

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.