



Briefing Paper on Charting a New Path to Food Security: Food for the Hungry – our Global Responsibility

APRODEV and CIDSE Briefing Paper and recommendations to the EU for the World Food Summit 16-18th November 2009

1. INTRODUCTION

Today close to one in seven human beings, 1.02 billion people around the world, are suffering from chronic hunger¹. While the numbers are staggering, they have been lost in reporting on the global economic downturn. Yet, the food crisis is still here. Although prices have fallen from their peak in 2008 they remain higher than the 2006 average, and the underlying trends indicate that global agricultural production, under current prevalent production and consumption patterns, cannot keep up with rising demand.² The international community is thus far off track on meeting its commitments to securing the Right of all persons to Food, and achievement of MDG 1 of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger by 2015.

There have been numerous political declarations as well as institutional and financial initiatives since the explosion of food prices in 2008, all professing commitment to alleviating the immediate impacts on affected communities, and to finding long-term solutions to the crisis. A number of positive developments can be identified over the course of the political debate, for example, (re)recognition of the importance of investment in agriculture in developing countries, an increasing focus on small scale farmers, and recognition that changes in global food governance are needed to advance global food security.

However, there is as yet a lack of recognition of the fact that the food price crisis was not the result of one or two isolated policy failures, but of the promotion over the past two decades of a broad set of policies inspired by a market based approach to food and agriculture that did not and could never ensure global food security. This approach had left millions of rural poor in developing countries in a state of chronic hunger for years, long before the effects of the price hike of 2008 hit, and has contributed to severe environmental degradation which has been undermining the long-term agricultural productive capacity.

Commitments to action throughout 2008 and 2009³ indicate clearly that the international community has not yet accepted the need for fundamental change. Whilst calling for greater

¹ United Nations (UN) Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) estimates for 2009.

² UN warns of more food shortages without strong action, Jan 27, 2009: <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/9904/icode/>

³ For example in fora such as the G8, and the UN within the FAO and the High Level Task Force. See

http://www.mofa.go.jp/POLICY/economy/summit/2008/doc/doc080709_04_en.html;

<http://www.ifad.org/events/g8/statement.pdf>; http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/foodclimate/HLCdocs/declaration-E.pdf;

investment in small scale farming, they simultaneously call for further liberalisation of agricultural trade, despite clear evidence that more trade liberalisation will hurt rather than help small farmers.

If current policy initiatives and financial stimuli such as the EU Food Facility and the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative are to provide anything more than short term fixes, they must be used to contribute to the implementation of a **new long-term global approach to food security**. Based on our experience as faith-based development agencies working with partner organisations in the South to improve rural livelihoods, **CIDSE and APRODEV believe strongly that this new approach must place people and their Right to Food⁴ at its heart, with a strong emphasis on coherence across food, agriculture, environment, trade and development policies.**

Pope Benedict XVI captures this in his recent Encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate*, stating that, *'The problem of food security needs to be addressed within a long-term perspective, eliminating the structural causes that give rise to it and promoting the agricultural development of poorer countries...it is necessary to cultivate a public conscience that considers food and access to water as universal rights of all human beings.'*

"Give us this day our daily bread" is a petition repeated by millions of Christians around the world every day as they pray the Lord's Prayer. This prayer, surrounded by the Biblical narrative that calls us to care for humanity and all of Creation, leads us to two clear, collective tasks in building a just, peaceful and sustainable world. First, living in a broken and sinful world, wherein we see hunger all around, our immediate response as compassionate people of faith is to offer food (Matthew 25:35-40). While providing food in times of want is commendable and necessary, God also requires a second vocation, that we "loose the bonds of injustice. . ." and ". . .let the oppressed go free. . ." (Isaiah 58:6). This vocation requires that we reflect on, critique, and act against the systems that lead to pervasive and debilitating hunger (footnote: Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance).

As a key actor in global agriculture, trade and development policy – and thus with significant responsibility for the creation of the current system of food insecurity – **the EU must assume a leading role in advancing this new approach**. The opportunity presented by the current debate and political focus on food security to establish a new path must not be missed. Numerous opportunities present themselves, including the World Food Summit and WTO Ministerial in November 2009, and ongoing debates on EU agricultural and development policy. CIDSE and APRODEV present the following recommendations to the EU for changes to its policies that will contribute to a global strategy that empowers the people and countries most at risk to ensure their food security.

<http://www.un.org/issues/food/taskforce/Documentation/CFA%20Web.pdf>;
http://www.ransa2009.org/html/docs/docs/statement_eng_ransa2009.pdf

⁴ The Right to Food has been defined in [General Comment No. 12](#) of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. This defines the right to food as : 'the right of every man, woman and child alone and in community with others to have physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement in ways consistent with human dignity'.

CIDSE and APRODEV Recommendations to the EU⁵

2. A CALL FOR BETTER POLICIES

2.1. Incorporate the Right to Food as a guideline for policy-making

The Right to Food is legally binding, even if the Guidelines for its implementation are still voluntary. It places responsibility on governments and allows for enforceable action when rights are being undermined. The Right to Food does not impose specific agricultural or food policies on governments. Instead, it provides a useful framework for action that can guide governments on how to increase food security in their country using a range of policy changes and programmes.

All EU member States have ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights⁶ which enshrines the Human Right to Food (Article 11) and within the FAO all EU member States adopted the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food in 2004. The Right to Food is also linked to MDG 1 targets that the EU has expressed continuous commitment to since their adoption in 2000. In the Treaty of Maastricht the EU committed to ensuring coherence across all policy areas. EU Development Policy and international human rights obligations and commitments provide an appropriate basis for ensuring this coherence.

The EU should ;

- Commit to incorporating the Right to Food as the guideline for its responses to the food crisis and the basis for future policy making – as called for by the UN Secretary General at the Madrid high-level meeting on food security for all in January 2009.

2.2 Support an enabling policy framework for small scale farmers

EU policies should address the many factors which limit the access of female and male small-scale farmers, women-led households and landless workers in developing countries to affordable and adequate food, as well as their ability to achieve a secure and decent livelihood for themselves and their families. This will enable small-scale farmers to benefit from higher food prices, rather than suffer their consequences. This should be done by creating enabling policy framework based – at a minimum – on the following⁷:

- Support for ecologically and socially sustainable agricultural development.

⁵ Based on the APRODEV policy paper, '*Food for the Hungry*', March 2009, and the CIDSE-IATP paper, '*Global Food Responsibility*', May 2009.

⁶ The Additional Protocol of the International Covenant on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights was adopted on 10th December 2008, providing a long awaited effective remedy for violations of economic, social and cultural rights. All governments should sign the Additional Protocol.

⁷ These measures have all been outlined in the key findings and recommendations of the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD). See www.iaastd.org The IAASTD process involved more than 400 authors from different disciplinary and geographical backgrounds. A multistakeholder process with participants from around the world, it included inter-governmental institutions, representatives of governments, civil society, private sector and scientists. It reflects a growing consensus that governments, academics and NGOs need to redirect agricultural science and technology to support small-scale farmers, local knowledge and to counter global warming.

- Access to fertile land and water for small scale farmers, including women producers and resources poor farmers in particular
- Support to those living in poverty in rural areas to access extension services, training and financial services, including credit
- Ensuring the participation of small scale farmers and their representatives in policy formulation for agricultural development and modernisation strategies
- Support for farmer empowerment at all levels, such as establishing or strengthening farmers' organisations, producers' associations, cooperatives, and the strengthening of collective bargaining in agricultural value chains and outgrower schemes
- Investment in pro-poor research and rural development and the protection and participatory improvement of local seed varieties, based on full recognition of Farmers' Rights related to seeds, including sui-generis legislation
- Development of storage and transport infrastructure, appropriate systems of stockholding with a focus on decentralised and locally controlled grain banks
- Improved access for small farmers to markets with prioritisation of local and regional markets, thus avoiding product and marketing standards that discriminate against poor and small farmers
- Establishment of local and regional market institutions and competition policies

2.3. Support biodiverse agricultural eco-systems

EU agricultural, trade, environment and development policies should promote biodiverse agricultural eco-systems both at home and abroad. Current trade and agricultural policies have promoted monocropping, which has led to the reduction of agricultural biodiversity, undermined soil and landscape structures, and is threatening the use of agro-ecological practices. Increasing productivity, in particular in Sub-Saharan Africa is crucial but must be pursued by promoting diverse and sustainable farming. The IAASTD 2008 report⁸ provides significant evidence for how small scale bio-diverse agriculture can achieve greater food security and reduce poverty in developing countries, but has so far been largely ignored by European and international policymakers. The EU should endorse the findings and recommendations of the IAASTD report, and should, at a minimum;

- Support agricultural practices based on local agro-ecological systems and involving mixed land use. These better manage biological balance, keeping insects, weeds and soil erosion in a natural check.
- Reject the prescription of a single global model for agricultural modernisation. A large number of diversified farming systems exist across the globe, each of which has its own ecology, logic, problems and potential for further development. Based on this diversity, different options must be sought to stimulate sustainable development.
- Promote public funding for agricultural research, in particular in the South. This research should be farmer-led, empower small-scale farmers and draw on gender-specific knowledge, and should promote pro-poor solutions.

⁸ See footnote 5.

2.4. Reform EU trade policies

To claim that more trade liberalisation will promote food security and call for a successful completion of the Doha Round is not acceptable. Existing trade policies have played a significant role in creating the current state of global food insecurity and must be revisited. The first and foremost obligation of every government is to secure the availability of sufficient adequate food for its own citizens. The EU must recognise and support this, specifically by;

- Revisiting its Global Europe strategy to shift its focus away from European business interests towards the realisation of the Right to Food.
- Taking into account that in many countries and regions there is a clear competition for land between producers of food, animal feed and fuel. Food security objectives have to take absolute precedence over energy security objectives.

Establishing trade rules that build on human rights commitments. This entails respecting the principles of participation, transparency, accountability and the guarantee of access to effective judicial remedy.

- Recognising developing countries' right to policy space in trade agreements, and stop pushing for market access for Europe in trade negotiations with developing countries.
- Ensuring provision of a Special Safeguard Mechanism under all trade agreements with developing countries. These allow a government to temporarily raise tariffs in case of import surges or price disruptions to protect food security and rural development priorities. The mechanism must be easily accessible to developing countries.
- Strengthening and simplifying international trade rules to curb dumping. New definitions are needed, the burden of proof has to be reversed as well as means to measure the dumping margins in relation to production costs vs. domestic prices.
- Removing trade distorting subsidies, like EU export restitutions that destroy local markets and allow agribusiness to control global markets.
- Curb private dumping practices by European companies which dispose by-products of food chains or aim to gain a regional monopoly by selling abroad below the European cost of production, such as happens with deep frozen chicken or pork meat parts, which are of low demand in the European market.
- Allowing for flexibility with regard to export restrictions. The harassment of countries which have made use of export restrictions for their own food security is unjustified and should stop. Export restrictions are legal under WTO rules and any disciplines on their use should be well balanced and differentiated taking account of the situation in the country of origin and destination of the trade flow.

2.5. Support land reform policies

Higher agricultural prices lead to higher land prices and so the food crisis has led to increased land disputes and competition across the world. Corporations and international financiers are negotiating hard to acquire or lease farmland in developing countries. As a result of many of these land concessions, leases and acquisitions, tenants have been forced to leave, and smallholders, pastoralists and indigenous farmers with insecure land titles have been driven from their land, their homes, access to water and other natural resources. Off-shore agricultural production can lead to 'land grabbing', the violation of traditional land

rights, especially those of women farmers, and to other human rights violations. The huge demand for biofuels, partly as a result of mandatory targets for biofuels adopted in developed countries (like EU's Renewable Energy Directive adopted in January 2009), will further increase the pressure on land in developing countries. In this light it is imperative that the EU supports land reform, secures tenure and traditional rights in developing countries. Specifically the EU should;

- Monitor compliance to the principle of 'do no harm' by investors and companies involved in land, acquisitions, leases and concessions in developing countries. These investments in agriculture, land and technology transfer should involve smallholders and local inhabitants and must be sensitive to their needs. These arrangements should be beneficial to small and medium enterprises and should not undermine national land reform processes.
- Support measures to safeguard the rights of small landholders in national legislation and in certification schemes.
- Support an International Code of Conduct to regulate investment, and on responsible governance of tenure of land and other natural resources, to be developed and agreed through an inclusive and transparent process, involving consultation with civil society⁹.

2.6. Ensure fair competition and good business practices

The EU is home to some of the most powerful multinational food and agricultural corporations that control large parts of the global food and agricultural system. The EU should regulate the corporate activity of these companies both at home and abroad to promote a fairer system for how food is produced, consumed and distributed, giving preference to local food systems and small-holder producers. The EU should;

- Monitor EU based corporations according to ILO conventions, the existing guidelines and Code of Conducts, in particular the OECD Code for Multinational Corporations.

2.7. Stabilise world food prices, curb speculation and provide access to food for the needy

The world has seen outrageous price fluctuations on the international markets for agricultural products in the last three years, which have greatly exacerbated food insecurity and contributed to the explosion of food prices in 2008. Whilst price fluctuations are caused by various factors, partly the spill-over effects of policies dealing with crises of other spheres of global economy (finance,, energy, climate), speculative financial movements on the raw material markets have significantly contributed to this volatility. The G8 and many other international platforms have highlighted the need to stabilise world food markets on a number of occasions; they have not yet come forward with clear proposals.

The engagement of speculative finance (including hedge funds) in food stock exchange and futures markets for food and agriculture should be eliminated.

⁹ See the briefing note by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food which sets out relevant principles and recommendations, 'Human rights challenges of large-scale land acquisitions or leases' June 2009. <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/food/docs/BriefingNotelandgrab.pdf>

- Stock-keeping as strategic food reserve has to be revitalized, whether on global, regional (including at the EU level), national or local level, and whether in physical terms or as virtual reserve, to counterbalance disproportionate oscillations.
- The more centralized the level, the more the reserves should be only virtual; the principle of subsidiarity needs to be applied.
- The focus of the efforts should lie on local grain banks with some interregional exchange and under the control of the local communities, in order to shield the most affected population in marginal areas from the impact of price fluctuations and food scarcity.
- The WTO-rules and SAP-conditionalities on public stockholding for food security purpose need to be relaxed in order to encourage governments in the holding of basic foodstuff stocks within a reasonable limit.
- International rules should be developed to coordinated decentralized stockholding programmes for food security in developing countries.

3. CALL FOR BETTER GOVERNANCE: CREATE AN INCLUSIVE AND BINDING GLOBAL FOOD ARCHITECTURE

The mobilisation of all stakeholders around the establishment of the new global food architecture provides an opportunity to create consistency between actors and policies on a global scale. This is welcome, as at present, such a policy framework, that brings together all actors, does not exist. The action taken by the United Nations special team (HTLTF), set up in April 2008, works on a national level to create better synergies between actors in the field. However, has been no political arena on the international level to create more mutually coherent commercial, agricultural, energetic, financial and environmental policies which all influence world food security. The new food architecture should represent a global partnership between international organisations, scientists, donors, States, producer organisations, civil societies, and the private sector. Through the support of all of the existing institutions and actors concerned, this partnership should be three dimensional: political, scientific and financial.

During World food week at mid-October, the two first pillars of this new architecture have been established, as a result of the successful conclusion of the reform of the Committee on Food Security, and agreement on establishing a High Level Panel of Experts. On 16–18 November 2009 the city of Rome will host the World Summit on Food Security. The participants, which will include a number of Heads of States, will be tasked with building on the decisions taken in October to define improved governance of food and agriculture. At the World Food Summit the EU should;

- Ensure the new global architecture has a strong mandate. The political pillar, the reformed CFS, in which all stakeholders are represented, should improve the alignment of international policies that influence world food security. All of the fundamental issues must be discussed, whether they are trade, agriculture, energy, finance, environmental issues and/or concerning development cooperation. The global food architecture will only be significant if it is given a strong mandate to remedy global policy mistakes and establish increased accountability, address bad governance and market failures that permit the prevalence of hunger

- Ensure the new architecture strengthens the UN system. The UN and its agencies have the history, the experience and the one country one vote principle that are likely to support more democratic outcomes to effectively shape a global architecture. The global food architecture should be put under the remit of the United Nations, who will ensure the right to food and other human rights and initiate the Millennium Development Goals
- The Rome-based UN special agencies for food and agriculture (FAO, IFAD, WFP, CGIAR) as well as the World Food Aid Convention have all been undergoing a major reform process. These reform processes should be continued in the context of the new architecture, as outlined in the comprehensive evaluation report that has been produced.
- Support the acceleration of international funding for food and agriculture under a financial pillar of the new global food architecture. Principles for the governance of new funds must be agreed before any agency is entrusted to administer them. These principles should include equitable representation of donor and recipient governments, transparency, accountability, a focus on quality of aid, good governance and participation. The UN Secretary General and the CFS should come up with an acceptable proposal on how to administer multilateral funds in this area – taking into account the L’Aquila initiative and ensure the synergy, at country level, of different streams of donor funding. Funding should not only be available for governmental programmes, but also for programmes submitted by NGOs and CSOs, the terms for which should be elaborated. The CFS itself should provide for the strategic coordination of the programmes.
- Support building on existing processes. The HLPE in particular, should build on the unique experience of the International Assessment of Agriculture, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), its research results and methodology of work.

4. Call for more resources

4.1. Upholding ODA Commitments

Donor countries cannot ignore their obligations under international human rights law to provide the necessary aid when required, to the maximum of available resources. Although ODA is not a silver bullet, it is neither a purely voluntary matter to be left at the discretion of donors. Increasing and improving the quality of ODA for agriculture and rural development is indispensable, alongside the necessary policy and governance reforms. ODA sets the tune for private investment to follow. Thus it should serve as incentive for overcoming the crisis of underinvestment in agriculture and rural development all over the developing countries. Next to the volume of ODA it is vital, who administrates the funds under which conditionalities, surveillance and participation in decision making.

In Monterrey, the EU and its Member States have agreed to commit 0.7% of GNI to Official Development Assistance (ODA) by the year 2015. In 2005, France, Germany, Italy and the UK agreed to reach the interim target of 0.51% of GNI by 2010. Luxembourg, Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark are currently meeting the required commitment. However, shrinking economies have resulted in decreasing aid budgets. Moreover, shrinking national budgets result in increasing pressure on development budgets. Given the disproportional negative impact of the global economic crisis on least developed countries – with lower exports, unemployment and fewer remittances and private investment leading to an increase in hunger and poverty – it is imperative to maintain and even increase the levels of ODA support from the EU and its member states.

- The EU should fulfil commitments to provide 0.7% of their GDP to ODA as a minimum obligation for the EU¹⁰ to fight hunger and poverty.

4.2. Investing in agriculture and rural development

While the EU has increasingly supported trade, it has steadily reduced its support to agriculture in ODA during the past 25 years. In 2007, the share of the EU's ODA to agriculture was a little over three percent of total ODA spending (down from over 17 percent in 1980). The part allocated to the agriculture sector through the Xth European Development Fund is notably low at 4%.

Policy change and improved governance are crucial for winning the fight against hunger. However, these will be to little effect without significant simultaneous increases in investment in agriculture and rural development in developing countries.

The relative neglect of agriculture and rural development over the past three decades has led to an under investment in the sector by national governments, international organisations and donor countries. This negative trend is now being reversed. In 2003, African NEPAD governments have committed to spending a minimum of 10% of their national budgets on agriculture and rural development, aiming to reach a 6% sector growth rate by 2008. In 2008, the UN has called for an annual budget of 40 bn US \$ to effectively tackle the food price crisis. The EU has created the 1 bn Euro 'Food Facility'. Last July, the G8 meeting in L'Aquila announced the 'Food Security Initiative' which intends to mobilise 20 bn US \$ for a 3 year period.

- The EU and its Member States should increase their share of ODA to sustainable smallholder agriculture and rural development to at least 17% in the next five years, allowing national donor programs, NGO support initiatives and international funds to be adequately resourced.

4.3. Conversion of agricultural budgets

Whilst agricultural subsidies in the North have to shrink, the budgets for global food security policies need new resources. Legal avenues have to be explored on how to make contributions to global food security part of the agricultural policy and on how to transfer funds from one task to the other.

4.4. Deliver aid in line with the Right to Food

The challenge is not just about the quantity of aid: even more important is the quality and type of aid. Respect for the *2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*¹¹, is a minimum, but more important is to ensure ownership and participation. This approach would ensure that all those affected by projects and programmes, in particular women as the majority of small-holder producers and agents of change, are involved in their analysis and design.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier De Schutter, calls for a "triangular" approach to development cooperation, where people play an active role as right-holders alongside their national governments and donor agencies.

Specifically the EU should;

¹⁰ In Monterrey, the EU and member states have pledged to reach 0.7% by the year 2015, (with an intermediary target of 0.39% by the year 2006) by which time member states should reach the target of at least 0.33% individually. Only four EU member states currently allocate a minimum of 0.7% of their GDP to development aid.

¹¹ The 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, in broad strokes, calls for scaling up more effective aid, adapting it for different country situations, specifying indicators, timetables and targets to accelerate the pace of effective aid; monitoring and evaluating implementation; leadership and alignment; strengthened donor capacity; national procurement, untied aid and harmonization of policy: http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,3343,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00.htm

- Support aid policies that put the Right to Food at the core.
- Ensure farmers and other civil society groups are given a central role in the process of the implementation of the EU Food Facility. All international organisations should work in partnership with representative farmers and civil society groups in developing countries on EU funded developing projects.

4.5. Responsibility of recipient governments

At the Second Ordinary Assembly of the African Union in July 2003 in Maputo, African Heads of State and Government endorsed the 'Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa'. The Declaration contained several important decisions regarding agriculture but prominent among them was the "*commitment to the allocation of at least 10 percent of national budgetary resources to agriculture and rural development policy implementation within five years*". The 2007 AU/NEPAD survey found that 50% of African countries spent less than 5% of their national expenditure on agriculture development, reflecting a decrease from 57% in 2003, and that between 2002-2007 only 8 countries had spent more than 10% of their budgets on agriculture, a figure which had fluctuated over this period¹².

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¹² Ethiopia, Comoros, Madagascar, Mali, Malawi, Niger, Senegal, Zimbabwe. See <http://www.nepad-caadp.net/pdf/How%20are%20countries%20measuring%20up%20to%20the%20Maputo%20declaration.pdf> accessed 24th August 2009.