



# **NEPAD Dialogue**

## **Focus on Africa**



25 October

*The NEPAD Secretariat weekly newsletter*

Issue 68

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## **World “first” honour for Africa’s rice expert**



**Dr. Monty Jones**

**World-famous rice-breeding expert Dr. Monty Jones of Sierra Leone became the first African in the world to receive the prestigious World Food Prize at the presentation of the 2004 awards in Des Moines, the capital city of the US farming state of Iowa, on 15 October 2004.**

He received the award for his work on the development of NERICA – New Rice for Africa – a combination of African and Asian rice varieties, perfectly adapted for the harsh growing environment and low-input conditions in sub-Saharan Africa.

It is recognised as having immense potential for food security and poverty alleviation in one of the most impoverished regions in the world.

NERICA is a technological breakthrough for Africa, by an African who developed it at an African-led research institute – the Africa Rice Centre (WARDA), in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

NEPAD has placed agricultural growth as the cornerstone of its poverty reduction programme and has asked the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) to be the technical agent for the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP).

NEPAD has identified NERICA in the context of the CAADP's action plan and the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Steering Committee has endorsed the expansion of the NERICA throughout Africa. The award to Dr. Jones has come, therefore, as a big boost to CAADP.

Research on NERICAs involved national agricultural research programmes in 20 African countries, and advanced research institutions across the world.

**Twelve African diplomats based in Washington, D.C., including ambassadors of Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and representatives of Angola, Ethiopia, Malawi, Nigeria, South Africa and Uganda travelled to Des Moines to participate in the World Food Prize ceremonies.**

In a statement to the World Food Prize Symposium, the ambassadors said. "Through this award Dr. Jones brings global recognition not only to his own efforts with the team at the West Africa Rice Development Association (WARDA), but to the thousands of African scientists who are working hard to find breakthroughs to end hunger and poverty in Africa."

The ambassadors recognised the assistance provided by the U.S., Europe, China and Japan, the World Bank and other bilateral and multilateral donors, foundations and non-governmental organisations that have helped make scientific achievements such as Dr. Jones possible.

"Dr. Jones' achievements illustrate the great potential of Africa's agriculture to feed hungry people, but the challenges are great," the ambassadors noted. "Over 200 million Africans are chronically hungry and one-half of the population lives off less than \$1 per day."

The ambassadors urged the international development community to help African governments further strengthen "homegrown" scientific capacity to increase the productivity of Africa's complex farming and pastoral systems.

"We need hundreds more Dr. Monty Joneses to fight African hunger and poverty using science and technology," they said.

**At the 2003 Maputo Summit, African Heads of State pledged to increase their spending on agriculture to 10% of national budgets. The ambassadors urged the international community to support these efforts and the agricultural development priorities articulated under NEPAD's Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme.**

They specifically called for assistance to:

1. Build strong scientific institutions and human capacity to develop and disseminate agricultural innovations;
2. Revitalise agricultural education at all levels with urgent attention to restoring Africa's agricultural universities, colleges and farmers' training centres, and regional Centres of Excellence for scientific research;
3. Strengthen transport, communication, agricultural processing and information technology to lower production and marketing costs, open new markets and improve the competitiveness of Africa's

agricultural products in local, regional and global markets.

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## African women welcome the NEPAD engendering process

African women attending the 7th African Regional Meeting on the Review of the Dakar and Beijing Conferences (Beijing + 10) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 6-14 October, 2004, expressed satisfaction with the efforts of the African Union (AU) and NEPAD to ensure that all their policies, programmes and practices are inclusive and engendered.



Dr. K. Y. Amoako, Head of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) speaking to Ms. Litha Musyimi-Ogana (NEPAD Gender and CSO Advisor) during the closing ceremony of the NGO Forum at the 7th African Regional Meeting on the Review of Dakar and Beijing (Beijing +10)

This nod was given unanimously after a day-long expert group meeting on the AU and NEPAD, held on October 9, 2004.

The expert group meeting, chaired by Dr. Sara Longwe of FEMNET, heard from two panelists: Madam Bineta Diop, the executive director of Femmes Africa Solidarite (FAS) and Ms Litha Musyimi-Ogana, NEPAD Gender and Civil Society advisor who presented a paper on “ Gender Responsiveness of NEPAD.”

To quote from one of the participants: “The two presentations are a living testimony that our continent is emerging as a continent of hope and not of doom.

**“At last African governments are keenly listening to the voice of the African people, and African women in particular, as demonstrated by the Heads of State commitment to gender equality through the adoption of the AU Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa and the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa.”**

The two presentations attracted intensive and uplifting discussion on the AU and NEPAD and raised many questions and clarifications.

The discussions centred around NEPAD policies, programmes and implementation and also called for the monitoring of the implementation of the Heads of States commitments and declaration at the national level.

In addition to participating in this panel, NEPAD also took part in sessions on the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and UN Resolution 1325 and the Peace, Security and Conflict Resolution, coordinated by the UN Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

**At the end of the discussions the meeting recommended a set of proposals for the AU and NEPAD to make them more gender responsive, inclusive and accountable to the people.**

One of the key requests was that the conference participants be added to the mailing list of the NEPAD Dialogue newsletter.

At the conclusion of the meeting, African women expressed their satisfaction with the mechanisms that the AU and NEPAD had put in place for gender mainstreaming and to ensure popular participation of the African people.

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## **Woman Nobel Peace Prize winner joins in with NEPAD at the global “WAVE” talks**

**Prof. Wangari Maathai, winner of the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize and Kenya’s Deputy Minister for Environment took part in the Global Women’s Assembly – “Women as the Voice of the Environment (WAVE)” -- held on 11-13 October, 2004, at the United Nations for Environment Programme (UNEP) headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.**

The conference brought together over 1,000 participants among them women ministers, top government officials, representatives from the diplomatic corps, environmentalists, civil society organisations including youth, gender and environmental experts.

The opening of the conference was electrified by the presence of Prof. Wangari Maathai, as the Guest of Honour. The coincidence of the Assembly and the naming of Professor Maathai as a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate brought life to the conference and added rare excitement to the whole process.

The Women as the Voice of the Environment (WAVE) Forum ran side by side with the Women’s Environment Ministers meeting. The NEPAD Secretariat was represented by the Advisor: Gender and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Litha Musyimi-Ogana.

The objective of the conference was to bring together women environment ministers from around the world, gender experts and women working in the environment arena to monitor the gender mainstreaming process in the implementation of UNEP’s environment programmes, assess gender gains and losses and strategise on new engagement strategies that could help engender UNEP’s programmes as well as regional, national and local level programmes.

Among its major outputs were final WAVE recommendations, a UNEP Women’s Manifesto and a document on project ideas for follow up by UNEP.

The conference was organised around two parallel programmes; one covering the Network of Women Environmental Ministers meeting and the other covering the WAVE.

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# Home grown school feeding programme: new details

**Dialogue newsletter has received text revisions from Rome to the report: “Home grown school feeding programme targets most vulnerable groups in Africa” distributed in Dialogue issue No. 67.**

The report covered a speech by Prof. Wiseman Nkuhlu, Head of the NEPAD Secretariat, to the World Food Programme Executive Board meeting.

A paragraph in the original report from Rome referring to Home grown school feeding noted:

“Other countries have shown great interest in the programme. Mali has submitted a proposal, Senegal, Nigeria and Ethiopia have asked for support from WFP to develop their own programmes.”

The revised text from Rome says:

“Other countries have shown great interest in the programme. Mali has prepared a concept paper and would like to initiate a Home Grown School Feeding programme in the northern region of the country. Nigeria has requested technical assistance from WFP to help them develop their own programme”.

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## Calendar of Events

- **22 - 23 October**, NEPAD Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- **25 October**, NEPAD advisory panel meeting, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- **1 - 2 November**, Water Centres of Excellence Workshop, Botswana.
- **20 November**, NEPAD Steering Committee Meeting, Algiers, Algeria.
- **20 - 21 November**, African Peer Review (APR) Panel Meeting, Algiers, Algeria.
- **22 - 23 November**, NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSIGC) Meeting, Algiers, Algeria.
- **23 November**, APR Forum Summit, Algiers, Algeria.
- **22 - 25 November**, Conference on Successes in African Agriculture, Nairobi, Kenya.

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