

DISCUSSION: SUGGESTIONS FOR EMERGING TOPICS TO INCLUDE IN THE CONFERENCE PROGRAMME OF THE 2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POVERTY, FOOD AND HEALTH

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Duration:	13.11 - 20.11.07
Requester:	Ms. Sofia Guiomar. The Institute of Preventive Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Lisbon,
Number of participants:	13
Number of Contributions:	14

II. REQUEST FOR SUGGESTIONS

The Institute of Preventive Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Lisbon, is organising the 2nd International Conference on Poverty, Food and Health, this time dedicated to the Human Rights approach, which will take place in Lisbon, on 28th to 30th November 2007. This event is organised under the patronage of the Portuguese Presidency of the European Council (<http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/EN/> <<http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/EN/>>) and make the link across the European Presidencies programmes of the Troika countries Germany - Portugal - Slovenia, on some health and nutrition issues. However, it's the Portuguese Presidency privilege and a unique opportunity over these 18 months, to discuss poverty and integrating human rights in poverty, food and health.

Our aim is to gather some of the leading experts from different fields in order to generate authoritative and meaningful debate that contributes to raise new ideas and perspectives for policy action to tackle poverty in its different dimensions. This is an opportunity and a challenge to bring the human rights approach to poverty, food and health to the European politicians and policy makers.

The main topics are:

- Poverty and human rights. The state of the art.
- Achieving the right to food
- Why integrating human rights in poverty reduction strategies does not so much?
- Sustainable development and global governance
- How global governance is committed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals?.
- The economic costs of socio-economic inequalities in health in the EU
- Drawing lessons from food security and nutrition research, analysis and information for improved decision making and response

We believe that a great participation from different backgrounds will be crucial for the positive outcomes that we hope will emerge from this event.

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I would be very grateful if Forum members could GIVE SUGGESTIONS for EMERGING TOPICS we SHOULD INCLUDE in this Conference Programme or in the next Conference in March/April 2009.

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The Conference website will be available with all the information about the programme and venue. (www.pfh2007.org)

Thank you very much.

My best wishes,
Sofia Guimar

SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION

III. FSN FORUM SUGGESTIONS - LIST OF CONTRIBUTIONS;

Suggestion from S. Mehta;

Dear Sofia,

The World Bank's latest report on 'Agriculture for development focuses on small farm holders. Our paper, which can be found at http://km.fao.org/fsn/resources/fsn_viewresdet.html?no_cache=1&r=275&nocache=1, maybe of interest for discussion at the 2nd int conf on poverty, health and food. You may like to invite Dr Rupela to defend this paper!

Regards,

Subhash Mehta,
Devarao Shivaram Trust,
Deva Prasad, 19 Palace Road,
Bangalore 560052

Alleviating Rural Poverty through Low-cost and Biological Approaches of Crop Production and Innovative Market System

O.P Rupela¹, S Mehta², CLL Gowda¹ 1. International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), Patancheru 502 324, Andhra Pradesh, India.
2. Devarao Shivaram Trust, Deva Prasad, 19 Palace Road, Bangalore 560052, Karnataka, India.

Abstract

Farmers in general and small-holder farmers of developing countries in particular are custodians and conservators of much of the genetic biodiversity. Some components of Green Revolution (GR) technologies, particularly agrochemicals, potentially threaten this task of farmers. In addition, their use has increased the cost of crop production in some developing countries impinging on farmers' profitability and livelihoods. Low-cost and biological approaches based on recycling of natural resources with or in the vicinity of small-holder farmers have been reported to allow yields comparable to conventional agriculture treatment receiving market-purchased inputs. Over the years, the reported low-cost and farmer-empowering protocols of crop production have been reported to enhance soil health and should attract policy makers. Agricultural research and development institutions have generally focused on productivity related issues and taken the relevant technologies of crop production to farmers via industry and market. Farmers have generally been seen as producers of crops without any stakes further on. Linking of farmers to markets, a relatively recent and welcome trend in some countries has generally happened for facilitating disposal of farm produce. Unless protected by policies, even this linkage can work more in favor of markets than the farmers. A new model making farmers as stakeholders in farm-produce to the end, right in their rural settings, is proposed. Authors call this as Producer Company (PC) concept. PC is a company of the farmers, by the farmers and for the farmers, financially facilitated by local government, but managed by professionals, leaving farmers to farm and on-farm activities. This is expected to make rural areas as hub of economic activities.

Suggestion from L. de Clementi;

I believe that points raised by Dr Binayak are not new but in some way they are getting to the core of the main problems. Particularly, I wish to strongly support **point 1**.

I believe that the worldwide campaign against hunger should be more oriented at putting pressure on the governments of developing countries to **invest more in education, health and**

agriculture. It has been demonstrated that in the medium period this is the winning way to sort out from poverty and food insecurity and, at the same time, to increase democracy and participation in development. Each of us, looking at national budget of developing countries, realizes every day that what they invest in these issues is shameful.

Laura de Clementi
FAOR a.i., Nicaragua

Suggestion from B. Rajbhandari:

Dear Dr Sofia

I would like to focus on the following topics during this discussion:

1. Monitoring mechanism of the state's commitment toward fulfilling the food security as human rights
2. Assessment of relationship between land rights, food rights and primary health rights
3. Monitoring the impact of WFP in developing countries toward ensuring food security
4. Documentation and dissemination of the best mechanism and practices for ensuring food security and public health.
5. One blow to hunger, poverty, food insecurity and poor health- find out the form and primary stakeholders including government.
6. Emergency measures to ensure food security and health service in conflict hit regions- challenges, better practices and prospects.

Thank you.

Dr Binayak Rajbhandari
Chairman, Himalayan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (HICAST)
PO Box 13233, Kathmandu, Nepal

Suggestion from I. Hanson:

I am highly impressed to know that a conference of this sort is being organized, as an attempt to eradicate or reduced the monstrous problems of hunger and poverty from developing countries.

I wish to suggest that serious attention be focused on African as this part of the world inhabit the most impoverished citizens in the globe.

I shall be willing to participate in this coming conference please.

Iyawe, Hanson.

Suggestion from B. Rajbhandari:

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Thank you.

Dr Binayak Rajbhandari

Chairman, Himalayan College of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (HICAST)

PO Box 13233, Kathmandu, Nepal

Suggestion from P. von Hartmann;

Hello Sofia,

Thank you for your gracious invitation to the 2nd International Conference on Poverty, Food and Health. If I were able to attend, I would bring to mind the enormously harmful association between the global "drug war" and its undesirable effects in all three areas.

The prohibition of Cannabis

- cripples organic agriculture,
- induces scarcity of a "strategic food resource"
- induces scarcity of clean, renewable energy and industrial resources
- creates deep poverty by removing a critical resource, obviating a more efficient and equitable regional economic dynamic
- causes expensive chemical poisons to be used, rather than allowing people to produce their own biogenic, agricultural pesticides, fungicides, antibiotics, anti-viral therapeutics, insect repellents, and other life and health-enhancing products
- turns agricultural communities into war zones as the price of 'marijuana' makes cultivation more attractive to impoverished farmers
- institutionalizes the economics of punishment
- enriches a corrupt black market economy devoid of spiritual integrity

Give people hemp seed to plant for biofuels, the world's most nutritionally complete seed, there will be far fewer hungry and malnourished people, fewer people being sickened by chemicals, and fewer people living in the violence and misery of a pointless drug war.

"Our aim is to gather some of the leading experts from different fields in order to generate authoritative and meaningful debate that contributes to raise new ideas and perspectives for policy action to tackle poverty in its different dimensions."

I trust that Michael Karus and Gero Leson will be there (2). Unfortunately, Andre Furst in Switzerland will be unable to attend, because he's in prison for farming Cannabis for fuel, food, building materials.(4) Andre's incarceration is an attack on the future of sustainable agricultural economics, and I trust it is of concern to everyone in this forum.

"The main topics are:

* Poverty and human rights. The state of the art.

Drug war induces poverty and violates the fundamental human right to grow "every herb bearing seed." (3)

* Achieving the right to food

The "drug war" figures heavily against people's right to food.

* Why integrating human rights in poverty reduction strategies does not so much?

Because human rights are in conflict and economic competition with "drug war" objectives.

* Sustainable development and global governance

In June 2007 a resolution was passed by the Conference of Mayors in the United States (1):

"NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the United States Conference of Mayors believes the war on drugs has failed and calls for a New Bottom Line in U.S. drug policy, a public health approach that concentrates more fully on reducing the negative consequences associated with drug abuse, while ensuring that our policies do not exacerbate these problems or create new social problems of their own; establishes quantifiable, short- and long-term objectives for drug policy; saves taxpayer money; and holds state and federal agencies accountable."

Cannabis is potentially the most abundant and globally distributed agricultural resource on Earth. It is also the most useful and nutritious. A re-valuation of this resource will lead to the economics of abundance, peace and health.

Best wishes to all for a very productive conference.

There in spirit,

Paul

Suggestion from H. Md. Salim;

Dear Dr. Sofia,

I heard in WFP diet was formulated considering only Energy but to make a nutritious food diet should made considering all of nutrients. Normally every hyman being need 6 nutrients in their diet. So, except water every diet should made considering by energy, protein, fat, vitamin and minerals. Without this formulation people will face malnutrition. And in future it will be harmful for the nation. So, every food should be nutritious in WFP. I think by this way we can remove malnutrition curse from the future world. In that case people should be aware about the knowledge of nutrition. Finally I think in every discussion in FSN may include this topic to build a strong nation in the world mainly 3rd world/developing countries.

Hossan Md. Salim
Ph.D Student
Laboratory of Animal Nutrition
Chungnam National University
Korea

Suggestion from K. E. Islam;

Dear Dr. Sofia,

Thanks a lot for giving us the opportunity. I believe that the conference will definitely generate lots of thoughtful and interesting debate around Human rights and poverty.

I would like to expand the topic a bit more by including Childhood poverty and child rights. Why I am saying this?? Because childhood poverty on its own is important and has distinct features from poverty in general. Children are estimated to represent half of those living in poverty. According to children, the definition of poor children are those “Who lack basic need such as food, cloths and safe shelter, do not receive enough attention from their parents and have no safe place to play”. From this definition it is clear that childhood poverty refers to much more than just income poverty.

Addressing childhood poverty is crucial to poverty reduction, because short run deprivation in childhood can have long-term effects that carry on into adulthood, effecting individuals' capabilities and opportunities. In turn it effects country's development and growth. However, often we tend to forget children when think about any poverty reduction strategies or we think that if we address poverty in general the effect would automatically trickle down to the well being of children, which is not always true. Preliminary findings of some poverty reduction interventions in Bangladesh have shown that though the economic status of the targeted households has improved, the positive impact of those interventions did not reach the children either in terms of health, education or nutritional status.

Therefore, my suggestion is that “CHILDREN and CHILD RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE” should be the central of any discussion around Poverty and Human rights.

Cheers,

Kazi Eliza Islam
Program manager
Household Economic Security
Save the Children UK
Dhaka, Bangladesh

Suggestion from J. L. Vivero Pol:

Dear Dra Guiomar:

I am glad that human rights, specifically the right to food, have been included in this Conference, as more and more their relevance for anti-hunger and anti-poverty programmes is mounting.

I feel happy with the topics you have mentioned, and I could suggest something else such as:

* The economic cost of social inequalities in Developing Countries, where those costs are much higher and unbearable for national budgets.

* Scaling up successful anti-hunger and anti-poverty programmes: we need to reach many people fast because they die everyday.

As a sort of suggestion, regarding Nutrition and Human Rights, I would suggest to invite Asjborne Eide and Wenche Bart-Eide, from University of Oslo, as they are experts on that and lecture and research on human rights and Food Security.

Moreover, I would suggest to invite Dr Jose Esquinas, director of the Chair on Hunger and Poverty Studies of University of Córdoba (jose.esquinas@upm.es), as he was the convenor of a recently organized and successful International Seminar on Right to Food and Food Sovereignty. See www.cehap.org for further information.

Finally, within our regional Initiative Hunger-Free Latinamerica and the Caribbean, we are deeply involved in promoting the right to food in the region, as a means to eradicate hunger within a generation's scope. Please, feel free to visit our website, where you'll be able to get more info on our activities: www.rlc.fao.org/iniciativa

We have recently presented seven national studies on advances and progresses on the implementation of the Right to Food in Paraguay, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Haiti.

<http://www.rlc.fao.org/iniciativa/infda.htm>

Best regards

Jose Luis Vivero Pol
Iniciativa "América Latina y Caribe sin Hambre"
Oficina Regional de FAO para América Latina y el Caribe
Avda. Dag Hammarskjöld 3241, Vitacura, Santiago, CHILE
Tel. (56) 2 3372328, Móvil (56) 9 84189745

Suggestion from A. S. Md. Selim:

Dear Madam,

Please include PROBIOTIC research in your conference.

Dr. Abu Sadeque Md. Selim
Assistant professor
SARD, Bangladesh Open University, Gazipur-Bangladesh.

Suggestion from R. Lao:

Dear Ms. Sofia Guiomar,

ESCR-Asia proposes that you include in your conference the following topics:

1. implementation of the right to food guidelines: current and or good practices (Asia, Latin, African experiences)

note: the Voluntary Guidelines on right to food was passed /approved by more than 100 members states of UN FAO through the FAO council. It's worthwhile to monitor its level of implementation.

ESCR-Asia is making toolkit on the RTF guidelines and encouraging the gov. to optimize it in its Accelerated Hunger Mitigation Program (AHMP).

2. Food Terminals (or trading terminals): its implications on people's access to food or a rights analysis

Will propose more in the coming days.

Resurreccion Lao