

FSN FORUM - DISCUSSION TOPIC NO. 46  
**FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURAL GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS**  
 FROM 21 OCTOBER TO 30 NOVEMBER 2009

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## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

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Duration: from 21.10.09 to 30.11.09

Number of Contributions:

## II. INTRODUCTION OF THE TOPIC

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Dear Forum Members,

We are members of the steering committee of the upcoming Civil Society Forum (CSF), which will be hosted on 13-17 November 2009 by the City of Rome. The Forum will have the support or participation from FAO, IFAD and WFP and will run on occasion of the World Summit on Food Security (Rome, 16-18 November 2009). One of the principal outcomes of the Forum will be a joint statement to be presented to the Plenary of the Summit.

On behalf of the small group of Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organizations involved in the organization of the CSF we would like to propose to the FSN Forum Members the following discussion. The results will feed into the discussions being prepared by our group in charge of the preparation of the meeting.

### **Food security and agricultural governance systems**

The global food crisis is also a crisis of food governance.

Decades of globalization with respective deregulation, concentration, lack of investment and inadequate food and agricultural policies and respective models of production have led to massive problems in order to implement the right to food.

It is widely accepted that most of food is produced by women, farm workers and by small-scale food producers. And yet they are dramatically losing access to, and control over, food producing resources such as land, water, seeds, livestock breeds, fishing grounds, etc. Anticipated profits from the agro-export business, the increase in agro fuels and rising food prices, have triggered a strong demand for land and water to expand monocultures and industrial agriculture. This development, together with other factors such as armed conflicts, extractive industries, tourism, industrial and infrastructure projects and accelerated urbanization have led to dispossession of rural communities and widespread land grabbing. They also lead to changes in land use, destruction of forests and watersheds, degradation of soils and depletion of water supply and fishing-grounds.

Having in mind these previous trends, it is increasingly accepted that several actors should be involved in the new food and agriculture governance systems.

However, the range of actors involved is often a matter of discussion with governments. At the same time, while some actors such as the private sector are increasingly coordinated, others sometimes lack the capacity to make their voices heard at different levels.

This discussion will tackle the need to examine and change current norms and regimes governing food issues, reflecting on the models of production that should be promoted, the problems around access to natural resources and the major actors that will need to be involved.

**Question 1 - How is food produced and what kind of production models should be promoted?**

- Which models of agricultural, fishing and livestock production, along with related policies (e.g. investment) are the best options to cool down the planet and to reduce people's vulnerability to climatic variations?

**Question 2 - Who controls food producing resources and how to develop new governance structures that can better regulate access to natural resources?**

- How to design more effective governance systems to regulate the access, control and use of natural resources and the major actors to be involved?

**Question 3- Who needs to be involved and at what level?**

- Which are the most important actors to be involved at local, national and international levels and the possible alternatives to link its participation at local, national and international levels?

Cheers,

Chris Leather (Oxfam), Antonio Onorati (IPC), Francisco Sarmiento (ActionAid)

### **III. LIST OF CONTRIBUTIONS**

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#### **Contribution by Andrew Mc Millan from Italy**

Dear Members,

Chris, Antonio and Francisco have raised highly pertinent questions. I will touch only on the 3rd issue, making a couple of observations about “actors at the international level”.

Like many others, I feel greatly encouraged by the direction that the Committee for World Food Security (CFS) reform process has taken. It is enormously important because it ensures that the responsibility for addressing critical policy issues affecting food security remains in a truly multilateral forum. Hopefully the agreements eventually reached signal a new seriousness on the part of governments to work together and constructively to solve the greatest scandal of our time – the fact that over 1 billion fellow humans are constantly short of food and another 2 billion face shortages of micro-nutrients and vitamins, in spite of the fact that the world has the capacity to resolve the problems here and now.

What seems most important now, in the lead up to the World Summit on Food Security and the FAO Conference in November, is to ensure that the momentum generated by the Committee for World Food Security (CFS) process is carried through into these other events without dilution. One senses that there are already, in the preparatory discussions for the Summit Declaration, signs of divisions re-emerging between nations in relation to defining goals and the extent of obligations into which countries will enter to achieve them.

I am totally convinced that – in spite of the dreadful performance of the last few years towards the 1996 “halving” goal – it is entirely feasible to bring an end to hunger throughout the world, with the possible exception of countries seriously affected by conflict, within a very short time – a matter of just a few years.

And I believe that a reformed Committee for World Food Security (CFS) can do much to ensure this, provided that it is given all the authority and resources that it needs to undertake its responsibilities. Historical precedent - from the earliest days on FAO – suggests however that while countries may agree on the establishment of new or reformed institutions and endow them with a broad mandate, some governments, before the ink is even dry, conspire to limit their capacity to actually fulfill their new-found functions. If the Committee for World Food Security (CFS) is to succeed, it needs to be able to arrive at far reaching decisions and recommendations on highly sensitive issues relating to the conduct of international trade in food items; international and regional food stock levels and the management of these stocks; contingency plans to ensure equitable food distribution between countries and individuals in the event of global food shortages; ensuring an adequate level of investment in research into truly sustainable methods of assuring future global food supplies etc. It needs to be able to follow through with these decisions and recommendations to the point at which they are actually applied. And for this it needs predictably available resources that are not unduly vulnerable to the changing whims of its leading members.

Extremely powerful business interests are bound to feel threatened by some of the actions that are fundamental to ensuring universal access to adequate food – especially when global supplies might again be under stress - and they will lobby potentially supportive governments relentlessly until their views are heeded.

What one must hope for, first, is that the time between now and the Summit will be used to strengthen, not weaken, the consensus that seemingly emerged about the need for a strong and effective Committee for World Food Security (CFS), leading to the strongest possible statement

of support in the Summit Declaration, that makes very specific reference to its role in addressing global policy issues affecting food supply and access, and guarantees it the resources needed for it to undertake all that is expected of it. And secondly that the Committee for World Food Security (CFS), once it starts to work, should, from the outset, adopt a code of behaviour under which its members agree to subordinate their short-term national interests to ensuring that the higher-level global objective of a hunger-free world is attained. The goal of eradicating hunger will only be achieved when all countries make it a central objective of their development policies – for to do otherwise is to gamble with people's lives – more than a billion of them.

Andrew MacMillan

**Contribution by Feysal Bushira from the Haramaya University, Ethiopia**

Dear colleagues,

I think this an important issue the world should reflect and deliberate on seriously.

We are in a era of nearly equating those peoples dying due to hunger and people perishing due to obesity (to much eating) and even people dumping foods while complaining against the market (milk farmers of Western Europe).

Therefore, the issue of food security and fighting hunger is not only production failure but also open and transparent governance in distribution and utilization of produced food and related goods.

Feysal Bushira  
Haramaya University  
College of Agriculture and Environmental Study  
Haramaya  
Ethiopia

**Contribution by Muna Lakhani from the Institute for Zero Waste in Africa, South Africa.**

In answer to:

**Question 1 - How is food produced and what kind of production models should be promoted?**

- Which models of agricultural, fishing and livestock production, along with related policies (e.g. investment) are the best options to cool down the planet and to reduce people's vulnerability to climatic variations?

If anything other than natural and organic food production is determined as a preferred model, and if fossil based chemical monoculture is agreed to, then this would constitute insanity in a climate-chaotic world, and the associated fossil pressures. Increasing the organic content of farming soil from the current average of 1% to about 5% would sequester approximately 150 billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub> – about 5 times the annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. So why would we want any more fossil based food production, with its associated chemical and other negative impacts?

Kind regards  
Muna Lakhani  
Institute for Zero Waste in Africa

**Contribution by María Victoria Whittingham Munévar from Colombia**

Dear fiends,

please find below a brief contribution to this topic, understanding that governance is something I have thought about and agriculture something quite unknown.

This are extracts from a paper I wrote in 2003, that connects with questions 2 and 3; I hope it serves our discussion.

R. Keohane (1984, 1998, 2000, 2002) professor of Political Science at Duke University, stressed the challenge that globalization represents for governance and institutions; summarizing his arguments:

1. Increasing interdependence without organized government would lead actors to seek to solve their own problems by imposing costs on others.
2. Globalization makes some degree of global level regulation essential, but both institutions and loyalties are much deeper at local and national levels.
3. Since there is no global constitution, the actions of the entities that make or represent global rules are often not regarded as legitimate.
4. World politics as a whole lacks universally accepted values and institutions.

There are some institutions that are recognized as representing global governance, such as the UN, the OAS, the European Parliament, and others. The question is *how effective are these institutions and how do we enhance their effectiveness?* Keohane stated (2001) that in evaluating institutions there are three useful dimensions: *consequences, functions, and procedures*. These dimensions were very useful in analyzing the case presented in this paper, as discussed in the case section.

Clearly the process of globalization has created new demands for these organizations and is transforming the political structure of the world system. The main question deduced from the literature review regarding globalization is:

*Do we have the correct institutional structures and arrangements to deal with the demands that these changes are creating?*

This question was not necessary when the activity of governance would have been thought of as limited to states and the formal intergovernmental organizations they agreed to create; but as we enter into the twenty-first century, global governance is being resulted as systems of rules at all levels of human activity.

#### Global Governance

The first *institutions* appeared as sets of rules that must be applied under certain circumstances, and in order for the authorities to be able to reinforce these norms a level of agreement was required from the collective. In fact, we are talking about *governance* in its more simple definition, as the system of interactions between the different actors involved on matters of public concern, and about institutions as the principles for regulating these relationships.

Today, we are facing new and different challenges resulting from the giant leap in complexity of human systems that globalization implies. The new interactions in play define new forms of governance and necessarily demand new institutions regulating the emerging systems. The regulative power of institutions is their main characteristic and, as a matter of fact, it applies to any level of social and political interaction whether it be local, national, or global. It is also clear that having appropriate institutions at any level of governance is critical for assuring the functionality of the global systems.

Held, Mc Grew, Goldblatt and Perraton, in "*Global Transformations: Politics, Economics, and Cultures*" (1999), dedicated a whole chapter to present the shift in reach of political power, authority and forms of rule. They characterized the contemporary (globalization) era as marked by a deterritorialization of politics, rule and governance, although new forms of territorialization, such as regionalism, are evident as well. They proposed that the term global governance helps articulate the stretching of political relations across space and time; and presented the following definition:

*by global governance is meant not only the formal institutions and organizations through which the rules and norms governing world order are (or are not) made and sustained – the institutions of state, intergovernmental cooperation and so on – but also all those organizations and pressure groups - from MNCs, transnational social movements, to the plethora of non-governmental organizations – which pursue goals and objectives which have a bearing on transnational rule and authority systems (see Rousenau, 1997).*

This definition of *governance* reflects the complexity of interactions affecting and transforming the existing systems of authority in the world, and also the development of new layers of governance; as mentioned by Held et al., today, more than ever, action at a distance permeates with greater intensity the social conditions and cognitive worlds of specific places or policy communities. Regarding the impact that these changes entails for the nation-state, they mentioned that the national government is now locked into an array of global, regional and multilateral systems of governance. It is interesting to notice that they referred to the national government and not the nation-state. As mentioned before this may no longer be a valid term for encompassing the interactions within a country.

For supporting their claim about global governance Held et al. mentioned, among others, the fact that there has been a significant increase in the number of cases in national courts in which issues of international law have been raised, whether involving the interpretation of treaties or other international legal documents. They conclude that the evidence indicates that there is no longer a strict separation between domestic and international legal rules. A new domain of law has emerged or at least has become visible, what Held et al., among others called global law, meaning those elements of law which have far reaching national consequences; basically these elements are meant to protect basic humanitarian values which can come into conflict, and sometimes contradiction, with national laws (Held et al., 1999, p.70). Finally, Held et al. emphasized the role played by the traditional and new media in enabling individuals and groups to overcome geographical boundaries and in having access to a new range of social and political experiences; the new communication systems offer new frames of political references independent of direct contact.

In the year 2000, W. Andy Knight published “A Changing United Nations: Multilateral Evolution and the Quest for Global Governance”. This book is particularly interesting because it presented the challenges that globalization had posed to the United Nations as the main institution of global governance.

In the very beginning, the following quote from Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations, is presented:

*State sovereignty, in its most basic sense, is being redefined – not least by the forces of globalization and international co-operation. States are now widely understood to be instruments of their people and not vice versa. At the same time, individual sovereignty...has been enhanced by a renewed and spreading consciousness of individual rights*

Knight presents a review of the practices of global governance and concluded that there are two conceptions, or at least two dominant conceptions, one being defined by the hegemonic groups, and the other by social groups and movements; the first is a ‘top-down’ form of governance, while the second is ‘bottom-up’ (Knight, 2000, p. 161). In the conclusions, Knight presents an argument for the normative approach to global governance, as he stated it, the act of striving toward the ideal of global governance is considered worthwhile, particularly if at least some progress is made in the improvement of the living conditions of people across the globe (Knight, 2000, p.180).

In the year 2001, a continuation of the previous debate was presented in the book by Emmerij, Jolly, and Weiss, “*Ahead of the Curve? UN Ideas and Global Challenges.*” Interestingly, they focused in the term *good governance*. They mentioned that the World Bank defined bad governance as personalization of power, lack of human rights, endemic corruption, and unelected and unaccountable governments, and that good governance must be the natural

opposite (Emmerji, Jolly, and Weiss, 2001, p. 192); thus good governance became the model to work toward. The main conclusion of this book is that in order to promote good global governance, the organizations representing global authority, such as the United Nations, must be strengthened and empowered. These organizations are receiving a lot of pressures from the many new actors in the global political arena, and they need to be capable of responding to them.

In the year 2002, the book *“Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World”* by Akira Iriye, was published. The author describes the contemporary world as ‘an arena for an increasingly complex interplay of state and non-state actors, including multinational corporations, religious organizations, regional communities, transnational private associations, and even stateless persons (Iriye, 2002, p.vii). The inclusion of many new actors never before mentioned as part of the political body in the world and the fact that they have been increasingly more active, define new layers and new systems of governance, the more inclusive of them, at least in theory, is global governance. Iriye focused in describing and understanding international organizations, both intergovernmental and nongovernmental. They are his unit of analysis. He argued that international organizations respond to a world in which increasingly the central actors are forces that cut across national frontiers; a global arena in which individuals and organizations other than sovereign states come together and engage in activities separate from those pursued by national governments.

The most important consequence of these interactions, said Iriye, is the generation of a global consciousness and of universal standards for judging the behavior of nations. He mentioned that to some extent this is a logical development for a twentieth century characterized by conflict and violence at the interstate level, and I would like to add that in the case of Latin America at the intrastate level as well.

Finally in the year 2003, Boäs and McNeill published their book *“Multilateral Institutions: A Critical Introduction”*. Their focus is two fold, one the major institutions that constitute the multilateral development system, regarding them as political organizations whose projects, programs, and policies have a significant impact on domestic policies; and second, the critical and increasingly active role that NGOs interaction with multilateral organizations plays in shaping them. According to the authors, multilateral institutions, do place some constrains on the activity of strong powers and thereby offer some protection for weaker actors, for small states and poor countries and people, multilateralism is preferable to unilateralism. Therefore they considered that what is needed is the strengthening of multilateral institutions by promoting critical perspectives and the inclusion in equality of every stakeholder.

From my point of view the main contribution made by Boäs and McNeill is the systematic review of what has happened to multilateral institutions and how the emergence and enhancement of NGO's impacted them. According to Boas and McNeill, “Both private firms and NGOs will interact with the multilateral institutions in a complex set of relationships played out within a politicized arena, where issues of legitimacy and governance will increasingly come to the fore” (Boäs and McNeill, 2003, p.156).

*Global governance* is understood as a minimum framework of rules necessary to tackle global problems, guaranteed by a set of institutions, formal and informal, international and local, and representing the interests of as many stakeholders as possible.

- The process of globalization has created new spaces and new forms of interaction among national and international stakeholders, defining hence new systems of governance. There is a need of having institutions that represent and incorporate these new forms of interaction and the systems defined by them. Institutions that represent global political interest, able to guarantee the minimum human rights to its large constituency and in consequence think and act globally.
- The enhancement of civil society and the spread of social networks have created an increase in the demand for transnational, *global*, institutions capable of guaranteeing that states are instruments at the service of their people and not vice versa (Koffi Annan in



“Two concepts of Sovereignty”, The Economist 18.09.1999). Institutions of global governance are very important, despite the arguments that argue that political institutions are not central to the globalization process.

As a backing to the last point let's look at two conclusions presented by Keohane in his 2000 paper:

- Holding states accountable depends on certain aspects of globalization: those that derive from the existence of significant political institutions with global scope.
- Holding powerful organizations accountable will require meshing together more effectively mechanisms of internal and external accountability.

María Victoria Whittingham Munévar, PhD  
Colombia

### **Contribution by KV Peter from World Noni Research Foundations, India**

This world has enough food to feed its inhabitants. The divide between excess food fed and once a day fed is increasing. We humans are yet to learn from honeybees which share their food based on work done. In the west obesity due to excess consumption is the problem. In Africa it is the meagre existence due to non availability of food, the problem. There is also a vested interest in keeping human population poor and illfed. Gandhiji stated 'Poor see God in bread'-a statement which holds good for ever.

K V Peter

Director, World Noni Research Foundation,

Perungudi, Chennai

India

### **Contribution by Kwaku Agyemang from FAO Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa, Zimbabwe**

Dear FSN Forum members,

My name is Dr. Kwaku Agyemang and I am a Consultant at the FAO Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa. I am grateful to the colleagues who proposed this topic on Food Security and Governance. I think Governance is very important, especially in Africa, where Governments commitment to agriculture in terms of investments and governance has been rather weak, as compared with other issues such as national security even in places where there are no visible threats to national security. I reproduce below a section of a paper I put together some 5 years ago on Food Security in West Africa.

*“ Whereas good governance has been made a very important ideal for which all African country governments are urged to attain and peer review processes have been established to monitor their progress or achievement, agricultural development and in particular the area of food security (a situation in which all people at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for active healthy life), has had the lowest profile on the current debate on governance. Three reasons, revolving around conflicts between human security versus national security, polarization centred on ethnic, religion and economic tensions, and competition rather than cooperation that divert attention from societal (including food) security to other forms of security. Following the four basic*

*aspects of food security (availability, access, stability and quality) food security cannot be guaranteed through economic governance institutions alone.*

*Pro-active food security governance has been listed (Salih, 2003) as including:*

- exerting pressure on government and others involved in food security policies*
- maintaining accountability and oversight to ensure compliance with commitments made*
- taking corrective measures when policy targets are not met within a specific time- frame.*

*Part of good governance is the provision of safety nets to vulnerable groups. Need to de-link political interests from basic needs.*

*Good Governance can be used to overcome the major challenges to food security which are*

- Underdeveloped Agricultural Sector*
- Barriers to market access*
- Effects of globalization ( a concept that allows countries to benefit from capital flows, technology transfer, cheaper imports and larger export markets: 3 dimensions are; multiplied linkages among people and countries at world level, tendency to use universal practices, spillovers of behaviour of individuals or societies)*
- Diseases and infections*
- Handicapping policies*

*Strategies can be built around Nutritional interventions, Facilitating of market access, capacity building, gender sensitive developments, building on coping strategies, creating off-farm opportunities.”*

I support the view that in Africa, the African Union Peer Review Process should consider including commitment to Agriculture and Food Security Governance as part of the Review criteria. Governments should be made to account for promises made to the population on food security and those that persistently renegade on their promises should be sanctioned.

Kwaku Agyemang (PhD)

### **Contribution by Silvia Susana Menell from Valor.Ar. , Argentina**

My best greetings to all those who in one way or another want to help change the reality of hunger and lack of nutrients in human food.

I am from the Republic of Argentina, and I work in the Undersecretariat for Consumer Protection for the Program Valor.Ar. (<http://www.mecon.gov.ar/secdef/valorar.htm>)

This program, which focuses on consumer awareness, has four basic pillars. The spreading of the rights of citizens according to the Consumer Defense Law, which constitutional power dates back from 1994, and covers everything related to consumption in general and to food in particular. From my sanitary point of view, nutritional health is seen as essential to the formation of healthy citizen forming a sustainable workforce with a view to a future in dignity and welfare.

My country was devastated for a long time by policies which adapted the population was adapted by consumerism to the in obtaining a model that was based on sustained support from the state. This generated of political clientelism.

We have two well-defined realities. The federal capital and the rest of the country. We can not say that there is hunger as it is described in different forum messages, but poor dietary habits, product of years of policies distorting the indigenous culture. The central government, worried about this development, seeks, through the Ministry of Social Development, to respond to the different situations present in each region of the country. But we often find that the help of the

government to the regions, is not exploited to the extent it is granted. The value that was given to basic foodstuff has been lost.

Therefore it has become more and more common to see meals being prepared with high percentages of fat and little protein, supplanting the traditional "churrasco".

Today culture drags us to burgers, sausages, and fast food, because parents are not at home. In the past mothers taught their children the basics of cooking, today we see that these basics became the "hot dog" which has little or no nutritional value and high calorific value, generating obese children with snacks further contributing to this condition.

Another even worse phenomenon occurs in the inner parts of the country, where the lack of education impact the tables every day. Due to the reliance on state assistance, people go without creating what our grandparents called "Quintino", which was neither more nor less than the vegetable garden to feed themselves, some hens, and one, if they owned it, cow supplying milk to those who did not. How did this happen?

Technology and the impact of propaganda advertising the use of products that are not beneficial to health have contributed in their own way.

Today boys prefer pre-packed desserts to a delicious apple. They eat little or no vegetables, a lot of carbohydrates and fats, and in large cities lack of movement generates dangerous obesity.

Another condition that needs to be mentioned is that my country has its big head in Buenos Aires, centre of work, and immigration not just by residents of the interior, but also from neighbouring countries, who see their own domestic economic situation much worse than how they could fare in Argentina. I suggest, in a perhaps illusory manner, to go back to basics. We need to teach citizens how to care for their own subsistence, with regional economies supporting communal spaces in discovering the different needs of the dwellers. We have as a precedent the Natives which, according to the chronicles available, were healthy and have been able to respond to the hard work imposed on them by the *conquista*. They show villagers who satisfactorily managed themselves in terms of natural resource exploitation. Since the twenty-first century economy excluded so many people why not go back to the roots, in order to accommodate the demand food? But for that, we must educate, educate in everyone in every corner of the country, showing that the source of their livelihood is in their hands.

We can do it. It is only a political decision.

I appreciate the opportunity to put all this here. Greetings to the fellow "foristas".

Silvia Susana Menelle

### **Original message in Spanish**

Mis cordiales saludos a todos aquellos que, de una forma u otra queremos ayudar a cambiar la realidad del hambre y la falta de nutrientes adecuados en la alimentación humana.

Soy de la Rca. Argentina, me desempeño en la Subsecretaria de Defensa del Consumidor en el Programa Valor.Ar.

Este programa, que es un de concientizacion de los consumidores, tiene cuatro pilares básicos. La difusión de los derechos del ciudadano en cuanto a la ley de defensa del Consumidor, cuya fuerza Constitucional data de 1994, y abarca todo aquello relacionado al consumo, ya sea en general, y de alimentos en especial. Desde mi perfil sanitarista, la salud alimentaria es vista como fundamental para la formación del ciudadano sano, como fuerza de trabajo sostenible, con vistas a un futuro digno y de bienestar.

Mi país fue arrasado durante mucho tiempo por políticas en las cuales el consumismo fue adaptando a la población en la obtención de un modelo que fue sustentado en base a apoyo del estado. Esto generó el clientelismo político. Tenemos dos realidades bien marcadas.

La Capital Federal y el resto del país.

No podemos decir que exista el hambre tal y como lo manifiestan los foristas en los distintos mensajes de foro, pero sí una mala alimentación, producto de años de políticas de desnaturalización de la cultura autóctona.

El gobierno central, preocupado por esto, mediante el Ministerio de Desarrollo Social, intenta dar respuesta a las distintas realidades que presenta cada región del país.

Pero nos encontramos frecuentemente que la ayuda que parte del gobierno hacia las distintas regiones, no es aprovechada en la medida que es otorgada.

Se han perdido a lo largo del tiempo la utilidad que se le daba a los alimentos esenciales, por lo que es más frecuente ver en las casas comidas preparadas con altos porcentajes de grasas, pocas proteínas, suplantando el tradicional "churrasco", que no es otra cosa que el "bistec", con ensalada y papas fritas.

Hoy la cultura, nos arrastra a las hamburguesas, salchichas, y comida rápida, porque los padres no están en casa.

Antes las madres se ocupaban de enseñar a sus hijos a cocinar lo básico para poder comer, hoy vemos que lo básico es el "pancho" con muy poco o nada de valor nutritivo y alto poder calórico, generando, chicos obesos, ya que los "snacks" contribuyen a ese estado de cosas.

Otra realidad, más tremenda, se da en el interior del país, en donde la falta de educación hace mella en las mesas de todos los días, merced a la espera de la ayuda del estado, sin generar, lo que nuestros abuelos llamaban la "quintita", que no era ni más ni menos que la huerta para autoabastecerse de verdura, algunas gallinas ponedoras, y alguno, si tenía una vaca, abastecía de leche al resto que no la tenía. y COMO PASO TODO ESTO?

La tecnología y la penetración de propaganda favoreciendo el consumo de productos que no son beneficiosos para la salud han hecho lo suyo.

Hoy los chicos prefieren postres preparados a una deliciosa manzana. Comen poca o casi nada de verdura, muchos hidratos de carbono y grasas, y, en las grandes ciudades, la falta de movimiento hace que se genere una obesidad peligrosamente en avance.

Otra realidad, que no puede dejar de nombrarse, es que el país al que pertenezco tiene su gran cabeza en Buenos Aires, centro del trabajo, y de inmigración, no solo de pobladores del interior, sino de países limítrofes, que ven su realidad económica mucho peor que la que podrían obtener en Argentina.

Yo propongo, quizá en forma ilusoria, volver a las fuentes.

Enseñar al ciudadano la forma de su propia subsistencia, con economías regionales que se ocupen de sustentar espacios comunales para la explotación de las distintas necesidades de los pobladores. Tenemos como antecedente la subsistencia del indígena autóctono, y, de acuerdo a las crónicas de las que disponemos, saludables, que han podido responder al trabajo duro que les impuso la conquista. Esto habla de pobladores que se manejaban de forma satisfactoria en cuanto a la explotación de los recursos naturales. Si este siglo XXI expulsa de la economía a tanta gente, porque no volver a los orígenes, de forma tal de poder dar respuesta a la demanda de alimentos. Pero para eso, tenemos que educar, educar en cada rincón del país, mostrándole que la fuente de su sustento está al alcance de su mano. Podemos hacerlo.

Solo es decisión política.

Agradezco la posibilidad de expresar todo esto aquí, un saludo para los foristas.

Silvia Susana Menelle

### **Contribution by Muna Lakhani from the Institute for Zero Waste, South Africa**

Silvia Susana Menell's (*previous contributor to this discussion*) words touched on a topic that relates to another "elephant in the room" that we seem to avoid... that we in the South, are victims of attacks on our cultures, lifestyles and dietary habits by the North / West – I am the last person to say I am a victim, but we need to make sure that the global governance about food that we talk about, must also speak to governing those who feed us rubbish, and are allowed to get away with it in the name of profit.

So I urge the group to not only speak of how best to improve our lives through sustainable food production on the ground, but also how best to rein in those rampant *murderers-from-a-distance*, that we call Corporate food companies...

Or will the FAO, again, simply ignore this? To avoid this issue, it promotes "business as usual" - we need business unusual, as the issue of war by proxy is critical in feeding the world.... Take on rampant capitalism, or else the entire process will become worthless... I would appreciate other points of view on this critical matter.

Kind regards

Muna Lakhani

Institute for Zero Waste in Africa

### **Contribution by Laura Pereira from the University of Oxford, UK**

Dear All

This topic is greatly relevant at the moment in light of the concept of Earth System Governance ([IHDP Report 20](#)) of which the food system is a major component. The question is therefore not simply of agricultural governance, but of food system governance in its entirety and how it integrates with the Earth's system as a whole. As food security is not just about availability, but includes the elements of access, nutrition and stability (as Kwaku Agyemang, previous contributor to this discussion, noted), a wider range of actors needs to be incorporated into the governance of the food system. Further complications come from the lack of a hierarchical structure across different levels, as the food system is more of an organic network with actors acting across multiple scales levels. We therefore need a governance system that is suitably flexible to be effective under changing circumstances in the Earth's system (whether these are environmental, economic, political...) so as to ensure food security.

In answer to question 3, this means that there is not necessarily a set of key actors, but the inclusion of all interests are important even if there are those actors with more power or influence. In order for the inequality of the food system to be addressed, all actors need to have a voice and a new governance structure needs to ensure that this is the case. This means the necessary inclusion of actors from smallholder farmers and entrepreneurs to large multi-national corporations and NGOs from the global North and South and everything in-between. Non-state actors' role in food governance and food security is increasingly important and is a key area that

is often forgotten at the international level. A focus on this more integrated governance structure which realises the integration of these actors across otherwise disparate areas such as trade, human rights, environmental protection and development would be the ultimate goal for a new governance system.

I look forward to reading the other posts on this topic from other colleagues around the world and to see what the final outcome at the summit is.

Best wishes,

Laura Pereira  
DPHil candidate  
School of Geography and the Environment  
University of Oxford

### **Contribution by Rahul Goswami from Agripedia, India**

Dear friends,

There's a corpus of very valuable information and good practice here in these threads, that's quite clear.

Although generally optimistic about local communities being able - eventually - to look after their food and nutrition needs, I tend to think that things will get worse before they start to get better.

That's because governance at many levels is both fragmented and neglected. Cultivation in most of the major foodgrain producers of the world has become a battle between traditional knowledge (which is in general not winning) and corporate + government methods that have little to do with community needs.

That has been clear in South Asia for most of this decade. In India (my home country) the convergence of the global financial crisis, the deficient monsoon and an agriculture sector that is struggling has made the impact on rural and urban poor seem like a hammer blow.

At national and international level, the general response to this growing crisis is more or less worded like this: "The slowing of economic growth and food consumption in lower income countries will likely result in increases in levels of poverty and food insecurity around the world as growing populations face reduced access to food. Many low-income countries will face financial constraints as they try to meet the food needs of their populations in the midst of the economic crisis".

The US Economic Research Service (ERS) says it bluntly: "The latest long-term food security outlook analysis shows that the developing countries that will be hardest hit by the global economic crisis are those with high levels of balance of payments deficits [such as India] and high food import dependency. ERS estimates that there will be a 2% increase in the number of food-insecure people in 2009. Results indicate the number of food-insecure people would rise by 12% from the baseline in 2009."

That's bad news and apart from the shock of the real numbers these percentages represent, it means that the kinds of agricultural governance that we currently have are unable to meet the challenge of the crisis.

In our country we have a 'National Food Security Mission' which by 2012 wants to increase the production of rice by 10 million tonnes, wheat by 8 million tonnes and pulses by 2 million tonnes. How does it plan to do that? Our Agriculture Ministry calls its method "area increase and

productivity enhancement in targeted districts". We also have an Integrated Cereals Development Programme for 'rice-based cropping systems', 'wheat-based cropping systems' and 'coarse cereals-based cropping systems'.

These are supposed to "provide more flexibility to states (provinces) based on local needs". Finally, we have a National Agriculture Development Campaign to "incentivise the states to increase investment in agriculture and allied sectors".

Notice how in all these cases the farming household, the agricultural community and local markets are left out? Where is the governance then? If it's not with the 'local', it's quite likely to be not working.

Regards,  
Rahul Goswami  
Social Systems and Community Researcher  
Agropedia - National Agricultural Innovation Project  
India

### **Contribution by George Kent from the University of Hawaii, USA**

Chris Antonio, and Francisco have raised fundamental questions about "food security and agricultural governance systems," or in its shorter form, food governance. Being the academic that I am, I think it is important to explore what this means.

They say, "Decades of globalization with respective deregulation, concentration, lack of investment and inadequate food and agricultural policies and respective models of production have led to massive problems in order to implement the right to food." Does the problem somehow arise only at the global level? There have been problems of hunger and malnutrition within countries long before the recent expansions of global reach. Globalization might have changed the intensity of the problems, but maybe not its basic structure. What exactly is that flawed structure?

They say, "This discussion will tackle the need to examine and change current norms and regimes governing food issues, reflecting on the models of production that should be promoted, the problems around access to natural resources and the major actors that will need to be involved." Perhaps a good starting point would be to identify those current norms and regimes. What is it that needs to be changed?

Is it meaningful to talk about changes in global governance without at the same time talking about local governance?

In my view, the fundamental problem is that food production and distribution both within countries and internationally is dominated by the market system. That system has wonderful advantages in that it produces abundant food and high income for some people. At the same time it has disadvantages. As I see it, the major disadvantages of market systems everywhere are (a) they tend to produce increasing inequality at the same time they produce wealth, (b) they are not sufficiently sensitive to environmental concerns relating to depletion and pollution, and (c) they are gender biased, mainly because they tend not to value women's production.

The market system does a lot of people a lot of good, so it is not likely to be eliminated. Moreover, there are no good alternatives to it on the horizon. The remedy, then, is to undertake non-market activities to correct or compensate for the deficiencies of the markets, at the same time allowing us to benefit from their best features. There must be strong legal systems that require businesses to treat their workers better, especially women, and to protect the

environment. Programs of that sort are already in place in many parts of the world, but they are not fully integrated into what we regard as the food governance system.

To some extent these ideas would apply to all businesses, but special consideration needs to be given to those systems that provide, or fail to provide, enough good food for all at all times.

Aloha, George Kent

#### **Contribution by P.K. Thampan from the Peekay Tree Crops, India**

Dear All,

I would like to touch on the first query raised in the message on Food Security and Agricultural Governance System. The most appropriate production model for deriving both productive and protective benefits is agroforestry or tree based integrated farming system involving a combination of compatible tree species and agricultural crops with or without livestock components. Such a cropping/farming system, appropriate to the local edaphic and climatic conditions, has the potential to generate multiple sources of food, income and employment for the members of the practising families and also of the local community. Any food production strategy initiated at the national level shall target on producing diverse foods of plant and animal origin from the same operational holding in order to satisfy both the food and nutritional needs of the families involved. When such a farming system is promoted even marginal holdings could be made productive to satisfy the needs of the dependent families. In this regard I wish to highlight the accomplishment made by a marginal farmer owning only 0.07 ha of homestead in a UNDP-GEF-SGP project site in Kerala, India. In the homestead the family has integrated coconut, tree spices, vegetables, root crops, annual spices, rabbitry, pisciculture and a biogas plant running on rabbit refuses. From such an integrated farming unit the family is earning an average income of US\$ 225 per month.

Agroforestry also offers significant protective benefits to the community. The population of diverse tree species of different stature and the arable crops growing underneath when spread over many holdings minimizes the hazards of soil and water erosion, stimulates the underlying productive capacity of the soil resource, improves the quality of local environment and promotes biological diversity. The tree components in the system can also function as effective sink for carbon dioxide and many air pollutants, both gases and particulates. Healthy and vigorously growing trees are known to assimilate and sequester 6.75 tons of carbon in the biomass and add 0.5 ton of carbon to the soil carbon stock per hectare per year.

Agroforestry when promoted on a mission scale at the national level will augment the availability of nutritious foods at the local level. It will also improve the quality of the local environment and reduce people's vulnerability to climatic variations. What is important is a special drive in this direction by enlisting the participation of the people at different levels.

Regards  
P.K.Thampan  
Peekay Tree Crops Development Foundation  
Kochi, Kerala, India.

#### **Contribution by Aggripina A. Mosha from the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP), Tanzania**

Who needs to be involved and at what level?



- Which are the most important actors to be involved at local, national and international levels and the possible alternatives to link its participation at local, national and international levels?

As FAO recognizes that food security and agricultural development cannot be achieved without the full and equal participation of both women and men in rural areas. Both play different but crucial roles in agriculture and rural development, and both contribute towards agricultural and food production (<ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/011/i0765e/i0765e10.pdf>). Underscore the essence of women's' inclusion: Sustainable agriculture, rural development and food security cannot be achieved through efforts that ignore or exclude more than half of the rural population - women. Women constitute more than half of the agricultural labour force and are responsible for most of the household food production in low-income food-deficit countries (<http://www.fao.org/economic/esw/esw-home/esw-gender-development/en/>).

While acknowledging that the poor are concentrated in subsistence agriculture with substantial percent of agricultural production being devoted to food crop production, we ought to recognize that the majority of these producers are women. And that most of their labour is unpaid, and unsupported. Women have lower access to and control over inputs to agricultural production including credit and information; yet, African women spend three to four hours more than men in agricultural production. All the same, they benefit least from investments in this sector. Development programmes as well as agriculture in Africa and Tanzania in particular have rarely gender aggregated indicators for income poverty, quality of life and social well-being. This is so, despite the fact that, women and men experience and are impacted with poverty differently due to structures of the economy and the society at large. On this basis women and gender experts need to be included at all levels from policy formulation to monitoring gender specific impact of these policies.

Women in Africa and particularly the rural poor find it difficult to access credit facilities and other financial resources needed to improve upon productivity. Most traditional lending institutions require collateral, and many times, in the form of land. Women's low education and training relative to men is again another barrier to their accessing credit facilities. It is no wonder that, the majority of rural women farmers have concentrated on subsistence crops rather than cash-crop farming, which is normally controlled by men. As a result, women continue to reproduce poverty, as they cannot break even beyond the subsistence of their families due to lack of cash income. Worse still, most current policy developments and strategies like "Kilimo Kwanza" (Agriculture First) in Tanzania are geared towards commercialization of agriculture.

Among important actors to be involved are local NGOs who are Gender Activists and those enabling small-farmer agriculture innovations at local levels; Gender Focal Persons in the agriculture sector and the Legislature, the Governments Gender Machinery as well as the Local Government Authorities.

Aggripina A. Mosha  
TANZANIA, East Africa

### **Contribution by Muna Lakhani from the Institute for Zero Waste in Africa, South Africa**

Silvia Susana Menell's (*previous contributor to this discussion*) words touched on a topic that relates to another "elephant in the room" that we seem to avoid... that we in the South, are victims of attacks on our cultures, lifestyles and dietary habits by the North / West – I am the last person to say I am a victim, but we need to make sure that the global governance about food that we talk about, must also speak to governing those who feed us rubbish, and are allowed to get away with it in the name of profit.

So I urge the group to not only speak of how best to improve our lives through sustainable food production on the ground, but also how best to rein in those rampant *murderers-from-a-distance*, that we call Corporate food companies.

Or will the FAO, again, simply ignore this? To avoid this issue, it promotes "business as usual" - we need business unusual, as the issue of war by proxy is critical in feeding the world.... Take on rampant capitalism, or else the entire process will become worthless... I would appreciate other points of view on this critical matter.

Kind regards

Muna Lakhani  
Institute for Zero Waste in Africa

### **Contribution by Rahul Goswami from Agropedia, India**

Dear Paul, Thampan, Annie, George,

As I see it partly from the field in western India, and partly from the cities, the food price increases of 2007-08 are already returning. Because they are, the important matter of governance of food systems will once again be overtaken by the need to respond to emergencies. A greater amount of the time available to cultivators in between emergencies will be devoted to managing crops and inputs, leaving less time to community matters such as governance. I think this is what will happen to those food systems that continue to be market-dominated.

George wrote:

"The major disadvantages of market systems everywhere are (a) they tend to produce increasing inequality at the same time they produce wealth, (b) they are not sufficiently sensitive to environmental concerns relating to depletion and pollution, and (c) they are gender biased, mainly because they tend not to value women's production."

I suggest two more major disadvantages: (d) they are biased towards urban markets and because of that bias treat producer communities like suppliers (which of course these communities are anything but) and (e) align naturally with political-industrial oligarchies wherever these have taken root, which means they will always drive a techno fix in place of a traditional knowledge-based one.

These disadvantages perpetuate the market mind of food. And that is why patterns of reasoning that we may follow do not occur to the market merchants and their supporters in government and industry. Look at the response - from mainly the Northern viewpoint - to the condition of the consumers of food during the 2007-08 food price crisis. The dominant explanation was: Asian countries that are now bearing the brunt of high food prices are also large and fast-growing economies (such as China, India and Indonesia), and their middle classes are becoming economically stronger so they are consuming more.

The assumption was that because per capita income was seen to be rising, more food was being consumed. What was not understood was that incomes were rising very unequally, and it is the inequality that spawned a set of 'market' policies that led to the minor shock over the extent of developing country malnutrition and hunger, leading to the now overfamiliar question: how can there be hunger when food stocks are high?

George wrote:

"They say, 'Decades of globalisation with respective deregulation, concentration, lack of investment and inadequate food and agricultural policies and respective models of production have led to massive problems in order to implement the right to food.' Does the problem somehow arise only at the global level?"

No it doesn't. That is why last year, when the [International Food Policy Research Institute's \(IFPRI\)](#) 'India State Hunger Index' was released it caused such a furore. This was proof of sub-regional stresses, even between states/provinces which are big producers of food, that cause widespread hunger. It is also proof of a perverse kind of centralisation in which a vast agricultural bureaucracy is exploited by a fast-growing food processing industry (aimed at urban markets) and which has co-opted much of the political class into pushing through legislation and regulations that severely hinder local control of food systems.

What is the alternative?

P K Thampan wrote about integrated farming systems:

"When such a farming system is promoted even marginal holdings could be made productive to satisfy the needs of the dependent families. In this regard I wish to highlight the accomplishment made by a marginal farmer owning only 0.07 ha of homestead in a UNDP-GEF-SGP project site in Kerala, India. In the homestead the family has integrated coconut, tree spices, vegetables, root crops, annual spices, rabbitry, pisciculture and a biogas plant running on rabbit refuses. From such an integrated farming unit the family is earning an average income of US\$ 225 per month."

That is a powerful answer. This is a means by which destructive centralisation can be overturned (or through which farming communities can insulate themselves from the 'market'). This is a means by which urban-rural inequality can become less harmful, and by which inflation in food prices can be contained. Localised and integrated approaches to food will encourage development spending in rural areas, encourage employment (think 'green jobs' too) and shrink income disparities, the opposite of which is taking place under the market-industry-political regime.

What happened in 2007-08 (and the signs have returned) is that higher costs of utilities like transportation, power, and health services forced further cuts in food spending. The data point to a severe compression of incomes and purchasing power for the majority of the population in India - it is a compression that more than negated the rise in demand from the urban minority, but it has still been given little attention.

Regards,

Rahul Goswami  
Social Systems and Community Researcher  
Agropedia (National Agricultural Innovation Project)  
India

## **Contribution by the World Rural Forum**

### **Question 1 - How is food produced and what kind of production models should be promoted?**

The export-oriented industrial agriculture model that has imposed itself has, far from providing enough food to mankind, created the problem of food insecurity in the world. In turn a high percentage of people are supplied with food produced by family farming and small farming.

Today FAO speaks of more than 1020 million hungry and it seems as if the trend is increasing. It seems clear that intensive export-oriented production is not the way forward to ensure food security in this world with a growing population.

The logic that each region specializes according to its comparative advantage in the international market has been at the expense of domestic production which, in turn, has resulted in greater difficulties for local people to access safe and affordable food. While it might very well be that the market has reduced distances between producers and consumers in global terms, the reality is that in many cases it has increased inequality, creating two main groups: those who produce and those who consume.

The clear reality is that three quarters of the world's poor live in rural areas of developing countries. And nevertheless, in many countries agriculture has assumed a secondary role in the political agendas of their governments.

We firmly believe that, to improve the situation of these millions of people, we should focus on food producing agriculture and in particular on family agriculture (FA). Small holder farming, in all its diversity, is a sustainable model of food production, land management and source of income for millions of families.

We propose to prioritize local and national markets, strengthen agriculture and family farming and to promote environmentally, socially and economically sustainable consumption.

In this regard the World Rural Forum (WRF), which we here represent, along with more than 150 organizations from around the world, is promoting the declaration made during the UN International Year of the Family Agriculture.

This model needs the support of all and such an initiative can act as loudspeaker for the demands of thousands of millions of people who, far from having their basic covered, need to be protected from policy decisions far removed from reality that they live in. We need support, recognition and promotion of Family agriculture.

We are campaigning [www.familyfarmingcampaign.net](http://www.familyfarmingcampaign.net)

"FAMILY FARMING: FEED THE WORLD, TO CARE FOR PLANET"

#### Question 2 - Who controls food producing resources and how to develop new governance structures that can better regulate access to natural resources?

It is a well known tendency, fostered by industrial farming, that productive resources are concentrated among few agricultural input companies. The input supply companies become fewer and fewer, in turn increasing the weight of these companies in the different links of the production chain (seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, harvested and processed products).

There is evidence that export focussed industrial agriculture has serious implications for the sustainability of natural resources, energy expenditure, and so on. Family farming and the promotion of local production can be a way to make sustainable use of resources and help reduce the emission of greenhouse gases.

As long as natural resources can be a possession in the hands of the unregulated private capital they will more than likely continue contribute to the satisfaction of a few peoples' demands to the detriment of general welfare.

The biggest problem regarding the management of natural resources lies in that its operation is governed under open access regimes and this in itself leads to overuse and arbitrary appropriation. In that situation, the least developed countries are excluded from the exploitation of their own resources with all the consequences that entail for the overall internal development chances.

To address this apparent imbalance of power it is necessary to dismantle the traditional open exploitation system and to set up transparent mechanisms for decentralization enabling local communities to access and control their own resources.

#### Question 3- Who needs to be involved and at what level?

No agent can be excluded. The active and coordinated engagement of all stakeholders both public and private that are willing to work under the principle of solidarity is required.

The growth of world population, social change, food, economic and health crises demand a change in the pattern of development that concerns all and each of us. First of all we have to change our approach and stop talking about how to feed the world and change to discuss how a world composed of citizens who are able and decide how to eat could come into existence. Food safety is a global public good and therefore we must establish measures to ensure fair prices for producers which at same time are affordable to the consumer.

We also assume that agriculture and agricultural products are not a further commodity, that natural resources need to be controlled and can not be privatized for the sake of the interests of the few but need to serve the global welfare.

We can not tackle the problem of food insecurity concentrating only on solving problems related to production as food insecurity is the result of lack of access to food that has many reasons and dimensions. The overall rural development, the access to education, to health and technical assistance needs to be taken into account.

As long as agriculture remains a commodity, an economic and political weapon, (hence the most developed countries have taken great care to protect their industries against third parties), it will be impossible to include ethical governance respecting the human right of every individual to an adequate standard of living including the Right to Food as recognized by Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

#### At national and local level

We must encourage the development of a political environment aware of this need encouraging the development of sustainable and competitive family agriculture. This requires recognizing and strengthening the role of peasant organizations and encouraging investment in agriculture, infrastructure and associated services that would allow for favourable living conditions for inhabitants of rural areas.

We will need to be working with society as to what concerns consumption patterns, promoting responsible consumption of local or culturally more acceptable products. This is a road, albeit not the only, to promote family farming.

#### Globally

First of all there is the need for a firm commitment by governments, financial institutions and civil society to food security and therefore to family farming.

Control mechanisms and accountability of the commitments made during the International Summits need to be established at the supranational level. Political will has shown many times its weaknesses.

We can not continue with vague commitments, we require a true global commitment, a leadership setting clear goals and commitments which results are subject to monitoring, especially from farmers' associations and civil society, both nationally and internationally.

WORLD FORUM WORLD RURAL-RURAL FORUM

November 5, 2009

#### **Original message in Spanish**

#### Pregunta Nº 1 - ¿Cómo se producen los alimentos y qué tipo de modelos de producción deben promoverse?

El modelo de agricultura industrial agroexportadora que ha venido imponiéndose –lejos de ofrecer alimentos suficientes a la Humanidad-, ha agudizado el problema de la inseguridad alimentaria en el mundo. A su vez un porcentaje muy elevado de personas se abastecen de alimentos producidos por la agricultura familiar y a la pequeña agricultura.

Hoy en día la FAO habla de más de 1020 millones de hambrientos y no parece que la tendencia sea a mejorar. Parece evidente que la producción intensiva orientada a la exportación no es el camino a seguir para garantizar la seguridad alimentaria de este mundo con una población en aumento.

La lógica de que cada territorio se especialice según su ventaja comparativa dentro del mercado internacional ha sido en detrimento de la producción doméstica que, a su vez, se ha traducido en mayores dificultades de la población local para acceder a alimentos seguros y a precios asequibles. Si bien parece ser que el mercado ha reducido distancias entre productores y consumidores finales en términos globales, la realidad es que en muchos casos ha aumentado las desigualdades, creándose dos grupos fundamentales: los que producen y los que consumen.

La realidad evidente es que tres cuartas partes de los pobres del mundo viven en zonas rurales de países en desarrollo. Y, a pesar de ello, en muchos países la agricultura ha pasado a un papel secundario en las agendas políticas de sus gobiernos.

Creemos firmemente que -para mejorar la situación de estos millones de personas-, se ha de apostar por la agricultura productora de alimentos y, en concreto, por la Agricultura Familiar (AF). La AF, dentro de su diversidad, es un modelo sostenible de producción de alimentos, gestión del territorio y fuente de ingresos de millones de familias.

Proponemos priorizar los mercados locales y nacionales, fortalecer la agricultura y ganadería familiar y el consumo basado en la sostenibilidad social, económica y medioambiental.

A este respecto el Foro Rural Mundial (FRM), al que representamos desde estas líneas, junto con más de 150 organizaciones de todo el mundo está promoviendo la declaración de por la ONU un Año Internacional de la Agricultura Familiar. Este modelo necesita el respaldo de todos y una iniciativa así puede ayudar a hacer de altavoz para las demandas de miles de millones de personas que lejos de sentir sus necesidades básicas resueltas quedan al amparo de decisiones políticas muy alejadas de la realidad que viven. Necesitamos el apoyo, el reconocimiento y la promoción de la AF.

Estamos en campaña [www.familyfarmingcampaign.net](http://www.familyfarmingcampaign.net)

“AGRICULTURA FAMILIAR: ALIMENTAR AL MUNDO, CUIDAR EL PLANETA “

Pregunta Nº 2 - ¿Quién controla los recursos de producción de alimentos y cómo desarrollar nuevas estructuras de gobernanza que ofrezcan una mejor reglamentación del acceso a los recursos naturales?

De todos es sabida la tendencia propiciada por la agricultura industrial de que unas pocas empresas de insumos agrarios concentren los recursos productivos. Cada vez son menos las empresas suministradoras de insumos, y a su vez cada vez es mayor la participación de estas empresas en diferentes eslabones de la cadena productiva. (Semillas, abonos, pesticidas, productos cosechados e incluso transformados).

Está demostrado que la agricultura industrial con destino a la exportación tiene graves repercusiones en la sostenibilidad de los recursos naturales, gasto energético, etc., la Agricultura Familiar y el fomento de la producción local puede ser una vía para hacer un uso sostenible de los recursos y ayudar a reducir la emisión de gases de efecto invernadero.

Mientras los recursos puedan ser una posesión no regulada en manos de un capital privado, es más que probable que su disfrute siga atendiendo a unas pocas demandas en detrimento del bienestar general.

El mayor problema en cuanto a la gestión de los recursos naturales, reside, precisamente, en que su explotación se rige bajo regímenes de acceso abierto y ello por si mismo provoca un uso excesivo de los mismos y su apropiación arbitraria. En esa tesitura, los países menos desarrollados se ven excluidos de la explotación de sus propios recursos con las consecuencias que ello provoca sobre sus posibilidades de desarrollo integral interno.

Para afrontar este manifiesto desequilibrio de poder, es preciso dismantelar el tradicional régimen de explotación abierto y establecer mecanismos de descentralización transparentes que permitan que las comunidades locales accedan y controlen sus propios recursos.

Pregunta Nº 3 - ¿Quién es necesario que participe y a qué nivel?

No puede quedar excluido ningún agente. Es más, se precisa del compromiso activo de todos los agentes sociales tanto públicos como privados que estén dispuestos a trabajar coordinadamente y bajo el principio de solidaridad.

El aumento de la población mundial, los cambios sociales, las crisis alimentarias, económicas y sanitarias demandan un cambio en el modelo de desarrollo que nos concierne a todos y cada uno de nosotros. Antes de nada tenemos que cambiar de discurso y dejar de hablar de cómo alimentar al mundo y pasar a que sea el mundo formado por ciudadanos los que sean capaces y decidan cómo alimentarse. La seguridad alimentaria es un bien público global y por ello hay que establecer medidas que permitan garantizar precios justos a los productores y, al mismo tiempo, asequibles para el consumo.

También hemos de asumir que la agricultura y los productos agrarios no son una mercancía más, que los recursos naturales necesitan de un control y que no pueden ser privatizados en aras de los intereses de unos pocos sino servir al bienestar global.

No podemos atajar el problema de la inseguridad alimentaria ciñéndonos únicamente a resolver problemas relacionados con la producción ya que la inseguridad alimentaria es el resultado de la falta de acceso a alimentos que tiene muchos más condicionantes. Es preciso tener en cuenta el desarrollo rural en general, el acceso a la educación, a la salud, a la asistencia técnica, entre otros.

Mientras la agricultura siga siendo una simple mercancía, un arma económica y política, (de ahí que los países más desarrollados se hayan cuidado mucho de proteger sus sectores frente a terceros), no se podrá incluir criterios éticos de gobernanza que respeten el derecho humano de todo individuo a un nivel de vida adecuado incluyendo el Derecho a la Alimentación tal y como reconoce el Artículo 25 de la DU DDHH.

#### A nivel nacional y local

Tenemos que propiciar el desarrollo de un entorno político consciente de esta necesidad que favorezca el desarrollo de la AF, sostenible y competitiva. Para ello es necesario reconocer y fortalecer el papel de las organizaciones campesinas, así como favorecer la inversión en agricultura, infraestructuras y servicios asociados que permitan unas condiciones de vida favorables a los habitantes del medio rural.

Asimismo habrá que trabajar con la sociedad en cuanto a lo que se refiere a los patrones de consumo, promoviendo el consumo responsable de productos locales, o culturalmente más aceptables. Esta es una vía, que no la única, de dar salida y fomentar la producción agraria familiar.

#### A nivel global

Primero se necesita un Compromiso firme de gobiernos, instituciones financieras y de la sociedad civil a favor de la seguridad alimentaria y por tanto de la Agricultura Familiar.

Es preciso establecer a nivel supranacional mecanismos de control y rendición de cuentas de los compromisos que se adquieren en las Cumbres Internacionales. La voluntad política ha demostrado en numerosas ocasiones sus flaquezas.

No se puede seguir con compromisos difusos, se precisa de un verdadero empeño global, de un liderazgo que establezca compromisos y metas claras y que sean sometidos a un control de resultados, especialmente de parte de las asociaciones campesinas, de la sociedad civil, tanto a nivel nacional como internacional.

FORO RURAL MUNDIAL-WORLD RURAL FORUM

5 de Noviembre 2009

#### **Contribution by Lateef Bamidele Taiwo from Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria**

Dear FSN Forum members,

My responses to the questions above are highlighted below.

#### **Question 1 - How is food produced and what kind of production models should be promoted?**

Before now, in many of the developing countries, food was produced by the resource-poor farmer. The main purpose of his effort was always to feed his immediate and extended family. He has control over the land and needed little or no input such as fertilizer and pesticides. Human population was low and there were adequate resources, such as land, water, seeds, livestock breed. The soils were fertile because they were not excessively cultivated. The planet was 'cool' and climatic conditions were stable. Now, there is combustion of fossil fuel to increase energy to run the industries. This had led to climatic variations and consequent emergence of new diseases of plants and animals. This had resulted in food shortage and malnutrition.

Therefore, a new model of mass food production is required. New concepts and methodologies that will develop the capacity of the rural people so that they can easily respond to new opportunities are needed. The farmers should have access to land and inputs.

**Question 2- Who controls food producing resources and how to develop new governance structure that can better regulate access to natural resources?**

In many developing nations, government controls food producing resources.

There is the need to put in place a number of intervention programmes that will increase rural household income, improve standard of living and reduce extreme hunger and poverty.

Examples include the promotion of gender equity and women empowerment. Moreover, a new governance structure that recognizes that land tenure system hampers land holdings by the resource-poor individuals needs to be put in place. A governance structure, which will ensure access to credit facilities by the rural poor, is imperative. A structure, which will impact agricultural production skills in the rural people, is also required. Such a structure will assist in the formation of cooperative groups in the rural place.

When access to food producing natural resources is facilitated, there will be reduction in hunger and poverty. A structure that will ensure sustainability of agricultural systems and therefore repose confidence in funding agencies will guaranty adequate food production.

Cheers

Dr. Lateef Bamidele Taiwo,

Institute of Agricultural Research and Training,

Obafemi Awolowo University, Ibadan, Nigeria

**Contribution by Subodh Kumar**

Dear all,

I would like to introduce the subject of "Zero Budget Natural Farming" developed in India by Shri Subhash Palekar. Full details and information on the system can be accessed at, website: [www.palekarzerobudgetnaturalfarming.com](http://www.palekarzerobudgetnaturalfarming.com).

Millions of Indian farmers have switched over to this mode of farming with miraculous results, in quality, profuse production and almost zero costs as inputs. From very poor to highly educated and well off persons have gone in for the techniques of Zero Budget Natural Farming.

In my humble opinion for very deprived people of developing countries like India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, this can be a very important strategy to consider for implementation.

Subodh Kumar

**Contribution by Patrick Chatenay from UK**

It may be useful to note that the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy up to 1992 was successful in increasing food production at acceptable price-levels whilst managing the related social upheaval reasonably well. Today of course, elements such as the intensive use of plant-



protection chemicals would (and should) be severely curtailed but the combination of managed prices and volumes would work just as well in attracting investment and increasing output.

Clearly, the CAP is not what free-market advocates consider optimal. They are wrong: because of the time-horizon, the structure of food production and the uncertainties involved, the “market” neither recognizes fully, nor manages, agriculture’s positive and negative externalities. In particular, “free-market” rules for international trade in food is a perfect recipe for disasters.

Some “son of CAP” policy is probably generally the best route to increase food supply worldwide.

On the issue of control (questions 2 and 3, if I am not mistaken), for the life of me I cannot see why democratic political institutions cannot suffice: they are not perfect, but they usually muddle through.

Warm regards,

Patrick.

### **Contribution by Andrew Mc Millan from Italy**

The Civil Society Forum should strongly criticise the failure of governments to adopt an eradication goal. The simple reaffirmation of the 2015 “halving” goals amounts to the deliberate denial of the right of hundreds of millions of fellow humans to have even the prospect of access to adequate food within their lifetimes. Even if the halving goals are met, Heads of State are effectively condemning over 400 million people to the certainty of ill health and premature death – when the means to prevent this are available. Their deliberate action in failing to commit themselves to eradicating hunger when it lies within their power to do so presumably makes them culpable – to put it bluntly – of homicide on a vast scale.

This highlights the failure of global and national governance systems – including the World Summit on Food Security - to address the problems that they are intended to resolve.

Andrew Mc Millan

### **Contribution by Tjerk Dalhuisen**

I agree with the statement by the World Rural Forum. The industrial agriculture and the corporate control is very damaging to local food production in many countries, especially in the South. The large scale production for export is a danger to local communities. This is the case with soy as animalfodder for the meat industry in Europe and China, and also for soy, corn, rapeseed and sugercane for agrofuels. Communities in countries like Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Paraguay are suffering heavily from intoxication by massive herbicide and pesticide use on roundup ready soy. People are driven from their land to the cities and the local food situation is deteriorating. Strange enough, NGO's like WWF and christian NGO's like Solidaridad and Icco are effectively supporting this agro-export model. They support the Round Table on Responsible Soy, a forum dominated by big soy producers, traders and industry. Their criteria for so called 'responsible' soy do not question the soy agro-export model. In fact the criteria are so weak that GM roundup ready soy, grown on soil that has been recently deforested, can still be called 'responsible'. But this soy production has nothing to do with feeding the world, only with making money for very few, at a huge cost for many others, nature and society. So I really can't understand why NGO's that should work to improve food security can lend themselves to be used for the kind of greenwashing practices like the RTRS. If we could convince these NGO's, including WWF, to no

longer justify this agro-export model things might start to change. That would give a strong impulse to the search and drive for real solutions to the food question.

More information on [www.toxicsoy.org](http://www.toxicsoy.org)

Tjerk Dalhuisen,  
the Netherlands

### **Contribution by Florencia Moye Lopez from CEFIM, Mexico**

I am a Mexican student of Bioethics in Rome, I work for an organization called CEFIM (Centre for the Holistic Education and Training of Women) and will participate as a delegate to the Parallel Civil Society Forum to the World Summit on Food Security (out of 649 delegates, 349 will be women, with me alone as Mexican).

It is important to understand that within our social movements and NGOs we represent civil society and not our own interests, since we are the voice of men and women who could not participate in the side events of the Summit.

The World Summit on Food Security touched upon the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, in particular of the two linked to the Summit: eradication of poverty and malnutrition.

The new proposals in relation to energy production related to food and the factor of climate change, bring up a main question: which would be the best way to estimate food production and carbon dioxide emission in order to adapt developing countries through their small means of production such as sown field plots in a development which does not violate the fundamental rights of individuals, like the Right to Food? In short, reconciling energy and food production needs by promoting human rights.

According to published figures, one in six in the world is malnourished and according to Jacques Diouf a child dies of hunger every six seconds. This was mentioned at the Forum on Food Sovereignty. Therefore we need to discuss why reform is needed, the previous model, i.e. food security, being for some inefficient and anti-ecological.

#### **My proposal and answer:**

The outcome of the Summit should be a strategy document, as we intend to create models that face a real and palpable crisis and not an ideological document (gender, equity, empowerment of women, etc.).

We could achieve this through a Global Plan that incentives agricultural producers –who are the stakeholders- towards small fields of production of basic food such as: maize, beans, and others. This generates also CO2 capture through products like trees, seeds, etc.

This Global Plan should include a fair distribution of income which respects international principles of cooperation and non-intervention. Thus the government and the actors interact.

This strategy should check globalization of production and distribution of food, which causes economic and food crisis.

Do not forget that neither FAO nor the forums, give us human rights only by discussing the Right to Food. Remember that we are entitled to human rights for being a person and therefore the role of International Treaties, platforms, and international documents, as well as the state is to make sure that these rights are recognized.

### **Original message in Spanish**

Soy mexicana, estudiante de Bioética en Roma, trabajo para una organización que se llama CEFIM (Centro de Educación y Formación Integral de la Mujer (<http://cefim.org.mx/>) y estoy como delegada en este Foro paralelo a la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación (de 649 personas 349 son mujeres, y solo yo como mexicana). Con lo anterior es importante reconocer que todo movimiento social y Organización No gubernamental representamos a la Sociedad Civil y no nuestros propios intereses. Ya que somos la voz de aquellos y aquellas que no pudieron participar en los eventos paralelos a la Cumbre.

Hay tres temas centrales en discusión tanto en la Cumbre Mundial de la Alimentación, como en los Foros paralelos y los pre eventos organizados por la FAO y la Organización Civil para enfrentar la crisis económica. El primero es dar cumplimiento a las metas del Milenio en el 2015, concretamente dos que nos vinculan a la Cumbre: erradicar la pobreza y la desnutrición, las nuevas propuestas en relación a la producción de energía relacionada con la alimentación interviniendo el factor del cambio climático, reúnen un punto de vista importante, ¿cuál es la mejor forma de valorar la producción de alimentos y bicarbonato para adaptar a los países en vías de desarrollo, por medio de sus pequeños medios de producción que son parcelas y campos de sembradío, en un desarrollo sin violentar los derechos fundamentales de la persona, como lo es el Derecho a la Alimentación? En pocas palabras, **conciliar la energía y la producción de la alimentación promoviendo los Derechos Humanos**. Finalmente, en cifras publicadas, uno de cada seis en el mundo es desnutrido y según Jaques Diuof un niño muere de hambre cada seis segundos, esto se mencionó en el Foro sobre Soberanía Alimentaria, por lo tanto discutir por que es necesaria una reforma alimentaria, debido a que el modelo anterior, es decir la seguridad alimentaria, para algunos es ineficiente y anti ecológico.

Mi propuesta y respuesta. Ante una Cumbre Internacional en donde la mayoría de los participantes es Latinoamérica, Africa e India, siempre se considera, por el principio de subsidiariedad, a la voz civil, sin embargo, es importante considerar **que se trata de un documento de estrategia, porque pretendemos crear modelos que enfrenten una crisis real y palpable, y no documentos de ideología (genero, equidad, empoderamiento de la mujer, etcétera)**. Lograrlo por medio de un Plan Global en donde se incentiven los pequeños campos de producción de alimentos básicos: maíz, frijol, tomate, etcétera, incentivando a los productores, que a su vez son los actores, a una forma natural, beneficio que genera a su vez CO2, por medio de los frutos (árboles, semillas, etcétera). El Plan Global interactuado con una justa distribución de ingresos que respete los principios internacionales de cooperación y de no intervención. Así el gobierno y los actores interactúan. Esta estrategia globaliza más la producción y distribución de alimentos, hecho que provoca enfrentar la crisis económica y alimentaria.

No hay que olvidar que ni la FAO ni los Foros, nos dan los derechos humanos, porque se discute el derecho humano a la Alimentación, hay que recordar que los derechos humanos los tenemos por el hecho de ser persona, y tanto el papel de los Tratados Internacionales, plataformas y documentos internacionales, así como del Estado es reconocerlos.

### **Contribution by Subodh Kumar from India**

Key to Food security, Food safety & sustainability

Our farmers under the guidance of our scientists very successfully brought about the Green Revolution to give us the food security. By the turn of events, we are compelled to launch an urgent Food Security Mission. While deliberating on this in a down to earth manner, there is also need for a little parallel lateral thinking.

From Babar Nama it is known that in the 16th century, India was flush with overflowing granaries and wealth. Even in 18th century very high agriculture yields by the farmers of the then Madras Presidency is confirmed by the British Gazetteers. Just in about two centuries, food surplus India was to suffer the infamous Bengal famine of 1942. But it has taken only a few decades to wipe out the surplus of our Green Revolution. The recently reported incidents of suicides among our farmer brothers should also impel us to pay urgent attention also to any additional changes which have come upon the rural scene.

We should be simultaneously looking for strategies to make our Food Security sustainable. During the deliberations of experts in a conference held in IARI Pusa on 6th Sep. 2007, with Hon. Dr M.S.Swaminathan in the chair, a very lively and open house discussions took place.

Following were among main points that emerged for attention:

- 1) Mental attitudes /perceptions of the people
- 2) Bringing about improvement in the knowledge and skill base
- 3) Quality of the available farm input materials i.e. Fertilizers, Seeds, Pesticides etc.
- 4) Cash needs and management
- 5) Inadequacy of Weather forecast
- 6) Problems related to water for irrigation
- 7) Post harvesting operations
- 8) Market accessibility and role of Special Economic Zones (SEZ)
- 9) Cash resources

### 1. Attitudinal Issues.

1.1 - Indians had a tradition of community participation, which accounted for proper management of the joint community resources like community pastures, water bodies, schools, and a number of locally specific social participative institutions. Erosion of values of these socially relevant but very important for the community customs took place, when these community activities were sought to be taken over by the British Administration.

In the post Independence era, corrective action is being sought to be implemented through reviving and empowerment of Panchayats.

The connection of Panchayat Raj with sustainability of life and Food Security puts the importance of Panchayats in a better perspective. The common community services like looking after the community pasture lands, water bodies, sanitation, health, primary level education, waste management, cooperative agriculture and animal husbandry related matters have great relevance for sustainable community security.

1.2 - Sanitation, health and nutrition have been a much neglected area, particularly relating to would-be-mothers, girl child and infants in the rural communities.

The mind nutrition foundation of UK1 has established that neonatal and subsequent malnutrition, results in inactivity, laziness -both physical and mental, fatalistic attitudes, encouraging a parasitic life style. Mid day school milk and meals programmes also fall in the corrective activities.

Pregnant mother, infant nutrition program had been launched by UN long back. In fact it was reported that of all the countries, China had the distinction of best implementation of these rural nutrition programme. The spectacular progress made by China is attributed to the new generation of young Chinese which has emerged with a more positive proactive mental attitudes, as a result of the Chinese nutritional programs launched in rural areas way back in the 1970s.

Recently even in USA, Would-be-Mother & Child Nutrition programme have been launched.

NGOs in India also are engaging themselves many initiatives in this field. But a more comprehensive National level initiative is required.

The program will be more sustainable by making available and propagating use of home grown Green Leafy vegetables, and Milk from cattle which almost every rural family used to keep.

Most of these objectives were met traditionally by the Indians by keeping household cows. This practice needs to be encouraged and revived.

### 2. Knowledge Skill Base

Extension Services have a tendency to be located in urban areas.

There should be a reorientation of the existing extension services. Every village cluster should have its own extension centre. These Extension Centers should be run as sustainable production centres, in affiliation with the nearest University / Research Lab. The individual units should be constituted as small registered bodies, of young local Agri/Vet graduates.

Modern irrigation techniques like drip irrigation, Hydroponics, Green house nurseries, Crop rotation, Soil enrichment by green manures, Biodynamic, Biofertilizers locally grown and

developed area specific Horticulture and Fruit crops and good Animal Husbandry Dairy farming practices will be automatically transferred to the local community by actual demonstration of successful practice, on profitable basis.

Their success will itself be a source of knowledge transfer and skill enhancement agent for the area. The seed money for starting such activities can be sourced from socially responsible Corporates and the Rural Banking input channels. These extension centres to be successful, have to Keep Good Cows.

### 3. Quality of input materials and soil fertility

The locally home grown materials like biopesticides, biofertilizers, seed treatment and crop sprays only can ensure the cheapest and most reliable products.

The biodynamic (Rudolf Steiner) preparations from Cow Horns are also now a strategy being promoted even by USAID.

India had a long tradition of soil remediation by Organic and green manures, Crop rotation, seed treatment with Cow Urine and Neem preparations. (Vriksh Ayurved enlists use of such herbs as Ribes Embilium - a de-worming agent- as soil sanitizer before planting of trees.)

Even the use of chemical fertilizers has to be supplemented with Organic Manure. Use of gypsum requires Organic manure. Without cow where does one get free Organic Manure?

Even seeds could be mostly home produce selected and saved by proper guidance.

For these strategies training in making good reliable home made preparations needs to be standardized and keeping of house hold Cow has to be encouraged. Home made products not only ensure more reliable quality of Farm inputs, but also reduce the cash requirements of the farmer.

### 4. Productivity

Improved quality of input materials and soils fertility, aided by modern knowledge skill imparted by the local extension model farm will be a big change agent in bringing the productivity improvement. With better, skills and knowledge access soil, input materials and healthy farmers productivity can not be low. For that you have to keep House hold cows as discussed above.

### 5. Weather Forecasting

The quality of meteorological data depends on the accuracy of the observations and the number of weather data collecting stations. Setting up of an individual data collection point is a capital intensive operation, and for good weather forecasting a very large number of data collecting posts is required to be installed. With modern scientific advances and communication development this process can be made very cost effective and accurate.

It is suggested that a proposal should be submitted for the Govt to consider to encourage and allow making use of all the mobile telephone system towers in the country to also record and automatically transmit weather data for the use by the Meteorological Department. This can be a win-win situation for all, the Mets, telecoms and agriculture. As directed by Hon. Dr M.S. Swaminathan, this suggestion has already been forwarded to the Secy, DST GOI.

### 6. Water

As a matter of conscious planning water intensive crops like paddy and sugar cane should be encouraged to shift to coastal areas, with greater emphasis on Rain water harvesting.

Crops requiring less water have to encourage in drier areas. For better moisture retention the Humus and Organic Content of the Soil has to be improved. This can be done only by encouraging household cows.

### 7. Post Harvesting

Refrigeration and cold chain are very important links in post harvesting operations. The zero energy cold chambers could be propagated in areas where feasible. But the most energy efficient green strategy is making available refrigeration to rural masses by devices working directly from Biogas. Kerosene operated refrigerators were very common up 1940s. The gas Operated refrigerators are now becoming popular in USA. In India after cooking of the meals, every individual small family biogas plant is left with some surplus biogas. The quantity of surplus bio gas is too small for power generation, but is adequate to operate a small refrigerator. In India

we should have biogas operated refrigerators available for rural areas. This offers very good business opportunities for commercial houses to take interest. This subject has also been referred to the Secy. DST. GOI.

For Bio Gas you need to keep a house hold cow.

#### 8. Market Access: Role of SEZ

Indian Agriculture produce was organic by default, and has great significance for nutrition and health of the community. Organic Agriculture products, Horticulture, Floriculture & Milk have greatest market potential in the New World. In fact Milk is already being called the New Oil of the modern world.

Large corporate bodies taking interest in setting up of SEZ, should be advised to develop and create Organic Produce base in their SEZs. This will, but not only open the potentially very big international market for them also ensure a quantum jump in the earnings of a farmer.

But to ensure this strategy, one must encourage keeping of a household Cow, and simultaneously setting up of large Organic agriculture and Dairy Farms in SEZ.

#### 10. Cash Resources

With home grown quality inputs of seeds, fertilizers, organic manure Milk and Milk products for nutrition and energy needs met by Biogas and Organic Produce, through a house hold Cow the Cash requirements of a farmer will be minimized.

To conclude the last suggestion is to develop an integrated Animal Husbandry promotion and development, Horticulture mission approach for sustainable Food Security. An animal feed mission will require to be considered as an integral part of Food Security Mission.

Subodh Kumar  
MDGS Kendra  
India

#### Contribution by Maria van Heemstra from the World Council of Churches, Switzerland

*My contribution is in the form of responses to some of the other contributors (please note that these comments are my own personal opinion and do not constitute an official WCC view).*

Although Silviana Susana Menell is right that nutritional education is important and going back to home cooking as opposed to the fast food habits of our times would be beneficial for people's health, it is crucial to have **land tenure policies** to ensure that the **source of the livelihood** of small farmers and indigenous peoples (i.e. **their land**) is not taken away from them, so that it is indeed possible to, as Silviana says, show "everyone in every corner of the country ....that the source of their livelihood is in their hands." In the Argentinean countryside (as well as other countries in Latin America as Tjerk Dalhuisen has pointed out), however, because of the industrial planting of GMO soybeans (with the full support of the Government) many people can no longer grow food crops on their farms, even a "Quintino", or even live in their communities, because the land and water are being contaminated with round-up (and other chemicals) from large Round-up ready soybean plantations. There are illegal land grabs, ecosystems are being destroyed to make way for industrial soy monocultures (the Chaco area for example) and entire communities are being forced to migrate to cities, where they have no other alternative but to depend on public assistance. This is a consequence of the present agro-export model of agriculture whereby agricultural products are considered mere commodities. Therefore I believe that **agricultural products should be removed from global WTO agreements**. Any trade in food crops should be regulated in such a way as to support farmers producing crops for food in their own countries rather than supporting large corporations that are governed by shareholders from all over the world.

There is an increasing trend for some countries, wealthy individuals or corporations, to purchase large tracts of land in developing countries which still have available land for agriculture. This is an alarming trend which should be addressed on the international level. One possible solution

might be to limit the total surface area that one owner could possess (as had been instituted in the new national Constitution of the Bolivian government), and particularly if the owner is of a different country; it should be forbidden to possess such lands solely for investment purposes and pension funds as in the case of the ("pooles de siembra") in Argentina for soybeans.

As for the model of agriculture to promote, I agree with Muna Lakhani that **organic methods of food production, as well as agroforestry** as mentioned by P.K. Thampan, which enrich the soil, respect the ecosystem, provide work for farmers, are the preferred model. This type of agriculture which involves closer interaction between farmers and their crops also promotes knowledge about plants as opposed to the industrial model where a so-called farmer is just driving an enormous machine which does all the work.

I agree with Laura Pereira a **wide range of actors should be incorporated** into the governance of the food system, but it is particularly important to include the small and medium farmers actually producing food crops for local consumption. However I am not sure Laura meant by a "hierarchical structure". What is happening in practice is that a few large powerful transnational corporations (the large grain shippers, large seed companies and food distributors i.e. supermarkets) are dictating to the public how the food system should be managed. In my view it would be better to have a governance structure run in a democratic way where the various stakeholders have equal say; i.e. such an organic network of small and medium-sized farms who have the support of the government in the form of credits, education and infrastructure they need to have access to markets. The European Union's Common Agricultural Policy for example has not been very favorable for small farmers. Furthermore, I do not think the large multinationals should have a dominant role in the food governance structure as deciders, as we have seen that they in general favor their own economic interests over those of the public good; rather, these should be controlled by the food governance structure to ensure the public good.

The **social status of and respect for farmers should be raised** so that more people are attracted to growing food and so they are able to make a decent living doing so. This will greatly help to ensure food security. Now, however, in France for example, going to an agricultural high-school is considered generally as an alternative for students who are failing high school. This should not be the case. Farming to ensure the food security of the population should be given high priority and due respect. It is a difficult job which needs people who are motivated and hard working, knowledgeable and able to adapt to changing conditions. In the reform of the French school system they have just made the subject of Economics compulsory for all. I would rather see a subject related to such a basic need as growing food, which is universal, getting priority over Economics, which is only valid in a certain type of economic system; another subject which should be compulsory is environmental science. Likewise, as many food producing farmers in the world are women, as Aggripina A. Mosha has pointed out, **strengthening women's rights** so they have access to credit, education etc. is also essential, as well as including them in any governance structure not only as a token participation as is often the case but in proportion with their contribution to food production.

### **Contribution by Andre le Roux from South Africa**

Some general remarks

- **Introduction:** I am PA (André) le Roux, a pensioner formerly with the RSA Department of Agriculture. During the late 1980's I was the Secretary to the Committee for the Development of a Food and Nutrition Strategy for South Africa. This first strategy was accepted and implemented by the then government of the RSA. I was also involved in the development of a White Paper on Agriculture for the new democratic government which came into power during 1994. As I have been an employee of the Department of

Agriculture all my working life, I maintain an interest in matters of agriculture and food and nutrition. The recent World Summit on Food Security prompted me to get involved.

- Historical Review: The first documented food crisis occurred during the 13<sup>th</sup> century before Christ in Egypt (*ref Genesis 41 – 41 in the Bible*). This is within the great hunger belt, extending from South-East Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, the Middle-East, through Africa and the equatorial region if Latin-America (*ref. Ending Hunger : An Idea Whose Time Has Come; Preager Special Studies, Anon., 1981.*)

An appropriate point of departure in modern times would be the World Food Conference in Rome in 1947. In “Food Policy: Integrated Supply, Distribution and Consumption” (*Ed. By Gittinger PJ, Lesly J & Hoistingner C*) it is pointed out that the conference took place in an atmosphere of crisis. It states that “The immediate threats of famine in the Indian Subcontinent and African Sahel coupled with the reduction of world grain reserves to their lowest level in 25 years and corresponding increases in food prices shocked the inter-national community into a mood of serious concern and reappraisal.”

Since then Food security and Nutrition featured regularly on international forums. Guidelines for food security strategies and programmes to alleviate hunger and combat malnutrition were put forward at these forms and participating governments urged to put those guidelines in practice. Numerous publications by internationally recognised experts on food and nutrition, as well as case studies by renowned universities into food insecurity and malnutrition, comprise an extensive data base for the development of strategies and programmes to address any food and nutrition crisis.

- Concerns:

Notwithstanding the fact that all food security related aspects have been covered exhaustively as indicate, the wheel is redesigned every time there is a crisis and millions is spent on conferences being attended by high level delegates as is the case with the recent World Summit on Food Security. Studying the papers of these conferences, show that nothing new comes from it. Every time the participating governments undertake to implement the measures agreed to at such conferences as set out in “L’Aquila” Joint Statement on Global Food Security: *L’Aquila Food Security Initiative (AFSI)*. History has it that not much, if any, of the agreed measures are being implemented, as confirmed by the fact that food insecurity and malnutri-tion are increasing annually. (*A personal observation: It seems that Ecclesiastes 1:11 rings true in this respect. It states: “There is no remembrance of the men of old, and even those who are yet to come will not be remembered by those who followed.”*)

**It seems to me that funds spent on food and nutrition forums and conferences is a waist of money that may have been spent famine is occurring.**

A superficial study showed that most governments have policies, strategies and programmes in place to address food insecurity and malnutrition. Yet, notwithstanding these policies, strategies and programmes that are also incorporated in International and National Millennium Goals, the global food crisis is deepening. The main contributing factor appears to be that governments, particularly in developing countries, do not assign a high enough priority to ensure food security at regional, national and household level and to ensure an optimum nourished population. World Summit on Food Security the Honourable David Carter,



Minister for Agriculture and Forestry of New Zealand appropriately stated: “Sustainable, long-term increases in the living standards of the poor and hungry can only come when national governments and local communities take ownership of their own development processes.”

**It is suggested that the FAO, with its large information database on food and agriculture, and taking into consideration the vast knowledge and expertise on food and nutrition strategies –**

- **devise an overall food and nutrition strategy that provides for all scenario’s leading to food insecurity and malnutrition at international regional and national levels that can be implemented by countries where it is required;**
  - **ensure that a reasonable quantity of food commodities are available that can be provided where food insecurity and malnutrition reached alarming proportions or is imminent (as was the case in Egypt so many millennia ago);**
  - **remind member countries on a regular basis of previous commitments by their governments to ensure food security at national and household level and to assist in the alleviation food insecurity and malnutrition in countries that cannot provide in their own needs; and**
  - **provide guidance and assistance to countries where food security and malnutrition is endemic due to insufficient natural resources or other circumstances.**
- The plundering of natural resources, in particular medium to high potential agricultural land by mining, deforestation by logging operations in indigenous forests, together with the slash and burn practice by rural communities, and marine reserves to mostly satisfy financial greed, already have a severe impact in food security in particular and the environment in general.
- Mining has a limited benefit as a result of its restricted duration. It seldom benefits those who are dependent on the land, either for subsistence or commercial farming. Even after a mine closed down, the rehabilitation of the land thus used (should such rehabilitation be included in permits for mining) takes many years before it can be used for agricultural purposes. **Mining rights on medium to high potential land should only be granted where it is of high national importance and should also benefit those land owners who are being affected.**
  - Logging of indigenous forests not only destroys wild creature habitats, but contributes significantly to climate changes. **As with mining, logging rights should be granted with great circumspection and the question should be asked who the actual beneficiaries are of such rights – it would appear that corruption could play a role in this regard.**
  - Land obtained by slash and burn for the production of food by poor rural communities has very low agricultural production potential. Once the little fertility such land has, is exhausted, the next section of forest is slashed and burned. **Rural communities utilising these practices to in their food requirements should be taught proper farming skills – inter alia**

**the referti-lisation of land obtained by such practices. In this regard, international guidance and assistance is of the utmost importance.**

- There can surely be no objection to the utilisation of the marine environment to enhance food security and for other ethical purposes. However, there is no justification where marine reserves are plundered by large scale operations purely to satisfy financial greed. **The international community should implement and enforce measures to restrain such operations.**
  
- I wish to join up with the concern by Tjerk Dalhuisen that the utilisation of crops traditionally intended for human and animal consumption are now being used in the production of bio-fuel, thereby constituting a higher income to subsistence and commercial farmers with a detrimental effect on food security. **Governments should ensure that requirements for field crops to ensure sustainable food security are met before such crops are being used in the bio-fuel industry.**