

ROSA Watch

Rosa Watch is a monthly bulletin that aims to bring you up-to-date useful information about food security, and do so rapidly and directly.

Each issue has:

- 1) a main subject with a common database of reference documents available from the **ROSA online library**
- 2) a selection of new documents put online and regularly updated by a watch on subjects dealt with by the network.

In this issue:

- **ROSA Document Database:**
On the subject of **nutrition**
- **ROSA News**
January – February 2009

Would you like to tell us about some news or a recently published article, or just make a comment? Contact the team of moderators (animation@reseau-rosa.eu). All contributions are welcome!

THIS MONTH'S EDITORIAL

Taking nutrition issues into account in development policies

The documents from the online library presented in here emphasise the great importance of nutrition in development policies and programmes. They show a lack of commitment on behalf of decision-makers, who tend to treat nutrition as simply a subsidiary question.

Several studies try to show the importance of giving priority to nutrition, and how this can help in reaching the Millennium Development Goals (Benson 2008, UNSCN 2004). World Bank (2006) and FAO (2004) documents suggest drivers for decision-makers to help them give nutrition a more central place in public policy. IDS (2008) and Save the Children (2008) analyse the weaknesses in development aid, particularly in terms of child nutrition. Both documents show that major donors do not put enough resources into this. UNICEF's 2007 statistical results show how little progress has been made in child nutrition since 1990.

Improving nutrition programmes: Lessons learned from experience and best practices guidelines

Some of the documents give examples of successful interventions, notably in child nutrition (see The Lancet's series). The authors also suggest ways of changing the scale of these projects to have an even greater impact on child undernutrition. Several articles also give some perspectives on tools created recently during the 2005 drought in Niger (Martin-Prével, Delpeuch 2007 and Delpeuch 2006). The analyses also highlight some structural causes that prolong food and nutrition insecurity in the long-term,

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and criticise the policies implemented for being inadequate to deal with the scale of this problem (Trench, Rowley *et al.* 2007). Various best practice guides bring together contributions from different experiences to highlight the most important guidelines on nutrition (FAO 2004, World Bank 2006).

Some authors try to broaden the question of malnutrition by linking it to other subjects such as climate, bioenergy, overnutrition ((FAO, IFPRI 2008 and FAO 2006).

ONLINE LIBRARY ROSA Document Database

Nutrition

This Month's Highlight - ROSA Focus No. 2 (February 2008) - Undernutrition in developing countries and its causes

The month's highlight looks at the causes of maternal and child malnutrition and its effects on people in developing countries, by presenting the main results of the articles published in early 2008 in The Lancet's series. The article contributes to the discussion on the various types of actions proposed to alleviate undernutrition, and their effectiveness.

In French: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article165&lang=en>

This Month's Highlight - ROSA Focus No. 4 (April 2008) - Actions to address undernutrition: the dilemma of where to invest

This month's highlight looks at the dilemma of where to invest to address the problem of undernutrition. How to prioritise actions that address the most common and recurrent problems related to undernutrition? How to ensure these actions operate at scale and effectively reach those in need? How could the LRRD ensure a smoother shift from emergency nutrition (with high ECHO investment) to post-crisis situations? These questions are emerging from this article and will be discussed during the seminar organized by EuropeAid at the beginning of May.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article160&lang=en>

This Month's Highlight - ROSA Focus No. 12 (January 2009) – The way forward for the EC to prioritise nutrition and to develop a nutrition strategy

Following the seminar in May 2008 (Enhancing EC's contribution to address maternal and child undernutrition and its causes), a concept paper has been developed by AIDCO E6. It suggests a way forward for the EC to prioritise nutrition and to develop a strategy/nutrition operational plan. This month's highlight looks at the key elements of the draft concept note. It provides an overview of the donor environment in nutrition and related areas and highlights the EC's strengths and comparative advantages. It also suggests next steps: actions for EC internal implementation and activities to be undertaken in partnership/collaboration with others.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article221&lang=en>

Enhancing the EC's contribution to address child and maternal undernutrition and its causes. Background paper for the seminar -Claire Chastre (May 2008)

This concept note was prepared for the seminar organized by the European Commission on the theme "Enhancing EC's contribution to address child and maternal undernutrition and its causes". This document is intended to highlight key challenges and issues for discussion at the seminar. It provides a brief overview of levels and consequences of undernutrition. It also drew attention to the challenges faced by national and international system which aim to address undernutrition.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article78&lang=en>

The Lancet's series on maternal and child undernutrition. Executive Summary - The Lancet (February 2008)

The Lancet's series on maternal and child undernutrition provides new insight into the global prevalence and impact of maternal and child undernutrition. The Series follows a number of earlier important series from The Lancet, such as those on child survival and neonatal health, that have shaped policy and action. This publication examines evidence-based interventions that, if implemented at scale, could significantly reduce the effects of maternal and child undernutrition. This reduction will require improved coordination between national agencies and international organisations, as well as efficient management of

resources and a dedicated effort to strengthen global capabilities.

In English: http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/IMG/pdf/The_Lancet_s_Series_on_Maternal_and_Child_Undernutrition_Summary.pdf

Maternal and child undernutrition: global and regional exposures and health consequences - The Lancet's series n°1 (January 2008)

This article examines the prevalence of maternal and child undernutrition and considers short-term consequences in terms of deaths and disease burden (as measured by Disability-Adjusted Life Years DALYs). Stunting, severe wasting, intrauterine growth restriction, deficiencies of vitamin A, zinc and iron and sub-optimal breastfeeding, together these risk factors were responsible for more than one-third of under-five child deaths and 11% of the global total disease burden. The continuing very high mortality and disease burden resulting from these nutrition-related factors make a compelling case for the urgent implementation of proven interventions.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article68&lang=en>

Maternal and child undernutrition: consequences for adult health and human capital - The Lancet's series n°2 (January 2008)

This article examines long-term educational and economic effects and associations with adult chronic diseases, particularly as countries go through the demographic, epidemiological, and nutritional transitions. Because maternal and child undernutrition has long-term, intergenerational effects, the prevention of conditions associated with undernutrition should be seen as an intergenerational investment.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article66&lang=en>

What works? Interventions for maternal and child undernutrition and survival - The Lancet's series n°3 (January 2008)

The third article of The Lancet's Series analyzes the potential benefits of implementing health and nutrition interventions that current evidence indicates are effective and applicable in low-and middle-income countries. The authors point out that much can be done to improve maternal and child nutritional status with simple evidence-based interventions. Hence, countries with a high prevalence of undernutrition must consider which interventions are of the highest priority and en-

sure their effective implementation at high coverage the greatest benefit.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article64&lang=en>

Maternal and child undernutrition: effective action at national level - The Lancet's series n°4 (January 2008)

The articles 4 and 5 of The Lancet's series consider the current state of evidence-based interventions and how they could be implemented at scale through actions at national and global levels. The fourth article reports on an assessment of actions addressing undernutrition in the 20 highest undernutrition-burdened countries and seeks to define strategies for improving maternal and child undernutrition in those countries. The authors highlight that the charge of nutrition leaders at country level is to review their existing strategies and programmes to ensure that priority is given to interventions with demonstrated impact on undernutrition, and then to develop feasible strategies for increasing public demand for these interventions and delivering them at scale.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article63&lang=en>

Effective international action against undernutrition: why has it proven so difficult and what can be done to accelerate progress? - The Lancet's series n°5 (January 2008)

The articles 4 and 5 of The Lancet's series consider the current state of evidence-based interventions and how they could be implemented at scale through actions at national and global levels. The fifth article seeks to explain why the international nutrition system has not been able to do this more effectively. The authors point out that considerable deficits remain in the performance of the international nutrition system. If the challenge of reducing global undernutrition is to be met, then all the organisations that are part of this system need to individually re-examine their strategies, resources, and internal incentives, and the system as a whole should undertake a similar exercise.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article62&lang=en>

Repositioning nutrition as central to development. A strategy for large-scale action - World Bank (2006)

This report calls attention to the need to increase investment in nutrition programs. This case is based on evidence that the scale of the problem is very large and that nutrition interventions are essential for speeding poverty reduction, have high

benefit-cost ratios, and can improve nutrition much faster than reliance on economic growth alone. Moreover, improved nutrition can drive economic growth. The report proposes to the international development community and national governments a global strategy for accelerated action in nutrition.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article87&lang=en>

From agriculture to nutrition. Pathways, synergies and outcomes - World Bank (2007)

The persistence of malnutrition despite the general improvement in food availability reveals that agricultural production is not the only determinant of nutritional status of population. This report raises the question of how agriculture can more effectively contribute to improved nutrition outcomes and take into account other sectors that contribute to nutrition. It presents a synthesis of available evidence on the impacts of agricultural development on nutrition. It also reviews and synthesizes lessons learned from four interventions that explicitly aimed to integrate agriculture and nutrition. Finally, the report analyzes constraints and challenges faced by agriculture programs that propose to improve nutrition outcomes in lower and middle income countries.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article85&lang=en>

Incorporating nutrition considerations into development policies and programmes - FAO (2004)

This policy brief is intended to improve the understanding of the advantages of good nutritional status to the development process, so that nutrition considerations can be incorporated into development policies and programmes. This report highlights that factors influencing nutritional status fall under the responsibilities of many sectors. Hence, the integral role of nutrition in development must be taken into account during policy formulation, programme planning and implementation. It will promote collaboration among different sectors and disciplines, and will contribute to provide sustainable improvement in nutritional status of population.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article80&lang=en>

Improving nutrition as a development priority - addressing undernutrition in national policy processes in Sub-Saharan Africa - IFPRI (2008)

Drawing upon the findings of a study in Ghana,

Mozambique, Nigeria, and Uganda, the report examines what factors make it difficult for undernutrition to be targeted as a national development priority. It examines the policy processes in each country (policymaking structures, political actors, the understanding of undernutrition that drives policy choices in this area and the timing). The dominant commonality is that none of the countries has effectively prioritized undernutrition in the objectives and resource allocation patterns of government.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article70&lang=en>

Mainstreaming nutrition in poverty reduction strategy papers: What does it take? A review of the early experience - World Bank (December 2006)

The fight against undernutrition must be an integral part of poverty reduction strategies. The PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers) are key instruments facilitating the adoption of a multi-sector approach and enhancing the inclusion of nutrition in national strategies. This report analyses 40 PRSPs to assess i) how malnutrition is dealt with as a development problem for the country, ii) the use of information on nutrition to analyse poverty, iii) to what extent the PRSPs of the countries assessed take account of policies, strategies and programmes for tackling malnutrition.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article40&lang=en>

Greater DFID and EC leadership on chronic malnutrition: Opportunities and constraints - Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Save the Children UK (April 2007)

The purpose of this paper is to understand the DFID and EC logic in their recent publication in combating malnutrition. Some of the key findings of their research were that DFID and the EC only assign chronic malnutrition a medium level of priority, and that nutrition is seen as a supporting investment rather than a foundational one.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article73&lang=en>

Everybody's business, nobody's responsibility - Save the Children UK (April 2007)

The paper by Save the Children UK is based on the report prepared by IDS on the importance DFID and the European Commission strategies give to tackling malnutrition. After reviewing the situation and the consequences of child malnutri-

tion, the report questions whether levels of DFID and EC funding are adequate given what is at stake in chronic malnutrition. The authors sum up by regretting that development strategies never make a priority of eradicating child malnutrition.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article59&lang=en>

Progress for children. A world fit for children, statistical review - UNICEF (December 2007)

Since 2004, the "Progress for Children" series has published data and analyses on how well the world is doing in meeting its commitments for the Millennium Development Goals. The first part of the document looks particularly at the first goal: reducing extreme poverty and hunger. It is a statistical view of how much progress has been made for this goal in developing countries since 1990. The study shows that one of the factors studied, the incidence of underweight children under 5, has decreased by nearly 20% in developing countries, but this is still well below the goal. Moreover, the risk of being underweight for children under 5 in rural areas is twice as high as in urban areas.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article57&lang=en>

Nutrition for improved development outcomes. 5th report on the world nutrition situation - United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition (March 2004)

This fifth report on the world nutrition situation reviews current trends in nutrition and the future challenges to be faced. It focuses particularly on how reducing undernutrition can help meet the Millennium Development Goals. The report also highlights the relationship between nutrition and strategies for alleviating poverty, reforming the health sector, improving governance and trade liberalisation. The report ends with suggestions on how to include nutrition in public policy programmes.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article45&lang=en>

Beyond any drought. Root causes of chronic vulnerability in the Sahel - The Sahel Working Group (June 2007)

This report looks at how development agencies and governments in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso understand and tackle vulnerability. The 2005 food crisis highlighted the extent of vulnerability in the Sahel, attracted international attention and released large sums of money to help

people survive the immediate crisis. Most studies carried out after the crisis focus on the particular circumstances of events in 2005. This report was commissioned by the Sahel Working Group, which was concerned that too much attention was given to a very specific scenario, and too little to the increasingly unacceptable levels of vulnerability which preceded the crisis and still persist two years later.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article53&lang=en>

Evaluation du dispositif de prévention et gestion des crises alimentaire du Niger durant la crise 2004-2005. Synthèse concernant les aspects nutritionnels - IRAM (June 2006)

Niger regularly faces cyclical food insecurity in a context of chronic poverty. The 2004/05 food crisis was atypical in the course it took, its scale and how it was managed. This report analyses the nutrition situation in Niger with a detailed study of available nutritional and epidemiological data. It is part of the external assessment on Niger's national organization for food crises prevention and management. The document reviews the main points from the information part of the strategy and guidelines on nutritional aspects.

In French: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article86&lang=en>

Nutrition indicators for development. Reference guide - FAO (2004)

The nutrition indicators for development reference guide, result of a FAO/IRD collaboration, helps to identify and choose the right indicators according to the context. As the nutritional situation of a given population is the result of a number of causes, nutrition indicators refer to a variety of sectors: nutrition, food security, care and caring capacity, health and demography, basic socio-economic and agro-ecological conditions. The guide provides characteristics and limitations of indicators in each sector, chosen among the most relevant and widely used, and steps to be followed while selecting the indicators and collecting data.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article95&lang=en>

The double burden of malnutrition. Case studies from six developing countries - FAO (2006)

In many developing countries, under- and over-nutrition are occurring simultaneously among different population groups. This phenomenon, referred to as the "double burden" of malnutrition, is not limited to upper-income developing coun-

tries, but is occurring across the globe in countries with very different cultures and dietary customs. This report assesses the extent of the double burden of malnutrition and identifies programmes currently in place in six case study countries: South Africa, China, Egypt, India, Mexico and the Philippines. It appears that the main challenge for governments is to intensify efforts to prevent and manage overweight and obesity and disease processes associated with overnutrition, while maintaining efforts to eliminate undernutrition and micronutrient deficiencies.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article83&lang=en>

Impact of climate change and bioenergy on nutrition - FAO, IFPRI (2008)

This document was written for the UN High Level Meeting on World Food Security in June 2008. The first part is an inventory of current world food insecurity and future trends. The paper then analyses how climate change and the increased demand for biofuels affects nutrition. The authors stress the risks for food security caused by the impact of climate change on farming, and the competition between energy crops and food crops (which is also a cause of rising food prices). They also look at the opportunities, with possibilities of adapting farming to climate change and the capacity of a sustainable development of biofuels to tackle poverty and hunger. The authors conclude with a series of recommendations to politicians.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article71&lang=en>

ROSA News

New documents online

The environmental food crisis – United Nations Environment Programme (February 2009)

The United Nations Environment Programme report begins with an inventory of the 2008 food crisis. Based on figures for prices and quantities produced, the authors highlight current and future issues with livestock, crop and aquaculture production. The authors go on to analyse the relationship between climate change and agricultural production. They look first at the probable consequences of climate change on agricultural production (loss of arable land, soil and climate conditions, water resources) and food availability for

a growing population. Then the authors briefly explore some possibilities of mitigating climate change with appropriate types of farming. In conclusion, the report proposes seven options, with longer- or shorter-term effects, for increasing crop production without compromising sustainability.

In English: <http://reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article222&lang=en>

Seasons of hunger. Fighting cycles of quiet starvation among the world's rural poor - Action Against Hunger, IDS (October 2008)

Seasonal hunger is caused by annual cycles of shrinking food stocks, rising prices and lack of income. This study analyses the situation in three countries - India, Malawi and Niger - through personal testimonies and national statistics to get a clearer understanding of the extent of the problem.

Full paper in French: http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/IMG/pdf/Les_saisons_de_la_faim.pdf

Briefing paper in English: http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/IMG/pdf/seasons_of_hunger.pdf

Emergency food security interventions. Good practices review - ODI (December 2008)

This report gives an overview of practice and research in emergency food security interventions. The authors give references for tools and cases studies for each theme. The first part of the report deals with food insecurity analysis, indicators and information systems. The second part is a more detailed study of certain types of interventions: food aid and in-kind assistance; cash based programmes; agricultural conditions improvement; selective feeding.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article217&lang=en>

The state of food insecurity in the world - FAO (2008)

This FAO report published in late 2008 focuses on the consequences of food price rises over the previous months. According to the report, even before the peak in food price in mid-2008, the number of undernourished people had risen steeply to 923 million in 2007 (an increase of 75 million compared with 2003-2005). The report ends with what these high prices mean in terms of policies. Higher incomes for "smallholders could be the basis for much greater economic and rural development". Moreover, the international community must coordinate its actions on two vital fronts: support measures for the farming sector

and social measures for food-vulnerable people (safety nets and social protection).

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article215&lang=en>

The feeding of the nine billion: Global food security for the 21st century - Chatam House (January 2009)

Despite the fact that food prices are back to their August 2007 level, the author believes that politicians must not let up the pressure on food security. On the contrary, they should make the most of the temporary lull in agricultural markets to reach agreements that will be effective in tackling food insecurity. The report insists on the need to redefine agricultural policies with new emphases, including: i) increasing spending on farming, ii) investing for a 21st century green revolution, iii) focusing on the 1.5 billion smallholders and iv) creating a world organisation for managing world stocks and guiding actions.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article214&lang=en>

Rising food prices in the Sahel: The Urgency of long-term action - Oxfam, Save the Children (November 2008)

Along with many other parts of the world the Sahelian region of West Africa has been very affected by rising food and commodity prices with serious impacts being felt by poor households. The impact of higher prices has varied across the Sahel and within regions of individual countries. This briefing note summarises the impacts of rising prices, examines the local factors that have led to this situation and proposes short, medium and long term solutions. Coordinated action is needed from all actors (Governments, donors, civil society and the private sector) to find effective solutions to high prices.

In English: <http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article159&lang=en>

Back on the High Level meeting on Food Security – High Level Task Force on Food Security (Madrid, 26th and 27th of January 2009)

This high level meeting gathered a large range of participants from 126 countries (governments, civil society, private sector, representatives of international and regional organisations). The main aims of this meeting were to i) review progress made since the Rome food crisis meeting, particularly as far as government commitments were concerned; ii) move towards setting up the UN Global Framework for Action, drawn up as a re-

sponse to soaring food prices and the need to improve the coordination of UN agencies and other key actors, in order to help the countries worst affected by the food crisis; iii) agree on the next priorities for immediate actions, and for rolling out medium and long term measures and results. ROSA's website gathers various contributions and comments by government or multilateral agencies and civil society organisations, in relation with this event.

Link to our page dedicated to this event:

<http://www.reseau-rosa.eu/spip.php?article211&lang=en>

External links

Regional alert, Horn of Africa - World Food Programme (WFP) (February 2009)

After analysing the food situation in the Horn of Africa, this Alert is a country by country inventory, particularly for Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya. The first alert is the low levels of World Food Programme (WFP) stocks in the region. Moreover, other factors are liable to aggravate an already difficult situation: lower-than-average rainfall, the war in Somalia, less regional trading due to national restrictions for transporting goods, and the likely impact of a global economic crisis on the level of remittances.

In English: [http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RW-Files2009.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/JBR-N-7NWCDY-full_report.pdf/\\$File/full_report.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RW-Files2009.nsf/FilesByRWDocUnidFilename/JBR-N-7NWCDY-full_report.pdf/$File/full_report.pdf)

Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA), Sao Tome & Principe - WFP (January 2009)

As part of the project for "Strengthening Emergency Needs Assessment Capacity", over the past few years, WFP has analysed the food situation in several countries. The analysis carried out in Sao Tome and Principe shows the need to maintain WFP aid in the education and health sectors while awaiting the start of oil drilling, planned for 2012. The study reviews basic social infrastructures and trends in socioeconomic factors, and then draws conclusions on the food situation and vulnerability of households. The report ends with a series of political guidelines, sector by sector and at the different levels of intervention (local, district, national, international).

In French:

<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/vam/wfp196157.pdf>

Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis (CFSVA), Cameroun - WFP (December 2008)

The importance of agriculture in Cameroon and the large proportion of the active population involved have not prevented Cameroon's food self-sufficiency declining rapidly since the 1980s. The survey shows that almost 30% of rural households live with food insecurity (in 2007). Several reasons are evoked to explain this situation, including poor access to credit, lack of crop diversity and the small size of smallholdings.

In French:

<http://documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/ena/wfp194436.pdf>

This bulletin was written by the team in charge of animating ROSA (Operational Food Security Network). It is an initiative of AIDCO E6 (thematic support for food security, rural development and environment) in collaboration with AIDCO G4 (Training and Knowledge Management). The viewpoints expressed do not in any case represent the official European Commission viewpoint.