

# Feeding G20

**Achieving real change in the fight against food insecurity and undernutrition**

At the time of writing this paper over two million children under-five are at risk of starvation in East Africa<sup>1</sup>. This catastrophe, just a couple of years after the 2008 food crisis, indicates that we have not learnt from past mistakes. This food crisis is intolerable; yet, it is part of a much larger problem. In 2009, FAO estimated that the food price increases of 2007-8 pushed the number of hungry people in the world to over one billion for the first time<sup>2</sup>. Every year, 3.5 million deaths are caused by undernutrition with severe acute undernutrition contributing to 1 million of these. Furthermore, it is not acceptable that in the 21st Century, one-sixth of the world's population is still suffering from hunger, 60% of whom are women<sup>3</sup>. If the MDGs are to be achieved, the G20 must act to address food and nutrition insecurity through long-term approaches and solutions that allow the right to food to be respected, protected and fulfilled.

The G20 leaders have highlighted key critical factors that need to be taken into consideration to respond to global food insecurity. For example, the Development Working Group (DWG) Conference in Cape Town in June/July 2011 highlighted the role that inequality plays in weakening the relationship between growth and poverty reduction. The critical role of agriculture and food security policies and programmes in reducing child undernutrition has also been recognized by the G20 Agriculture Ministers. However, the G20 governments have yet to deliver a comprehensive and sustainable response to address those issues. The Action Plan on Food Price Volatility and Agriculture from the Meeting of G20 Agriculture Ministers does not offer an immediate and exhaustive response to the current international food price crisis. Additionally, it fails to include important long-term measures that are needed to fight food and nutrition insecurity. Thus, we have joined together to provide the G20 with proven solutions and recommendations. The G20 has the power, capacity and responsibility to take a number of bold and urgent actions and to start the necessary dialogue for the creation of effective measures to ensure food security, nutrition, and sustainable agriculture.

[www.feeding20.org](http://www.feeding20.org)



## WE THEREFORE URGE THE **G20** LEADERS TO:

- 1. Commit to multi-sectoral action by ensuring that food security, agriculture and development policies are nutrition-sensitive**, inclusive of nutrition-specific interventions and accountable for improved nutrition outcomes for women and children.
- 2. Fulfil current funding pledges**, particularly the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative (AFSI) and **increase public investments in small-scale, sustainable and resilient agriculture**, particularly by investing in women farmers and through food and nutrition security actions.
- 3. Take relevant actions to guarantee transparent regulation** of food prices and price volatility by regulating food markets.
- 4. Support the implementation of a cost-effective system of food reserves**, at community, national and regional levels.
- 5. Prioritise the scaling-up of social protection programmes**, particularly of safety net programmes to support individuals and female-headed households most vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity.
- 6. Build the resilience of those most affected by climate change** by supporting adaptation actions that tackle the impacts it has on food and nutrition security and accelerate progress on climate change mitigation measures.
- 7. Fully support the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and promote an expanded mandate of the Rapid Response Forum** to issue global alerts on high food prices and promote action for effective response.

1 - IRIN (16 June 2011) Kenya: Severe drought, high food prices hit pastoralists. Available from: <http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportid=92997>

2 - FAO (2009) The State of Food Insecurity in the World Economic crises – impacts and lessons learned Available from: <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/012/i0876e/i0876e00.pdf>

3 - ECOSOC (2007) Annual ministerial review: strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development <http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/communications/wfp224568.pdf>

→ **1 . Commit to multi-sectoral action by ensuring that food security, agriculture and development policies are nutrition-sensitive, inclusive of nutrition-specific interventions and accountable for improved nutrition outcomes for women and children.**

Building and strengthening national and local capacity to develop food security, agriculture and development policies that achieve long-term sustainability of nutrition objectives is paramount. G20 leaders must support capacity building to improve the ability of the population to produce nutritious food for themselves. This can be achieved, for instance, by supporting smallholders to produce a wider variety of crops, and by providing technical and financial assistance for infrastructure. In order to boost food production among smallholder farmers, two priorities must be pursued in the G20 agenda to tackle hunger: (i) nutrition objectives for agricultural investments and (ii) targeting support to female producers. Women comprise 43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries<sup>4</sup> and yet they continue to have less access to assets, services and opportunities than men. According to the FAO State of Food and Agriculture report 2010-2011, removing these gender inequalities could reduce the number of hungry people by 100-150 million. In terms of nutrition objectives for agricultural investments, nutrition indicators, such as the dietary diversity index<sup>5</sup> for children under 5, should be incorporated into the monitoring of agriculture and rural development policies.

Undernutrition, particularly among children, is a critical global development and economic challenge. 44 %, or 86 million, of the children suffering from chronic undernutrition live in eight<sup>6</sup> of the G20 countries<sup>7</sup>. G20 leaders should therefore commit to addressing undernutrition as a key economic priority through greater inclusion of both “nutrition-specific” interventions and “nutrition-sensitive” investments. At national level, undernutrition can lead to losses in GDP of as much as 2% to 3%, increasing in some cases to as much as 6% per annum, translating into deficits of several billions of dollars a year<sup>8</sup>. The economic benefits of investing in nutrition are recognised in both the 2008 Copenhagen Consensus and in the Scaling Up Nutrition movement. Supporting these nutrition-sensitive and nutrition-specific measures could prevent millions of child deaths each year. The economic returns on these investments are expected to far exceed the costs. For example, the World Bank estimates the cost-benefit ratio of salt iodization to be 30:1 and iron fortification to be 8:1.

→ **2 . Fulfil current funding pledges, particularly the L’Aquila Food Security Initiative (AFSI) and increase public investments in small-scale, sustainable and resilient agriculture, especially by investing in women farmers and through food and nutrition security actions.**

The 2009 L’Aquila commitment to invest \$22 billion over 3 years in agricultural development and food security, including \$6 billion of new money, has yet to be fulfilled. The accountability report estimated that donors have only delivered 22% of the money promised, with just one year to go until the deadline, and most have not reported how they plan to reach the pledged amount. Furthermore, critical inconsistencies and flaws in the accountability system remain, making it problematic to tell if donors are keeping their promises; for example, fiscal years and reporting periods are different. In addition, donors have interpreted the

scope of L’Aquila differently with some choosing not to include nutrition and social protection in their pledges. The L’Aquila Joint Statement rightly placed emphasis on the need to support more sustainable agriculture and smallholders, in particular women. Yet, it is unclear how much focus there has actually been on women, small-scale producers and environmental sustainability.

We can see that there is substantial room for improvement which needs to be addressed urgently. We call for commitments to be met through

4 - CFS (24/05/2011) CFS Policy Round Table on “Gender, food and nutrition security” A concept note. [Available online] [http://cso4cfs.files.wordpress.com/2011/06/cfs\\_policy\\_rt\\_concept\\_note\\_gender\\_nutrition\\_and\\_food\\_security\\_24\\_05\\_11.pdf](http://cso4cfs.files.wordpress.com/2011/06/cfs_policy_rt_concept_note_gender_nutrition_and_food_security_24_05_11.pdf) [Accessed 12/08/2011]  
5 - Dietary diversity is usually measured by summing the number of foods or food groups consumed over a reference period. Source: Arimond M and Ruel M (2004) Dietary diversity is associated with child nutritional status: Evidence from 11 demographic and health surveys. *J.Nutr.* 134:2579-2585.  
6 - Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Turkey and the USA  
7 - Unicef (2011). State of the World’s Children.  
8 - See : <http://www.wfp.org/node/357>

inclusive country-led plans, particularly focusing on smallholder farmers, and more accountability on how the funds are spent. This should be accomplished by incorporating women and men smallholder farmers in the development of food and nutrition security policies and country plans. Civil society organisations, farmers' associations and women's organisations must also be included in the development, implementation and evaluation of the country proposals. More efforts should also be made to ensure that countries submitting proposals are aware that nutrition funding falls under the scope of GAFSP (Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme), one of the funding channels of the L'Aquila initiative. To accomplish these goals, greater coherence between the GAFSP and the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) should be encouraged, especially by aligning GAFSP policy with the guidance developed at the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

Donors must also recognise that more and better investment in smallholder agriculture is needed beyond the L'Aquila commitment period. Since the mid-1980s, the share of aid invested in agriculture in Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members' aid programmes has declined from 17% to 6% in recent years<sup>9</sup>. Agricultural spending within overall Official Development Assistance (ODA) should rise significantly and national governments must also prioritise agriculture in their spending. Investments should focus on increasing access to and sustainable use of resources by smallholders: research and development should be directed towards appropriate sustainable technologies for small scale women and men producers, equitable market linkages must be built, producer organisations should be supported, knowledge of sustainable techniques should be shared through extension services and innovative farmer-to-farmer processes, and access to finance for small-scale producers should be improved.

### → **3 . Take relevant actions to guarantee transparent regulation of food prices and price volatility by regulating food markets.**

Price volatility is particularly harmful to people living in poverty – who spend most of their income on food. It is also detrimental to smallholder farmers, specifically women, who find it hard to plan production or investments and confront risks of loss of livelihoods in the face of changing prices (Box 1). G20 leaders must act both domestically and through multilateral mechanisms, in particular through the Committee on World Food Security, to tackle harmful food price volatility.

G20 countries can help to alleviate and reduce excessive financial speculation through greater transparency and regulation of exchanges. These are essential to provide a better overview of the entire commodity futures market encompassing all classes of traders and all derivatives. A regulatory framework should be established to ensure futures markets operate in a fair and transparent manner without market abuse and excessive speculation. Price limits, position limits and restrictions on passive speculation should be introduced or strengthened, and existing loopholes should be closed.

#### **BOX 1**

In the Horn of Africa, high local prices are predominantly caused by shocks such as recurrent droughts and local political conflict. However, global food prices are an additional threat for this import-dependent region. Countries like Djibouti and Somalia have a cereal import dependency ratio of 100% and 60% respectively. Import-dependent countries are vulnerable to increases in global food prices, and political instability obstructs the establishment of control measures to lessen the impact of high global prices into local markets. Currently, staple cereal prices have risen to record levels, with the price of red sorghum in Somalia increasing by 240% since October 2010 and the price of maize price tripling in Kenya. Many factors are involved in the volatility of food prices (biofuels, land tenure issues, etc.). However, promoting transparency and regulation of food markets is a critical step towards moderating drastic price fluctuations. Moreover, transparency in the regulation of food markets will provide evidence on how those factors operate hence facilitating the identification of additional measures to tackle price volatility.

<sup>9</sup> - Source: OECD (April 2010) Measuring aid to agriculture. <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/54/38/44116307.pdf>

## → 4 . Support the implementation of a cost-effective system of food reserves, at community, national and regional levels.

It is critical that G20 countries provide technical and financial support for the creation and management of food reserves at local, national and regional levels in order to limit price volatility and as part of a broader strategy to enhance food and nutrition security. These reserves will have to be designed to support the most vulnerable during a crisis. G20 leaders should assist by providing funding, building capacity and promoting local purchases to build the reserves. For these purposes the reserves should have a code of conduct, a well-defined distribution system (for short term and long term use of stocks) and appropriate trigger mechanisms.

The effectiveness of food reserves depends on the level of regional integration, incorporation with social protection and support of local producers (Box 2). Furthermore, their purpose should go beyond humanitarian action to allow local price regulation and to avoid leading to increased risks for the livelihoods of small holders. Finally these reserves should be managed with the involvement

of smallholder associations, women's organisations and civil society organisations.

### BOX 2

Regional integration is critical to address price volatility. In some regions such as West Africa, efforts are underway to establish food reserves by consolidating capacity and building more effective instruments to tackle food insecurity. A joint ECOWAS / WFP project is expected to take place this year. This will be a project which takes place at regional level to address issues such as price volatility which are difficult to tackle at the national level. A regional agricultural policy can improve commercial flows within the region; can help with the management of food availability and with the utilisation of regulatory instruments like regional food reserves. Reducing dependency on imports will also prevent high global prices being transmitted to local markets.

## → 5 . Prioritise the scaling-up of social protection programmes, particularly of safety net programmes to support individuals and female-headed households most vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity.

Investing in agriculture must go hand in hand with implementing social protection interventions. Such programmes should be aimed at strengthening and developing households' resilience through livelihood enhancing initiatives that build assets, allow and stimulate investments in more and higher-risk resources, and promote resilience to shocks. There are many types of safety nets and the context will determine to a greater extent which are the most effective. For example, when appropriate, cash transfers can contribute to substantial improvements in the nutrition of children by removing the economic constraints of accessing a nutritious diet. Hunger safety nets are targeted at those living in food insecurity and are particularly appropriate for both chronic and seasonal food insecurity. These hunger safety nets must include a nutrition (micronutrient supplements or improvements in health conditions), and/or financial component, depending on the context and needs identified. Some G20 emerging economies

offer significant insight into the implementation of effective social protection and safety net programmes and could play a key role in supporting all developing nations to provide adequate social protection and greater resilience for communities during times of crisis (Box 3).

We request that the G20 countries increase funding for and support to the scaling-up of national consumer and producer safety nets; by: i) increasing the proportion of beneficiaries and by increasing direct or indirect transfers (e.g. direct cash transfers to increase purchase power and food subsidy/price control to indirectly support consumers.); ii) bolstering national-led processes to design safety net programmes, through provision of timely and appropriate technical expertise to improve targeting and reach ; iii) increasing resources to support targeted interventions that meet the needs of the most vulnerable to food insecurity (nutrition

interventions for children under 2 years of age, the chronically ill and pregnant and lactating mothers and regular transfers to the elderly, physically challenged or other socially excluded groups such as female-headed households). These safety nets

must also be long-term, flexible and adjusted against price inflation. Additionally, appropriate measures to regulate markets and control food prices should also be in place to avoid undermining their impact.

### BOX 3

Undernutrition has multiple causes and many non-nutrition interventions can have a very positive impact in reducing it. By designing multi-sectoral programmes, deeper causes of poverty and hunger can be addressed. One example is Bolsa Familia a wide social protection strategy created in Brazil within the Fome Zero programme, which is an umbrella plan comprising of a variety of safety net and social protection programmes tailored to the needs of different segments of the population. In 2006 Brazil experienced increases in income, decreases

in undernutrition rates and decreases in the risk of undernutrition due to a multi-sectoral approach which was coordinated and monitored by a dedicated agency. Also small farmers increased their access to credit and many families in arid regions received water tanks. Similar success stories from applying a multi-sectoral approach can be found in Bangladesh, Mozambique and Malawi. However, political will and financial investment are also necessary, particularly for these comprehensive programmes.



**6 . Build the resilience of those most affected by climate change** by supporting adaptation actions that tackle the impacts it has on food and nutrition security and accelerate progress on climate change mitigation measures.

Smallholder farmers in developing countries, especially women, are particularly affected by climate change while they contribute little to greenhouse gas emissions (Box 4). By 2050, the risk of hunger is projected to increase by 10 - 20%, and child undernutrition is anticipated to be 20% higher than a no-climate change scenario<sup>10</sup>. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) fourth assessment report (AR4) concluded that undernutrition which is linked to extreme climatic events may be one of the most important consequences of climate change due to the very large numbers of people potentially affected. Urgent adaptation measures are needed, including building the resilience of vulnerable farming communities by emphasizing the need for agro-ecological approaches and techniques applicable to marginal and degraded lands. Furthermore, water management should be improved, focusing on rain-fed smallholders who have the greatest room for food security improvements. Developed countries have an important role to play to enable the adaptation of low and middle income countries, through additional investment and the enhancement of national capacities, particularly to strengthen the link between monitoring systems and response mechanisms.

### BOX 4

Small-scale farmers and pastoralists are increasingly vulnerable to more frequent and intense droughts, which are largely due to climate change. The scale and severity of the current emergency in the Horn of Africa has affected millions, leaving many vulnerable and displaced. With the majority of East Africans wholly dependent on livestock and seasonal crops as a means of livelihood, poor cultivation and livestock rearing conditions diminished water supplies have left entire communities with few sources of subsistence. Many have depleted their livelihood assets, and have minimal income. Compounded by severe food price rises, they are unable to independently support or feed their families.

G20 leaders must agree to provide the resources needed for adaptation to climate change and to contribute to the Green Climate Fund set up through the Cancun Agreements to reach \$100 billion annually by 2020. They should agree on public, private and innovative finance sources that deliver substantial new, additional and reliable revenues for climate change adaptation and mitigation in

<sup>10</sup> - Parry, M., MW Rosegrant, and T Wheeler. 2009. Climate Change and Hunger. Responding to the Challenge. WFP, Rome.

developing countries. This could include a global financial transaction tax and a fair global mechanism to address shipping emissions. G20 countries must also commit to increase action on domestic emissions reductions and in particular to reinforce their commitment to cut emissions in line with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate

Change (UNFCCC). G20 leaders must create a climate of good faith and raise ambitions between parties to ensure that the "African COP" at Durban will deliver the meaningful outcomes needed for those least responsible but worst impacted by climate change, such as small scale food producers in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

➔ **7 . Fully support the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and promote an expanded mandate of the Rapid Response Forum to issue global alerts on high food prices and promote action for effective response.**

We call on G20 countries to increase support for the reformed CFS. The multilateral, multi-stakeholder process, led by the Committee on World Food Security, will provide the necessary basis to increase the capacity of the Rapid Response Forum, called for by G20 Agriculture ministers last June. G20 countries must encourage the implementation of the Rapid Response Forum to extend its mandate from a consultation body to a more empowered organization, operating in the framework of the Agriculture Market Information System (AMIS) and in close cooperation with the CFS.

The Forum is expected to be a space for international policy coordination and to provide advice when there is a forecast of food security risk. However, we call on the G20 to encourage the creation of a more stru-

ctured entity with the power and authority to mobilize political and financial support; it should also provide guidelines and tools to promote early responses to potential food price crises (Box 5). In order to achieve this it will also need access to reliable data from relevant agencies and to support countries to develop effective information systems. The G20 should promote the transparency of existing monitoring systems, the decentralisation of monitoring from global to local systems and the inclusion of developing countries as part of the Forum. The creation of the AMIS is a positive development; however we see much focus on data collection and analysis but little on response mechanisms. Therefore, we call for greater commitment to develop appropriate response mechanisms and close the gap between information systems and preventive actions.

**BOX 5**

Expanding the power of a Rapid Response Forum could play an important role in reducing the devastating effects that, for example, are currently afflicting the Horn of Africa. The Horn of Africa is one of the most complex regions in the world and is wracked by conflict. Additionally droughts and food crises are recurrent problems. At the moment over 12 million people are facing severe food insecurity despite warnings that go back as far as November 2010 when FAO raised the alarm. Consecutively, in January 2011 FEWSNET declared that there was a high probability of extreme food insecurity following failure of the rains from October to December 2010 and warned that if this situation continued, a crisis similar to that in

2005/6 was likely to happen, although in a larger area. These ignored early warnings and the passivity of the international community to act with anticipation, call urgently for an evaluation of the response mechanisms. It is crucial that the G20 insists on the establishment of a Forum that has the capacity to demand accurate information and more importantly, the authority to assemble an appropriate, precautionary action.

Source:

<http://www.fao.org/crisis/horn-africa/frequently-asked-questions/en/#c121556> ;  
[http://www.fews.net/docs/Publications/East\\_Regional\\_Alert\\_Update%202011\\_01.pdf](http://www.fews.net/docs/Publications/East_Regional_Alert_Update%202011_01.pdf)

**CONTACT:**

**ELISE RODRIGUEZ**

*Chargé de mission plaidoyer / Advocacy Officer*

**Action Contre la Faim**

Email: [eliserodriguez@actioncontrelafaim.org](mailto:eliserodriguez@actioncontrelafaim.org)

T: +33 (0) 1 43 35 86 17

**JEAN CHRISTOPHEL**

*Chargé de mission plaidoyer / Advocacy Officer*

**CARE France**

Email: [christophel@carefrance.org](mailto:christophel@carefrance.org)

T: +33 (0)1 53 19 81 19

**JENNIFER S. KLOPP**

*Vice President of Development and Communications*

**Helen Keller International**

Email: [jklopp@hki.org](mailto:jklopp@hki.org)

T: 212-532-0544 ext 808

**JEAN-CYRIL DAGORN**

*Responsable de Plaidoyer Justice économique /  
Economic Justice Advocacy Officer*

**Oxfam France**

Email: [jcdagorn@oxfamfrance.org](mailto:jcdagorn@oxfamfrance.org)

T: + 33 (0) 1 56 98 24 42

**SHERI ARNOTT**

*Senior Policy Advisor, Food Security and Nutrition*

**World Vision Canada**

Email: [Sheri\\_Arnott@worldvision.ca](mailto:Sheri_Arnott@worldvision.ca)

T: 1 (613) 569-1888 ext 2234

[www.feeding20.org](http://www.feeding20.org)

