

**PRIVATE SECTOR VIEWS
ON
ISSUES BEFORE THE
UN COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD
SECURITY**

October 2011

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COMMITMENT TO ADDRESSING POVERTY AND FOOD SECURITY

1) Agriculture is an engine for development

- a) Food security is closely connected with economic growth and social progress in developing countries. The food security agenda should focus on agriculture which constitutes the basis of many poor peoples' livelihoods and the backbone of rural economies in most developing countries and empower them to be successful food producers.
- b) There is a need to support smallholder adaptation to changes in food demand and the challenges posed by evolving technology and sustainability requirements.
- c) Smallholder farmers need improved access to markets, the adaptation and adoption of appropriate technologies, institutional innovations and improved access to natural, financial, social and human capital.
- d) Food security is linked to food availability, distribution, variety, and incomes. The primacy of food availability in the face of a growing population demands an increase in productive capacity in farming around the world and a reduction in pre- and post-harvest losses and food waste.

2) Support Entrepreneurship and Private Enterprise

- a) Open markets and private enterprise are critical for development and are an important part of achieving food security goals.
- b) In addition to the participation of large companies in the agri-food sector, the path forward must focus on the sustainable entrepreneurship of local small- and medium-sized enterprises.
- c) An important pathway to achieving food security is to enable smallholder farmers to break the subsistence cycle and become small scale entrepreneurs.
- d) Farmer organisations have a vital contribution to make to the development of agriculture and rural communities. Unless small-scale farmers are organized, they will remain politically powerless and economically disadvantaged.

3) Establish a Conducive Operating Environment

- a) Transparency, fairness, and predictability are key to promoting enterprise.
- b) All forms of private enterprise – domestic markets, foreign investment and international trade – require an operating environment conducive to growth and development, including: peace and stability, the rule of law, good governance with accountability and transparency, the absence of corruption, adequate infrastructure, an educated workforce, clear property rights and enforceable contracts.

- c) We need an approach that is farmer-centered, ensuring they have access to the things they need to produce a crop – such as the best-adapted seed technologies, land, water, knowledge, inputs and credit. Rural infrastructure needs to be in place to allow for market access and farmers to sell their products.
- d) Nurturing and supporting domestic growth should be central to any development effort. Food insecure countries need to set the right framework to encourage domestic investment, including stable macroeconomic policies that limit capital flight, reliable government data on market conditions, sound information disclosure practices, and clear and efficient regulatory frameworks for doing business.
- e) Improve trade mechanisms and the harmonisation of standards, phytosanitary rules, and technology approvals.

4) Research, development, and extension services

- a) Agriculture is knowledge-based and requires a holistic view.
- b) If the world is to secure the increases in agricultural productivity required to produce enough food for the growing population, greater emphasis is needed on the role of agricultural research and the development and transfer of appropriate and adapted technologies to farmers, integration with traditional knowledge, and capacity-building.
- c) Extension systems are the networks of local experts that work with farmers to transfer scientific expertise, agronomic techniques, and best practices. Providing this education to rural communities in a systematic, participatory manner is essential to improving their production, income and quality of life.
- d) Increased programming and recruitment are required to attract students to post-secondary education in plant science, animal science, agronomy, agricultural economics, and related disciplines. It is essential to build capacity among a new generation of agricultural professionals.
- e) Dissemination of useful and practical information related to productive agriculture, marketing techniques, and basic business skills are needed to address poverty. It should also include basic health, nutrition, and domestic information for the benefit of rural households.

5) The Power of Partnerships

- a) Effective partnerships between and among governments, the private sector and civil society are particularly useful in addressing complex and inter-related challenges. Such partnerships have proven vital in areas where no single actor can successfully address an issue on its own.
- b) The Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) initiative is a partnership well focused on aspects of food security.

GLOBAL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

1) Safety nets, social protection and nutrition

- a) More attention must be paid to the immediate needs of those who lack the necessary purchasing power to meet their food and nutrition requirements, especially women and children.
- b) Social protection and safety nets to reduce vulnerability should not only meet immediate needs, often arising from natural disasters or conflicts, but also contribute to reducing uncertainty and improve agricultural productivity.
- c) Agriculture is in desperate need of capital investment, especially to feed 10 billion people in 2050. Price caps will fundamentally destroy that investment, so it is important food security should be dealt with in social safety net structures.

2) Increasing investment

- a) Prioritize specific value chains or regions for increased public-private investment and access to credit, including micro-credit.
- b) Remove barriers to investment, particularly through innovative financing mechanisms (catalytic finance, patient capital, credit guarantees and insurance).
- c) Develop intellectual property protection policies, where they are currently lacking.
- d) Strengthen the capacity of smallholder farmers (particularly women) through extension, financing, information access, organizing support, and property rights.

3) Improving markets

- a) Improve trade policies at global and national levels, including finalising the WTO Doha Round and prohibiting export bans.
- b) Establish emergency reserves to ensure availability for the most vulnerable.
- c) Establish transparent monitoring and data-sharing on availability, stocks, demand, price and quality of agricultural commodities.
- d) Improve smallholder farmers' access to markets through investments in transport and storage infrastructure, refrigerated storage as well as information access.

4) Expanding technology access and R&D

- a) Develop public-private partnerships for technology R&D and for expanding technology access.
- b) Encourage consistent, well formulated government policies to incentivize on technology approvals, regulation, R&D and safety.
- c) Strengthen agriculture and nutrition science in developing-country institutions.

5) Ensuring environmental sustainability

- a) Encourage sharing of best practices and technologies for environmentally sustainable agriculture.
- b) Improve water resource management through increased public-private collaboration to strengthen water management strategies and technologies.
- c) Scale up sustainable supply-chain management for specific commodities, through effective policies.
- d) Reduce post-harvest losses and food waste by improving transport, storage, energy efficiency, and waste recycling along the value chain; and reduce consumer food waste.
- e) Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture, through policy and financing incentives including the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).

6) Meeting nutritional needs

- a) Increase availability of nutritional foods through R&D, improved distribution, and integrated production strategies linking agriculture, nutrition and health goals.
- b) Support the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) programme.
- c) Encourage consumers to choose diets that offer a healthy nutritional balance as well as environmental efficiency.

FOOD PRICE VOLATILITY

- 1) **Prohibit export bans** on food and agricultural inputs and strengthen measures against politically motivated export interruptions. Improve trade policies at global and national levels, including finalizing the WTO Doha Round.
- 2) Encourage use of **transparent markets** and **creation of national/regional commodity exchanges**. Develop mechanisms for price and market information sharing, particularly to farmers in food insecure areas, since good price transparency improves fair marketing.
- 3) Food security in the face of a growing population demands an **increase in productive capacity in agriculture**. At the same time, **reduction in post-harvest losses** through improved storage and transportation can increase food availability.
- 4) Develop a **global system to monitor information on food production and consumption, reserves and price levels**, together with a mechanism to better anticipate, respond faster, and in a more coordinated way to food crises. Arrange regular sales tenders for food insecure areas to avoid shortages on local markets, and strengthen information on quality criteria to maximize local production.
- 5) Encourage **regional trade among food insecure countries**, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, prioritise exports to deficit areas. Recognise the need to procure aid from local and international sources. However, self-sufficiency rather than aid should be the goal.
- 6) Establish a mechanism to strengthen agriculture sector **risk management tools** and practices at the country level as a key strategy for reducing the impacts of volatility on the poor.
- 7) Increase the environmental sustainability of agriculture – including impacts on water, land and climate – through a **coordinated effort to share best practices**, catalyse partnerships and strengthen leadership.
- 8) Target technology innovation and distribution to specific regional needs, with active support and leadership from local stakeholders. These efforts can be accelerated through **harmonizing and reforming policies and regulations** (such as food safety, MRLs, and phytosanitary rules) plus establishing goals and incentives.

- 9) Establish partnerships for **smallholder farmers' education**, engaging the private sector, governments, civil society and communities.
- 10) Ensure food and nutrition security by **encouraging a range of crops and produce** to be grown to avoid hunger and malnutrition. Pulses are a vital part of that mix and also add benefits in crop rotation in food secure and insecure countries alike.
- 11) Any **reserves programs should be limited** to key regional areas that are regularly in need of food aid, and should be administered by the World Food Programme.

RESPONSIBLE AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT

- 1) Investment, foreign and domestic, is a vital source of capital as well as a driver for increased productivity in the national market, and is also a source of significant secondary job creation.
- 2) Improved coordination between public and private **investment in infrastructure** can have a multiplier effect on development assistance. Railroads, highways, and information and communications technology – the basic tools of transportation and communication – are essential links between regional and international markets, supply chains, and value chains.
- 3) Domestic markets and foreign investment require the same **conductive operating environment**, including: peace and stability, the rule of law, good governance with accountability and transparency, the absence of corruption, adequate infrastructure, an educated workforce, clear property rights and enforceable contracts.
- 4) **Transparency, clarity, respect, and accountability** should be the responsibility of both investors and governments.
- 5) **Best practices in corporate governance and responsibility**, such as those in the UN Global Compact, provide useful guidelines.
- 6) National governments should establish regulations for large scale investment on the size, mode and rules regarding maximum acquisitions. The principle should be **transparent rules in advance of investment**. Any social commitments and corollary investments should be negotiated, transparent, and accountable.
- 7) An acquisition should ensure **proper remuneration** for any affected tenure holders, workers or affected communities.
- 8) An **educated and trained workforce** is essential. Investments must be made by national governments in education and by businesses in their workers.
- 9) Working with national and international priorities, an integrated approach to improving **whole value chains** can offer benefits. That includes support for value added development, including via micro-credit.
- 10) Smaller food insecure countries should promote regional integration in order to create larger, **regional markets** that will attract more investment. Also, more modest investments in sustaining infrastructure such as road and bridge repair, storage, refrigerated transportation, and distribution hubs can be extremely effective.

GENDER

- 1) Promote the adoption and implementation of policies by national governments that ensure legal equality for women, including **rights to land and other productive resources; access to financial services, business registration and operation, and employment opportunities.**
- 2) Encourage women's capacity to organize themselves and foster women leaders. Protect rural women worker's wages and labour conditions and cultivate their roles as small scale entrepreneurs. Ensure that **women's leadership and expertise** feed into work on food security such as guidelines and initiatives related to land, investment, and nutrition, particularly for women smallholder farmers.
- 3) Provide access to **proper maternal health services** for women and focus particularly on **nutrition for the first 1000 days** of mother and child. Include improvement of women's, adolescent girl's and children's nutritional status as an explicit goal and expected outcomes of agriculture, food and nutritional security-related programmes, strategies and policies.
- 4) Encouraging investors, donors, and governments to focus on supporting women smallholder farmers, including **access to resources such as inputs, agricultural extension services, grain storage, and information.**
- 5) **Education programs** should make specific reference to the needs of women, including rural women. There is a pressing need for literacy, basic math skills, and general education for women in developing countries. Multiple studies have also found women's education plays a positive role in achieving goals for child schooling and nutrition.
- 6) It is important to have gender sensitive approaches to increase access to **agricultural extension services**. Specific training with mechanisms to manage gender-based biases on access to land, banking, and marketing opportunities are needed to close gaps for rural women and avoid perpetuating long term gender inequities.
- 7) Access to **banking services** that ensure women directly receive payment for their agricultural production. Savings accounts are needed, as is affordable micro-credit and access to opportunities in the value chain.
- 8) Supporting **co-operatives and other enterprises** that allow smallholder women farmers to aggregate their harvests, negotiate better prices, and introduce value-added processing.
- 9) Educational goals for **orphans and vulnerable children** in developing countries should be assessed at a national level. In many developing countries, agriculture can be the primary means of employment for the vast majority of the population. When the family unit is disrupted, many of these children lose their opportunity to **learn basic farming skills.**

CLIMATE CHANGE

- 1) **Agriculture generally, and farmers especially, are vital to mitigate and adapt to climate change.**
- 2) Increasing farm productivity in a sustainable way and **decreasing waste and losses** can significantly mitigate the effects of climate change, prevent deforestation, and protect biodiversity.
- 3) Encourage productivity improvements – in a sustainable way – on existing agricultural land to **avoid additional land clearing** and give priority to the **rehabilitation of degraded agricultural soils**.
- 4) Adopt **proven sustainable agricultural practices** to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and enhance the effect of natural carbon sinks.
- 5) Promote **agricultural best practices**, particularly Integrated Crop Management (ICM), conservation agriculture, intercropping, improved seeds and fertilizer best management practices.
- 6) Provide **incentives to farmers** and other stakeholders which reward adoption of sustainable and responsible production systems, better performing technologies and the efforts of early adopters.
- 7) **Further research and innovation** are essential to develop the necessary adaptation and mitigation solutions. Support increased investment in agricultural research, including links between agriculture and climate change, involving research centres, capacity building programmes, and industry R&D.
- 8) Include robust methodologies and field-testing to overcome uncertainties around **measurement, reporting and verification**.
- 9) Promote **funding mechanisms** which support the needs of all levels and forms of farming.
- 10) Create a **dedicated adaptation fund for agriculture, accessible to farmers' organisations in developing countries**.

LAND TENURE

- 1) Good land tenure **security** is central to sustaining productivity but also to fostering good stewardship of land among farmers and pastoralists. Good land management practices should be rewarded.
- 2) Land tenure rules should focus on **transparency, clarity, respect, and fair compensation**.
- 3) Governments should focus on **anti-corruption and good administrative practices**.
- 4) **Failure to establish and respect women's right to land tenure regularly** impedes the agriculture sector's ability to meet food demands or to break the poverty cycle for the hundreds of millions of small-holder farmers who are women. It is important to avoid the loss of land through divorce or widowhood, as well.
- 5) All farmers, including smallholders, rely on secure land tenure for access to resources. Any change to their status through pressure such as urbanisation or other social forces, **must be compensated**.
- 6) Large scale acquisitions should be monitored in light of **national guidelines** on the size, mode and rules regarding maximum acquisitions. The principle should be **advance, transparent rules and should involve local authorities**. Any changes due to an acquisition should ensure proper remuneration for any affected tenure holders or affected communities.