

TOWARDS A NEW GOVERNANCE IN FOOD SECURITY

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TOWARDS A NEW GOVERNANCE IN FOOD SECURITY

**ACTION AID, CARITAS SPAIN, ENGINEERING WITHOUT BORDERS – DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION
AND PROSALUS**

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CAMPAIGN PRESENTATION

“THE RIGHT TO FOOD. URGENT”

The campaign «The Right to food. Urgent» was created in 2003 by several NGO's, which, based upon their own experience of cooperation on food security and nutrition issues in many countries of the South, wanted to also become involved in the aspects of awareness and political impact from a human rights approach.

During the start-up stages (2003-2006), the campaign focused on awareness and advocacy of the human right to food, through studies, publications, and activities both at the national and international level.

In a second stage of consolidation (2006-2009), the campaign reinforced awareness with the launch of a specialized web (www.derechoalimentacion.org) visited – on average – by more than 500 users daily and strengthened its contacts with institutions and international networks.

Nowadays, the campaign seeks to work on a third awareness stage, focusing on monitoring policies as well as the engagement and impact of initiatives to encourage the right to food in the framework of a new model to fight hunger.

Over these years, the campaign has become a reference in this field, having participated in key projects on the right to food, such as the FAO inter-government work group who wrote the voluntary guidelines for the realization of the right to food, the right to food forum, the drafting of the Master Plan II and III and the Spanish cooperation sector strategy to fight hunger, the High-Level Meeting on Food Security, the preliminary stages of the World Summit on Food Security, the consultation for the drafting of the European Commission on Food security Communication or the Comprehensive Framework for Action update.

The four organizations who promote this campaign have the strategic priority to work on the right to food:

- **Action Aid** defined along with its partners an institutional strategy “Broadening Horizon 2006-2012” which incorporates the right to food in its development project in both, the South as well as the North, and it is a top-priority issue. In 2004, it began working with ActionAid International in the project on Global Network on Food Security.
- **Caritas Spain** often works on this issue both through action and arguments in the fight against poverty. It has over 20 years of experience on field-projects related to food security and sovereignty and works jointly with a worldwide network of Cáritas dioceses. Nowadays, it develops multiple awareness initiatives in the Spanish confederate network and cooperates also with Caritas Europe and Caritas Internationalis.
- **Engineering without Borders – Development Association** works under a rights-based approach, as the basis of its interventions encompassed in its strategic planning. In regards to the right to food and food security the projects are carried out through the Agricultural Development Sector-Area and the Department of Studies and Campaigns. Furthermore, since its involvement in the campaign, it is developing several action plans on the impact of biofuels on development and on the right to food mostly.
- **Prosalus** started working on training, awareness and impact analysis on this issue in 2001 as a complement to its cooperation projects on food security. Since 2003, it has been coordinating the campaign. Its current strategic plan is aligned with the right to food as a fundamental assignment.

STATEMENT OF THE CAMPAIGN “THE RIGHT TO FOOD. URGENT”

Action Aid Spain, Caritas Spain, Engineering without Borders and Prosalus have set up in agreement to work on the achievement of the right to food, state that:

- Over one billion people in the World live in a state of undernourishment, among which 70% live in rural areas, 56% are women and 36% are their sons and daughters. Over the last years, minor improvements have been hindered by the effects of food price increase and the unsuccessful agricultural investments and policies of the past 30 years. This outcome sets us far behind the compromise manifested by the international community in the Development Objectives of the Millennium and the World Food Summit Meeting.
- The right to food is not acknowledged by the majority of the States as a fundamental right and therefore, those individuals who asses its infringement cannot claim protection and guarantee to the State.
- The national and official food, agriculture and rural development aid investment have been greatly reduced over the last three decades and meanwhile agricultural policies with interest of diverging impact on the betterment of people food supply have been promoted.
- The impoverished people themselves and groups, as well as several cooperation organizations, have developed means of reaching food safety, have carried out multiple experiments and innovative projects which, under the scope of social and supportive economy prove the feasibility of producing, distributing, consuming and saving in an alternative way.

CONSEQUENTLY, WE CONSIDER THAT:

1. the right to food is a fundamental basic right for human dignity, and that the States should respect it, protect it and guarantee it for all its citizens as well as third parties;

2. any strategy geared towards fighting hunger should be based upon the effective recognition of the right to food within the framework of food sovereignty politics;
3. the policies or subscribed agreements by the international community, both in agriculture and other matters, specially related to commerce, should respect the enjoyment and exercise of the right to food and never hinder it;
4. the agricultural and rural development policies should not be exclusively based upon productivity parameters, but instead they should additionally focus on food sovereignty and the respect for the environment that would allow people to exercise the right to define their own sustainable production, distribution and food consumption strategies and would promote the multifunctional features of agriculture;
5. in the process of defining and implementing international policies and strategies to fight hunger and any other which may affect food sovereignty (commercial, agricultural, etc.) the participation of the Southern countries, specifically those organizations which represent the impoverished groups, should be included and facilitated;
6. the public power players should review their policies and should funnel resources needed for the effective acknowledgment of the right to food so that it truly becomes universal, inviolable and inalienable.



INTRODUCTION

Even before launching the campaign «The Right to Food. Urgent» in 2003, the organizations like ours who supported it, have been overseeing and analyzing the worrisome hunger situation in the world, tackling it from a human rights approach, with the conviction that, anyone who suffers from hunger, has been subject to a violation of human rights, namely, the human right to adequate food.

In recent years there have been many reports and documents drafted by international organizations, development agencies, research centers and civil society actors that we have discussed. Many of them have embraced the problem of hunger from a merely technical point of view, related to agricultural productivity; from this standpoint, the solution or solutions to eradicate hunger stem from improved production and agricultural productivity. But in our initial arguments and our earliest documents, we have been pointing out over the years that we are not facing a widely technical issue – although we believe the productivity aspect is also relevant – but a political one. There is a cluster of policies at both, the international and regional levels, as well as national and local, which instead of encouraging and strengthening people's access to adequate food and the means to produce it, on the other hand, they even hinder improvement.

The years 2007 and 2008 revealed a terrible global food crisis, having pushed back the fight against hunger at worse levels than those in 1996, which is when the commitment of the World Food Summit to halve the number of hungry people was adopted. This resounding new evidence has served, at minimum, to bring back the scourge of hunger into the international community's agenda. The trouble is, that exceeding the figure of one billion hungry people – mainly small farmers, fishermen, shepherds, urban poor, «landless», women, youth and indigenous peoples – occurs when global food production is abundant enough to feed all humanity; this is not – at least at a worldwide level – a production issue but instead, it is a distribution and access problem.

The events of the past three years highlight the failure of the international community who had, supposedly, committed itself strictly and decisively in the World Food Summit in 1996 to halve the number of hungry people by 2015. The 1990-1992 figure of 800 million hungry people was the referential data at that time. Thus, the commitment entailed a numerical reduction of up to 400 million hungry people by 2015. In a brief analysis of the food insecurity data in the world published regularly by the FAO since 1996, we can verify that, since the commitment was subscribed, the number of hungry people – instead of decreasing – has increased year after year without any apparent correlation with agricultural productivity. At this stage, logical compliance and compromise would have allowed a statistical reduction by 37.5%; in other words, there should have been no more than 500 million hungry people in the world. However, the reality is that the number has increased in recent years more than 25% and nowadays, the figure exceeds the amount of 1 billion. The international community has point-blank missed its target. What went wrong?

We could bring forth much data and arguments; we could talk about droughts, floods, wars, bio-fuels, International trade, consumer behaviour, financial speculation, lack of agricultural investments, non-sufficient development support, dumping, agricultural industrialization,... but the bottom line is that this globalized world is globally unbalanced or non-equally globalized. At the forefront of any evidence or global phenomena – especially in the economic field – there is no global governance, no global regulation or anyone who would efficiently oversee the respect for human rights.

Therefore, perhaps the food crisis most critical effect may have been to leverage a reform on food security global governance. Most likely, the success or failure of the fight against hunger will depend on this reform process.

Consequently, we have deemed it relevant to share data, information, thoughts and opinions on this process through the campaign “The Right to

Food. Urgent». This book, – which has been written in close cooperation with the Hunger Studies Institute – offers the reader, first, an outlined and evaluative summary of the food crisis; second, a review of the governance reform developed since the spring of 2008; third, a first analysis of the Committee on World Food Security reform who has acted as the cornerstone of world governance; fourth, a list of opinions by distinguished contributors to this process, representatives of international organizations, in the field of human rights, civil society networks or investigation centres, and finally, concluding, thoughts of the organizations who are supporting this campaign.

We hope this publication adds to a greater and better participation of all groups who want to eradicate hunger and foster the respect, protection and safeguard of the right to food.

THE GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS

1.1.- THE WORLD FOOD SITUATION IN THE CRISIS CONTEXT

“The new lords of the world are terrorized by human rights (...). Because it is evident that economic, social and financial policies that thoroughly embrace human rights would immediately smash the absurd and fatal world order and would inevitably pave the way for more equitable distribution of goods, the fulfilment of people vital needs and would protect them from hunger (...)”
Jean Ziegler¹

Before the food prices crisis broke out, there was an underlying feeling of international optimism about the possibility of achieving several millennium goals and objectives. In fact, in its 2007 annual report, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), assured that if the trend continued, the Millennium Development Goals would be achieved in some regions of the world in 2015 (IFPRI, 2007).

There was even a constant-but-humble reduction of the percentage of people suffering from food insecurity and a gradual and slow trend to achieve Target 2 of the first Millennium Development Goal (MDG) to halve the percentage of people suffering from hunger. The FAO demonstrated this very positive trend since the 70's, by arguing in 2007 that “the percentage of people suffering from hunger had been reduced by half in the 1969-71 time span” (FAO, 2007), although it also acknowledged that the progress was extremely slow. Therefore, the FAO claims that fulfilling the objective established at the World Food Summit (WFS) in 1996 and ratified in the Millennium Summit – to halve the number and percentage of undernourished people by 2015 – is still remote.

1. “Geopolitics of hunger, by Action Against Hunger, 2003-2004”. Part 4: The Right to food, a right under construction, by Jean Ziegler, page.: 251. (Icaria, BCN, 2004)

Nowadays, the number of undernourished people in the world is over 1.02 billions- one out of six people.

The food price crisis that broke out in 2008 has shifted this trend. Nowadays, the number of undernourished people in the world is over 1.02 billions – one out of six people. The result is an increase of the number of hungry by 200 million in 2007 and 24.000 daily deaths from hunger-related-causes, 75% of which are children under the age of five. These figures command the fulfillment of the remaining MDG as no significant improvement in education, health, environment, governance and poverty could be achieved, unless the population has the necessary means to have, at minimum, a dignified life free of hunger.

Both, the numbers presented and their social, economic and environmental impact are shameful and unacceptable in a world that can produce enough food for over 12.000 billion people (almost twice the world current population). This is neither a lack-of-food issue nor demographic pressure; instead, this problem stems from the lack and restriction of access to local and global resources, in a world outright unequally globalized that generated growing pockets of marginalized and undernourished people.

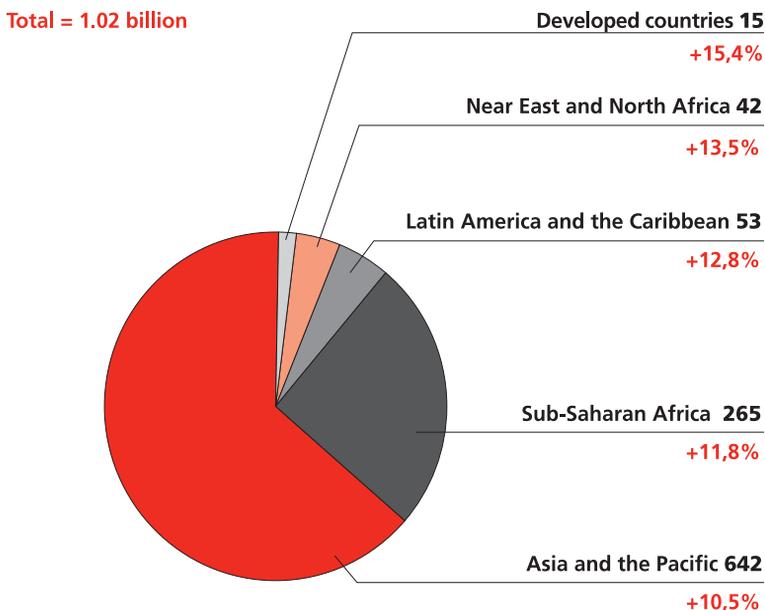
Those in developing countries are the most impoverished by globalization, specifically the landless rural population (50% of the world poor live in rural areas) and the households are run by women or urban poor (FAO-SOFI, 2009). In 2007, 97% of the undernourished population was found in developing countries; out of which, “65% live in seven countries only: India, China, Democratic Republic of Congo, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan and Ethiopia” (FAO-SOFI, 2008).

The countries which have been mostly stirred by the food price crisis have been those developing nations who are strictly food importers.

The countries which have been mostly stirred by the food price crisis have been those developing nations who are strictly food importers, because they do not only lack a domestic market to hinder the impact of the crisis but, to their detriment, have invested the most in the purchase of food in the international market. Most of these countries are in Sub-Saharan Africa, Central and South East Asia (World Bank, 2009). The FAO estimated the global expense on imported foodstuffs in 2007 has increase by 29% in comparison to the historical data of the previous year (FAO, 2008a), which is dramatically impacting the food insecurity situation in these countries, and as a consequence, in the world food situation in 2008.

The following graph shows the number of undernourished people in 2009 and the percentage increment of undernourishment compared to 2008.

FIGURE 1. TOTAL NUMBER OF UNDERNOURISHED PEOPLE IN 2009 AND THE PERCENTAGE INCREMENT OF UNDERNOURISHMENT COMPARED TO 2008



Source: FAO SOFI 2009

The FAO confirms that the Asia-Pacific region accounts for 642 million of hungry people, followed by Sub-Saharan Africa with 265 million, Latin America and the Caribbean with 53 million, Middle East and North Africa with 42 million and the developed countries with 15 million. As it is evident in the graph, the increase of the number of people subject to food insecurity as a result of the food price crisis yields two-digit-figures in all regions. In the case of Sub-Saharan Africa, though the increment is slightly smaller – most likely due to the fact that it lacks international and regional commercial pathways – the situation is in itself dramatic because this region started out from the catastrophic indicator of having a third of the population suffering from chronic hunger.

On the other hand, those countries that were under an emergency situation before the crisis, due to armed conflict or natural disasters have even been more severely stricken by their natural vulnerability.

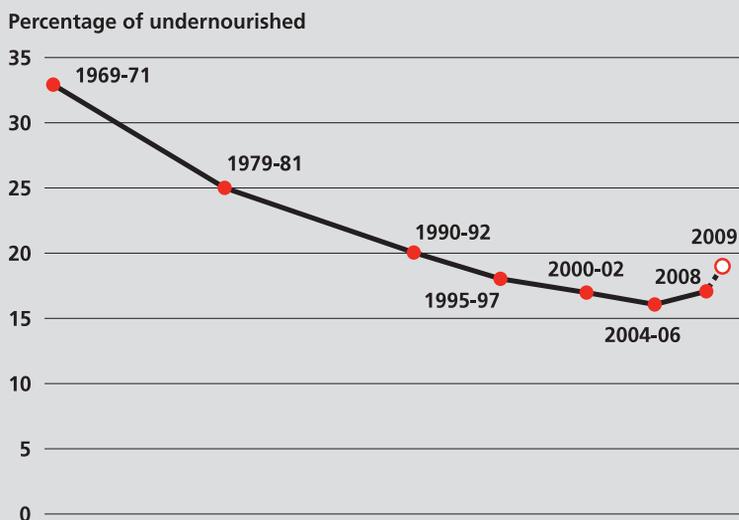
The increase of the number of people subject to food insecurity as a result of the food price crisis yields two-digit-figures in all regions.

As a consequence of the food crisis, for the first time since 1970 the percentage decrease trend in the number of people lacking food security is reversed.

Text Box 1. Reversing the MDG Trend

As a consequence of the food crisis, for the first time since 1970 the percentage decrease trend in the number of people lacking food security is reversed (MDG 1). After this indicator showed significant improvement in the 70's and 80's, it slowed its progress until 2007/08, where the trend changed significantly. The following graph shows the ratio of undernourished people during 1969-2009:

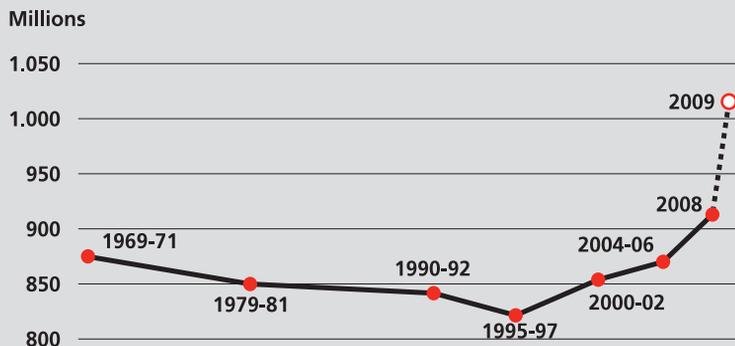
FIGURE 2: PERCENTAGE OF UNDERNOURISHED PEOPLE (1969-2009)



Source: FAO-SOFI 2009

In regards to the ambitious WFS goal of “reducing the number of undernourished people by half by 2015”, it should be pointed out that the number of people suffering from hunger has constantly increased at a gradually faster rate, since the mid 90's; in other words, when the WFS commitments were subscribed. The situation has taken a dramatic scope after the 2008 food price crisis: 200 million people in the past three years. The following graph shows the evolution of the total number of undernourished people in the world since the 90's:

FIGURE 3: TOTAL NUMBER OF UNDERNOURISHED PEOPLE (1969-2009)



Source: FAO-SOFI 2009

1.2.- THE EVOLUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL AGRIFOOD SYSTEM AND THE CURRENT FOOD CRISIS

In 2008 the international prices of staple food skyrocketed, increasing up to 40% in several places in the world. The maize prices doubled its last-year records, the prices of wheat were 40% higher than in 2007, and that same year, the prices of rice tripled (IEH, 2010).

The most immediate consequences of the food crisis were protests and uprisings in several places in the world. Among others places, it was in Mexico where people protested in the streets in 2007, against the increase in the price of corn, a basic ingredient to make "tortillas", a staple ingredient in the dietary intake of Mexicans (known as the "tortilla crisis"). Subsequently, in 2008, protests against hunger, uprising and rioting occurred in Indonesia, Thailand, The Philippines, Haiti, Mauritania, Morocco, Yemen, Pakistan, Guinea, Mozambique, Senegal, Cameroon and Burkina Faso. Over hundreds of people were arrested and killed (in Cameroon over 100 people died during confrontation with the police).

All of the above mentioned countries have big clusters of poor people who are the most vulnerable as they spend 60% through 80% of their income to buy food. Among the poor, women are the most affected, a phenomenon which came to be known as the "feminization of hunger".

In 2008 the international prices of staple food skyrocketed, increasing up to 40% in several places in the world.

The women who work in agriculture in the developing countries produce 50% of the food at the global scale.

Text Box 2. The feminization of hunger

If a few years ago the concept “feminization of poverty” was coined in reference to the indicator that among the poor 70% of them were women, and later the term “feminization of agriculture” was used to signal the rapidly increasing number of rural families lead by women due to the wars, the HIV epidemics or men massive migration to large cities, it is nowadays fair to speak of the “feminization of hunger”. Based on the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), 70% of the 1.02 billion people who are subject to food insecurity are women and girls.

The women who work in agriculture in the developing countries produce 50% of the food at the global scale. This percentage increases by 60-70% when referring to the production in developing countries, where they have limited access to technology, they are not land owners which severely hampers their access to official financing. Women are forced to withstand the pressure of added responsibilities with less access to resources, as they are overloaded with the production, reproduction and community chores. (LAHOZ, 2007).

Therefore, the gender mainstreaming should be prioritized in the policies, programs and project to improve food security and the quality of life in rural areas. Unless the gender approach is accounted for, no significant changes will prevail.

The causes of the crisis are diverse. From its beginning, numerous studies and debates over its causes were carried out and a general consensus was reached on the signaling of the most relevant causes to the sudden and widespread increase of the international prices of staple food.

On this regard, some arguments have made references to **cyclical causes**, such as crop losses, inflation and speculation on the prices of food. However, the widespread belief is that the food price crisis could be mainly explained through **structural causes** which still prevail and, which have been progressing over time as a result of an asymmetric evolution and unfair global agrifood system, which have obviously not been addressed promptly and which have not been well prioritized among national, regional and international authorities.

The widespread belief is that the food price crisis could be mainly explained through structural causes which still prevail.

Among **the structural** causes, the most relevant have been the following: the impact of the deregulation of the agriculture and non-agriculture raw material markets, the oil price increase, the drastic drop of agrifood production in the developing countries, the unbalanced supply and demand driven by the changes in the dietary profile of the emerging countries, the burden of the measures imposed by the international financial institutions (IFIS), the evident trade distortions in the international food market and, finally, the impact of climate change on food security at the local, national and global level.

There is no international legal and mandatory mechanism in the raw materials markets. There are “good practices” and codes of conduct but they are optional and they do not protect the markets from speculative capital. The progressive deregulation of the raw materials markets started in the 90’s with the cancellation of agreement and measures such as, for example, the limitations in the number of applications and operations in potential markets. This deregulation has gradually confirmed what UNCTAD has called “the financing of the raw material markets”. This has allowed speculative capital funds from investment banks, hedge funds, and others to be funneled into these markets with speculation purposes, enhancing the vulnerability to other factors and increasing the prices. The speculation was boosted with the influx of investment in the future food markets as a “harbor” sector, given the failure of other economic domains, primarily in the real estate business.

The oil price rise increased the costs of transportation and agricultural inputs, such as fertilizers, pesticides, and machinery and prompted an increased demand of agro-fuels. As a consequence, large plots of land were used for agro-fuel crops to the detriment of food crops, therefore stressing the soil resources and promoting exuberant international sales of land in developing nations.

During the food price crisis, it became evident that agro-fuel crops have and will have significant consequences on the world food production. Among others, Joachim Von Braun, Director of the IFPRI, argues that the supply of food and the supply of fuel is undeniably linked, which has brought a competition scheme between the agrifood crops and the fuel crops which will affect the price and supply of both for many years to come. Other critics, such as the former Rapporteur on the right to food Jean Ziegler already considers agro-fuels as «crime against humanity», and several institutions such as Stockholm International Water

Large plots of land were used for agro-fuel crops to the detriment of food crops.

Institute (SIWI) claims through scientific evidence, that if this situation persists, the quantity of water needed for the agro-fuel production will equal to the amount needed for agriculture to feed the whole world population by 2050. Moreover, FAO estimates that the demand of agro-fuels will continue to raise the price of agrifood for an extended period of time (FAO, 2008).

The reduction of public investment in agriculture in the developing countries has been uncontrollable over the last 30 years.

The demise of small and medium scale farmland in the developing countries is another relevant factor in the food price increase. The reduction of public investment in agriculture in the developing countries has been uncontrollable over the last 30 years. The 2008 World Bank development report indicated that public investment in agriculture in primarily-agrifood-producing-countries is less than 4% of the total investment. This figure is considerably low in comparison to the 10% that many countries with improved levels of development would spend on average in 1980 (World Bank WDR, 2008)². As a result, this abandonment forces the dependency of the developing countries on the International food market and, therefore making them more vulnerable to the international price fluctuation. In fact over the past 30 years, the 49 poorest countries in the world became sheer importers of food, when they used to be exporters. (IEH, 2008).

The African countries tried to tackle this situation in 2003, by signing the Maputo Declaration, where the African Union countries agreed to increase public expenditure in agriculture up to 10%. Nevertheless, up until now, only seven countries achieved this objective: Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Zimbabwe (Oxfam, 2009).

The ODA (Official Development Aid) for agriculture has been dramatically diminished over the last three decades.

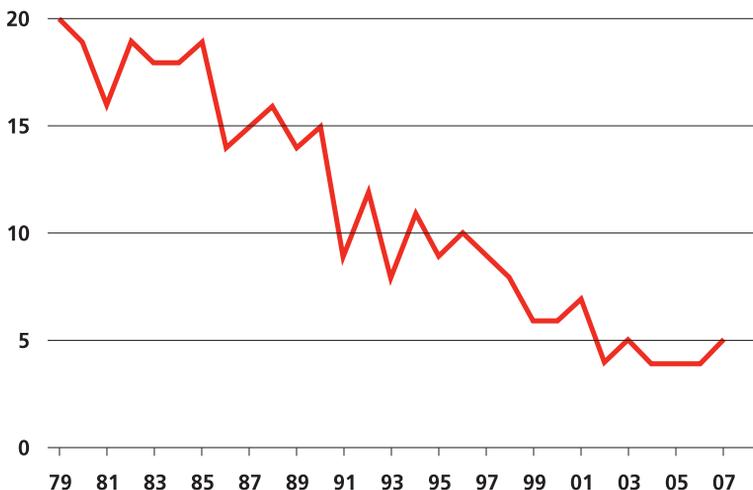
The ODA (Official Development Aid) for agriculture has been dramatically diminished over the last three decades, which has hampered public investment in the developing countries. The ODA for agriculture decreased from 18% in 1978 to 3% in 2007 (Broad Scope for Action, 2008).

2. Quoted on LAHOZ, C. y DE LOMA, E.: "The multilateral context of the SAN" (Spanish Agency of International Cooperation to Development –Spanish Acronym: AECID 2010)

FIGURE 4. PROPORTION OF ODA ON AGRICULTURE (1979–2007)

Aid to Agriculture has decreased

Proportion of ODA on agriculture (percentage)



Source: OCDE

The explanations to the disregard for the sector can be found in the equations imposed by the International Financial Institutions (IFIS), who – through structural adjustment programs – have encouraged the mutation of the small-scale agricultural model to agro-extensive farming for export purposes, that mostly benefits the multinational corporations and pose a threat to the family agriculture, rural farming, traditional fishing, and the natives’ production systems. Many developing countries, guided by the IFIS, have favoured monoculture and are sheer importers of food, therefore being totally dependent on the international markets but with scarce capacity to participate in them.

Many developing countries, guided by the IFIS, have favoured monoculture and are sheer importers of food.

Moreover, the consequences of developing countries huge foreign debts should be accounted for. Since the late 70’s and early 80’s (when the debt crisis broke out), the developing nations have been spending more on the «debt services»³, under the IMF recommendations than on social and productive services – agriculture, among them.

3. The debt service is the recurring payment that the debtor pays as interests and capital depreciation.

Based upon what was previously stated, the question is: does anyone benefit from this crisis?

The food price crisis has favoured the purchase of large plots of agricultural land in the developing countries (land-grabbing) –mostly in Africa.

Text Box 3. Has anyone benefited from the food crisis?

From a political economy point of view, this crisis is related to the evolution of the agrifood system over the last 30 years. The liberalization of the agricultural markets and their association with the financial markets as well as the technological improvement in the input production chain and the need to open new markets, have allowed an strategic alliance between the agro-chemistry sector, the seed-producing industries and the potential food markets (mostly for grains) towards the integration of Africa in the current and future international agricultural market system. As a consequence, the food price crisis has favoured the purchase of large plots of agricultural land in the developing countries (land-grabbing) – mostly in Africa – by the rich countries and multinational corporations.

Olivier de Schutter, special Rapporteur on the right to food, sent a warning message over the poignant impact of this scheme: “the eviction of many farmers who are not land-owners, the loss of access to land by the native people and shepherds, more pressure and competition for the use of certain resources, such as water and greater risk of food insecurity by the local population who are denied the access to the resources”⁴. The only ones who benefit from this situation are the multinational tenants.

“On the other hand, while many farmers and communities are suffering, other stakeholders in the food business seem to be making profits through the crisis. Nestlé global sales have increased 8.9% in the first of half of 2008. Monsanto, the world's largest seed company, has acknowledged to have increased its revenues by 26% from March through May of 2008”. (OXFAM, 2008).

4. De Schutter, O.: “Human Rights principles to regulate land-grabbing” (11/06/09). Official webpage of the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food.

This food crisis outline – fostered by the asymmetrical evolution and an unfair global agrifood system – also meets the implication of the subscription to several bilateral and multilateral trade agreements with the rich countries that would, supposedly improved the access to International markets and would help alleviate poverty more efficiently. However, these treaties have been poignant for the agrifood sector in the developing nations allowing – through the World Trade Organization (WTO)'s consent – the continued implementation of abusive subsidy policies by the rich countries (specially the US and EU), while the poor nations were obliged to liberalize agriculture. As a result, the development countries has been dragged into total dependence on the international agriculture prices which are heavily distorted by the subsidies of the developed nations while being unfairly affected by the international increase in the price of foodstuffs.

This food crisis outline also meets the implication of the subscription to several bilateral and multilateral trade agreements with the rich countries.

On this subject matter, the conclusions of the IAASTD⁵ (International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development) report are very straight forward as they state that “agricultural trade can benefit the poor but our present trade regimes do not advocate small-scale and subsistence agriculture in rural areas”. Even though there is sufficient evidence of the detrimental effects on the poor of agrifood trade liberalization, the crucial decisions for a successful shift in the undeniable asymmetrical growth of globalization are postponed; in fact, in the WTO inter-ministerial meeting held in Hong Kong (2005), the deadline for the dismissal of subsidies-on-exports has been 2013⁶.

The international agrifood system confronts a major challenge concerning the relative unbalance between food supply and demand.

The international agrifood system also confronts a major challenge over the next decade on the new development changes, concerning the relative unbalance between food supply and demand. The world faces a progressively greater demand of meat and dairy products, – namely China and India – as a result of the dietary intake diversification across the social classes who broke out of poverty and modified their life style. The production of this type of food commands an allocation of grains for animal

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5. The IAASTD (International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development), report, drafted by the World Bank in cooperation with leading UN agencies (FAO, PNUD, UNESCO, PNUMA), over 700 scientist from all over the world and the civil society.
 6. The Doha round of negotiations should have set the basis for the land reform, but nevertheless continues to be a vague and abstract promise. Meanwhile the occidental scheme prevails, – paraphrasing Orwell: “we should all liberalize our markets, but some more than others”.

Climate change is drastically diminishing the agricultural producers capacity to predict and manage their production systems.

After 30 years of absentmindedness, the crisis has, once again, brought the fight against hunger into the international development agenda.

feed (a cow needs 10-16kg of cereals to produce 1kg of beef), which will raise and impact the future price of agriculture staple goods.

Finally, – an exogenous element in the agrifood system – but one with serious impact on the food crisis and which will have profound implication in food production – is climate change which is drastically diminishing the agricultural producers capacity to predict and manage their production systems as means of subsistence to achieve food security. Moreover, as a result of climate change, millions of people have become “ecological refugees”. The United Nations estimates that “nowadays, there are over 250 million ecological refugees and one billion will be subject to the same misfortune in 10 years”⁷. On this regard, the IFPRI (International Food Policy Research Institute) claims that there is a direct relation between the price of food and climate change: “the floods and droughts translate into severe crop losses; and an increase in global temperature by three degrees translates into an increase in the price of food-stuffs by 40%”⁸.

Ultimately, the food price crisis which has increased the number of hungry people can be considered a warning about the long term implications of an unfair agrifood system, conceived for the benefit of a few and the detriment of many, namely the poor and most vulnerable groups. After 30 years of absentmindedness, the crisis has, once again, brought the fight against hunger into the international development agenda. Now is the time when the world should reevaluate whether the existing institutions and a global governance is capable of delivering a more balanced system to everyone’s benefit and to fight hunger.

Text Box 4. Country case: Ghana

Ghana had been achieving much progress in the fight against hunger and poverty up until 2007; the percentage of people living below the national poverty line decreased from 52% in 1991-92, to 29 % in 2005-06. However, the food crisis has halted the trend.

The increase in the price of food was drastic (see box) and was coupled by a significant reduction of the purchasing power of households affected by diminished remittance and employment of the extensive commercial farming employee workers.

7. Ziegler, J. “Hunger in the world as explained to my son”, pg.93

8. The Revolt of the Hungry: El Pais digital (08/03/2008)

MOST PRONOUNCED INCREASES OF STAPLE FOODS IN GHANA (06/07)

PRODUCT	PRICE INCREASE 07/08
White corn	+51%
Rice	+43%
National Rice	+33%

Source: self-assessment based FAO data, 2008

Consequently, the population was forced to emigrate and change the dietary intake both in quantity (reduction of the quantity of food) and quality (by substituting the tradition corn and rice calories intake to other cheaper and less nutritional food).

Fortunately, Ghana counts on a social food safety net which has, partially, mitigated some consequences of the crisis. Nevertheless, Ghana is categorized by the IMF among the “very vulnerable” countries.

1.3 - THE RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS: AFFECTED COUNTRIES, DONORS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The food price crises prompted assorted responses by the affected countries, the donor nations and the multilateral organizations. Several measures are presented and reviewed hereunder.

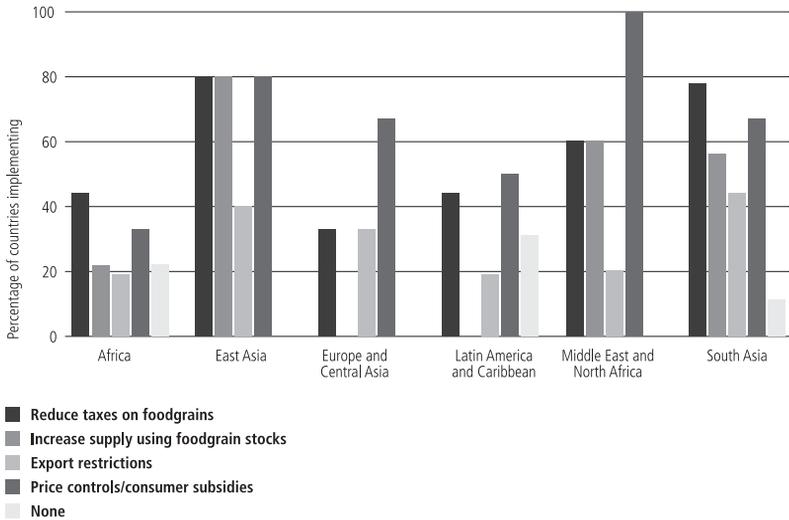
1.3.1.- The response to the food crisis by the affected countries

The most affected countries were the first ones to react through unilateral measures geared towards their domestic market as well as their agrifood trade policies. Each country implemented the measure it deemed appropriate, such as the liberalization of price-subsidized stocks, tax removal, restriction on private trade or reduction of tariffs and customs fees, among others.

The following graph shows the measures adopted by the most affected crisis after the crisis breakout:

The most affected countries were the first ones to react through unilateral measures geared towards their domestic market.

FIGURE 5. POLITICAL ACTION AGAINST THE INCREASED PRICE OF FOOD IN THE REGION



Source: FAO

Some outstanding unilateral measures adopted by the most affected countries were some of the following: Pakistan reintroduced rationing for the first time in two decades; Russia froze the price of milk, bread, eggs and oil; Indonesia increased public subsidies, and India prohibited the export of rice – except the high quality. Thereby, the World Bank confirmed that 48 through 58 countries activated mechanisms, such as price control, consumer subsidies, or export restrictions to minimize the effect of the price increase on their people. (Spanish acronym: IEH in IECAH, 2008 /International Hunger Institute and the Institute of Studies on Conflicts and Humanitarian Action)⁹.

9. An IEH (Hunger Studies Institute) Article: “The evident failure in the fight against hunger” (October 2008)

TABLE 1. UNILATERAL MEASURES ADOPTED BY THE MOST AFFECTED COUNTRIES

ADOPTED MEASURES	COUNTRIES
Export Restrictions	Cambodia, China, India, Pakistan, Ukraine, Vietnam and Zambia
Import fees reduction	Brazil, The Ivory Coast, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Liberia, Senegal
Consumer subsidies	Bangladesh, Ecuador, Malaysia, Thailand, Zimbabwe.
Production subsidies	Malawi, Burkina
Combination of several of these policies and measures	Argentina, Bolivia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Mexico, Peru, The Philippines, Russia, Tanzania

Source: self-assessment from: Anatomy of the Global Food Crisis¹⁰, 2008.

Several countries implemented policies and programs to directly support agricultural producers, through market or non-market mechanisms, including subsidies to buy seeds and fertilizers, better access to credit, and production safety nets. Out of the 81 countries surveyed by the FAO, only 35 reported the implementation of measures to support production and only 15 promoted market intervention policies, such as the regulation of the producer's prices.

On the other hand, measures to create and reinforce food social safety nets were adopted, which have proven to efficiently hinder the impact of the crisis in the most impoverished households. Some of these measures have focused on cash transfers, food assistance through programs such as public school feeding, or food/cash for work, and the distribution of vouchers and food stamps.

The trade-related measures had a profound impact and became an unprecedented protectionist trend in the current globalizing process. The measures were appropriate to address an emergency situation with an imperative need to help people. The adopted trade measures showed once again the multilateral trade system lack of resources to cope with food insecurity.

Some of these measures had mid and long-term counterproductive effects. For example, export restriction negatively impacted the commercial partners of those countries which unilaterally undertook protectionist measures, while these partners were often affected by the crisis as well. Thus, Asian countries export restrictions on rice adversely affected importing

Measures to create and reinforce food social safety nets were adopted, which have proven to efficiently hinder the impact of the crisis in the most impoverished households.

The adopted trade measures showed once again the multilateral trade system lack of resources to cope with food insecurity.

10. CONCEIÇÃO, P. and MENDOZA, R.: "Anatomy of the Global Food Crisis" (UNDP July 2008)

countries where rice is an important food-staple in the daily diet. Consumer subsidies are often a good option if geared towards the most affected and vulnerable groups; otherwise, they may waste resources needed for other urgent demands.

The adoption of these measure – often criticized by the developed nations and badly regarded by the WTO, lead to the statement in the Declaration on the World Food Summit on Food Security (November 2009) that claimed: “the need to refrain from adopting unilateral measures that are not in line with the International Law and the UN Charter, which may endanger food security”.

1.3.2.- The donors countries response to the crisis

Before the food crisis back in 2006 the DAC (Development Aid Committee) had opened the discussion on the importance of agriculture in the pro-poor growth¹¹. The agriculture section of the report “Promoting pro-poor growth: a policy guideline for donors” published in 2006, confirms the priority donors should give to agriculture and presents a new agenda to be added to the development policies.(DAC, 2006).

However, the alarm went off and the responses by donors was triggered by the Director of the World Food Program (WFP), Josette Sheeran urgent call, in March of 2008 through a letter to the donors published by the Financial Times, requesting for immediate help to maintain the purpose of her institution. The WFP openly admitted its inability to satisfy the growing demand of food aid with limited resources of little value in the market, with the same funds to buy greater quantities of food aid at a much higher price. The WFP was requesting 500 million dollars of additional resources to be able to rescue people in a food emergency situation in 80 countries. Other organizations, such as FAO, also called for urgent measures to tackle the consequences of the food price crisis, at the beginning of 2008. However donors delayed their response even more, as most of the compromises where announced in mid-2008, when the crisis has already increased the number of people suffering from food insecurity to 100 million.

11. Pro-poor growth is a term used in national policies geared toward stimulating the economic growth to the benefit of the poor (poverty as understood in economic terms). Absolute pro-poor growth means that the poor benefit from the overall economic growth, and relative when specific actions are carried out to boost growth among the poor (UNEP, 2006)

The donor nations were responding with greater or lesser compromise to the international calls, while they kicked off their own programs on cooperation and aid on food security. In regards to the WFP urgent call the donations came through sluggishly and the total amount was only allocated in May of 2008 when Saudi Arabia offered the 500 million dollars.

Moreover, many resources committed by the donors had already been allocated for that purpose, and in some other cases, only media announcements were made that would scarcely materialize. Those who meant to survey the contribution versus the adopted compromises faced the obstacle of the poor accounting submission at the international level.

The donor nations were responding with greater or lesser compromise to the international calls.

TABLE 2. MOST IMPORTANT COMPROMISES ANNOUNCED BY DONORS TO FACE THE FOOD PRICE CRISIS

United States	770 million dollars: 620 on food and 150 on projects to support agriculture.
Japan	100 million dollars in food aid.
Canada	50 million dollars in addition to its 180 million annual contributions to the WFP. It includes the special contribution of 10 million dollars to Haiti.
Great Britain	60 million dollars to the WFP and 800 million on agriculture (including research) in five years. It includes a special aid of 50 million to Ethiopia.
France	1 billion euros in five years to develop agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa.
Italy	14 million euros to Food Security Fund and the FAO.
Holland	50 million euros to the development of agriculture through teaching and training.
Sweden	12 million dollars to the WFP, which add to its 66 million annual contributions.
Norway	20 million dollars through the WFP and African institutions of the most affected countries.

Source: Lahoz & De Loma, 2008

This chart signals almost all of the G-8 countries. Among them, the US, Japan, Canada, Italy and Sweden, committed most of their funds to food and emergency aid. Only Great Britain and France spent large sums on long-term projects on research and agricultural investment. Given this scenario, it is noteworthy that after the meeting in Hokkaido in July of 2008, the G-8 first added the food security matter in their agenda. At the High-Level Conference on World Food Security on the challenges of climate change and bio-energy held in Rome in June of 2008, – attended by 181 Countries – a demand was presented to the international community to increase the aid to the countries most affected by the food price crisis.

It is noteworthy that after the meeting in Hokkaido in July of 2008, the G-8 first added the food security matter in their agenda.

The donors committed themselves to help with 11 billion dollars to face the crisis. All along the year 2008 additional announcements were made, thereby reaching the 24 billion dollars amount. These commitments

included aid from donor nations (Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Canada, France, Germany, Japan and Kuwait. Luxemburg, Monaco, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Spain, Great Britain, the United States and Venezuela), the European Union, the UN-CERF and the World Bank, in addition to loans from regional development banks.

In December 2008, the European Union adopted a regulation to establish a Food Facility, with 1 billion euros for a period of three years (2009-2011), out of which, over 200 million will be managed through the FAO operations in 25 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin-America. This Food Facility embraces measures to improve the access to agricultural inputs and services, to cover the basic dietary needs of the most vulnerable populations, and to increase agricultural production.

As far as Spain, coupled with sponsoring the High-Level Meeting on Food Security for All (known as RANSA - Reunión de Alto Nivel para la Seguridad Alimentaria de Todos), in January of 2009, it has announced important compromises. In the FAO Summit held in Rome in 2008, Spain committed 500 million euros in four years to rural development and the fight against hunger. At RANSA, Spain made an additional commitment of 1 billion euros fund in a 5-years time period

In the FAO Summit held in Rome in 2008, Spain committed 500 million euros in four years to rural development and the fight against hunger.

1.3.3.- The response to the crisis by the international organizations

The UN and Bretton Woods organization responded to the food price crisis with a series of specific programs. Such programs were implemented in December of 2007 and May of 2008. The following summarizes the characteristics of the most important programs implemented.

TABLA 3. PROGRAMAS PUESTOS EN MARCHA POR LAS ORGANIZACIONES INTERNACIONALES

ORGANIZATION	PROGRAM/POLICIES	DESCRIPTION
FAO	Initiatives on the food price increase started in the beginning of 2008	Aid to small farmers, through the distribution of seeds, fertilizers, animal feed and inputs. Counseling to the governments on policy measures to tackle the crisis. In 2008 almost 59 million dollars were committed to aid the most severely affected countries.
WFP	Global response to the high food prices. May 2008	Improves the availability of nutritious food-stuffs for children under the age of five, mothers and other vulnerable groups. In addition it promotes local production and acquisition of nutritious food.
IFAD	200 million dollars aid for loans to small farmers. April 2008	Promotes the production of small farmers with short-term programs, such as the distribution of agricultural inputs, and with mid and long-term programs through interventions to increase sustainable production.
World Bank	Global Food Programs Responses (GFRP). May 2008	Improved quick financing through a 1.2 billion dollars fund to cope with urgent demands: quick interventions geared towards restoring the ties between the small farmers and markets, improve the access to inputs markets and information services on the market. Technical assistance to the affected countries.

Source: Self-assessment based upon data from the FAO, 2008 and the HLTF, 2009.

All of the mentioned programs were also joined by other UN agencies initiatives that deal with issues related to food security and nutrition which have substantially reinforced their programs on food and nutrition, such as UNICEF, UNDP, OCHA and the WHO.

Each one of these programs responded to the organizations own principles, guidelines and sound experience, and have been implemented at a time, when no coordination mechanisms counted on shared and aligned views for joint efforts among international organizations to recruit donors to their programs. In spite of this, they were able to mobilize a significant amount of resources by the second semester of 2008 and the first semester of 2009.

TABLE 4. MOBILIZED AND INVESTED RESOURCE BETWEEN JUNE 2008 AND SEPTEMBER 2009 BY THE MOST IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

ORGANIZATION	MOBILIZED FUNDS (MILLION DOLLARS)
WFP	5.600
FAO	394
IFAD	911
UNICEF	146
UNDP	31
WB	12.161
WHO	3
IMF	9.204

Source: HLTf, 2009.

In general, donors had a more generous response to the Bretton Woods institutions (World Bank and IMF) than to other UN agencies, especially FAO who has the mandate to coordinate agriculture and rural development programs.

In regards to the measures adopted at the international level, two categories could be pointed out: first, those measures geared towards short-term alleviation through – in most cases – emergency food aid; and second, long term programs which include agricultural reform policies and proposals, social security policies, fiscal and distribution trade policies, to manage the macroeconomic impact, prevent future crisis and balance the world food system.

However, neither the unilateral measures adopted by the countries, nor those advocated by the international organizations were – in any way – properly articulated or coordinated, which leads to the conclusion that the response to the crisis was neither effective nor coherent.

The response to the crisis was neither effective nor coherent.

1.4.- The current financial crisis and its effects on food security and nutrition: hunger escalates

In the second half of 2008, even though the prices in the local market were still, high, the prices in the international markets started to gradually fall, bringing optimism among the affected countries about the possibility of progress in the fight against hunger.

However these hopes were impaired by the surge of the international financial crisis at the end of 2008.

The financial crisis plunged the food price crisis into the background in the mass media, though its consequences are still strongly prevailing in the developing nations. In fact, the concurrent effect of the food price crisis and

the financial crisis confront the most affected groups – landless farmers, women-lead households, and the poor urban population – with an increasingly difficult scenario.

One of the most significant effects of the financial crisis was worldwide unemployment, which, although it had a more severe impact on the urban poor, it also had an indirect effect on the rural population who is increasingly dependent on emigrants remittances. The most common way to confront the situation was to both, reduce the daily intake of food and consume cheaper and less nutritious meals.

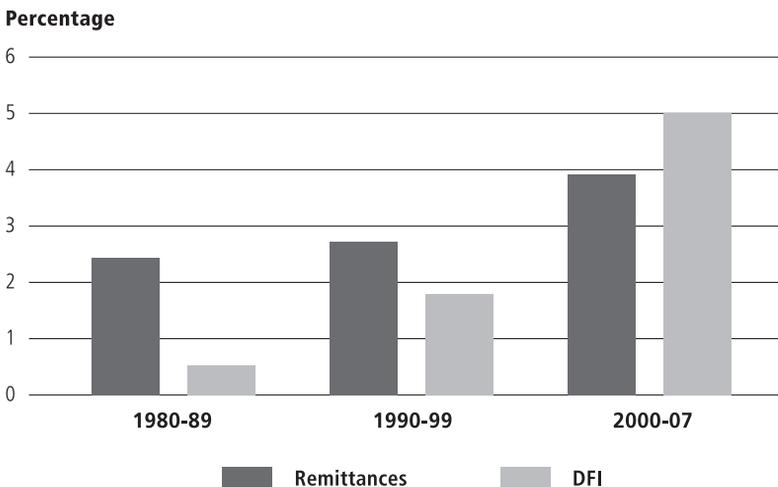
Food-deficient countries were most severely stricken by the financial crisis because they had to borrow money to import food at increasingly hiked-up prices and to invest in already-mentioned programs.

These countries have smoothed their balance-of-trade through Direct Foreign Investment (DFI), remittances, loan and ODA, but these triggers – which are seldom stable and predictable – have been halted by the recession in developed nations. For example, the shortfall of the previously-mentioned financial resources in the 17 largest economies in Latin America, went from 184 billion dollars in 2007 to 89 billion in 2008. (SOFI, 2009).

The importance of remittances and DFI as a function of the developing countries can be seen in the following graph.

Food-deficient countries were most severely stricken by the financial crisis.

FIGURE 6. REMITTANCES AND DFI AS A PERCENTAGE OF GDP (1980-2007)



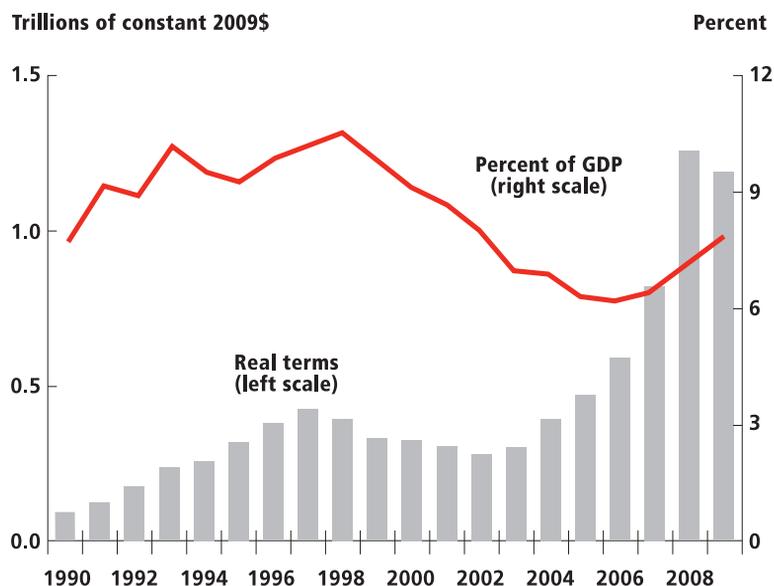
Source: World Bank

As the financial crisis would strike the economies of the rich countries, the official development aid was scaled down.

Moreover, as the financial crisis would strike the economies of the rich countries, the official development aid was scaled down. Therefore, resources for food security and nutrition declined, and previously-subscribed commitments were set aside. In 2009, the IMF predicted that 71 countries would see their ODA fall by 25% as a consequence of the financial crisis. (IMF, 2009). This recession, which – as claimed by the World Bank – would translate into a contraction of global growth of 2.9% in 2009, will continue to distress the developing countries. The financial needs will be more demanding, while the aid to development will stall or drop down. The remittances will be diminished and employment destruction will exacerbate poverty and food insecurity.

The following graph shows the World Bank estimation of external financial demands of the developing nations in the 1990-2009 time-frame, as percentage of their GDP evolution:

FIGURE 7. DEMANDS OF EXTERNAL FINANCING IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (1990-2009)



Source: estimations by the World Bank, 2009

As it can be seen, the demands of external financing for the developing countries – through ODA, DFI or remittances – had an upward trend in the 2006-2009 time-frame. Moreover, the graph shows over the last three years, a shifting trend in the importance of external financing in the gross domestic product of the developing nations which met the effects of the food and financial crisis. Nowadays, the developing countries need additional external financial support, but it is highly unlikely that donors will cope with those demands under the effects of the crisis.

Nowadays, the developing countries need additional external financial support.

The available resources in the developing countries to implement social policies, such as social food safety nets, or promote agrifood production policies, or ensure livelihood through sufficient quality food, are scarce and slow-to-come. Without a doubt, the hunger situation in the world will worsen, which will add other obstacles to the already-worrisome status of over 1 billion people suffering from food insecurity in the world.

1.5.- The absence of world food governance

Throughout the analysis of the different crisis, its causes and consequences on food and nutrition security, there are four relevant common elements that should be highlighted.

First, it's the technical and political weakness at the international level of the agrifood institutions, who were not capable or willing to predict the implications of certain international policies in the local and global food security scheme.

Second, the lack of coordination among organization to bravely and quickly respond to the global scope of this situation, who streamlined their projects as isolated unilateral initiatives driven by specific interests rather than development goals.

Third, the fact – too often forgotten – that the countries – member states of the international organizations who are the ultimate rulers – did not know or want to rule on these matters. The countries are accountable for the governance crisis as they decide on the future of the international agencies.

The countries are accountable for the governance crisis as they decide on the future of the international agencies.

Finally, the importance and need of commitment compliance through an accountability system which would interpret the present standing support review it and demand accountability for projects encouragement and discouragement in the field of food and nutrition security.

The international events surrounding the food price crisis and food security have emerged over the past three years, though no succinct and

binding commitments over the cooperation and development policy alignment on food security have been agreed upon. Though many financial commitments were endorsed, the majority of them have not been executed and there is little visibility or information on how those resources were actually managed. Furthermore, it should be recalled that most of these funds were committed to tackle the immediate consequences of the crisis and to address the most urgent needs of the affected population. However, structural mid-and-long term measures have been scarcely put forward, and what has been agreed upon, such as the IAASTD report, has had a limited impact due to the controversy of its content.

On the other hand, the food crisis has prompted several coordination initiatives such as the Global Alliance for Agriculture, Food and Nutrition as presented by the G-8, bypassing the existing UN mechanisms, such as FAO or the Committee on Food Security (both under a reform process). The latter are the legitimate entities acknowledged by the developing countries and the civil society and they should continue to unite their efforts towards achieving a sound and most-needed world governance on food security.

The UN has kicked off an additional coordination mechanism: the High-Level Task Force (HLTF) on the Food Crisis, whose primary objective is to create a Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA). Nevertheless, none of these mechanisms have shown proven efficiency in coordinating the initiatives by donors, UN agencies or Bretton Woods institutions devoted to enhance food security.

The crisis has brought to the surface that prevention, coordination and accountability are three pending subjects in world governance on food security. Neither the UN agencies, nor the donors, the IFIS or the governments were capable of coordinating their programs and anticipating the dreadful consequences that are now trying to address. The events of the last three years make it imperative that the principles of transparency, participation and accountability be embraced in the management of all committed funds.

The next chapter thoroughly looks at the steps towards world governance on food security.

The crisis has brought to the surface that prevention, coordination and accountability are three pending subjects in world governance on food security.

THE GOVERNANCE REFORM PROCESS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER

2.1.- THE FOOD CRISIS HIGHLIGHTS AGAIN THE NEED OF A GOVERNANCE REFORM ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

The concept of food governance was first introduced in the early 20th century by the Society of Nations (the precedent of the United Nations) and acknowledged the need to establish an international policy alignment mechanism on food security, which led to the creation of FAO in 1945.

FAO promoted high level conferences as the meeting ground for debate and analysis of the concept of food security and the best possible policies for its effective implementation. One of the first times the effectiveness of this system was put through a test was during the food crisis of the early 70's, which had an overall resemblance to the 2006-2008 crisis. The price of food – which had had a downward trend over the 60's – skyrocketed and simultaneously, the oil crisis broke out due to the Yom Kippur war between Israel, Syria and Egypt.

The oil countries' producers and exporters (the OPEC, Syria and Egypt) decided to discontinue selling oil to those nations who supported Israel in the war. The Western countries heavy dependence on oil and its up-to-four-folds escalated price led to an inflation crisis that plunged the world into an economic recession. This adverse scenario met poor agriculture production outcomes and set the base-ground upon which the food insecurity crisis surged out. The impact of the first oil price shock plunged 40 million Africans into hunger in the 1973 and 1974 time frame.

The United Nations reacted by hosting the first World Conference on Food in 1974, sponsored by FAO, where the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition was approved¹². In 1970, the world population was 3.7 billion and the number of undernourished people were 400 million, namely 10,8 % of the population, while the current percentage is 16,6%.

The Western countries heavy dependence on oil and its up-to-four-folds escalated price led to an inflation crisis that plunged the world into an economic recession.

12. Resolution 3348 (XXIX) 17 December, 1974

The lack of agreement and coordination among the different countries and the agencies and institutions that have campaigned against hunger became evident.

This conference proposed the creation of the Committee on Food Security (CFS), with the purpose of acting as an intergovernmental unit within the UN system to assess and reviews the policies and programs concerning food security issues worldwide.

Back in those years, the lack of agreement and coordination among the different countries and the agencies and institutions that have campaigned against hunger became evident and as Susan George stated in her book "How the other half dies": "They could only agree on the fact that hunger is escalating"

In fact, the disparity of interests and political-strategic views among the Southern and Northern countries on one side, and among the socialists and capitalists nations on the other hampered the committee's ability to accomplish its mission. Meanwhile, several FAO and Committee's agenda-matters were delegated to other units, such as, the World Bank and other agricultural sector related agencies (such as IFAD) hereby diminishing the power of the countries of the South given that the decisions in these institution are lead by a few member states who finance them. The Committee weakening was coupled by the agricultural liberalization process, the exacerbation of globalization inbuilt changes and the demise of several regulatory mechanisms at the international level within the UN framework.

More recently, several summits were hosted which announced high-level resolutions which made an imperative moral and ethical call to eradicate hunger in the world and put an end to the weak commitments and the poor results. As a summary, the following international milestones can be signaled: the first World Food Summit (WFS) in 1996, where a plan of action to achieve food security was approved with the countries full consensus for the first time, though it has not yet brought efficient results as made evident in the escalating number of hungry people.; the second World Food Summit in 2002 (5 years after) which proposed the creation of an alliance against hunger initially made up by four specialized institutions¹³ in agriculture and food-related-matters with the civil society participation and the private sector. However, up to this date that Alliance has achieved no tangible progress in action coordination and agreement.

On the other hand, a significant group of civil society organization has been advocating since the early 90's the use of the world food sovereignty as an encompassing tool to devise alternative solutions and joint action plans. The collective proposal of this initiative was grounded on the parallel

1996 WFS forum political declaration which stated: *“The social movements would like to manifest its collective frustration and rejection of the official declaration of the Food Summit. Since 1996 the governments and international institutions have lead globalization and liberalization which have intensified the structural causes of hunger. They have triggered (...) a more severe polarization of the rich and poor (...) and have aggravated poverty and hunger in the world.”*

These summits and their parallel forums clearly show the longstanding colliding interests and opposing views of the actors involved in the fight against hunger. The food issue is a complex multidimensional and wide-ranging matter which encompasses political, economic, social and cultural elements. Hence, achieving an international treaty based upon policy agreement and coherence by reconciling these interests whereby the right to food of the people, communities and nations who suffer from the scourge of hunger and under nutrition is prioritized, is mostly imperative.

Once again and due to the food crisis, the need for close coordination and common goals achievement among a broad range of groups – governments, agricultural organization, civil society, donors, development banks, international and regional organizations, research institutes, trade entities – is clearly manifested. For that purpose, several initiatives supported by different countries, organizations and interest groups, etc. spring up. After the breakout of the food price crisis, an opening move on this matter was the creation of HLTF and its Comprehensive Framework for Action which will be thoroughly explained in the following section, whereby the UN attempted to establish a forum for discussion and agreement among all actors.

These summits and their parallel forums clearly show the longstanding colliding interests and opposing views of the actors involved in the fight against hunger.

2.2.- THE UNITED NATIONS CREATION OF THE HIGH LEVEL TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS THE FOOD CRISIS

In April of 2008, the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called upon the participation of all the directors of the United Nations agencies with competence or involvement in food security and the Bretton Woods institutions in Geneva. As a result of that meeting the High Level Task Force on food security was created, led by the United Nations Secretary General, with the purpose of ensuring action coherence in the United Nations agencies and Bretton Wood institution food security matters.

13. FAO, PMA, IFAD e IFPRI.

The HLTF functions as the proposals coordinator in the developing countries as well as in the donor nations, to address the food crisis and gathers leaders of specialized agencies, funds and programs, the Bretton Woods Institutions (IMF, WB and WHO) and the UN Secretary General.

Text Box 5: The High-Level Task Force on the food crisis (HLTF)

The HLTF is made up by the directors of specialized units, United Nations funds and programs, the Bretton Woods Institutions and the UN Secretariat. The constituent members are:

- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
- International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR)
- Organization for Co-operation and Economic Development (OCED)
- Special Adviser on Millennium Development Goals
- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
- United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)
- United Nations Department of Political Affairs (DPA)
- United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI)
- United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
- United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)
- Office for the Coordination of Human Affairs (OCHA)
- United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Islands Developing States (OHRLLS)
- World Bank (WB)
- World Food Program (WFP)
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- World Trade Organization (WTO)

The secretary general of the UN is the president of the HLTF and the general director of FAO is the vice-president. A general coordinator

teams up the task force with the support of Secretariat made up technicians who had been selected by multilateral organizations and some donor countries.

Its key responsibilities are:

1. Counseling the Secretary General on the most adequate proposal to combat food insecurity.
2. Consensus building of all relevant actor in the CFA.
3. Promote coherence and coordination on information exchange.

For more information please visit the website:

<http://www.un.org/spanish/issues/food/taskforce/>

The objective of the HLTF is to promote a unified response to combat food insecurity in the world, by establishing priorities or action plans as well as coordinating the execution (HLTF, 2008). Hence, it responds to the need for leadership and coordination which, as stated in previous sections, unveiled the existence of uncoordinated responses by governments, donors, international organizations and financial institutions, to the food crisis.

In July of 2008, the HLTF presented the Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA) with the high-level goal of giving the governments, the international and regional organizations, and the civil society groups a broad set of policies and practices to choose from as most adequate responses given the context and scenario.

The CFA presents two primary objectives (with an impact assessment for each one of them); the first one is to hinder the most critical and urgent effects of the crisis, and the second one is to achieve long-term results, and both of them mean to fulfill the MDG 1. The objectives are:

- Improve access to food and nutrition aid and embrace immediate measures to increase the availability of food.
- Strengthen food and nutrition security in the long-run by addressing the underlying causes of the food crisis.

The CFA was considered, along with the WFS Action Plan of 1996, the most precise document at detailing a course of action to combat hunger in the world and achieve food security for all.

The objective of the HLTF is to promote a unified response to combat food insecurity in the world, by establishing priorities or action plans as well as coordinating the execution.

This initiative was welcomed by several United Nations agencies and Bretton Woods institutions, which for the first time could count on a coordination mechanism upon which they could maneuver their programs. Even though the document was very comprehensive and left plenty of room for customized activities – due to the wide range of action proposals – it was not easily embraced by several UN organizations who feared the partial loss of leadership, competence and therefore, resources.

In general, the donors also welcomed the CFA with interest, at a time when they demanded a reform process of the UN institutions, since they considered them to be excessively expensive and bureaucratic, with increasingly limited technical capacity and unable to bring tangible and effective results in the fight against hunger.

In December 2008, the HLTF presented a program for 2009 focused on supporting developing nations to implement the CFA suggested action plans, with the purpose of launching a financing mechanism for that action proposal. However, and despite of its good initial acceptance, certain donors mistrust on a still-week institutionalization, with clear interaction difficulties with other constituent organizations and a brand new financing mechanism, prompted them to maintain their unilateral financial support prevailing initiatives. This disturbed the HLTF and CFA leadership consolidation process to address the food crisis.

During 2009, the HLTF tried to find its position within the reform context of the World Committee on Food Security, by participating in the reform debated. Also during this year, the HLTF strengthens its association and joint activities with civil society organizations, by sponsoring recurrent counseling forums to build the governance on world food security.

Nowadays, the HLTF is involved in the CFA review process that will support a more realistic framework for action, and will potentially contribute to outline the strategic global framework (CFS) (see text box 14). The following text box summarizes the key contributions by the member's organizations of the campaign "The Right to Food. Urgent" to the CFA review.

Text Box 6. Contributions of the Campaign “The Right to Food. Urgent” to the CFA review process (March 2010)

Governance on food security. The new CFA should state the scope and range of the different current international initiatives articulate them or merge them within the framework activities of the reformed Committee on Food Security (CFS). It should also review the potential role status of the CFA and the HLTF in a CFS reforms scenario.

The Right to Food Focus. The food security governance should be built with a human rights focus. The approval of the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 2009 and its enactment would allow the reporting of these rights violation by filing claims at the UN CESCR. It is important to keep this new dimension into account when updating the CFA and adding the human right to food approach. The Voluntary Guidelines for progressive realization of the right to food in the context of food security should be and important reference for the CFA reform.

The preferential agricultural model. The scheme to be advocated in the fight against hunger is not the agro-industrial model. Instead family agriculture with an agro-ecological oriental is the preferred option. This concept is mentioned in certain sections of CFA but is refuted in others and it should be concisely and strongly stated. The programs to combat hunger should decisively encourage family agriculture.

The Domestic Focus. The CFA properly insists on the domestic duties, the coordination activities of the different international organizations over the leading role in each State in its own territory. However, it important to not exclusively work at the domestic level, but to also duly account for the regional and provincial attributes, as well as the population and ethnic group singularity. The review should emphasize the participation of rural organizations and stakeholders who have decision power over the definition and implementation of agricultural public policies and, specifically, the CFA execution.

The minimum criteria for consensus on bio-fuels: An International consensus should be reached on the percentage of bio-fuel energy production and the International criteria that should regulate any bio-fuel production or sale transaction. These criteria should include a set of ethical principles and a certification scheme to guarantee that

The food security governance should be built with a human rights focus.

production was commissioned under environmental, social, energy-efficient guidelines, and with due observance of the food security standards.

Climate Change: A reassessment of our development model should be deliberately carried out. A proportional system of accountability should be established so that those economies that are significantly inducing climate change should be proportionally responsible of safeguarding food security and addressing the vulnerability traits of the most affected populations.

Source: campaign "The Right to Food. Urgent", 2010
The complete contribution document can be found in the campaign webpage:
www.derechoalimentacion.org

2.3.- MILESTONES OF THE REFORM PROCESS OF THE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE ON FOOD SECURITY

After the HLTF reform in 2008, several international meetings were held to discuss the food price crisis and many seminar and conferences addressed food insecurity. All of these high level gatherings set a base ground for a diverse, disorganized and spontaneous political debate which embodied initiatives and discussions in favor of a governance on food security:

The food crisis calls for the international community reaction.

May 2008. The special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier de Schutter, calls upon the United Nations Human Rights Council to convene in a special session on the impact of the price rise and the realization of the right to food. In his contribution published in May 2, 2008, the Rapporteur concluded that the food crisis calls for the international community reaction, which under the guidelines of international laws could demand the observance of the right to food by the States. He also states that, clarifying the international obligations of States may help to promote a much needed international cooperation¹⁴.

The Human Rights Council, by holding its first special session ever on an economic and social right on 22 May 2008, sent a strong message to the international community about the equal value of all the rights of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The session highlighted the fact that

14. MANDATE OF THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHT TO FOOD New York and Geneva, May 2nd P P, 2008 <http://www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/otherdocuments/1-srrftnoteglobalfoodcrisis-2-5-08.pdf>

human rights should not only be seen as obligations imposed on States acting individually, but also are to be realized through international dialogue and cooperation¹⁵.

In a joint declaration at the Council on Human Rights, FIAN, CETIM, ActionAid, Habitat International Coalition, FIDH (International Federation on Human Rights), Vía Campesina (International Peasant Movement) and approximately 60 other additional civil society organizations (among which PROSALUS and Veterinarians without Borders) subscribed a text titled “The world no longer needs this medicine”. Unlike the UN High-Level Task Force analysis to address the global food crisis, we acknowledge the fact the current crisis is deeply entrenched in decades of bewildering international policies, promoted and implemented under the guidance of the Bretton Woods institutions and- more recently the WTO. These policies have failed to create and to maintain a facilitating environment for the States to respect, protect and guarantee the human right to adequate food”¹⁶.

We acknowledge the fact the current crisis is deeply entrenched in decades of bewildering international policies.

June 2008. The High-Level Conference on World Food Security is held in Rome: the challenges of climate change and bio-energy, which concluded with a declaration that called for an increase in food production, a reduction of barriers to trade and additional agricultural research initiatives. It was estimated during this conference that national governments and donor nations should invest, in between 15.000 and 20.000 million dollars annually for several years to boost food production to outdo the risks of a new crisis¹⁷. It also points out the risks of agro-fuels and their environmental and food security impact.

During this conference, the opportunity to discuss institutional arrangements and governance issues on the management and the international response to the crisis was facilitated. France launches for the first time the idea of building a global partnership on agriculture and food. However, the conference was considered a failure by many, since only a general agreement was reached to reverse to current trend so that agriculture could be included as a fundamental development issue in the international agenda. Unfortunately, no agreements or allied plans came about to address the structural causes of the food crisis and the means to tackle them.

15. <http://www.srfood.org/index.php/es/areas-de-trabajo/governance-and-the-global-food-crisis>

16. http://www.escr-net.org/news/news_show.htm?doc_id=688977&attribLang_id=13441

17. UN Secretary-General declaration, in the opening of the High level Conference on Food Security, held in Rome (June 2008)

July 2008. In the G8 meeting held in Hokkaido (Japan) the G8 leaders sign a declaration on world food security where they manifest their commitment to increase food aid and acknowledge the coordinating role of the UN, thereby supporting the CFA, while a strong proposal to create an “Global Partnership for Agriculture and Food Security”(GPAFS) is advocated: “we will work with the international community in forming a global partnership on agriculture and food, involving all relevant actors, including developing country governments, the private sector, civil society, donors, and international institutions”¹⁸. Even at early stages, this proposal has not been supported by important stakeholders such as the civil society representatives and the G-77.

Few international commitments announced in 2008 had become effective.

January 2009. The “High-Level Meeting on Food Security for All” (RANSA - Reunión de Alto Nivel sobre Seguridad Alimentaria para Todos) is held in Madrid where resilient effort was needed to maintain food security as a top priority in the development agenda (regardless of the breakout of the financial crisis). During this meeting the UN Secretary General identified the right to food as the third foundation stone of the CFA while giving overall support to this framework of action, and supported the proposal of a Global Partnership on Agriculture and Food Security as he added the nutritional aspect (GPAFSN). At RANSA, it became evident that few international commitments announced in 2008 had become effective. Hence, out of all the committed funds during the FAO conference, only 10% had been delivered by the end of 2008 – a percentage that accounted for emergency aid only (IEH – The Institute of Hunger Studies, 2010).

A surprising result of the RANSA meeting was the general acceptance that the United Nations currently existing units should be entrusted with the governance role on food security, after a reform and adjustment process of the units involved. Another important initiative that was put forward was the need for extensive and surveys so that the governments, the civil society, companies, scientific researcher and international and regional organizations can create partnerships where the standpoint of the different countries can be considered.

18. Point 4 of the declaration of the G8 leaders on global food security.

February 2009. The discussion process on the Committee on Food Security (CFS) reform was launched. A reform process **contact group** – made up of two member States per region and UN agencies and civil society representatives – is created. This group would meet on a monthly basis in plenary sessions, the first one of which was held in April 2009.

July 2009. The annual G8 plus (with the addition of China, India, Brazil, South Africa and Mexico) in L’Aquila includes the global food security issue in its agenda, and calls upon countries to eliminate export barrier – specially humanitarian relief exports – and those destined to successfully fulfill the Doha Round terms. The CAADP and NEPAD¹⁹ initiatives to increase public investment in agriculture in the African countries, are also supported. The participating countries agree to mobilize 21 billion dollars over a period of three years, for agriculture and food security and also decide to hold a series of meeting to revise the endorsed commitments. This process came to be known as “The road from L’Aquila”

September 2009. Co-presided by Italy and the United States, the first meeting within “The road from L’Aquila” process was held in the United Nations headquarters. An Action Plan for 2010 was developed to combat food insecurity and hunger and a new follow-up mechanism – known as “Partnering for Food Security: Moving forward” – to review compliance with the L’Aquila commitments was established.

During this month, the G-20 Meeting takes place in Pittsburgh, which backs up the initiative to create a Global Partnership on Agriculture Food Security and Nutrition Security and calls upon the World Bank to create a multi-donors trust-fund involving donors and institutions to complement the CFA efforts.

November 2009. The Third World Food Summit is held with very ambitious objectives:

- Eradicate hunger by 2025.
- Launch a more coherent and efficient governance system on food security.

19. NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA’S DEVELOPMENT - Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program

- Agree on rules and mechanisms so that small-holder farmers of the north and south have similar revenues to those workers in the secondary and tertiary sectors.
- Mobilize 30 billion dollars annually for public and private investments in rural infrastructure and guarantee input access to boost production and productivity in the developing nations.
- Approve an early-reaction mechanisms to food crises.

Many countries and social groups start to show tolerance-fatigue to the list of events and summits which failed to bring about any tangible results.

Controversy preceded the summit, as many countries and social groups start to show tolerance-fatigue to the list of events and summits which failed to bring about any tangible results and therefore did not support the Summit gathering. Many Heads of State and Governments of the developed countries (mostly the G8) were absent at the summit. The final declaration states that in order to feed 9 billion expected inhabitants by 2050, agricultural production will have to increase by 70%. A CFS reform is strongly supported and stakeholders are urged to work within the Global Partnership on Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition.

The social movements, NGO's, several developing countries and the Special Rapporteur on the right to food considered the summit to be a failure, since once again it does not address some structural causes of hunger and continues to overlook small-holder agriculture, which should be the basis upon which world food security governance may be built.

December 2009. A new "The road from L'Aquila" process meeting leads the creation of a work group to follow up on the financial commitments approved in L'Aquila, made up by Canada (as a G-8 member), the CFS, the HLTF, the OCDE and the EC.

TABLE 5. MAIN SUMMITS AND EVENT ON THE FOOD SECURITY CRISIS (APRIL 2008-DECEMBER 2009) AND THEIR BRIEF DESCRIPTION

EVENT AND DATE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Creation of the UN HLTF, April 2008	Under the command of the Secretary General of the UN, the goal is to promote a unified response. Its first achievement was to create the Comprehensive Framework for Action.
High-Level Conference on Food Security: The challenges of climate change and bio-energy, June 2008	A declaration was promoted that called for increased food production, a reduction of trade barriers and additional agriculture research.
Presentation of the CFA and the G-8 Meeting in Hokkaido (Japan), July 2008	It manifested its support to the HLTF and the CFA, and introduced the idea of creating the "Global Partnership for Agriculture and Food Security"
High-Level Meeting on Food Security for All (RANSA), in Madrid, January 2009	Extensive support to the CFA. The right to food is acknowledged as a cornerstone of programs and potential achievements and the need to create a governance mechanisms such as CFS is reinforced.
G-8 Meeting in L'Aquila, July 2009.	A series of meetings were held to follow up on the endorsed commitments, known as "The road from L'Aquila".
Meeting on Food Security, within "The road from L'Aquila" process, en the United Nations, New York, September 2009.	Co-presided by Italy and the United States, an action plan for 2010 is developed to combat food insecurity and hunger.
G20 Meeting in Pittsburgh, September, 2009	The World Bank is called upon to create a multi-donors "trust-fund" along with involved donors and institutions to complement the CFA.
Third Summit Meeting on Food Security. And, simultaneously, The Social Movements Forums NGO/CSO, November 2009	The work of the Contact Group established by FAO to review the Committee on Food Security is approved, while working within the Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition is encouraged.
Meeting to review the L'Aquila commitments, December 2009	A work group to follow-up on the endorsed financial commitments at L'Aquila, was created. Canada (as a G-8), the CFS, the HLTF, the OCDE and the EC.

Source: Self-assessment.

The analysis of this time line of events confirms the need for better coordination and stronger political decision, given that several interests must come to agreement terms and there is no common ground for negotiation with equal representation of the countries of the north and south. Different work proposal continue to emerge, essentially framed under two clearly different initiatives and diverging strategic outlines: the L'Aquila process and the CFS reform.

Different work proposal continue to emerge, essentially framed under two clearly different initiatives and diverging strategic outlines: the L'Aquila process and the CFS reform.

2.4.- THE L'AQUILA PROCESS AND THE CFS REFORM: OPPOSING STANDPOINTS BETWEEN THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH

The Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition (GPAFSN) and a reform of the Committee on World Food Security have been two parallel proposal and processes that are clearly diverging, since the interests of the G8 countries supported by large agrifood corporations collide with the interest of other countries of the north, several developing countries and the civil society in participating and leading the creation of a more efficient governance system on food security in the world.

The Global partnership is stewarded by several countries of the North with an underlying eagerness to step in the international spotlight. Initially the partnership proposal was presented at the G8 meeting in Hokkaido (July 2008). In January 2009, at the RANSA meeting held in Madrid, the partnership was stewarded by Spain and was named the Global Partnership on Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition (GPAFSN).

Even though it was conceived as a global discussion process to maintain agriculture, food security and nutrition in the international agenda and the global debate forums – therefore granting the CFS a very relevant role in it – the truth is that its core assignments have not yet been detailed. In any case, objectively speaking, the GPAFSN has not emerged as anything more than an political and resources mobilization abstract process.

In the G8 in L'Aquila, Italy takes the leading role. In the G-20 held in Pittsburgh, the leaders of the 20 countries support the initiative.

In his contribution on GPAFSN²⁰, at the RANSA meeting, the Special Rapporteur of the UN on the right to food, Olivier de Schutter, signaled the risk of creating a new Partnership. First, he pointed out that, given its arrangement, the GPAFSN could not propose a honest agenda if led by the key donors (G8) and the Bretton Woods institutions, and second he warned the attendees of the potential disarray of the international fight against hunger, as the United Nations agencies and Bretton Woods institutions partnership may allow simultaneous diverging agendas under each organization priorities.

In order to prevent this disarray, he recommended that objectives and their expected outcome were clearly specified, and that human rights were the framework upon which the action plan would be executed, with a top

20. Special Rapporteur contribution to the debate on the Global Partnership on Agriculture and Food Security, in preparation for the High level Conference on Food Security for All, Madrid, January 26th - 27th, 2008 (01/2009)

priority focus on the right to food. He also added, that the partnership should be guided by the principles of transparency, participation, non-discrimination and accountability – in accordance to the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda – and should incorporate the reformed CFS as a core unit.

Furthermore, the CFS reform is supported by the developing countries where they have a “one nation, one vote” representation, unlike in the G8, where they are obviously not accounted for.

The social movements, NGO's and Civil Society Organizations called upon the FAO member States in the declaration presented at the third WFS, to financially contribute to the CFS reform process as a demonstration of their political will.

The draft Declaration of the Third World Food Summit on Food Security (Rome, November 2009) stated in point three: *“Urgency awareness and the commitment to address the world food crisis have leveraged international cooperation and governance on food security, through the Global Partnership on Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition centered on the Committee on Food Security leading role. It is crucial to improve world governance with the support of the existing agencies and advocating effective alliances”*. But no references were made on the establishment of coordination mechanisms among them or, on each entity's role.

In any case, a text that encourages the participation of existing institutions while also advocates the creation of a global partnership, is in essence, contradictory. This contradiction was also evident in L'Aquila, where the partnership proposal was put forward while simultaneously acknowledged the key role of FAO in the global governance reform process on food security.

Some NGO and Civil Society Organization, along with the G-77, have shown skepticism and mistrust to the GPAFSN proposal. Others, such a Via Campesina, have expressed their conclusive rejection.

In general, the developing countries as well as the social movements or the civil society groups are against a global governance on food security reform led by or financed by the IFIs and the G8. They advocate a more democratic and transparent model centered around the United Nations system and the reformed CFS, where each country has a vote. They also expect the L'Aquila process to be merged into the CFS, which is actually stated in the approved text on the creation of a reformed CFS.

At the international level, uncertainty prevails regarding the support of the countries of the north – and, in some cases, African countries also –

It is crucial to improve world governance with the support of the existing agencies and advocating effective alliances.

The developing countries as well as the social movements or the civil society groups advocate a more democratic and transparent model centered around the United Nations system.

to the CFS reform process. The approach to the CFS reform which primarily seeks to enforce the CFS role as a “best practices” exchange platform is a clear example of the secondary role certain countries expect the CFS to have in the creation process of a world governance on food security.

2.5.- MAIN COORDINATED AND EXPLICIT INITIATIVES AT THE GLOBAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL: THE WORLD BANK MULTI-DONOR TRUST FUND AND THE CAADP PROGRAM.

This section portrays explicit initiatives that are, in a certain way, the result of the previously analyzed processes, which seem to be more openly supported by the donor countries: The World Bank Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), and The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP).

The Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) was drafted by the World Bank, Canada, the United States and Spain and was officially presented to the IMF Committee on 4 October, 2009 in Istanbul. It is a global multi-donors trust fund which has been recently created to finance national initiative on agriculture and food security. It has five potential financial support areas as general objectives:

1. Increase agricultural productivity.
2. Link farmers to the markets.
3. Reduce risks and vulnerability.
4. Improve the rural non-agricultural livelihood.
5. Technical assistance, institutional strengthening and capacity building.

The program has opened three channels to support the national plans on food security. The first one means to transfer resources to the public sector through the World Bank, IFAD and the regional bank; the second channel is aimed at supporting the private sector through International Financial Cooperation (IFC) of the World Bank; and the third one expects to encourage technical assistance, through FAO and other technical agencies at the regional and global level.

So far, this GAFSP has a 1 billion dollar budget contributed by the three founding countries. Spain has delivered 80 million dollar to this fund as per the commitment upheld by the President in the framework of support of the Common Agricultural Policy of ECOWAS (The Economic Community of West African States).

The civil society opinion on GAFSP is straightforward: GAFSP should strengthen the recently approved CFS instead of weakening it. In November 2009, the Coordination Committee of the Civil Society Forum called upon the civil society organization to request a review of GASP policies by the key donors. This revision should incorporate two fundamental aspects: first, it should include the representatives of the CFS bureau in the Steering Committee of the GAFSP donors group and accept technical support by the CFS counseling group; and second, it should sustain the expenses of the CFS responsibility to manage and support the implementation of national action plans on food security with GAFSP funds.

As a response to this call, eleven American NGO's have issued a press release (15 April, 2010), where they claim that in order to combat poverty and hunger, transparency, accountability, the civil society involvement and the non-intervention of International Financial Corporation (IFC) is essential.

Transparency and accountability are essential to combat poverty and hunger.

CAADP was approved at the African Union Assembly in the Agricultural Ministry Conference in Mozambique in 2003, with the purpose of improving food security and nutrition and the revenues of the agricultural African economies. The CAADP subscribed the commitment to boost agricultural productivity by 6% by 2015 and increase public investment in agriculture by 10% in the African countries national budgets.

The donors financial contributions should be delivered through the World Bank multi-donor fund. The donors confidence on this program is shown in the substantial influx of resources. For example, American USAID has committed 15 million dollars over a five year time period. The European Union Commission has committed 7.2 million dollars and the Netherlands, 6.5 million. Other partner's contributions expect to increase the fund resources up to 60 million dollars by 2012.

The CAADP is based on four principles:

- Sustainable management of land and natural resources.
- Improvement of rural infrastructure and market access.
- Incremental food supply and hunger reduction.
- Agricultural research.

Even though the program addresses the whole African continent situation, it is implemented at the sub-regional and national level. The national projects are carried out by National Agriculture Investment Plans, known as "CAADP Compacts"; priorities and activities are set at the national round

table discussions between donors and each countries government with an active participation of the civil society.

The first country to sign a CAADP Compact was Rwanda in 2007. 2008 was a very dynamic year as eight countries joined in agreement: Togo, Burundi, Ethiopia, Sierra Leona, Benin, Mali, Niger y Liberia. Furthermore, nine additional countries are supposed to sign up by 2010, namely, Ghana, Nigeria, Gambia, the Ivory Coast Malawi, Uganda, Swaziland, Kenya and Zambia. Zimbabwe is currently negotiating the Compact terms.

The regional entity which has most significantly progressed in the implementation of this process was ECOWAS, which has signed the first Regional Compact.

Despite of its drawbacks, these negotiation and agreement approaches could become the breeding ground for national governance mechanisms associated to the CFS. The potential next step should be to encourage these institutions to implement national development strategies on food security with the equal legal and official participation of a comprehensive group of stakeholders.

THE COMMITTEE ON FOOD SECURITY BEFORE AND AFTER THE WORLD SUMMIT ON FOOD SECURITY

3.1.- CFS BACKGROUND

As previously mentioned, one of the proposals of the First World Food Summit held in 1974 was the creation of a Permanent Committee on World Food Security (CFS)²¹ which should function as a FAO technical committee. The CFS responsibilities were approved in November 1975 and are summarized as followed:

- To examine the main food security problems and issues and the governments and international organizations measures to address them.
- To examine the impact on world food security of other related factors, specially the staple food supply-demand system and the need and trend of food aid; the stock situation in exporting and importing countries; physical and economic access to food and poverty related issues which affect food security.
- Recommend appropriate measure to encourage world food security.

The 1996 World Food Summit additionally granted the CFS the surveillance responsibility over the implementation of the Action plan adopted in that summit.

In 1997, during the June session of the FAO Council, the functions of the committee were reformulated to achieve two fundamental goals: to incorporate the definition of food security adopted in the 1996 summit and to turn the CFS into the United Nations forum where world food security policies and other issues such as trade impact on the food market could be examined and applied.

21. Resolution 21/75

The main objective was therefore, stated as follows: "The committee will contribute to the world food security goal to guarantee that every person has at all times physical and economic access to sufficient and adequate food, free from adverse substances and nutritious enough to satisfy the sustenance of an active and healthy life".

Ever since it was created, the FAO Member States continue to gather in periodic session joined by developing countries as well as donors, to discuss the main problems and issues of food security.

During these sessions the developing countries would explain their food and nutrition insecurity situation, the progress (if applicable) on this subject matter and presented their financial requests to the developed countries. However, strategic action programs were rarely promoted.

The donor countries funds commitments would be rarely materialized, and if so, the financial data was so scarce that not subsequent track records could be kept. As a result, the CFS session were blundered by empty debate and outcomes defaults where the committee was pushed into the role of an independent forum where selfish interests excluded agreement and progress.

Furthermore, the CFS, even at initial stages, has been democracy-deficient since its decisions were never comprehensively agreed upon with the involved actors, namely the civil society organizations. This may explain why the civil society has always criticized the CFS, by emphasizing the poor relevance the human right to food has on its agenda and the committee favorable standpoint on intensive agricultural trade liberalization.

So far, the CFS has held 35 sessions, the last one of which (October 2009) approved its reform document.

3.2.- THE NEED FOR A CFS REFORM

The 2008 crisis highlighted the CFS strategy failure. The poor predictability and the uncoordinated response to the crisis proved the CFS inability to achieve the targeted results and that a reform was needed. Therefore, in October 2008, during its 34th periodic session, the CFS decided to begin a reform process to strength its role as a coordination entity to align policies and program on food security at the international level.

Upon beginning, increased participation by the developing countries and the civil society was considered a top priority. An incremental presence of the civil society organization would be crucial to assist in government commitment tracking and reporting human rights violations such as the right to food.

The CFS session were blundered by empty debate and outcomes defaults.

The new CFS should become the main United Nations platform for coordinated execution and tracking of the program on food security, by strengthening local, national and regional partnerships. It should count on scientific evidence to legitimize its decision, guidelines and recommendations, through high-level experts' inputs. It was therefore decided to create a high-level panel of experts on food security (HLPE/FS).

The FAO Council considered this reform to be a crucial step towards improving world governance on food security (FAO, 2008).

While the reform process was taking place, the Rapporteur on the right to food stated the reasons that explained the failure to eradicate hunger which should be crucially accounted for in the CFS reform. These reasons are signaled in the following text box.

Text Box 7. Five reasons for the failure to eradicate hunger²²:

The Special Rapporteur on the right to food claim there are five reasons for the failure to eradicate hunger:

- 1) An almost exclusive focus on increasing agricultural production, instead of the adoption of a more holistic view about the causes of food insecurity..
- 2) A failure of global governance to overcome existing fragmentation of actors, policies and mitigation efforts and inability to promote inclusive global partnerships with integrated policies and viewpoints.
- 3) A still incomplete scientifically-supported understanding of how to work in certain areas which have an impact on our ability to achieve food security for all.
- 4) A failure to follow upon commitments, a result of a lack of accountability at the global level.
- 5) The insufficiency of national strategies for the realization of the right to food at domestic level.

De Schutter 2009

22. Complete text available at: <http://www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/otherdocuments/20-srftcontributioncfs22may2009-rev.pdf>

3.3.- THE CFS REFORM PROCESS: THE CONTACT GROUP

Once the CFS reform was approved a Contact Group (CG) was created. The CG was made up of two FAO member States representing each region, and delegates of the United Nations agencies, civil society organizations (SCO), and NGO's (Oxfam, Vía Campesina, IPC and Action Aid among others). This group met on a monthly basis since 2009, to draft the final CFS reform document in the Third World Food Summit held in November of that same year.

The process developed by the CG was very dynamic, transparent and inclusive. The CG opened a web page so that all work documents could be available to the involved actors.

The reform proposal development was led by four work group, whose input would be included in the final document. The groups would deal and debate on the following issues:

1. The role and vision of the new CFS.
2. CFS member and their decision power.
3. Mechanisms and procedures.
4. High-level expert panel.

Some of the key contributions of this process were related to the strengthening of the CFS role to follow up on the commitments and achievements of the donors and governments of each country.

The CFS should observe the principles of commitment and responsibility, to avoid the mistakes of the past, and gather all UN agencies and the civil society in the most inclusive manner to coordinate all actors proposal on food security. Moreover, the HLTF should be actively involved in the reformed CFS. It was also suggested that ECOSOC could merge the CFS into the reform process.

The first plenary session of the Contact Group was held in April 2009. In that meeting, several aspects of the actual reform process were discussed: schedule, CG reference terms, agreement on the content of the final document and next-steps to create a high-level panel of experts (HLPE),

The second session was held in May where the preliminary draft was discussed. It contained three alternatives on participation in the decision-making process within the CFS.

The third meeting took place in July and presented the second draft where it was stated that the CFS would continue to act as an inter-governmental organization with three levels of participation:

The CFS should observe the principles of commitment and responsibility, to avoid the mistakes of the past.

1. Members full rights. The governments have the right to make the decisions. Participants. The UN agencies with a specific mandate on food security
2. (FAO, WFP, IFAD) and the HLTF (which should have a very active role), NGO's and CSO (specially those related farmer issues) international experts on the subject. The participants should have and advisory role to the governments.
3. Observer. Private Sector.

It was also agreed that the CFS reform would be gradually implemented, first, at the international level and second, at the national, local and regional level.

Text Box 8. Key claims of the civil society in the CFS reform process

The civil society fundamental claims were presented in a comprehensive manner in the CG meetings. They were the following:

- The CFS should have a normative and political role whereby decisions are based upon the right to food and the 2004 voluntary guidelines.
- The civil society role in the CFS should be that of informing and influencing its decisions. The civil society participation should be institutionalized, on distinctive terms when compared to the member States status, as they have different responsibility and duties in the CFS.
- The Global Partnership proposed by the G8 should be merged into the reformed CFS. The HLTF should assume the Secretariat role.

The CFS should have a normative and political role whereby decisions are based upon the right to food and the 2004 voluntary guidelines.

The last plenary session – prior to the Third World Food Summit – took place in October 2009. The last aspect of the reform document was discussed before its presentation.

Despite of the overall consensus throughout the process, no agreement was reached on certain issues, such as the private sector participation. Even though this sector had been asked to participate through the entire the reform process, its passive demeanor led many to ponder on their possible subsequent withdrawal. Furthermore, the Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition kindled apprehension as it is considered a CFS

parallel mechanism. The CSO and the NGO's believed the CFS would take up the leading role, as the UN coordinator on food security affairs. However, several FAO member States – the majority of them being G8 countries – continued to support the GPAFSN.

The final document on the CFS reform was presented at the Third World Food Summit meeting in November, 2009.

3.4.- ANALYSIS OF THE REFORM PROPOSALS APPROVED BY THE FAO COUNCIL

In October 2009, during the 35th CFS session, the members of the CG presented the committee reform proposals. Those reforms were conceived with the purpose consolidating the CFS vision and function as the coordinator of worldwide efforts to combat hunger and guarantee food security.

The reform presents the CFA as the most inclusive international inter-governmental platform which is meant to lead worldwide food security endeavors and function as a core unit within the Global Partnership on Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition.

The CFS has an Executive Committee or Bureau that represents the CFS member groups in the plenary sessions, that coordinates interventions of different actors at distinctive levels, and commands the CFS plenary sessions preliminary work. The Executive Committee is made up of a Chairperson and 12 members – two per each of the following regions: Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Middle East; and one from North America and one from the South East Pacific Region. The members are chosen every two years in the CFS plenary meetings.

The executive committee will count on the assistance of an advisory or consulting group, made up of NGO's representatives in the CFS. All representatives would be able to participate in the joint meeting between the Executive Committee and the Advisory Group, but the Executive Committee will have the decision-making attributes.

The plenary is the core decision-making, debate, coordination, training and consolidation unit that brings together stakeholders on food security from all over the world. The meetings will be held annually and extraordinary session will convene as well. The plenary results are to be submitted to the FAO Council and ECOSOC.

The reform presents the CFA as the most inclusive international inter-governmental platform which is meant to lead worldwide food security endeavors.

23. It is understood, that the second stage – which focuses on national and regional coordination – will be executed after the reformed CFS is strengthened.

Finally, the CFS will have a permanent Secretariat located in FAO Headquarters in Rome. It will be in charge of helping the plenary, the executive committee and the consulting group, as well as the HLEP in their work.

In reference to its role, the text states that the reform will be executed in two stages. The first stage²³ – intermediately applied after the reform text approval – strengthens coordination at the global level. It also highlights the support to policies convergence and coordination by developing international strategies based on lesson-learned and local, national and regionally proven best-practices.

It contemplates three definite participation attributes:

- **Members:** governments, FAO Members, the WFP or IFAD and United Nations member States that do not belong to the previously mentioned agencies. It is the most dynamic scheme.
- **Participant:** UN agencies representatives with specific mandate on food security issues such as, HLTF, the WFP, FAO and IFAD and those who deal with related matters, such as UNICEF, UNDP and WHO, the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, the High Commissioner on Human Rights, the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Office of Coordination of Human Affairs (OCHA), and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

Civil Society Organizations and NGO's, whose work areas encompass food security matters, specially small holder farmer organizations, fishermen, craftsmen, peasants, the urban poor, landless women, adolescents, consumers and indigenous populations. This group should have a more balanced geographical and gender representation than it currently has.

The international research systems on agriculture, such as representative of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

Regional and International Financial Institutions (The World Bank, IMF, regional development banks) and the WTO.

Representatives of private sector organizations and private philanthropic foundations whose work areas relates to the Committee's concerns.

- **Observers:** the CFS could invite other interested organizations and institutions – local, regional, national or global – to participate in full sessions or certain agenda topics discussions as observers.

Furthermore, it recommends that NGO's and CSO establish their own global mechanism on food security, which will moderate the intervention and consultation of these entities in the CFS. It is recommended that this mechanism guarantees the representation of the South, information and know-how exchange, and establishes a civil society forum prior to and in preparation for the CFS sessions. Similarly, the private sector and philanthropic foundations are encouraged to establish their own mechanism.

During the CFS second stage reform implementation, this entity will enhance its role in national and regional coordination efforts, by promoting a more efficient resource management. Hence:

- Coordination with the HLTF will be reinforced.
- A good accountability system, follow-up procedures and best-practices guide will be advocated.

The importance of the relation between the CFS and field work is highlighted, given that in the past, on-site analysis in the developing countries have presented unrealistic and out-of-context data. Therefore FAO regional conferences and other sub-regional and regional entities will be brought in to participate in the CFS to enhance this bond. Other relevant stakeholders cooperation is also emphasized such as the UN national offices and the HLTF. Besides, the FAO regional conferences, WFP and the IFAD will both, communicate the CFS recommendations as well as procure valuable information.

Additionally, a general indicator system will be developed for program implementation tracking at the national level and which will also serve as a monitor mechanism of the reformed CFS progress on food security.

Finally, a comprehensive scheme in which the CFS will interact with other global initiatives – such those recommended by the G8 or the HLTF role in the reformed CFS – is still a pending assignment. Meanwhile the communication mechanisms should be strengthened through the Contact Group, already transformed into the permanent Advisory Group.

Nowadays, the joint bureau and permanent advisory group meetings are preparing for the CFS reform second stage. During the last meeting held in April 2010, the bureau decided to create three work groups to discuss the following:

- WG I. Case Studies –national – regional, coordinated by US representative, Ms. Suzanne Heinen.
- WG II. Policies and Coordination convergence, led by a representative from Belgium, Mr. Hugo Verbist.
- WG III. CFS Reform (budget and bureau legal matters) coordinated by a representative from Brazil, Mr Renato Godinho.

The High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) input on agriculture, food and nutrition security will shape the subsequent CFS proposals to be considered in future stages.

Text Box 9. The High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE)

The creation of a High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) was proposed by the FAO Chairman to consolidate a group of worldwide experts whose guidance will shape the CFS decisions. The group will analyze and perform scientific studies on the causes and consequences of food insecurity and related matters, by forwarding solution proposals and risk alerts to avoid or prevent future crises.

Among others, its key functions are: to assess and analyze the current world food security scenario, perform scientific analysis and advice on specific political issues (such as trade policies or food security) and identify potential strategic and technical issues that should be looked upon, by helping the CFS establish its future priority scheme on key interest areas.

The High level panel is composed of two main units:

1. A "Steering Committee": a group of 10 to 15 experts on food security and related matter at the global level.
2. The "ad hoc" team: a broad support network of experts on food security who will be involved in specific projects, will be chosen by the Steering committee, with the purpose of investigating or reporting on specific issues.

This scientific support will grant more credibility and efficiency to the Committee's contribution on food security.

The creation of a High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) was proposed by the FAO Chairman to consolidate a group of worldwide experts whose guidance will shape the CFS decisions.

3.5.- NEXT-STEPS IN THE CONSOLIDATION PROCESS OF THE NEW CFS AND ITS INNOVATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS ON NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

Over the next years, the CFS major challenge will be the development of a strategic framework on food security and nutrition that will improve policies coordination and convergence, that will centralize information, guide and streamline action plans through the prevailing mechanisms (for example, the voluntary guidelines, the CFA or the CAADP) on the basis of scientific evidence and knowledge.

The strategic framework should not only acknowledge the human right to food, but should also create the political and legal conditions for its observance. Debate on the framework will start in October 2010 while the discussions of the work groups – those mentioned in the previous section – will contribute to its definition.

Given this scenario, one of the major challenges will be to count on the support of the member States to consolidate the CFS work by “mirror reflecting” national and regional governance structures and approving and implementing action plans in food security key aspects.

These national mirror counterparts should be built within the national strategic framework on food security where national governance building is highly prioritized. This will call for the restructuring of the current decision-making mechanisms with the assistance of inter-ministerial committees’ binding power. The FAO conferences could allow the opportunity to work on this subject. The civil society should be prepared to participate in these events by building regional issue networks and by consolidating the future permanent civil society forum within the CFS.

The countries should also finance the implementation of the CFS action plans. Meanwhile the governance costs should be financed through a percentage of the bilateral and multilateral funds allocated for agriculture and food security. This proposal – based on the allocation of 0.05% of the funds – would allow – based upon the opinion of certain NGO’s and Action Aid – to accrue the needed resources for the implementation of the CFS action plans (at the international, regional and national level) including the support of the civil society participation.

Meanwhile, much expectation is aroused by the approval and implementation of the key action plans on food security. Nevertheless, little could be discussed or implemented unless the CFS has a consolidated

The governance costs should be financed through a percentage of the bilateral and multilateral funds allocated for agriculture and food security.

“architecture”, specially at the national level. Apparently, and based upon the civil society opinion, the three key priority issues that should be addressed are the following:

1. Access to land and natural resources based on the voluntary guidelines on the access to land (in process).
2. The agriculture and non-agricultural raw material markets regulations so that countries can regain certain autonomy on the management and direction of their price policies and food stocks.
3. Sustainable agriculture support.
4. Regulation or a possible postponement of agro-fuel production as suggested by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food.

At the same time, donors should establish clear and “measurable” commitments, under the principles of the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda (appropriation, harmonization, alignment, accountability and development results management), on both, their support to the policies adopted by the developing countries as well as on the contributions of the multilateral organizations. Moreover, the committed and submitted resources on food security should be reported to the CFS so that it can efficiently follow up on the agreed compromises and also count on resources to sustain and manage the committee at all levels.

The Bretton Woods institutions should operate under the UN umbrella, specially FAO, the reformed CFS and the HLTF, as well as refrain from creating new mechanisms and structures that disrupt the global effort to combat hunger. The next High Level United Nations Summit will be held in September, 2010, to assess the progress on the Millennium Objectives, to renew the previously subscribed commitments and boost efforts to fight poverty and the realization of the MDGs in 2015.

All parties involved should acknowledge the CFS as the top level political platform on food security matters. Its contribution will be crucial because hunger cannot only be solved with technical input, but instead, it should combine political instruments and deep structural measures. As mentioned by the Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier de Schutter in his comments on the Third World Food Summit on Food Security, overlooking the structural causes of hunger will perpetuate its endurance, and unless courageous and urgent measures are embraced, the future generations “will bitterly judge us”.

Eradicating
hunger calls
for profound
structural
changes.

Eradicating hunger calls for profound structural changes based on equality, equity, social justice, sustainability and solidarity. It demands that social mobilization creates new definitions and participation channels in more democratic governance. A reformed and functional CFS can contribute to these goals.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE REFORM PROCESS

As it was exposed in previous chapters, the last two years have been intense on both, observations exchange and debate on the food crisis and the need for a governance reform on food security. Hence, we deemed it valuable to collect observations from different sectors, such as human rights, international organizations, civil society, study and research center, and therefore invited those involved – or at least, interested – to express their opinions.

Out of all the institutions we contacted, we were able to count with the contribution of four people who have a distinctive background and are experts on the subject:

- Olivier De Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food since 2008
- Barbara Ekwall, Head of the Right to Food Team of FAO.
- Flavio Valente, Director of FIAN International, civil society organization who has extensive track record and specializes on the right to food.
- Kattya Cascante, from the Alternative Foundation, who has tracked the food crisis closely and coordinated a specialized publication on the subject.

We have structured their responses, by asking them four basic questions:

1. From your point of view, what are the reasons that led to the failure of the international community in the fight against hunger since 1996 until now?
2. According to you, what are the most relevant aspects of the proposals that have been made recently to reform global governance in the fight against hunger?
3. What other measures should be taken globally to make the fight against hunger more effective?
4. What role should the voluntary guidelines for the right to food have in this process?

We thank them all for their cooperation and their insightful observations.

1. From your point of view, what are the reasons that led to the failure of the international community in the fight against hunger since 1996 until now?

More than one billion people go hungry in 2010. We have been so shortsighted that we only focus on the price changes of agricultural raw materials: if there is a speculation or a panic bubble due to a bad crop or a diminished stock, such as what happened in June 2008, the food crisis is on everyone's lips; if the bubble explodes, like it did in June 2008, we make believe the problem is solved. But there were 923 million people going hungry in January 2008 and in June 2009, a year after the speculation bubble, the prices were even higher than their top record in the international markets. Due to the crisis, the number of people going hungry increased by 75 million people. It is time to stop talking about the raw material prices in the international markets and face the situation of those who work in rural areas or have small business in the city outskirts. The smallholder farmers do not sell their crops in the Chicago Stock Exchange: the poor buy a bag of rice in their local markets, not in the international stock market. Since we do not look at hunger from this standpoint, we do not even consider the problems this political economy generates in the production chain and food distribution. We merely associate hunger to a supply and demand issue and we fail to understand the impact of dishonest employers and brokers behavior, the accumulation in certain links of the production and distribution chain, and the lack of social programs to help the poor.

The catastrophe has such a scope and progression, that we even blame it on natural causes, but hunger is a political issue. It should not be simply related to agricultural production, but instead, it should be looked at as a predicament of social justice, escalating inequality and lack of social justice. We live in a planet that produces more food than ever, but the number of hungry people has never been so extreme²⁴. There is an explanation to this situation: we have focused on increasing food availability, and have forgotten for too many years how to properly distribute the production. We have boosted agricultural production but now we must learn that we can have higher yields and yet not be able to reduce hunger; that higher production is necessary to fight hunger but not enough; and that while speculation on food commodities has increased during the second half of

the last century, we have simultaneously created poverty and curtailed the development of entire regions.

The current hunger situation has been caused by the mode of production which has condemned the smallholder family agriculture to collapse and plunge it into mere subsistence farming. The small-scale farmers, because of their inability to survive in an increasingly competitive context, were relegated to settle in poor land areas, in high-altitude, in either dry or eroded territory, and they were pushed into marginalization. Unable to protest and without being able to export their products, they were not integrated as political or economic actors. In other words, they were excluded from public policies. We know the results. The rural exodus has been massive. Today, over one billion people – one person out of six worldwide and 43% of the population in developing countries – live in shantytowns, in the outskirts of big cities, and in the year 2030 – when the world population will reach up to 8 billion people²⁵, the ratio will be one person out of three²⁶. The majority of the urban poor has no social protection. In general those who stayed in the countryside have been limited to subsistence agriculture which barely allows them to survive. Many people were forced to sell their land or abandon them therefore becoming landless workers, with temporary jobs in extensive plantations. The consequences of this trend are well-known: the purchasing power of large population groups is too weak to buy the food available in the markets. Hunger affects different groups, not only smallholder family farmers. Historically, it began when small scale agriculture was strangled. It is not a natural disaster. It is a development process. This process could have been different. Changing it is possible.

Three deeply-bounded factors have led to the current situation: the cut-down on agricultural investments by the countries; the impact of trade

24. The 2008 cereal crops reached a historic maximum of 2.3 billion tons; the 2009 are mildly below that record.

25. Throughout the 20th century, the world population has escalated from 1,65 billion up to 6 billion, the highest growth index (2.04% per year) was reported in 1960. The most significant absolute increment (86 million per year) was in the late 80's. Nowadays, the population growth rate is 1.2% per year and the annual increment is 75 million people. Over the next years, the African continent will have the highest demographic growth: the current continent's population of 1 billion people will add up 24 million people per year, and will double in 2050.

26. UN Habitat, Tripartite International Conference on the challenges of urbanization and the reduction of poverty in African countries, Caribbean and the Pacific, First meeting,, Nairobi, June 8–10 2009, HSP/EC/ACP.1/4, 2 June, 2009.

liberalization and finally, the failed attempts to modernize agriculture, given the lack of political power of the small-scale farmers. These factors can be traced back to the colonial legacy. The developing countries inherited an unequal distribution of land; very few of them promoted true land reforms, and those who implemented them have not always been successful.

Another colonial legacy was the international division of labor, whereby the colony would supply low-cost raw materials to the metropolis, in exchange for opportunities to place the manufactured or high-added-value products from the metropolis. Some countries managed to change this international labor division, but others failed, mostly those from Sub Saharan Africa.

These two colonial traits – first, severe inequality in the rural areas, and second, a strong dependence on the rich countries – have promoted an agricultural model with a clear export-business objective but remote concern on the local population's food demand. Rural poverty is a result of this situation: the voice of the majority of small-scale farmers is overheard by the power-players because they cannot compete in the international markets.

2. According to you, what are the most relevant aspects of the proposals that have been made recently to reform global governance in the fight against hunger?

According to the reform document adopted in October 2009, the reformed Committee on World Food Security should in the future constitute «the foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for a broad range of committed stakeholders to work together in a coordinated manner and in support of country-led processes towards the elimination of hunger and ensuring food security and nutrition for all human beings. The CFS will strive for a world free from hunger where countries implement the voluntary guidelines for the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security». In principle, this should result in: 1° an improved accountability of donor governments, whose pledges must be materialized and directed towards the real needs identified in developing countries; 2° an improved accountability of the partners in developing countries, who should be given the incentive to adopt national strategies in the design and implementation of which civil society organizations, including in particular farmers' organizations, should be involved; 3° an improved accountability of international agencies, both within and outside the UN system, whose efforts should be guided by the

need to realize the right to adequate food for all, and should be in the future better coordinated.

It is particularly important that, in phase II of its work, the CFS shall «*develop a Global Strategic Framework for food security and nutrition* in order to improve coordination and guide synchronized action by a wide range of stakeholders». This is particularly welcome. For the moment, global governance is fragmented. A large number of UN agencies, as well as the ILO, the World Bank and the IMF are involved in providing guidance to countries on the various issues relevant to fighting hunger and malnutrition; the World Trade Organization offers technical advice in multilateral trade negotiations. It has not been unusual in the past for these organizations to offer conflicting advice to the States. Each of them has tended to concentrate its efforts on furthering its own area of specialization without developing the partnership required to address the issues in a comprehensive way. In addition, certain prescriptions imposed on States in structural adjustment policies have deprived them of the policy space they require in order to deal adequately with food crises and price volatility. It is urgent that coordination among these agencies be improved, and that their efforts are channeled towards the overarching goal of combating hunger and severe malnutrition. And it is equally important that the legitimacy and ownership of their recommendations be enhanced by the establishment of a strong partnership with governments and with civil society organizations. Indeed, while the coordination between agencies has been insufficient, governments too have all too often acted with their own interest in mind, and without paying the required attention to the impact of their actions on other countries' ability to realize the right to food. We need to have international agencies, governments, and civil society organizations act together, in order to improve consistency in our efforts to combat hunger and in order to put a higher price tag on non-cooperative behavior.

This is why, in the proposals I made as a member of the contact group on the reform of the CFS, I noted: "The main task of the CFS should be to monitor progress towards the achievement of time-bound goals for the eradication of hunger and other severe forms of malnutrition. In order to achieve this, the CFS could adopt on a regular basis (for instance every 4 years) a set of guidelines based on a shared diagnosis of its members about what needs to be done by both the international community and by national governments in order to make faster progress towards this objective. The timeframes should incorporate short, medium and longer

term responses, since the focus on strong indicators with specific deadlines might otherwise privilege the short term impacts on specific symptoms above more structural responses or increased resilience to volatility and shocks. The guidelines could also identify areas in which international cooperation is required in order to support national efforts to eradicate hunger and malnutrition”.

3. What other measures should be taken globally to make the fight against hunger more effective?

It is important not to focus on the institutional or governance dimensions alone. Instead, the political economy of the food systems must be improved in a number of ways. Among the priorities I see, are the following:

- Undertaking rigorous comparative assessments of the impact of different agricultural modes of production on the right to food;
- Channeling adequate support to sustainable farming approaches that benefit the most vulnerable groups and that are resilient to climate change and the depletion of hydrocarbons;
- In the current efforts to relaunch agriculture, prioritizing the provision of public goods, such as storage facilities, extension services, means of communications, access to credit and insurance, agricultural research and the organization of farmers in cooperatives;
- In order to encourage States to guarantee the right to social security to all, without discrimination, through the establishment of standing social protection schemes, and to ensure that, when targeted schemes are adopted, they are based on criteria that are fair, effective and transparent;
- With regard to volatility on international markets, the risks associated with international trade should be better managed. Specifically, least-developed and net food-importing developing countries should be better protected from the volatility of international market prices, and to combat volatility on international markets more effectively by: (a) The full implementation of the Marrakesh Decision within WTO;(b) Encouraging the establishment of food reserves at the local, national or regional levels; (c) Improving the management of grain stocks at the global level, including improved information about and coordination of global grain stocks to limit the attractiveness of speculation; (d) Establishing an emergency reserve that allows WFP to meet humanitarian needs at pre-crisis prices; (e) Examining further the proposals for a minimum physical

grain reserve to stabilize markets, and for other means to combat speculation on the futures markets of agricultural commodities by commodity index funds.

4. What role should the voluntary guidelines for the right to food have in this process?

The importance of the Voluntary Guidelines adopted in 2004 stems not only from the fact that they are the first intergovernmental document clarifying which measures States should take in order to implement the right to food, but also from their operational dimension, cutting across different areas and making the right to food very concrete.

Perhaps most importantly, the Voluntary Guidelines discuss the strategies States could put in place in order to move towards the full realization of the right to food. In 1999, seeking to clarify the normative content of the right to food in its General Comment No. 12, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights already had emphasized the need for States to work towards 'the adoption of a national strategy to ensure food and nutrition security for all, based on human rights principles that define the objectives, and the formulation of policies and corresponding benchmarks'.²⁷ Guideline 3 of the FAO Voluntary Guidelines provides useful indications about how States could adopt a national human rights-based strategy for the realization of the right to adequate food. Such a national strategy should comprise the establishment of appropriate institutional mechanisms, particularly in order to:

1. identify, at the earliest stage possible, emerging threats to the right to adequate food, by adequate monitoring systems;
2. improve coordination between the different relevant ministries and between the national and sub-national levels of government;
3. improve accountability, with a clear allocation of responsibilities, and the setting of precise timeframes for the realization of the dimensions of the right to food which require progressive implementation;
4. ensure the adequate participation, particularly, of the most food-insecure segments of the population; finally, they should

27. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment No. 12 : the right to food (1999), E/C.12/1999/5, para. 21.

5. pay specific attention to the need to improve the situation of the most vulnerable segments of society, including girls and women whose specific situation must be taken into account,²⁸ to the principle of non-discrimination, as well as to the explicit inclusion of access to adequate food as part of larger poverty reduction strategies.²⁹

As part of such a national strategy, States should adopt a framework legislation ensuring that the right to food is justifiable before national courts or that other forms of redress are available, so that in situations in which, for instance, the prices of food undergo a sudden increase, the branches of government who could take action will not be allowed to remain passive. There is a general recognition that establishing such a framework may significantly contribute to the realization of the right to food, in a number of ways³⁰:

- a. by ensuring that governmental bodies will be held accountable if they do not comply with the obligations the said framework imposes on them;
- b. by ensuring that the right to food will be at the center of national development strategies, which developing countries may then refer to in their dialogue with donor countries seeking to provide international aid;
- c. by strengthening the position of countries in negotiations related to trade or investment, by referring their partners to the obligations they are imposed vis-à-vis their constituencies at domestic level.

28. Guideline 3.9.

29. Guidelines 3.4. and 3.5.

30. See in particular Arjun Sengupta, 'The Right to Food in the perspective of the Right to Development', in Wenche Barth Eide and Uwe Kracht (eds), *Food and Human Rights in Development*, vol. II : *Evolving Issues and Emerging Applications*, Intersentia, Antwerpen-Oxford, 2007, p. 107, at p. 131 ; and Sibonile Khoza, 'The Role of Framework Legislation in Realising the Right to Food: Using South Africa as a Case Study of this New Breed of Law', in Wenche Barth Eide and Uwe Kracht (eds), *Food and Human Rights in Development*, vol. I: *Legal and Institutional Dimensions and Selected Topics*, Intersentia, Antwerpen-Oxford, 2005, pp. 187-204, at pp. 196-197.

BARBARA EKWAL

Coordinator of the Right to Food Team, FAO

1. From your point of view, what are the reasons that led to the failure of the international community in the fight against hunger since 1996 until now?

The World Food Summit in 1996 promised to reduce by half the number of hungry people by 2015, which at the time was estimated at 800 million.

Thanks to improved technology and infrastructure, the world has been successful in increasing agricultural production. Indeed, the present generation is the first one in mankind to produce enough food to feed the entire population on the planet. However, we have failed to translate this success into increased access to food for the hungry. Following initial progress in hunger reduction, the trend was reversed at the beginning of the new Millennium. In 2008, while record high harvest of cereals were registered, the number of persons suffering from hunger increased by 40 million. Today, in a world of plenty, an unacceptable high number of (more than 1 billion people, or one person in six!) are hungry.

The food crisis is not something new – it is the aggravation of a long-term structural crisis. It shows the fragility of the present food system, which was good at producing large amounts of food, but failed to do so in a socially and environmentally sustainable manner. Because the crisis disproportionately affects the most vulnerable, it is an urgent human rights issue that requires determined action.

The food crisis should be taken as an opportunity to learn from past mistakes and propose solutions that are based on the premise that every human being has a right to adequate food.

- 1. Address the root causes of hunger:** This means going beyond the technical issue of food production and recognizing the social and political dimension of hunger. The food crisis is not linked to a failure in production or to external factors, such as natural disasters, but to the way in which society is organized and the policy decisions that were taken in the past. This insight is an opportunity. It brings the recognition that we need a) strategies and policies that promote the right to food, b) a conducive legal framework that ensures accountability, and c) government programs that empower the hungry. The Right to Food Guidelines (Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security) and implementation tools provide the

necessary guidance. With such an approach, efforts to end hunger will be on the right track.

2. **Agriculture with a human face:** This means putting the human being at the center of policies and measures on food and agriculture. It means looking at the processes that steer the design, implementation and monitoring of policy making in this area. Questions to be answered are: who produces what, for whom, and with what kind of environmental, social, political and economic impact? The answers will include targeted support to the most vulnerable groups, empowerment of smallholder farmers, strengthening the governance of land tenure, and promoting the sustainable use of natural resources.
3. **Policy coherence:** What one hand gives should not be taken away by the other. Food security is not only an issue of agricultural production. Measures taken in other policy areas, such as social safety nets, education, health, trade, energy, transportation, affect a person's ability to realize his or her right to adequate food. National coordination mechanisms need to be established or strengthened to analyze the impact of sectoral policies on people's ability to achieve food security, to identify policy choices, and to ensure participation by the hungry in decision-making. There also needs to be coherence at international, national and sub-national levels. The new architecture of the food security governance discussed later in this article addresses this issue.

One size does not fit all. Different strategies and tools are available to achieve our vision of a world without hunger, in which the right to adequate food is realized for all. We need to continuously enrich, diversify, improve and adapt our tools. Policy choice is a key. We need to promote dialogue among all stakeholders at all levels to discuss these choices and facilitate informed decisions.

In this context, the right to food is both an objective and a tool. As an objective, it provides an overarching framework that guides all efforts at international, national and sub-national level to address the crisis and its structural causes. As a tool, the right food and human rights principles improve the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of measures taken at operational level. This means giving voice to the hungry, guaranteeing non-discrimination, promoting participation, and ensuring accountability and transparency.

The hungry cannot afford to wait any longer. The world can make hunger history and the right to food a reality for all. It is time to make it happen.

2. According to you, what are the most relevant aspects of the proposals that have been made recently to reform global governance in the fight against hunger?

The recent food crisis put food security and investment in agriculture at the top of the international agenda. The Madrid High-Level Meeting on Food Security for All in 2009 was an important milestone for the promotion of the right to food as framework to the response to the food crisis. A ground breaking statement was made by the UN Secretary General Mr Ban Ki-Moon when he called for the inclusion of “a third track – the right to food – as a basis for analysis, action and accountability” in the response to the food crisis.

The Declaration adopted at the World Summit on Food Security in Rome in 2009 reaffirmed “the right of everyone to have access to safe, sufficient and nutritious food” and called upon governments to “collectively accelerate steps... to set the world on a path to achieving the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security”. The Summit called for “strategic coordination at national, regional and global level to improve governance, promote better allocation of resources, avoid duplication of efforts and identify response-gaps”.

The last two years also saw the emergence of three major initiatives related to the global food security governance:

- In response to the acute food crisis, the UN Secretary-General in 2008 created the UN **High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis (HLTF)**, which developed a Comprehensive Framework for Action (CFA) for a coordinated response by the UN system. The right to food is one of the five areas to be emphasized in the context of the present revision of the CFA.
- The **G8 Summit in L’Aquila** in 2009 called for a Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition and also for a new design of the governance of food systems worldwide, building on existing institutions. It mobilized USD 6.1 millions of additional funding in support of agriculture and food security. The L’Aquila Food Security Initiative is presently exploring ways to track pledges, map food security initiatives and support country-led investment programmes.
- During 2009, the **Committee on World Food Security (CFS)** underwent reform to make it more effective, more inclusive and more responsive to the challenges of world food insecurity. The vision of the reformed CFS is a

world free from hunger, with countries implementing the Right to Food Guidelines. The new structure of the CFS encourages inputs from all stakeholders at global, regional and national levels. Important contributions are expected from civil society organizations, especially organizations representing smallholder farmers, fisherfolks, herders, the landless, women, youth, consumers and indigenous people, who will have more voice in the analysis of issues, in the debate itself and in monitoring. The reformed CFS potentially offers a platform to follow up on the implementation of the Right to Food Guidelines.

The most important feature of the new global architecture for food and agriculture is that it is increasingly grounded on the right to food and principles of good governance. It will be important to link policy making, fund mobilization and programs implementation to achieve coherence and maximum impact in these initiatives. The three initiatives are mutually supportive and have been converging.

The ultimate goal of the global governance, and one of prime importance, is that of supporting and linking with efforts taken at national level. It is concrete action at national level that will bring about the change that is necessary in order to improve the situation for the billion of persons who live with hunger today.

3. What other measures should be taken globally to make the fight against hunger more effective?

With respect to the right to food, the message is clear: make it happen! There is an international legal framework for the right to adequate food, there are political commitments at highest level and, most recently, also increased financial resources. The world knows what needs to be done – this is reflected in the Right to Food Guidelines – and tools have been developed to help integrate the right to food into legislation, assessment, monitoring, budgeting and education (see Methodological Toolbox for the Right to Food, www.righttofood.fao). Some pioneering countries have shown that the right to food is not just a slogan, but that there are concrete ways to put it into practice that it indeed makes a difference in the lives of people. What is needed at global level is a platform to capitalize on these national experiences, to promote in a systematic manner the exchange among countries of experiences and lessons learned, and to identify further ways to strengthen the implementation of the Right to Food Guidelines.

We have seen that major initiatives have been taken to improve the ability of global governance to deal with the hunger problem. The vital challenge at this moment is to implement these initiatives and to ensure that this is done in a coordinated manner. In this context, it is important to recognize existing links between the global and national (and sub-national) levels. Global initiatives have an impact only if they reach individuals. Countries should take ownership of these initiatives and translate them into concrete measures and activities that improve the situation of those who suffer hunger today. One of the global priorities should therefore be to support countries to adapt and implement the guidance, knowledge, and resources that are available at global level. Among the concrete measures to be promoted is the development and implementation of national food security strategies that are grounded on principles of human rights and good governance. The global level should also provide a platform where countries can provide feedback about experiences made, where they can raise priority issues that require the attention of the international community and where they are fully part of decision making and the development of policy guidance.

Donors have an important role to play. Ensuring simplification, harmonization, alignment and aid effectiveness continues to be a priority. Donor policies related to development cooperation and food aid could benefit from a right to food approach and its focus on the most vulnerable; the empowerment and participation of the hungry in policy-making; and the inclusion of transparency and accountability mechanisms at all levels.

As an organization that is a bearer of human rights values, the UN has a special responsibility towards the food insecure. Therefore, the increased attention given by the UN system to strengthening the mainstreaming of human rights in its work is particularly timely, relevant and promising.

The global system also needs to recognize, analyze, debate, seek consensus on and tackle specific challenges that impact food security. These challenges comprise climate change, the governance of land tenure, social safety nets, access to natural resources including water, as well as hunger-induced migration. These are very complex problems, which can only be solved at the global level, and which require an inclusive, participatory process that ensures a voice for those who are directly concerned. The new food security architecture has been designed for this; it has now to be used with the objective of realizing food security for every woman, man and child.

4. What role should the voluntary guidelines for the right to food have in this process?

The adoption, by consensus, of the Right to Food Guidelines by FAO members in 2004 represents a milestone in the context of the implementation of the Rome Plan of Action of 1996. The Right to Food Guidelines are the result of two years of intensive intergovernmental negotiations in which civil society organizations played an important part. For the first time, the international community agreed on the full meaning of this right and reached consensus on a coherent set of policy recommendations for governments, civil society and other partners in areas ranging from access to natural resources to education and international food aid. They thus offer a unique framework for coordination and policy coherence. By looking at rights, institutions and human rights principles, they help to tackle the root causes of hunger. All these are fundamental components of the response to the present food insecurity crisis.

Few people, if any, disagree that every woman, man and child should have access to the food they need. However, many wonder how placing emphasis on food as a fundamental human right could make a difference in anti-hunger efforts. The right to food perspective, building on the practical recommendations contained in the Right to Food Guidelines, brings a new dimension to the traditional approach to hunger reduction. It provides a legal framework, based on the concepts of rights and obligations, and mechanisms for increased accountability. By focusing on the most vulnerable, the right to food ensures that targeted action will benefit the food insecure without discrimination. By promoting transparency and participation, it improves the efficiency of public action. Finally, by empowering the poor, it ensures that they have a voice and can claim their rights. The right to food changes perspective. The hungry cease to be a problem, they become part of the solution and actors of their own development.

The Right to Food Guidelines provide a context for translating the political commitments made in recent summits and conferences into practical and concrete action. They recommend that States adopt a national strategy for the realization of the right to food that includes the mapping of the most vulnerable groups, their participation in decision making, the allocation of responsibilities across different branches of government, improved coordination, and the establishment of monitoring and accountability mechanisms.

Recent initiatives have consolidated the realization of the Right to Food Guidelines as an overarching objective, and human rights principles as a tool to achieve food security for all. However, the Right to Food Guidelines have not yet been sufficiently integrated in the response to the food crisis at operational level. This remains a major challenge.

The Right to Food Guidelines also have an important role to play as a basis for accountability, both at national and global levels. Monitoring their implementation at national level, a task assumed in many countries by civil society organizations, should become a process under the responsibility of the government, in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders. This would greatly improve the alignment of government policies, promote the coherence of public measures and constitute the basis for the development of a comprehensive food security strategy. Systematic follow-up of the implementation of the Right to Food Guidelines at global level would be an indicator that the global food security governance is effectively linking policy recommendations with accountability mechanisms. It would also mean that the international community is ready to deliver on its promise to tackle the root causes of hunger – an endeavor that requires courage, determination and, above all, strong political will.

Promoting the implementation of the Right to Food Guidelines will not only prevent past mistakes to be repeated. It would ensure that food systems, along with social, economic and political systems, are set up with the objective of promoting the well being of humanity and the dignity of every human being.

FLAVIO VALENTE

Director of FIAN International

1. From your point of view, what are the reasons that led to the failure of the international community in the fight against hunger since 1996 until now?

There is a widespread opinion that the international community's inability to cope with hunger and under-nutrition derives from lacking political will. I challenge this rationale. I believe developed nations and the international financial institutions have enormous and powerful political will to maintain and strengthen the current international development model, which under the market hegemony, continues to produce and multiply exclusion, inequality, discrimination, poverty and hunger. By simply paraphrasing Josué de Castro, we can state that the issue is not the lack of food security politic;

indeed we do have it, but it is for the benefit of a minority, in the national and international level, that translates into politics of hunger for a large fraction of humanity.

In fact the compensation policies, which do not mean to address the structural causes of hunger, have barely reduced the magnitude of this problem, due to the ruthless greed of the multinational corporations who count with the support, or at least the permission, of the rich countries and international trade and financial organizations.

Nowadays, we witness an outrageous and systematic violation of the human rights international treaties, specially the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which were ratified by most States but are consistently overlooked. We are spectators of at least three decades of national and international public policies – such as the structural adjustment programs, the liberalization of international agricultural trade, the agricultural products dumping by the United States and the European Union, the poor investment on family and small scale agriculture, the preferential support to agribusiness growth, the beneficial treatment to export agriculture, among others, which have profoundly hampered the developing nations governments capacity to regulate and encourage national agricultural production.

When confronted with the hiked-up prices of food in 2007 and 2008, these countries had no internal production or stocks to rely upon, because national agriculture as a food supply source had been destroyed, production only served the purpose of exporting, and people did not have enough money to buy more expensive imported food. This explains the protests and riot in over 30 countries. While hunger stagnated or even worsened in rural areas, it spilled over cities, which triggered collective legitimate demonstrations.

Without a doubt, the heart of the crisis is nested in the relentless expansion of the development model which is increasingly unsustainable. The incentives for the production of bio-fuels and speculation over the future markets, pushed up the prices of food and directly impacted on the price of land, and therefore augmented forced rel-locations and languished agriculture reform in several countries. As a response to the crisis, certain rich nations whose crop land yield could not guarantee food security, in association with multinational corporations, decided to purchase large plots of land to produce agri-food for consumption back in the master country. Investing in land, or merely monopolizing suitable land without time-bound conditions has become a business for China.

Simultaneously, we have observed a strengthening of the civil society organizations, better coordination of the social movements at the national, regional and international level, added means of articulating the fights of the rural producer movements (farmers, rural workers, landless people, fishermen, gatherers, etc.), environmentalists, NGO's and human rights organizations. This has resulted in greater incidence power at all levels, with more visibility in the international forums on public policies, and therefore making substantial progress in terms of public policies at assorted levels, mostly in Latin America.

2. According to you, what are the most relevant aspects of the proposals that have been made recently to reform global governance in the fight against hunger?

The most relevant progress is seen in the Committee on Food Security (CFS) reform process. This process has strengthened the Committee, by restating the pivotal role of the States in the direction of the process, by expanding its mandate and by the possibility of direct participation of the civil society groups in the political debate of the proposals, with an added focus to the participation of those social groups who are most affected by hunger and food insecurity

Guaranteeing that the CFS action plans are efficiently implemented is a top priority for the social movements in the near future. The civil society will have to continue reporting the ongoing violations of human rights and trying to influence the CFS initiatives to confront the structural causes of hunger and inequality, by demanding discriminatory policies phase-out and promotion of policies that support an inclusive agriculture development model that will contribute to ameliorate global warming through small-scale agriculture and the use of agro-ecological methods.

Expanding and coordinating the participation of stakeholders in this process is one of the major challenges the civil society is currently facing. While, we must strengthen coordination of our own activities to boost the civil society participation in the CFS, we should also improve our participation in national processes.

3. What other measures should be taken globally to make the fight against hunger more effective?

I believe we must pursue different approaches and do our best to coordinate our action plans. We should:

- a. Demand that the governments ratify the Optional Protocol to the ICESCR, that was approved in the UN General Assembly in December 2008, but needs the ratification by 10 countries to become effective, and ratification by those countries where human rights violations are mostly recurrent, so that the victims can resort to this international instrument.
- b. Urge that all purchases of large land areas by governments or companies in African, Latin American or Asian developing countries are suspended. The World Bank and other international organizations have been attempting to legitimize “land grabbing”, by “principles” and “codes of conduct” under declarations that the investments are necessary. But in fact, these acquisitions, which in most cases forces the relocation of thousand of families, they also interfere with the governments capacities to regulate their own agriculture and limits the access to land and water resources the small-holder farmers, landless rural people, indigenous people and women, among others, need to fulfill their right to adequate food, and water resources needed to fulfill their right to adequate food.
- c. Demand that the support to food production is focused on assisting small-scale production, by strengthening the agro-ecology model and guaranteeing that those most affected by food insecurity are actively involved in it, as a partial solution achievement. Increasing food production is irrelevant if social and land exclusion continue to exist, carbon emissions show an upward trend, soil and water contamination and erosion deteriorate the natural resources, as these combined factors threaten biodiversity.
- d. Link the food quality issue to the fight-against-hunger debate. Nowadays, almost two million people are undernourished, due to nutritional deficiencies as a result of an inadequate food intake. Undernourishment causes death and irreversible consequences in the physical, psychological and emotional lives of children under the age of two. The risk factors originate in the mother uterus and cannot be tackled with food supplements. These circumstances demand action-plans through public health, sanitation and overall social welfare programs.
- e. Boost the administrative, political, pseudo-legal and legal rights accountability process by the use of existing local national, regional and international tools, making them accessible to the most affected groups by working with the human rights organizations, to pressure the States to improve the quality of life of its people.

4. What role should the voluntary guidelines for the right to food have in this process?

The voluntary guidelines are a very strong tool to boost the efforts to fight hunger at all level. In coordination with the ICESCR and the General Comment 12, they are able to embody the fact that the human right to adequate food should not be limited to the delivery of food aid, even though this initiative may be crucial to guarantee the subsistence of those who are under an emergency situation. The scope and value of the human right to food calls for a multiple approach that would guarantee:

- a. The right to access and use of productive resources (land, water, seeds, etc.) by the most affected groups; the right to fair labor wages; the right to social security that could guaranteed the access to adequate food, among others.
- b. The protection against violent relocation or power abuse by third parties, such as companies, that would hinder their ability to realize this right.
- c. The right to count on programs, public policies and services that support or facilitate the realization of the human right to adequate food, such as the agricultural reform, employment policies, health, education, sanitation, food quality control, food and nutrition education, etc.
- d. The voluntary guidelines unanimously approved by the FAO Council in 2004 encompass the previously mentioned principles and many others, which should be observed by all governments. FIAN International, with the support of other partner organizations, published a manual that presents ways in which the civil society organizations can use the voluntary guidelines to analyze their movements initiatives.³¹

We hope that the Committee on Food Security – strengthened by the civil society participation – carries out its reform written commitments and lays out an strategic global framework on food security based on the voluntary guidelines, which could direct the international policies on food security and the governments with the purpose of eradicating hunger as well as promoting the holistic realization of the human right to adequate food for all people in the world.

31. This manual is available on the FIAN webpage; see weblink:
<http://www.fian.org/recursos/publicaciones/documentos/vigilando-la-accion-estatal-contral-hambre/pdf>

KATTYA CASCANTE

Fundación Alternativas (Alternatives Foundation)

1. From your point of view, what are the reasons that led to the failure of the international community in the fight against hunger since 1996 until now?

In the year 2000, the Millennium Declaration established the same goals for its first Objective (reduce undernourishment in the world, from 800 million to 400 million by the year 2015) and therefore evidenced the failure of the previous World Food Summit held four years ago.

The request to increase the international and national resources to develop agriculture was never formalized and, in addition, agriculture official development aid failed to meet any expectations. It was impossible to articulate any resource to invest on even minor technological improvement to increase small-holder farmers productivity and improve food security. Only few governments have involved civil society organizations on their initiatives to fight hunger. In fact, the lack of political will to address the core reasons of hunger and the absence of a policy strategy beyond the financial resources obstacle, was evident then and it is evident now.

Throughout the world summits, diagnosis improvement is seen but progress on finding solutions is not. Political agreement on issues such as, what food-stuff should be the leverage tool to pressure politics and economics, the importance of trade to achieve food security and the need for urgent measures to avoid natural resources deterioration and climate change, has not led to a common policy standpoint.

Much effort was put on rhetoric. In almost all declarations, we can read the same lack of eagerness in the intentions ("*we will make an effort to...*"), and commitments, which are non-binding to the States or international community. No proposals were made in reference to accountability to monitor progress and assessment. The summits do not circumscribe or punish non-kept promises, including those easy-to-verify, such as financial commitments, since the lack of transparency renders any follow-up initiative useless. There is no standing organization taking over this role. The Committee on Food Security in fact, in their meetings prior to the 2001 Summit, continue to draft its recommendations with the initial phrase: "*whenever possible*".

The 2007 food price crisis whose 2008 peak prompted the Rome High-Level Meeting in June, came again as a shock. The crisis showed that the

improvement in the hunger statistics was a result of context reforms but not structural changes. When the circumstances were not helping and raw material speculation distorted the market figures, the indicators pick up a regression trend that has not yet stopped. The 800 million hungry people – a stable indicator over the last ten years, in other words, with occasional successes that stopped the progression despite demographic growth – has now exceeded the 1 billion amount. The financial crisis and today's economy disturbs the priorities and hinders policy decision-making to combat hunger. The crisis claim over the lack of food access in a food sufficient world sets the expectations on the Doha Round, G7 and G20.

2. According to you, what are the most relevant aspects of the proposals that have been made recently to reform global governance in the fight against hunger?

The world food price crisis in 2008 has precisely highlighted the international community commitment to improve the governance on food security. The proposal to center the debate on the right to food in light of the Committee on Food Security reform process, is a crucial step in the right direction. Olivier de Schutter, the UN special Rapporteur, has set his hopes in a paradigm change, by broadening the traditional scope of food security that merely focuses on higher production towards the realization of the right to food as an obligation of the States and the international community (United Nations Council on Human Rights, 22 May 2008).

A month later (18 June 2008), the United Nations Council on Human Rights finally approved the Optional Protocol of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) which will equate the economic and social human rights with the civil and political rights. Finally, a mechanism that will guarantee the realization of the right to food, by specially protecting and administering the productive resources access to the poor, by focusing on the food crisis through a coherent combination of trade and investment policies and the human rights obligations, has been created. In 8 December 2008 the Optional Protocol was approved by the United Nations General Assembly and it should now be subscribed by all States.

An additional key aspect of the world governance reform of the agri-food system is the compatibility of trade and human rights. The existing trade agreements and the national policies of the poor countries should be analyzed to verify its compliance and advocacy of the exercise of the human rights. The trade rules should not diminish the States political field needed

to implement action plans that could safeguard national food security. Keeping into account that the countries with the most severe food insecurity situations are the least represented in Geneva, it is important to know if the internal policies are compatible with those rules embraced by the World Trade Organization (WTO). The fact that the WTO has no mechanism to alert of any deviation when these restrictions can have a decisive impact on any given country food security situation, is a clear evidence of the deficiencies of the system. This issue becomes more relevant at times when the most vulnerable States are forced to make decisions, without guidelines that could prevent a greater crisis impact in the future.

The crisis has also significantly changed the scenario. When the Doha Round took place in 2001 the circumstances were completely different. Today's food price increase is articulated under different parameters than back then, and therefore, renegotiation is imperative. The World Bank, the OCDE and even the WTO estimations predict and even greater escalation of cereal prices while the income decreases, and this has a devastating impact on Netfood (food importers developing countries). De Schutter claims, that trade liberalization and global economic welfare distribution will not improve food security. Instead, this situation calls for measures that could restrict import and hinder the negative impact of reform programs in the less developed countries and the developing countries who are net importers of food.

The Doha final agreement should include clauses on the impact on human rights. In other words, it should contemplate mechanisms that could guarantee the compatibility of the agreement with the obligations of the States to respect, protect, and achieve the right to food.

3. What other measures should be taken globally to make the fight against hunger more effective?

In addition to improving governance through a reformed Committee on Food Security system, articulating the right to food and balancing the trade relations mentioned in the previous answer, a more effective fight against hunger should address issues such as sustainable agriculture, and the strengthening of the international cooperation.

First, agricultural investments should be adequately targeted. In other words, they should not only raise productivity but should also increase the income of small-holder farmers while they protect the environment. Traditional agriculture lacks diversity, straightforwardness and demands

great amounts of external chemical inputs. Over 2 billion kilograms of pesticides are used worldwide, which threaten biodiversity and contaminate the environment of the consumer and the producer of agri-food. The transgenic crops which biotechnology support as an instrument to free the world from hunger, are meant to feed the livestock of the developed nations. Besides, these crops are glyphosate dependent, a genetic erosion toxin (for example, 80% of the rape is contaminated³²). Agroecology offers a more lucrative alternative without using fertilizer or phytosanitary agents where the elements interact through different approaches – economic, technical, environmental, social, cultural or ethic. Therefore, investment commitments that would embrace sustainable agriculture are needed by integrating the new consensus between IAASTD, the PNUMA, FAO and UNCTAD, that support agroecology as the best option.

Second, the farmers rights should be guaranteed and their role-model status should be acknowledged since they are the ones who best combine science and food production and who contribute the most to the betterment of the local food security conditions. Small-scale farmers are often times victims of development processes that threaten both, their land and resources access. Several people, groups or communities lack tenure, access to agriculture services or trade opportunities. States and the international community should guarantee that these groups have access to land and related resources, and also have a saying and a vote on the subject at forums and organizations where they can participate on equal terms.

Besides, multilateralism strength can only be built on the lessons learned on international cooperation deficiencies (agrofuels, speculation and volatility, climate change). The isolation of the food security issue from the agendas distort the negotiations results on the matter. The fact that, for example, the climate change agenda is not linked to food security deviates policies and resources in the negotiations results when both subjects are complementary.

In regards to emergency support to the affected countries, international cooperation could range from early alert to food aid, but it should be comprehensively executed. Food aid should not interfere with the local economy (price drops) and should seek long-term development and

32. Altieri, Miguel, (2004) Sociedad Española de Agricultura Ecológica (SEAE) (Spanish Society of Ecologic Agriculture) www.agroecologia.net

recovery. The aid programs should observe non-bias and non-discrimination principles, meaning that aid should be delivered on the basis of need. On the same line, most vulnerable groups should be prioritized. These programs should respect the local circumstances, food traditions and culture³³.

Finally, it should be highlighted that international cooperation cannot wait any longer to embrace transparency and accountability mechanisms. An international consensus should be reached to leverage this commitment.

4. What role should the voluntary guidelines for the right to food have in this process?

The voluntary guidelines on the right to food set the crucial parameters that can guide the international system to food security. They are, first, an international legal instrument that gives a detailed explanation of the content of the right to food, lists the States related obligations and, finally, advises on how to best apply the right to food. On the other hand, its voluntary nature draws two different points of views: those who claim that it does not in any way, reduce the current legal obligations at the international level on the right to food and therefore, are binding to those States who approved them (151 out of 187), and those who, on the opposite side, reject the establishment of legally binding obligations of States and international community, and dismiss the guidelines intentions to amend, modify or alter in any other way, the rights and obligation of the national and international law. It seems that this last standpoint is indeed predominant given that there is no effective mechanism to monitor the realization or execution.

It should be acknowledged that certain States have embraced the guidelines within their normative system (constitutions and national strategies) and it has meant a major achievement on food security matters. However, national and international liability is still a pending issue. The guidelines cannot enforce the review of all policies to assess their compliance with the right to food principles. It should establish a monitoring mechanism to track the progress in the realization of the right to food, and to alert on this right violations. In any given case, efficient demand procedures should be implemented so that people can defend their rights and have the access to means of improvement.

33. FAO, GTZ. 2006. «The Right to Food – Putting it into practice». Rome. Copyrights © 2006 FAO

The voluntary guidelines are a valuable tool, however too weak on their own. For the progressive realization of the right to food, the States should respect their commitments and international obligations and consider the importance of their observance by the other States. Non-approval is not penalized and non-obedience is not either.

The Doha final agreement, like I mentioned before, should include mechanisms that could guarantee the compatibility of the States obligations to respect, protect and carry out the voluntary guidelines on the right to food.

EPILOGUE

TOWARDS A NEW GOVERNANCE

1. What is happening?

As it has been explained in this publication, the evolution of hunger statistics – both absolute and relative – confront us with the dismal fact that up to the present time, 2010, the hunger situation is worse than in 1996, when the International Community had gathered at the World Food Summit and had made the commitment to halve the number of hungry people in the world. Since 1996, the hunger figures have continued to grow – most intensively over the last three years – and consequently, the percentage of people suffering from hunger is nowadays, higher than it was then.

Surprisingly, this occurs while the current food production is abundant enough to feed the entire humanity and despite of the major international summits on the subject, such as the most recent High Level Conference on World Food Security held in Rome (June 2008), the High-Level Meeting on Food Security held in Madrid (January 2009), the World Food Summit on Food Security held in Rome (November 2009), and despite the declaration of great initiatives and commitments – such as the 1996 CMA Action Plan, the MDG, the Comprehensive Framework for Action, the Partnership against Hunger and Poverty, the G8 joint Declaration on Food Security in L'Aquila (July 2009).

What is happening? We go around in circles over a problem we are not solving, despite having all the means to do it, while this situation has dramatic consequences on one sixth of humanity and incurs on the infringement of human rights.

2. What causes the food crisis?

The FAO report for the 2009 World Food Day, under the slogan «Achieving food security in times of crisis», identified low agricultural productivity, high

population growth, problems with water and land availability, the increased frequency of draughts and floods, and the limited investment in research and development as the driving agents of the food crisis.

But beyond agricultural factors, there are other factors that impact in no less intensity on the food crisis: the inequitable distribution of resources, the deficient social protection system, the irresolute protection to agriculture workers, the predominance of a large agri-business model that favours extensive and intensive agriculture, the unfair international trade system, the financial speculation on agricultural products, the unequal energy consumption, the predominance of non-food single crops (fibers, biofuels, etc.) the interference of subsidies and aid that in fact, favour the large-scale producers instead of the small-holders, corruption, gender discrimination in land and food management, etc.

After the subsequent failures over the last decades in the policies to fight hunger, a more incisive approach that could respond to the multiple dimensions of the problem, is imperative.

3. Why have we failed in the fight against hunger?

Comprehensively and formally addressing the complex causes of the food crisis is very important. But it would also be crucial to clearly identify the reasons why we have failed in the fight against hunger.

Experience shows that organizing summits and big meetings do not per se guarantee an efficient evolution of the established commitments and objectives. Up until now, these events have lacked efficiency and are very costly: due to event logistic expenses, added to the immense cost of despair among million of hungry people, who despite grandiose declarations and commitments do not envision any foreseeable solution to their dramatic personal situation.

The commitments subscribed in these meetings and summits are non-binding. There is no multilateral agent who could track compliance by the parties involved in each subscribing State. In our opinion, this international governance deficiency leaves the commitments to meander over time.

It seems that the rich countries are not afraid of hunger; they are afraid of the swine flu, AIDS, or tuberculosis, but not hunger. They lack the motivation to formally work to alleviate hunger and pursue the political will that could bring forth coherent and efficient decisions.

After failing to achieve the 1996 commitment to reduce hunger, it would be useless to establish new more ambitious objectives unless radical and

incisive change take place in the governance to fight hunger and make progress on accountability – or, at least, commitments follow-up and tracking.

4. How should governance reform be coherently outlined?

From the stand point of the campaign “The right to food. Urgent” the most adequate approach to face food insecurity is the human right focus. All people, regardless of their nationality, race, religion, gender, ideology... have the right to adequate and sufficient food. The States, at least those who have accepted the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, have the obligation to respect – refrain from limiting or hindering people’s right to food through any given decision or action –, to protect-adopt adequate measures to avoid individual, collective or corporate third party interference in the right to food of any given person in his/her territory – and to guarantee-develop programs that would facilitate the realization of the citizens right to food, and in the case of the most vulnerable groups who have no alternative mean of accessing food, food must be administered to them –.

The search for coherence in the governance on world food security should be built on the basis of the human right to food: what actions are or are not coherent with regards to the human right to food, which policies are or are not coherent, what international agreements are or are not coherent. The human right to food should grant judicial weight – and should therefore, enforce accountability of certain commitments – the global, regional, national and household governance on food security.

Based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the PIDESC and other international law instruments, the food insecurity situations that are currently prevailing in the world can be considered infringements on the human right to food.

5) Would any model work efficiently to fight hunger?

Over the past 30 years, an intensive and competitive market-oriented model has been promoted. While in the 60's and 70's the hunger situation improved through farmers agricultural extension programs, the 80's saw the near extinction of this small-scale farming support endeavours as the neoliberal strategy sponsored by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund sets in. The agricultural ministries of the developing countries lost ground, budget, staff and lost the direct contact with farmer communities, and we are now confronting the consequences.

If we want to efficiently eradicate hunger in the world, chances are that increased food availability or any given agricultural model will not alleviate hunger, because production is not the main issue – although it is important – but instead, distribution and access is crucial. When trying to combat hunger, the market oriented agriculture is not likely to be the most adequate model; instead, family farming, which prioritizes the food supply to the rural households, is a more suitable model.

The fight against hunger calls for top priority status to the access and resources need of small-holder farmers, fishermen, women and other vulnerable groups to produce food. Hence, the preferential approach to guarantee food security for those 1 billion people who suffer from hunger should be food sovereignty. A superficial strategy to fight hunger is not a valid option; casual agricultural models will not prove efficient; a sustainable rural development scheme that primarily focuses on family production is mandatory.

This agricultural model, although less «fashionable», or attractive to the developed economies, can be far more effective in the fight against hunger and environmental sustainability. This should be the high-level goal: support small-scale farmers so that their capacity to sustainably produce food for a nutritious diet is enhanced.

The rural economy and life style has been pushed sideways by a development model that favours indiscriminate consumption growth. That is why, hunger and food insecurity affect small-scale farmers to such an extent, that 70% of the poor live in rural areas and 75% of the people who suffer from hunger are farmers. A review of the social standpoint of small-scale farming and its interaction with the national and international models is needed.

Therefore, the model that should be advocated to efficiently fight hunger is not the agro-industrial model which, over the last 25 years has worsened the problems of these groups by limiting their access to productive resources and markets. Sustainable family farming should be the choice.

6) Who should be the leader?

Over the last years, several international initiatives to fight hunger have been launched, some of them with ample support – such as the 1996 WFC Action Plan, the ODM or the Comprehensive Framework for Action – and other initiatives supported by a smaller groups of countries – Partnership

against Hunger and Poverty or the joint declaration on Food Security by the G8 in L'Aquila in July, 2009 –. For organizations like ours who try on a daily basis, to monitor the evolution of the fight against hunger, it is often times very difficult to understand who does what and why, or when the compromises have been fulfilled, or if there is any coordination among these apparently scattered initiatives.

It is disturbing to foresee the growth of multilateralism at the United Nations sideline which has no accountability commitment with the well-known and structured international system, such as the UN General Assembly; instead, it follows its own rules and interests. Most likely this concern has compelled many civil society organizations to support the leadership of the FAO Committee on World Food Security (CFS) as a corner stone of the fight against hunger.

The CFS – which was created in the 1974 World Food Conference to analyse the problem in the world hunger situation and recommend adequate policies to promote food security – which after the 1996 WFC added the Action Plan follow-up responsibilities to its functional role, has failed, as the food crisis comes to prove. The need for a reform has become evident to all stakeholders involved on food security matters.

We believe the CFS reform is suitable, if and only if the committee is not limited to a debate forum role, but is instead enabled with enforced capacity, leadership, with greater representation by including the participation of different actors and the civil society among them. At the present time, the overall proposal approved by the FAO Council introduces the CFS as a more inclusive institution, with greater representation which can strengthen its leadership role. It also mentions the Committee's improved on-site impact, which is highly relevant given that in order to respond to food insecurity matters, digging into the field operative aspect of the hunger problem by trying to reduce one by one the number of hungry people with a comprehensive local point of view, is also very relevant, in addition to the macro analysis of its causes and consequences – which is certainly important and compelling – at the global level.

It will be very important to specify the scope and scenario of the assorted initiatives that are already executed in relation to the CFS reformed leadership role, so that follow-up can be improved and efficiency can be maximized.

Nevertheless, the contemplated timings are worrisome; the new CFS should develop a food security strategic framework that is not scheduled to

be discussed after October 2010, while it is not even clear how it will structurally interact with the Comprehensive Framework for Action which the High Level Task Force (HLTF) is currently updating through by consulting stakeholders.

It is likewise worrisome that the CFS financing has not been decided upon. Could a company with over 1 billion profit loss implement its reforms and measures on such a relaxed schedule? In this scenario, the loss of human lives is at a stake.

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Links

FAO Right to Food Unit:

http://www.fao.org/righttofood/index_es.htm

Report on the food insecurity situation in the 2009:

www.fao.org/docrep/012/i0876s/i0876s00.htm

Committee on the Abolition of the Third World Foreign Debt

<http://www.cadtm.org/G20-Un-pequeno-retoque-de-pintura>

Forum on the efficacy of the development of the Civil Society Organizations:

<http://www.cso-effectiveness.org/?lang=es>

Committee on Food Security (CFS):

<http://www.fao.org/cfs/es/>

HLTF webpage:

<http://www.un.org/spanish/issues/food/taskforce/>

World Bank webpage:

www.bancomundial.org

IFPRI webpage:

www.ifpri.org

Observatorio del Hambre (Hunger Observatory):

<http://observatoriodelhambre.net>

Campaign “Quién debe a Quién” (Who owes who):

<http://www.quiendebeaquien.org>

ATTAC webpage Spain:

www.attac.es

Official website of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Food Security.

www.srfood.org



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