shown in profile, looking down at a plant in his hands. The background is a lush green field of similar plants. The image is overlaid with large, semi-transparent white letters spelling 'AGRI' and 'GREEN'.

*Workers cross-breed plants in a demonstration  
plot at the Melkassa Agricultural Research  
Station in Ethiopia. The Foundation has helped  
to develop and support Ethiopia's agricultural  
transformation strategy*

AGRI

GREEN



In 2009, Ethiopia was planning to launch its first **Growth and Transformation Plan**, when late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi met with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The country was looking for innovative ways to speed up economic growth by harnessing the potential of the country's agricultural sector.

The Foundation met with the country's Ministry of Agriculture and over the next two years ran eight diagnostic programs to identify gaps in the sector. What emerged was a series of practical and innovative recommendations on how to transform agriculture in Ethiopia.

***It all began with a fortuitous meeting.***

Since its inception in 2011, the Ethiopian Agricultural Transformation Agency

(ATA) has focused on specific goals – from a nationwide soil-mapping scheme that is ensuring that fertilizer is used more effectively in the country, to a free advice hotline for farmers.

Within the first five years, the agency reached more than 13-million farmers, which led to the production of 270-million quintals of food crops.



“*Optimism for me isn't a passive expectation that things will get better; it's a conviction that we can make things better – that whatever suffering we see, no matter how bad it is, we can help people if we don't lose hope and we don't look away.*”

– Melinda Gates







**Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**  
**[www.gatesfoundation.org/Where-We-Work/Africa-Office](http://www.gatesfoundation.org/Where-We-Work/Africa-Office)**