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## KENYA TAKES THE LEAD IN BUSINESS ALLIANCE AGAINST CHRONIC HUNGER

- Kenyan CEOs and government take leadership of Africa's first Business Alliance on Hunger
- Alliance includes 30 companies and organizations working to implement business-led solutions
- The Alliance was launched in 2006 with Kofi Annan and managed by the World Economic Forum
- New leadership foresees expanding the scope and nature of Alliance initiatives
- Report highlights, summary, country profiles, quotes, maps and more at <http://www.weforum.org/africa>

**Cape Town, South Africa, 10 June 2009** – Kenyan Prime Minister Raila Odinga and a group of CEOs announced today at a press conference during the 2009 World Economic Forum on Africa that Kenyan leaders will take over an innovative business alliance aimed at reducing hunger in Africa.

The Alliance, coordinated by a Kenya-based secretariat, comprises over 30 companies and organizations working to develop business-led solutions to hunger. Alliance members have developed innovative business models through 14 on-the-ground initiatives in a Kenyan pilot district – creating 150 small-scale businesses, increasing the income and production of 2,300 farmers and reaching thousands of consumers with improved products and services.

Formed in 2006 by global CEOs and then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the Alliance has been managed to date by the World Economic Forum. Under its new structure, the alliance will be led and managed by Kenya-based organizations, with continued support from global partners. The MDG Centre in Nairobi, which manages the Millennium Villages Project in East and Southern Africa, will serve as the institutional host.

“Kenya is proud to lead the first business alliance working to end hunger on the African continent,” said Prime Minister Raila Odinga. “The Government of Kenya fully supports this initiative and believes that the private sector is an integral part of the solution to food insecurity,” he added.

Initiatives developed by Alliance members focus on improving local food production and incomes by expanding business linkages with small-scale farmers and entrepreneurs. Alliance companies have expanded retail outlets selling farm inputs, food and other products. Others have supported capacity building to help farmers grow higher value crops and improve their business skills.

Going forward, the Alliance intends to expand its geographic scope of activity within Kenya and focus on activities that have a noticeable impact on improving food security and the quality of food, according to David Mureithi, Managing Director of Unilever East and Southern Africa, who chairs the Alliance's new Executive Board. “Businesses have core competencies in delivering advanced technologies, supply chain management, capacity building and creating market linkages. A public-private partnership enables us to create synergies in mobilizing resources and implementation. It is key that we improve livelihoods, empower youth and contribute to sustainable economic growth of the country.”

“The synergies created by Business Alliance partners are helping unlock the economic potential of rural Kenya,” said James Mwangi, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Equity Bank in Kenya. “Our company opened a new branch in BAACH's pilot district of Siaya to provide financing to farmers and entrepreneurs. Our aim is to expand economic development through financial inclusion.”

“The transformation from subsistence farming to market-driven agribusiness is central to sustained economic growth in rural Africa,” said Glenn Denning, Director of The MDG Centre. “Building on successful public investments in the Millennium Villages Project in Sauri, the Alliance has mobilized private sector investment, helped raise household incomes and demonstrated a scalable pathway out of poverty.”

Telecom is one of the industries that have joined BAACH Kenya. Safaricom has established agents for its M-PESA cash transfer service in Siaya District, expanding local access to finance.

Michael Joseph, Chief Executive Officer of Safaricom, stated: "M-PESA has the power to change the social fabrics of society and this collaboration is a clear example of that power."

The World Economic Forum will continue its involvement with the Alliance as an Executive Board member. "BAACH is a great example of innovative partnerships that the Forum helps to catalyse and develop. We are delighted that Kenyan leaders will now be taking it forward to the next level, where it can serve as a model for other countries and regions," said Robert Greenhill, Managing Director and Chief Business Officer of the World Economic Forum.

### [Companies and Organizations on the BAACH Executive Board and National Council](http://www.weforum.org/en/initiatives/BusinessSolutionsforSustainableFoodProduction/TheKenyaPilotDistrict/index.htm#beba)

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### **Notes to Editors**

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David Mureithi, Raila Amolo Odinga, Glen Denning and Michael Joseph for Kenya Business Alliance Against Chronic Hunger - World Economic Forum on Africa 2009