

Regional Food Security Seminar Asia

Vientiane, Laos, 21-25 June 2010

Minutes and main discussion points

11 October 2010

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List of Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FSTP	Food Security Thematic Programme
HFA	Humanitarian Food Assistance
LRRD	Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development
GAFFSP	Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme
GoL	Government of Laos
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
JSF	Joint Strategic Framework
LRRD	Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MS	Member States
RDP	Rural Development Programme
RHVP	Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme
ROM	Result-Oriented Monitoring
ROSA	<i>Réseau Opérationnel de Sécurité Alimentaire</i>
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme

1. Monday 21 June 2010

1.0 Official Opening

Mr. Jacques Prade, Head of Sector for Food Security in Unit E6 of Natural resources Directorate E, Quality of Operations, DG EuropeAid, welcomed the participants and invited Mr. Henry Pranker and Dr. Phouang Parisak to officially open the seminar.



Mr. Henry PRANKERD, *Chargé d'Affaires* in Laos.

Mr. Pranker welcomed the participants to Laos. He explained that in recent years Laos has experienced nutrition problems and natural disasters (such as the 2009 typhoon) which lead to food insecurity. The European Commission, through the EU Delegation, is actively involved in supporting Food Facility projects. A 10 million Euro Food Facility agreement has just been signed, and an agreement on Food Security is due to be signed in the very near future.

Dr. Phouang Parisak PRAVONGVIENGKHAM, Director General of planning, MAF.

Dr. Parisak described and explained the Food Security situation in Laos and the main challenges that lie ahead. In 2000 Laos achieved sustainable self-sufficiency in rice, and it has recently begun exporting rice produced by smallholder farmers, thanks to investments in infrastructure development and in agricultural inputs such as fertilizers and seed selection. The investment in a small number of key crops has increased output across the whole agricultural sector. However, there are new challenges and food insecurity constraints to be addressed. There is a need for further investment in this sector; in the past it has been reliant solely on public support but this cannot continue.. It is hoped that new policies and regulations will attract private investments; for example, Laos is planning to lease part of its arable lands to foreign private companies for more intensive production of cash crops. The Laos

government also intends to boost research and development into techniques for mitigating the effects of climate change and preventing new diseases that affect crops and livestock. Lastly, it will also be important to adopt appropriate policies with regard to the smallholders and rural workers.

After the official opening and before getting the technical part of the seminar under way, Mr. Prade invited the participants to introduce themselves.



Mr. Jacques PRADE, Head of Sector Food Security AIDCO E6, briefly presented the objectives of the seminar.

Mr. Michel SCHLAIFER, the event moderator, presented an overview of the week's agenda and a detailed look at the first day's events.

1.1 Clarifying concepts to better understand each other

Mr. Prade opened the technical part of the seminar with a short presentation on the definitions of the main concepts and terms to be used during the course of the seminar, in order that all participants have the same knowledge base and a shared understanding during the discussions. He underlined, for example, that Food Security is an objective, whereas agriculture is a sector; that food aid and social transfer are tools for implementing a policy, not a policy in themselves. In an overview of the world hunger situation he pointed out that the problem is mainly due to social inequality, as the increase in world agricultural production has actually outpaced demographic growth. Hunger is a cause and simultaneously a consequence of poverty, since being hungry means being vulnerable to diseases, economic and

climatic hazards, and being forced to adopt such negative behaviours as over-exploiting natural resources, selling economic assets to find a solution for an immediate situation, etc. One of the challenges to Food Security is the new policy, adopted in several developing countries, that involves leasing great swathes of arable land to big private companies for large-scale, highly mechanised forms of agriculture. When smallholders compete on the same market as large farms, they lose out because their small businesses are highly labour-intensive, and because market does not recognise the social and ecological benefits of working in this way. It is important to keep in mind that the objective of Food Security is met when all the following conditions are fulfilled: food is available, it is accessible to all individuals, it is used appropriately and stability is ensured to protect the vulnerable part of the population against sudden crisis. Food Security interventions take place in different contexts, often in transition situations. Wherever possible, strict cooperation should be established with colleagues working in humanitarian assistance.

1.2 Some details about the rest of the seminar

1.2.1 Mrs. Isabelle LE NORMAND, consultant from the Team LRRD, briefly presented the key questions related to Transition/LRRD (Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development), to be addressed during the seminar session on this subject. She explained that on Tuesday, after a short introductory presentation, the participants would be organised into three work groups to discuss and try and answer those key questions.

1.2.2 Mrs. Claire CHASTRE, consultant from the Nutrition advisory service, put forward the key questions related to Food Nutrition and Social Transfers, to be addressed during the Thursday session (see **PwP1.2**).

Mr. Prade explained that currently there is no clear EC policy on nutrition and that it is not the purpose of AIDCO to produce policies. A decision has been made, therefore, to prepare some guidelines addressing technical issues related to nutrition, for instance how to assess a situation in a given country. It will be a technical document leading to a policy document, which will be discussed and presented by DG DEV.

1.3 Food Security: EU Policy Framework, by Mrs. R. KETTING

Food insecurity is affecting human development, social and political stability and progress towards Millennium Development Goals (MDG) since, in trying to cope with the consecutive food and economic crises, poor people reduce their dietary diversity and spending on essentials such as education and healthcare.

The Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme (GAFSP) was proposed as a multilateral mechanism to assist in the implementation of pledges made at L'Aquila in July 2009. It is now an US\$880 million multi-donor trust fund intended to scale up support to help developing countries reduce poverty and improve rural livelihoods and FS.

In the near future the aim is to achieve a common policy framework for the EU and its Member States in the fight against hunger and malnutrition. Future interventions will be targeted to the countries most off-track in their pursuit of MDG 1.

A Council meeting held in May 2010, discussing an EU Policy Framework on FS, agreed upon the following actions:

- o Endorse communication objectives and priorities
- o Capitalise on the potential of smallholders in order to reduce hunger
- o Improve access to food for the poor and vulnerable
- o Increase support for agriculture, food security and nutrition

This new EU Policy Framework is the basis of the Commission's revised Strategy of Food Security Thematic Programme and Multi Annual Indicative Programme. The implementation plan of this Policy Framework (for both EU and its MS) will be proposed by the Commission in 2010. The Council invited the Commission to submit a report on Nutrition.

Question and Answer session

Q1: Concerning Pillar 2 of Food Security, the presentation mentioned that social transfers should include nutritional indicators, but I think nutrition should also be covered in the policy.

Q2: Concerning Pillar 4: how will this be implemented with regard to storage and food reserves?

A2: Implementation will be by the private sector; EC is not providing direct support.

There was a request for clarification on the FSTP, and Mrs. Ketting explained that she would speak further on this during the Thursday session. However, no additional funding will be allocated. This FS strategy has just been issued and for Asia the main decisions have already been taken. Food Security and Rural Development are already focal issues in several countries, and RELEX hopes that the EU Delegations will take this policy into consideration. RELEX has already received 1 billion Euros for food facilities, so obtaining additional funding will be difficult.

At HQ a new viewpoint is being considered. Cooperation with Low/Middle Income countries should be supported by DCI, but in July further discussions will take place. RELEX is aware of the problem but does not support this idea.

Mr. Prade said that there are risks in shifting funds away from pure development to support issues of common policy interest.

EU Parliament, on the other hand, has major concerns about this and does not want the DEV Policy to play a minor role.

The most obvious change to the policy, with respect to the 1996 one that focused chiefly on agriculture, is the introduction of the "four pillars".

Q3: In my experience, there are problems of coordination between donors. Sometimes there is no coordination at national level, and things are worse still when decisions are made in Washington and Brussels!

A3: Donor coordination is indeed a key issue and one of the 5 Aquila principles. This issue was re-launched at G20 and will be again at the FAO summit in November.

Having principles is all very well; the difficulty lies in defining how to put them into practice, especially in transition situations. It is not simply an issue of political

unwillingness to cooperate. There is also the Paris declaration on donor coordination, effective in Ghana.

Q4: What about the Barack Obama Initiative?

A4: Funding from the Barack Obama Initiative, which forms part of the Aquila Initiative, will go into The Global Agricultural Food Security Programme which will be implemented by the World Bank. The US is cooperating in a bilateral agreement on Development, which also includes Food Security.

1.4 Policy Framework for EU HFA, by Mrs. A. MASEFIELD, regional food assistance coordinator of ECHO South Asia

Humanitarian Food Assistance may involve the direct provision of food but, in line with an important shift in approach away from the default in kind response, may also utilise a wide range of different means (services, cash, vouchers, other commodities, skills and knowledge etc). Adequate food consumption may not in itself ensure adequate nutrition; therefore there is a need to think in terms of complementary interventions. The core role of the HFA is to save lives by meeting basic needs for food and nutrition; however, support functions include reducing risk and vulnerability and capacity strengthening / advocacy. HFA can be triggered when there is evidence of inadequate consumption, when rates of mortality or acute malnutrition reach emergency levels or when compromised livelihoods pose severe risk. However, the Commission will only use HFA as a means of addressing chronic food insecurity when: 1) non-intervention poses an immediate or imminent humanitarian risk of significant scale and severity; 2) other more appropriate actors are either unable or unwilling to act and resistant to persuasion; and 3) in spite of its comparative disadvantages, positive impact can be expected within the same timeframe as intervention. There is increasing recognition of the links and overlaps between chronic and emergency food insecurity. LRRD is essential for ensuring the effective integration of humanitarian and development assistance. Globally, the majority of food-insecure people are not affected by humanitarian crises, nor do they reside in environments where HFA has a comparative advantage. However, it is precisely those who are already food-insecure who are the most vulnerable to future crises, and as the number of chronic cases increases, so do demands on humanitarian resources.

1.5 ECHO's activities in the region, by Mr. V. SERRANO, regional food coordinator of ECHO South East Asia & Pacific

Mr. Serrano gave a presentation of the activity of ECHO's Regional Supporting Office in Bangkok, which covers all the South East Asian countries and Mongolia. Last year a typhoon affected several countries and a great many people. The major focus of the response was to try and restore livelihoods, shelter and infrastructures. A case with a long history is that of the Burmese refugees in Thailand. The positive side here is that the refugees manage the aid directly themselves, supported by NGOs. A 5 year strategy is in place, enabling progress from a pure assistance approach to a more development-oriented one. Unfortunately, while the Thai policy continues to consider the refugees as such, they will find it difficult to become economically active.

In Indonesia ECHO intervened in a chronic situation based on a decisive assessment prediction of imminent crisis. One of the responses was to provide metal stores for maize.

In Myanmar ECHO intervened after Cyclone Nargis; this country has significant problems with regard to women's rights. In DPRK, North Korea, the main problem is the complete absence of knowledge as to what is happening. The Five predominant myths on seed aid are as follows:

- where food aid is needed, seed aid is too
- seed aid can do no harm
- disasters wipe out seed systems
- effective implementation is a straightforward logistical exercise
- improved seed is the best form of aid

Often when a food crisis arises, an organisation steps in; when the activity finishes there should be an assessment, but there rarely is!

One of the food ration mistakes is to focus only on rice; instead, food assistance should be more diversified.

Question and Answer session

Q1: How does ECHO coordinate with other Commission services?

A1: There is a real need for clear discussion on Country Strategy, for example in-depth explorations of some of the market issues and what the other donors are doing.

The ECHO representative spoke up, clarifying that Food Assistance should be humanitarian, and that many stakeholders claim to be following humanitarian principles but ECHO is the only donor actually following these principles. Many other donors are more interested in using food for politics than for peace. Even MS, in practice, are not as focused on humanitarian assistance as ECHO.

Q2: When do you expect the results of the livelihood evaluations?

A2: By the end of the year. This livelihood framework is increasingly used as a means of analysis within ECHO. It provides a lot of new elements for understanding how refugees cope, even in a refugee camp.

1.6 Food Facility, by Mr. B. STEFANESCU, Food Facility Project Manager of DG AIDCO Unit F3

Mr. Stefanescu presented the Food Facility, and in particular he illustrated the allocation of funding, with detailed data on the Asian countries. The Food Facility encompasses several activities: distribution of food and animal feed, food for work, cash for work, and access to markets.

The EU Parliament requested thorough monitoring of all the projects; this will therefore be the focus of activity next year.

The evaluation scores range from A (outstanding) to D (poor).

It is important that AIDCO receives timely information from the EU Delegations in the event that any problem arises in a project, especially when International Organisations (IO) are involved.

Confusion arose as a result of the audit report. AIDCO has received narrative reports from an IO which are not the official ones expected.

AIDCO underwent an Internal Audit to assess the Food Facility in terms of contracts, payments, monitoring of operations, reporting and visibility.

Mr. Stefanescu presented the auditors' main recommendations.

Question and Answer session

Q1: Do you know when the reporting templates will be ready?

A1: Yes, next week.

Q2: Should the EU Delegation be involved in revising the reports from the IO? Some IO send their reports directly to AIDCO.

A2: IO should send their reports to AIDCO, and HQ then informs the EU Delegation.

Q3: In the Philippines there is a logistical constraint: due to a ban on flights it is difficult to perform monitoring. What is the solution?

A3: If indeed it is not possible to monitor the project directly, viable alternatives would be to delegate the monitoring task externally or to ask that the local government do it.

Q4: Administrative and security constraints make it difficult to carry out Food Facility work, and direct monitoring of the project is not possible. How can this be resolved?

A4: Other EU Delegations are quite flexible as regards projects that under-performing, and have been known to turn a blind eye if something is wrong, instead concentrating on the activities that are progressing well. If there are problems that do not depend on the NGO, flexibility is a must and it is also crucial to put everything in writing.

Q5: In the event that an IO has not spent its entire budget, what should the EU Delegation do with the remaining funds?

A5: As a general rule the money must be returned to AIDCO, but for specific cases in some countries exemption has been discussed.

Q6: Of the four monitors that visited Nepal, only one had a background in agriculture, which was disappointing. The EU Delegation received poor feedback from headquarters, so there is a need for improved communication between AIDCO and EU Delegations. It is not clear who is responsible for this in FS projects with IO. The IO in fact refers directly to Brussels for instruction, but by way of contradiction Brussels expects the EU Delegations to make their own decisions...

A6: If monitoring work is carried out by an external contractor and an EU Delegation is unsatisfied with the company's performance, AIDCO would like to be notified. If the EU Delegation in Nepal has not received feedback from the meeting with the IO, AIDCO will send the minutes next week. The Delegation is involved in the decision process. Task managers in Brussels often require assistance from the Delegations in making decisions, so the responsibility lies with Brussels, but the Delegation should assist where possible.

Q7: Regarding flexibility: most NGOs working with the EU have been doing so for several years. It seems that they often fail to carry out high-quality feasibility studies, which leads to requests for additional information once the project has been approved...

A7: For the FAO study, the EC was aware that there was a problem as there had been no time to conduct a feasibility study. It was therefore agreed that in order to save time, baseline studies would be carried out during the project.

Q8: Concerning the visibility plan, one of the participants claimed that the IO spent 18,000 Euros on a single conference, which was considered excessive. The visibility plan is monitored during the missions, and the EU Delegations are also expected to carry out monitoring, but the problem is that the plan is not included in the financial report. Another participant said that the IO has been asked on several occasions to provide the visibility plan, but there has been no response.

A8: Visibility is an issue that is being tackled at HQ. One problem that sometimes occurs is that the contract does not clearly state the requirement for the visibility plan. However, much improvement has been observed in recent years.

Mrs. Ketting said that at HQ it is important to know of these problems in order to plan appropriately: if it is difficult for the IO to use up its budget, HQ needs to know.

The role of Result Oriented Monitoring (ROM), especially "ex-post", in Food Facility projects will continue to grow and have significant added value. Unfortunately, in the contract with IO AIDCO did not anticipate ex-post ROM, but it can be used on projects that have just ended; arranging this should not pose problems.

1.7 The Food Security situation in specific countries

The participants were invited to present the food security situation in their countries (see **Annex 1.7**).

1.7.1 Food Security in Cambodia

The volatile food prices have negatively affected poor households, and consequently the overall level of nutrition in the country has deteriorated. The greatest negative impact of the reduction in dietary quality and quantity has been on growing infants and children, and on pregnant and lactating mothers. The main challenges for agricultural growth were summarised, and the participants felt that the most effective actions to address them would be land reform and the creation and safeguarding of social safety nets for the rural poor. Lastly the results of field surveys and civil society consultations on Food Security were presented, providing recommendations for donors, the government and civil society itself.

1.7.2 Food Security in the Philippines

In the last 20 years the Philippines has progressed from being self-sufficient to becoming the world's biggest importer of rice, due to the change in national policies. Dependence on foreign food exports and the recent peak in commodity prices have contributed to further worsen poverty and hunger in the Philippines. The present national policies focus on achieving food self-sufficiency, with rice production in particular. The main causes of hunger in the country relate to aspects of production (e.g. land distribution), food availability (due to insufficient production and high food prices) and political unrest (mainly linked to poverty). The government has responded to the food crisis by implementing social protection programmes, stabilising food prices and working to support food production. The EC is currently financing several projects under the Food Facility Programme. However, due to decentralisation of much of its administration, it is sometimes difficult to implement the government policies.

Question and Answer session

Q1: Are nutrition-target services included as part of the social services?

A1: The EC supports the government and has no specific budget line for implementing projects directly.

Q2: The Food Security Thematic Programme (FSTP) is financing a Food Security information system to assist in better policy planning. Is it active in Cambodia?

A2: No, not yet. The problem at local level is the lack of advanced technology.

Ms. Ria Ketting, Strategy coordinator DG RELEX L3, explained that the project (managed by FAO) is currently running in Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos, but no field activity has been implemented as yet, due to an apparent lack of communication and coordination. In Myanmar the project has just started and FAO is still recruiting personnel.

In Cambodia there is a cooperation programme between GTZ and the Ministry of Planning to survey the households across the country in order to identify the beneficiaries of equity cards and support work, aiming at a better targeting of funds. The problem is that the data have to be regularly updated. It is a pilot project and no official results have yet been released.

Regarding decentralisation in the Philippines, which the ECHO regional representative considered an advantage (following a positive experience in Bolivia), Ms. Boudron explained that the EU Delegation in the Philippines holds regular productive discussions with the central government, but sometimes local governments disagree with decisions made at national level, which can paralyse any capacity for action.

1.7.3 Food Security in Laos

Laos is a big country with low population density, but still half of its population has no access to clean water. Poverty, including extreme poverty, is most common in the mountainous regions, where the majority of the country's ethnic peoples live. Developing rural areas is the central focus of the government's effort to make positive changes and eradicate poverty. Social indicators have shown an improvement over the years, but are still among the lowest in the region. Poor rural people depend on agriculture (and non-timber forest products, NTFP) for food and income, but agricultural conditions are often unfavourable and productivity is low. The main objective of the Government of Laos (GoL) is to achieve a policy of 'stabilising' settlement, aiming *inter alia* to facilitate remote and ethnic communities' access to social services while ending the 'slash and burn' agricultural cultivation that is held to have negative consequences for the environment, biodiversity and soil fertility. The allocation of land concessions to private investors has also had a significant impact on farmers, causing some to lose their land or be relocated, and has adversely affected conservation areas and forests, biodiversity, and income from non-timber forest products. Following the USA bombing of Laos, which ended in 1973, 37% to 50% of the land cover was contaminated by unexploded ordnance. This severely affects rural populations and limits the availability of arable land, particularly in the upland areas in the northern and southern regions. In 1998, Lao PDR ranked as the world's third largest illicit opium producer. Opium cultivation was reduced by 94% between 1998 and 2005. However, only 10% of the villages identified by the National Programme Strategy for opium elimination received alternative development

assistance, due to the lack of Government support and funds. This could explain why opium cultivation is once again on the rise.

Question and Answer session

Q1: Is there high decentralisation in Laos, as in the Philippines?

A1: Yes, decentralisation is also a problem in Laos. Local governments are extremely powerful and consequently national policies are often not applied at local level; also, sometimes local policies contradict those of the central government. At central level Food Security is a priority, but there is no certainty that any action will be followed through in the provinces.

Q2: Does the EU Delegation have a clear position on the Relocation Policy?

A2: In the Country Strategy Paper (CSP) there is a section on relocation. However, there are two different types of relocation: village consolidation - i.e. bringing the people closer to the services - and relocation of villages under the rubric of big infrastructure projects (e.g. plantations or hydroelectric power stations). The EU Delegation says that relocation, where necessary, should be based on local dialogue with consideration given to the benefits and disadvantages.

Q3: Is there good coordination between the EU Delegation in Laos and international organisations?

A3: It has been difficult to achieve coordination with other international organisations such as FAO and ADB, as it seems that they are not fully engaged with the process. Some particular coordination attempts on the part of the EU Delegation, aiming to assess the country system and aid impact, ultimately failed.

1.7.4 Food Security in Tajikistan

Tajikistan became independent in 1991. It has a high literacy rate and fairly high life expectancy. It is very centralised and is in an economic transition phase. Tajikistan is a net food importer and depends on international markets for staple food items such as wheat and associated products, rice and cooking oil. The main reason for food insecurity concerns access to food, i.e. the inability of households to acquire food in sufficient quantities. The country's overall agriculture production is increasing. Local grain, however, is of low quality, so local wheat flour is normally mixed with imported flour. Chronic food insecurity has hit Tajikistan during the past decade. For 37% of rural households, remittances are the main source of income. The majority of rural households have access to remittances, but the level and frequency varies widely. In 2009, remittances fell by 30% compared to 2008 due to the effects of the global economic crisis. Tajikistan is aiming to achieve food self-sufficiency, an objective declared in its key documents on national development. The Government is developing an agricultural reform programme and is keen to see the donor community invest in long-term development programmes and projects. 16.4 million Euros have so far been allocated through the Global Food Facility. The project focuses on reinforcement of production chains (including rehabilitation of the necessary infrastructure), extension services, input supply and marketing facilities. The main challenges to Food Security are incomplete land reform, persistent problems in the cotton sector and the current economic climate in the agricultural sector not being conducive to private investment.

Question and Answer session

Q1: The cotton sector has been highly inefficient and has suffered major losses in the past. Moreover, it has already been mentioned during this seminar that the EU Delegation is advocating profitable agriculture as a means of achieving Food Security. As this is a somewhat limited approach and could even worsen the Food Security situation, is it indeed the only focus?

Q2: Agriculture in Tajikistan is one of the main causes of food insecurity, rather than being instrumental in bringing social security...

A: The speaker explained his intended meaning that most people are employed in the agricultural sector. The role of the cotton mono-culture is decreasing. National dialogue is in progress on this issue and the EU Delegation is participating in these discussions, together with other donors. The present government policy is moving towards diversification and freedom to cultivate.

Q3: As Tajikistan is a net food importer, how did it respond to the food crisis? Which strategies did it implement, bearing in mind that some of its neighbouring countries applied high taxes on exports or banned them altogether?

A3: The government relied mainly on International Assistance, but even remittances played a major role at household level.

1.7.5 Food Security in Indonesia

Indonesia has a population of 260 million people living on more than 1900 islands. It has a highly decentralised system organised across 440 districts and 33 provinces. The poverty rate declined from 35% in 1997 to below 15% in 2009. Malnutrition among children also declined from 8% in 1997 to 2.1% in 2009. In the last 2 years there has been a surplus of rice production after 7 years of net import. The EC does not currently fund any programme specific to Indonesia, but the country is included in the regional one. In the last 5 years a country-wide cash transfer to poor families has been implemented. Recently it has been replaced by a conditional cash transfer focusing on health & education indicators, and applied in 6 pilot provinces.

Question and Answer session

Q1: Why did Indonesia decide to change over to a conditional cash transfer?

A1: In Indonesia the transfer was used to increase immunisation and school attendance and to improve the health of new mothers. The country-wide cash transfer was stopped because it achieved its objective of reducing poverty.

Q2: Is the high level of decentralisation in Indonesia posing the same problems as in the Philippines and in Laos?

A2: Sometimes local governments base their budget decisions on political considerations. A new law on decentralisation is under discussion, giving the government the power to overturn local government decisions which are not in line with central policies.

Q3: Food Security is not one of the focal points for Indonesia. How can delegations in such vulnerable and volatile regions be sensitive to Food Security concerns?

A3: Indonesia still has a Food Security objective, even in the absence of an official body. So there are still a number of methods and entry points for addressing Food

Security issues, including discussions with the government. Work towards this objective will continue in forums held by different sectors of activity.

Indonesia has just signed a 2 million Euro education programme, which will also assist FS.

In Bangladesh funding is no longer specifically directed at FS, but the EU Delegation is working to change this in several sectors.

Q4: How has running of the programme been sustained since 1989?

A4: It was originally a World Bank project and now it is becoming increasingly reliant on government funding.

1.7.6 Food Security in Myanmar

From 2004, the EU also allowed non-humanitarian aid to be provided in areas defined in Art. 5, reviewed in CP 2004. The external sanctions consolidate the adverse effects of "internal sanctions", strengthen the position of the regime and its economic cronies, and reinforce alliances with Asian commercial partners, especially for products on the sanction list (gems and timbers). Myanmar is basically a food-surplus country with significant agricultural potential, but presents pockets of food insecurity due to inequalities in access to food. Food Security in the country has been affected by two external blows:

- the global economic and financial downturn, which led to a decline in trading and remittances.
- Cyclone Nargis (May 2008): 2.5 million people affected; lasting damage to crop production, livestock rearing, fishing and trade; loss of assets and destruction of the communication network.

The government's key objective is to find sustainable ways of increasing agricultural production to ensure Food Security and socio-economic development. The formal economy is still controlled by the regime but market economy reforms are making modest progress.

The EC response is to prioritise areas with chronic and acute food insecurity, especially border regions, and support the recovery process in Nargis-affected areas. There are four main programmes providing funding: FSTP (36%), FF (42%), AUP (19%) and NSA (3%).

1.7.7 Food Security in Pakistan

Food Security is not a priority for the government, or the EU.

Rural development is included in the strategy.

As regards Food Facility, there is no national-level coordination body, so the Pakistani government is unaware of the EU Delegation's activities in this domain and *vice versa*.

The 8 Food Facility projects, including those with FAO and WFP, are making good progress. The biggest project, run jointly by FAO and WFP, is worth about 40 million US dollars.

1.7.8 Food Security in East Timor

East Timor became independent in 2002 after roughly 25 years of conflict. Nowadays, the population is plagued by food insecurity, in particular from insufficient intake, poorly diversified diet and inappropriate use of the little food they have. The EC is financing several projects under the Food Security Thematic Programme (FSTP) and the Rural Development Programme (RDP), which focus on improving availability of and access to food. There is a need to improve synergies and coordination between EC programmes and other donor programmes, improve inter-ministerial dialogue and support the ongoing decentralisation process.

2. Session on Transition and LRRD, Tuesday 22 June 2010

The moderator opened the day with a short summary of the main issues discussed the day before.

As the participants showed a keen interest in Food Facility, an informal session was scheduled for after the day's sessions, for participants who wanted to spend more time clarifying certain issues and sharing views.

2.0 Latest HQ developments on LRRD/Transition, by Mr. J. PRADE

Transition means dealing with specific situations affecting countries dealing with the aftermath of conflict, chronic drought and vulnerability.

These countries have many different agendas, such as fighting terrorism, and these are very challenging in FS terms.

The EU regulatory framework must be adapted in order to address this kind of situation, and above all it must be flexible.

AIDCO has tried to map all the previous interventions that aimed to address this kind of situation. It then tried to identify the best practices used by the Delegations - one of the objectives of the seminar.

Further work is still required in order to identify the Delegations' main weaknesses, bottlenecks and constraints and thus improve the framework in which both AIDCO and the EU Delegations are obliged to work.

The next financial forecast should take into account interventions in transition situations.

2.1 Transition situations and LRRD interventions, by Mrs. I. LE NORMAND

There is a compendium consisting of the entire legal, political, financial and procedural system within which EC services must operate when working in situations of man-made, natural or structural crisis.

The purpose of the compendium is to assist the EC services by providing quick and easy access to core aspects of the existing institutional and regulatory framework that impact on EC interventions in transition situations.

There are two legal and political frameworks: the Lisbon Treaty, which defines the overall legal and political framework for EC interventions in fragile/transition situations; the Cotonou Agreement, which concerns EC interventions in 79 African, Caribbean and Pacific countries (ACP).

The Cotonou Agreement enables the provision of funds from the emergency reserve. Quick *ad hoc* reviews can be conducted in crisis situations to change the CSP and/or the focal/non-focal sectors.

The EU Consensus and the Security Strategy set out the EU policy framework. They contain political commitments and instruct the EC to establish a specific set of structures, procedures and solutions to achieve an effective response. They also provide guidance on interventions in fragile/transition situations and explicitly refer to forming links between relief, rehabilitation and development.

Moreover, there are several more EC communications which define sector policy frameworks.

Mrs. Le Normand concluded her presentation by outlining the financial and implementation procedures, and she also explained how to go about intervening in transition situations at various points in the project cycle.

Question and Answer session

The legal framework is already available but contains decisions which have not been organised logically. At present the system works for derogations, but in future there will be a need to plan interventions in transition situations.

Q1: Who decides which states are fragile, and on what basis?

A1: The EU Delegation sends a request to the geographical director and a regional analysis is then used to evaluate it. A list of fragile states has been compiled by the Director General of AIDCO and approved by the Commissioner. Inclusion on this list depends on the definition of what constitutes a fragile situation. Inclusion of states on this list offers the EU Delegation some flexibility in the contracting phase, but has no effect on the preceding phases.

Q2: What is Fast Track?

A2: Fast Track is a decision-making tool, whereas there is some flexibility in the procedures for assigning contracts. Fast Track helps with the decision-making process. It provides a day-long inter-service consultation, i.e. a one-day round table meeting between representatives of the main Commission services. After the consultation, the resulting document is submitted to EU MS.

Q3: Does LRRD apply only to fragile states, or also to Middle-Income countries with regional problems, for instance Sri Lanka?

A3: The only programme which actually refers to LRRD is the Food Safety Thematic Programme. But LRRD needs to be applied to different sectors (e.g. the refugee example presented by Mr. Serrano). In a post-conflict situation or if a crisis hits a country, a specific approach should be applied. Once the situation has been clearly assessed, a transition process can begin. It is therefore possible to apply LRRD in Middle-Income Countries.

The participants and speakers then discussed the criteria for listing the countries.

Q4: Should LRRD be included in political dialogue, and if so, how?

A4: The Humanitarian Policy according to the Lisbon Treaty is not independent from the EU policy but integrated in the policy dialogue.

LRRD is a joint exercise, and one that ECHO humanitarian actors and EC Development actors should discuss in order to come up with an agreement. It is a dynamic process. For example, in Uganda the humanitarian personnel work in the

refugee camps, preparing the IDPs to return to their homes, and at the same time their Dev. colleagues implement development projects on Food Security. So it is a question of selecting specific objectives and discussing how to collaborate on them.

2.2 Case Studies

2.2.1 LRRD: Sri Lanka example

After 26 years of conflict, Sri Lanka's socio-economic situation is disastrous. Its government and many agencies/donors are involved in sending internally displaced persons (IDP) back to the country and in rehabilitation of affected areas, but there is a lack of significant coordination between them. However, the EU Delegation and ECHO have devised complementary strategies: ECHO's deals with short-term emergency needs and humanitarian assistance in fragile areas, while that of the Delegation focuses on medium- to longer- term requirements in areas where conflict has ended, through rehabilitation and (re)construction work. The coordination between these two actors needs to be more systematic so as to improve adjustments to the strategies. Independent assessments are also required to see if there are any inadequacies/overlaps with LRRD. Lastly, the Delegation of Sri Lanka recommends institutionalising LLRD, updating the associated document and encouraging discussions by organising regular seminars/workshops at national/regional/HQ level.



2.2.2 Food Security in Yemen

Yemen's Food Security has dramatically deteriorated in recent years due to the economic crisis and the country's internal conflicts. As a consequence of the latter - forced displacements, natural disasters - many people suffer chronic malnutrition. Thus, ECHO and EUROPEAID have become involved in Yemen, helping the most

vulnerable people by offering humanitarian aid and food security, fisheries, capacity building, electoral support, and so on. The objectives of the Food Security Committee focus on four areas: macroeconomics, growth and incomes; trade and transport; agriculture, water and fisheries; nutrition, health and education. Yemen needs to add specific policies and to improve the coordination between donors at the level of funding and implementing tools.



2.2.3 LRRD in Afghanistan

Afghanistan has suffered more than three decades of armed conflict. In addition, many elements affect Food Security in Afghanistan, such as the reduction of arable land, recurrent drought and lack of access to the international/regional market. LRRD interventions focus on livelihood diversification, rural enterprise development, institutional building, water development, improvement of dry land agriculture, livestock and fodder management and environmental protection. However, with the political instability and insecurity, it is difficult to monitor the projects and to recruit and retain staff in the long term.



2.3 Work Group session

The participants were divided in three work groups.

Each group discussed and answered the following questions:

1. Having discussed your respective experiences in dealing with transition situations, can you agree on a list of best practices?
2. Can you compile a list of improvements, to suggest to HQ, which would enable you provide a better response in transition situations?
3. Do you think that it would be useful to have different joint “humanitarian development strategic frameworks” (JSF) addressing very specific objectives? For example: JSF to reduce the prevalence of malnutrition; JSF for resettlement of IDP/refugees...

Each group selected a speaker to present to the plenary session the results of their discussions, after which the issues were discussed further.

One thing highlighted during the discussion was that ECHO carries out market analysis because it provides food *assistance*, not food aid. As part of assistance, a market assessment is conducted in order to identify and understand the constraints, before deciding, for example, whether to assist by means of food or cash, or to provide agricultural inputs in kind or in cash. One of the participants replied that market analysis constitutes part of the FSTP, so it is not in the mandate of ECHO. However, the explanation was that it is simply a quick analysis, a market assessment than an in-depth market analysis. In addition, the analysis usually focuses on actual local markets, rather than national ones, and is used to decide, for example, whether it is better to purchase food from the domestic or the foreign market.

Mr. Prade said that ECHO and EU should keep each other informed, but without inventing additional procedures or new bureaucratic structures, and also advised that this framework should operate at multi-sector scale.

On the programming phase there is a discrepancy between organising Humanitarian and Development interventions. Flexibility in the programming phase should make it possible, if necessary, to adapt a particular programme or to shift from one to another.

Many policies are in place (Stability, FSTM, Humanitarian Action, etc.).

As a minimum, Development and Humanitarian interventions ought to start cooperating on LRRD; this would simplify things and then prepare the way for the other policies.

AIDCO will prepare a draft reference document and will use the ROSA forum to discuss it, and perhaps also discuss the compendium, with contributions from the participants of this seminar.

The Food Security Budget Line, which officially closed in 2007, amassed a huge repository of experience on LRRD.

The LRRD matrix template has been promoted by AIDCO and been piloted in several countries; the resulting opinion is that it is too complicated and therefore rather difficult to use. A revision is probably due, as it has been a long time since the last.

The conclusion is that in some countries, Humanitarian actions and Development interventions are targeting the same beneficiaries with non-harmonised approaches, which results in confusion. Work is needed so as to reach a common understanding.

3. Field Visit, Wednesday 23 June 2010

On Wednesday 23 June the EU Delegation in Laos organised a field visit.

Participants were divided into three groups, and travelled in three vans.

The first stop on the trip was *That Luang Organic Market*.

The second place visited was the Lao Farmers' Products Company (LFP), a cooperative that buys organic rice from the district in which a visit was scheduled for the afternoon.

The third destination was the Sanghong district, where local farmers participate in the organic farming project promoted by the NGO Helvetas. The participants had the opportunity to meet the farmers and ask questions on their activity and on the project. Organic rice fields were also visited.



4. Nutrition Session, Thursday 24 June 2010

Mr. Prade opened the day with a presentation of the main points from the preceding day's field visit.

4.1 Nutrition introduction session, by C. CHASTRE

Mrs. Chastre presented the main nutrition initiatives in the EU and at international level, many of which relate to Millennium Development Goal 1. She went on to outline the different indicators of under-nutrition in children. The crucial window of opportunity is from pre-pregnancy in the mother to the child reaching two years of age. One consequence of chronic under-nutrition is cognitive damage (largely irreversible after 24 months), which leads to the perpetuation of poverty, inter-generational effects and increased risk of chronic diseases. Nutritional status depends on food availability, access and utilisation, and as such it is determined in part by Food Security. Under-nutrition can be addressed through direct interventions, for example providing vitamin A supplements or promoting breastfeeding. These activities are mainly the responsibility of the health sector. However, under-nutrition can be further reduced through indirect actions (e.g. social transfers, agriculture, water/sanitation, empowerment of women), aiming at addressing the underlying and basic causes. One of the key issues is targeting.

Discussion session

Interventions on water and sanitation (e.g. building latrines, procuring clean water and sources of clean water) could have an impact on nutrition, by increasing food utilisation (pillar 3).

On occasion, projects can have negative impacts. To give an example, if a mother is involved in an agricultural project, she will have less time to spend with her children. Or another: even though a gender empowerment project to fight for nutrition provides an opportunity for women to work and earn money, it can have an adverse affect on nutrition.

Acute malnutrition (wasting) is often a symptom of chronic malnutrition, so sharp distinctions in definitions should be handled with care.

The "do no harm" principle should be applied: Food Security projects should be careful to avoid negative impacts on nutrition, and this needs to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

There are questions on availability, accessibility, health, etc. so the approach must continue to span multiple sectors and continue to coordinate different "communities" of expertise, e.g. on Food Security, food emergencies, etc.

Economic growth is never discussed in development terms, but it is based only on quantitative indicators, while qualitative ones are also important.

For example, relocating people, which may seem a good idea for bringing people within reach of services such as health and education, often has a negative impact on their social network, culture and solidarity; the social cost is therefore very high.

There is a lack of nutritional indicators for evaluating the impact of humanitarian interventions, and investment in collecting nutrition information data is needed.

4.2 Overview of malnutrition in Asia, by F. BEGIN, Regional Adviser for UNICEF

Mrs. Begin began by presenting the trends and current situation as regards under-nutrition in Asia. Stunting has reduced across the world, while wasting has remained almost constant and over-nutrition has slightly increased. Out of 24 countries that make a major contribution to the prevalence of stunting in the world, 10 are in Asia. 10 countries account for 60% of the burden of global wasting, among which 4 are in Asia. The recent global crisis has affected the path to achieving MDG1. Obesity and diabetes are increasing rapidly in Asia, and affecting rural areas about twice as much as urban areas. The risk factors for obesity include stunting and a low level of education, but it is mainly a matter of increased intake and of the wrong type of food; insufficient physical activity represents only a part of the problem. South Asia shows very high levels of anaemia in children under five, so these children need to receive more iron in their food. The most important issue regarding malnutrition in children is the *quality* of the food they are given. Anaemia in pregnant mothers is responsible for the death of a high number of new mothers. It is essential to improve feeding practices of infants and young children, and also maternal nutrition, to accelerate progress towards reducing under-nutrition.

Question and Answer session

Q1: How are the household expenditures of the poor measured?

Q2: From a regional perspective, do you think you have sufficient knowledge of the nutritional situation in these countries?

Q3: Do you think that a national nutritional survey on malnutrition is enough to give a true representation of the country?

A3: This tool provides an overview. Nutritional surveys are quick, and approximate. If more information is subsequently needed, a specific survey is carried out on the problem identified.

Q4: What is the impact of a low level of education on under-nutrition?

A4: Of course poor education represents an increased risk. In Bangladesh the under-nutrition situation improved during the same period in which progress was made in education.

Mrs. Begin clarified that UNICEF is focusing on children under five, and especially those under two, years of age; it is therefore not responsible for school feeding. The discussion once again highlighted the need to target the beneficiaries within the window of opportunity mentioned above.

4.3 Work group session

"Addressing under-nutrition: using information to make decisions for action"

Mrs. Claire Chastre and Mr. Damien Buchon, from Yemen Delegation, explained the next task for the participants, again divided into three groups. Playing the role of Food Security Programme Managers in the Yemen Delegation, the participants were asked to outline the EC food and nutrition security strategy.

Work Group 1 (WG1) focused their intervention on improving nutrition in mothers and children under two. An expected result is an increase of 20% for household income and 15% for food consumption. A 20% reduction in the quantity of water used for qat production was also proposed.

The Food Facility will be used to make a cash transfer for education.

FSTP and FAO cooperation will assist in the diversification of production and provide support for research studies on improving the efficiency of qat production, in cooperation with teams in the Netherlands or Germany.

Work Group 2 focused their intervention on rural areas. The priority is to step up government commitment to poverty reduction and Food Security, as the group feel that governance is a real Food Security issue. There was also a suggestion of imposing some conditions on the qat issue. The World Bank would implement the project. One of the main interventions would concern income-generating activities for women in rural areas; for example, home gardening could provide families with direct nutritional support, and any surplus could be sold at the market and livestock production export oriented accordingly. WB, GTZ, NL cooperation and ECHO would ideally work together to support the proposal, and nutritional and FS indicators would become part of the National Poverty Reduction Plan.

Work Group 3 observed that the quality of the data and the money available for the intervention were very limited. The intervention would target the poorest households with mothers and children under five. The project should support the government by providing a sound policy to address the problem. The proposed activities would include supplying micronutrients for children aged between six months and two years, de-worming children to reduce infections and productivity-enhancing assets such as livestock revolving funds and household gardens. However, as the arable area is limited, it was decided that it would be more effective not to intervene in the production sector.

After each group had presented the results of their work, Mr. Buchon described and explained the real strategy adopted by the EU Delegation in Yemen, which since 2004 has mainly focused on a Food Security information system. In Yemen there are pockets of war and problems with refugees, and ECHO is actively providing Humanitarian assistance. There is a need to work with the government in providing information to raise awareness of malnutrition. The health system is very weak. The EC, in cooperation with UNICEF, improves health facilities through the government and by educating mothers about breastfeeding.

Question and Answer session

Q1: Has the EC considered providing assistance to the Yemen government for creating appropriate food stocks, as Yemen is a net importer of grain?

A1: No, there are no plans to do this.

Q2: Is there an agreement between ECHO and the EU Delegation as regards the target population?

A2: The EU Delegation decided the targets in strict cooperation (participatory approach) with the Ministry of Health through the districts.

Q3: Is the government beginning to commit to FS and nutrition issues?

A3: In 2008, for the first time, the Yemen government realised that nutrition standards could be a constraint for the country's development. It therefore requested EU support in developing a food nutrition strategy.

Q4: Since it appears that there is no LRRD, as ECHO works with IDPs and refugees, how do you use the FSTP money intended for LRRD purposes?

A4: Those funds are not used by the EU Delegation in Yemen.

Q5: How much progress in nutrition and FS can be made without tackling the major issue of qat?

A5: Qat is a very sensitive issue. A project funded by the EC to reduce qat may in fact have the opposite effect. Since qat curbs hunger, people eat less, meaning that it has an impact on nutrition. Qat is also the source of further problems related to smoking and to pesticide residues.

The FS strategy will be the responsibility of the National FS body, which is led by the Ministry of Planning. Its Minister is the deputy Prime Minister, and the body actually involves 7 different ministers. In order to reach women, the Delegation will need to work through local NGOs as the society is very "closed".

At national level, FSTP should intervene when it is impossible to work in partnership with the government on FS. If it does not intervene, the EU Delegation instead will collaborate with the government, thus making Food Security a joint objective.

The problems should be introduced into political dialogue and included in the CSP.

Therefore it is not possible to receive funds from the geographical programme and from the FSTP simultaneously.

FSTP should be used to pave the way for the inclusion of FS in the CSP, which is a government priority.

Mr. Prade says that the choice of which pillar to focus on depends on where there is the greatest need, bearing in mind the importance of targeting the beneficiary population.

As regards Yemen, as some indicators suggest an escalating nutrition crisis, this could be a good case to work on in collaboration with ECHO, or one where ECHO could intervene. If there is no possibility of either of these, the EU Delegation could begin an intervention in consultation with ECHO.

4.4 Nutrition Security for Mothers and Young Children in Asia, by R. KETTING

Mrs. Ketting presented a project implemented by UNICEF in Asia, largely funded by the EU through the 2010 FSTP annual work plan. Five countries are targeted, in which 30 million children and 5 million pregnant and lactating women are direct beneficiaries. This project is expected to contribute to a 5% reduction in stunting, as well as to the achievement of MDGs 1, 4, 5 and 8. It has components at both regional and national level. The appendix to the contribution agreement still needs to be finalised by HQ, in collaboration with the Bangkok delegation. This will include, among other things, further discussion on the regional component, consideration of the changes at national level, project governance at regional and national level, reporting and monitoring.

Question and Answer session

Q1: Why has India not been included in this regional programme?

A1: In the FSTP revised strategy the EC would like to support the WB programme in India. India is not included in the regional UNICEF project but will be involved in the transfer of experience. Furthermore, India's UNICEF office already receives generous funding compared to other countries in the region.

Q2: What do you think about the role of the private sector organisations involved in food supply in nutrition interventions?

A2: Increased investment in involving these organisations would be a sound strategy. Involvement of the private sector and coordination of the different interventions could be achieved through the coordination bodies at national level. Social protection and nutrition projects should also coordinate with one another. UNICEF would like to see more local companies producing fortified food supplements, but achieving this is no easy matter.

Q3: Why does the programme focus on children under two?

A3: Because this is the age where it can make the greatest difference, and with children of this age UNICEF interventions are less tied to other Food Security activities. The approach for under-twos aims to reduce poverty, whereas for under-fives it aims to assist survival. If the intervention also encompasses maternal health, work with children under two makes a greater contribution to food security as it tackles both poverty and adult health.

4.5 Food Security Thematic Programme, by R. KETING

A Mid-Term Review Study of the FSTP was implemented by 3 consultants from May to September 2009 through desk research only, except for meetings in Rome and Washington. Delegations were asked to put forward their contributions by answering the questionnaires that were distributed. The review team highlighted the relevance of the FSTP interventions and generally recommended a continuation of support for current initiatives and a more balanced attention to the four pillars of Food Security, with greater focus in particular on social protection and adequate nutrition. There would be a need for improved alignment with ECHO's operations and better coherence with national strategies, where they exist. Support to CGIAR has proved effective, so the MTRS is recommending that it continue and be extended to non-CGIAR institutions including South – South cooperation. Greater harmonisation and coordination is needed between the major stakeholders as regards Food Security Information Systems (FSIS). Food Security projects in individual countries where geographical programmes are not in a position to intervene, or cannot fully operate, should remain an important element of the strategy for 2011-2013. LRRD should remain a focus. Innovation should continue to be promoted in order to combat food insecurity, but it should focus more on identifying lessons learned and best practices in current interventions, rather than on identifying and piloting new ones.

The objective of the FS Thematic Strategy 2011 – 2013 is to improve food security for the poorest and most vulnerable and to help achieve the first MDG. The three strategic priorities are:

- Research, technology transfer and innovation
- Strengthened governance for Food Security
- Addressing Food Security for the poor/vulnerable in FS

The SP2 in Asia will build on regional Food Security initiatives specifically addressing chronic malnutrition. Support will be provided to existing multi-donor initiatives, such as the South Asia Food Security and Nutrition Initiative (SAFANS), the ASEAN Integrated Food Security (AIFS) Framework, and Food Security investment partnerships that are being established in the context of the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative.

Discussion session

Programming at national level: the FSTP was intended to be complementary to the geographical programme, and only put freely to use in fragile and high-vulnerability countries. Normally it should be the geographical programme that handles FS.

FSTP should be used in transition countries that are collaborating with ECHO and using this instrument to support ECHO action and FS action for LRRD. If the decision is made to use it in countries not linked to LRRD and where there is no humanitarian intervention, other criteria for selecting the countries must be found. If it so happened that ECHO was operating in a country where there was a crisis, and predictions indicated that the crisis situation would be ongoing the following year, this would be a textbook situation for applying FSTP. FSTP could still be used, however, in a country where there is no ECHO intervention but where a crisis could be imminent.

Mr. Prade said that FSTP should be applied in very low-resilience countries experiencing chronic situations, where in the event of a small-scale crisis ECHO would be obliged to intervene. LRRD should therefore be applied to pave the way for a future ECHO intervention, to assist ECHO's withdrawal from a country and to remove the need for an ECHO intervention. There are countries where ECHO must phase out its action even if the Global Acute Malnutrition index is above the threshold, simply because ECHO's mandate is for a very short intervention. In these cases, there would be an urgent need for an LRRD strategy.

In the previous thematic strategy there were 6 areas. In the new strategy LRRD is an important component, but it is still only one component.

A participant suggested allocating most of the funds to specific countries, while keeping a small budget reserve at sub-regional level, in order to have some flexibility.

Another idea with potential is for ECHO nutrition experts to train EU Delegation personnel, especially in the event that the Delegation lacks a focal point with the relevant background.

In Bangladesh there is a good level of dialogue on policies. The idea is to produce a document that will serve as an alignment guideline for the donors.

It is not clear whether FSIS should focus more on emergency indicators or on a long term strategy, nor why such information would be needed or who would use it. For this reason, there is a need for guidelines. Many donors and governments impose different FSIS which do not provide the information that the decision-makers need. DG RELEX will participate in an FSIS symposium due to be attended by a number of donors, in order to achieve a better harmonised approach.

4.6 Presentation of FSTP – AAP 2010, by B. STEFANESCU

Mr. Stefanescu presented the FSTP budget allocation for the period 2007-2010. There is an unwritten agreement with DG DEV to give 65% of the budget to ACPs and 35% to Asia and Latin America, as ACPs have the highest number of Low- and Medium-Income countries. However, a number of countries have chronic hunger and wasting situations in excess of the threshold, so it is a persistent crisis. There is a need to clearly redefine the criteria for the selection of fragile states. The main target beneficiaries of the programme are the ultra-poor, both rural and urban, living below the poverty line, which is often less than a half a dollar a day. FSTP projects are mainly implemented by NGOs and IOs, as well as by regional organisations. The main specific objectives of the FSTP were outlined. Agricultural research and development in Asia will receive a budget of 22 million Euros. The allocation for the information system (IFPRI) is being used to set up an FS information portal on which each country

will have its own space. The total fund for the system was 5 million Euros, of which 1.9 million have been allocated to Asia. North Korea and Afghanistan have received LRRD funds as a result of local calls for tenders. Specific Objective 5, comprising innovative programmes to combat food insecurity, includes funds for targeted Innovative Approaches projects. It supports *"Increasing food security and promoting legitimate crop production and small farmer enterprise development"* in Laos, and *"Preventing and addressing under-nutrition in women and young children, and its underlying causes"* in Bangladesh.

5. Social Transfer session, Friday 25 June 2010

5.1 Food Security Network – ROSA, by V. ALBY FLORES, Chargée d'études

Mrs. Alby Flores, chargée d'études of the Team ROSA, presented the activity of the ROSA Food Security Network. Networking is not a new practice in the Food Security sector; in 1996 RESAL mobilised a broad network of experts and technical assistants. However, following the request in 2007 for a new network focused on Food Security, AIDCO launched a virtual FS platform to improve coordination and provide support to EC staff. ROSA provides regular newsletters, an online library and a space dedicated to dissemination of good practices and lessons learned. Moreover it has interactive tools for sharing ideas and working together (wiki). In the coming months there will be a newsletter focusing on Asia, and subsequent newsletters will address other relevant subjects such as LRRD, Nutrition and Food Facility. There are several ways to contribute, e.g. sharing documentary resources, announcing news, offering suggestions of best practices and lessons learned, contributing to network publications (writing articles, suggesting new topics, etc.).

5.2 Objectives of social protection, by N. FREELAND, consultant from the Team Social Transfer

Social protection is a response to vulnerability, which is determined by poverty, risk exposure and lack of a voice. Social protection should therefore address all three dimensions, and is divided into three categories: social assistance, social insurance and social justice.

The ten guiding principles for achieving social protection were illustrated. Minimising policy intrusion means that external actors should capitalise on the energies present in the country. The focus should be on vulnerability, not on poverty.

Concerning pilot projects, it is important to understand that if they are not in keeping with government policy they are very likely to fail, which has happened on many occasions. To remove the need for such pilot programmes, the time has come to apply on a large scale the lessons learned from the previous ones. Ultimately the focus should be on the outcomes, meaning that the projects should serve as an indicator of how many people have been lifted out of poverty, rather than how many have benefited from the project.

Question and Answer session

Q1: What is the difference between a contributory and a non-contributory system?

A1: In a non-contributory system a farmer who does not pay tax will still receive a pension upon reaching retirement age. The contributory system is based on the Western approach of paying taxes every month in order to benefit from a pension on retirement.

Q2: I believe that before embarking on any technical interventions, governance should be a top priority.

A3: I agree. I think it is of the utmost importance to reach an agreement with the government as regards policy.

An EU development report is issued every year, and its central issue this year is social protection.

Mrs. Masfield said that it is important to keep in mind that social protection is only one part of a poverty reduction strategy, and should not be considered as a tool for solving the whole range of poverty issues.

5.3 Social transfers, by N. FREELAND

Mr. Freeland presented the experience of the Regional Hunger and Vulnerability Programme (RHVP), a regional programme for Southern Africa funded by DFID and AusAID. It seeks to address the prevalence of chronic vulnerability in the SADC region and promotes a shift from emergency relief to long-term social protection. Providing comprehensive social protection will help to generate economic growth and this will reduce poverty and the cost of social protection. In this way emergency assistance will be reduced, freeing up donor resources.

From the experience of RHVP and other similar programmes it was observed that social transfers have a positive impact on poverty, hunger, well-being, livelihoods, employment, equity, local markets, health, nutrition, education and gender equality.

Political will and commitment are pre-requisites for comprehensive and durable social transfer schemes. Social transfers should be based on categorical criteria and not on poverty (e.g. the elders, the young).

Question and Answer session

Q1: What do you think about the public works?

A1: The limit is that to target the poorest, the project pays a very low wage, keeping these people in poverty. Supplementing this with an emergency intervention, i.e. humanitarian aid, is very positive but does not solve the problem. It is better to allocate the cash directly, so that the people can invest it as they choose and begin some income-generating activities which could lift them out of poverty.

Q2: What should we do if no national policy is established?

A2: The point is that if the government agrees a social policy, it should be used wisely and ultimately try to make positive changes, rather than ignoring the issue.

5.4 Examples of EC involvement in Social Transfer in the region

5.4.1 Social Transfers in the Philippines

In the Philippines, Food Facility is funding several projects on Social Transfers, following a government request for food assistance in affected areas. In particular, there is a programme in Mindanao covering Food for Assets/Food for training and the establishment of a facility for vulnerability assessment mapping at national level. The Social Transfers Programme is run as a complement to EC programmes. The Food

Facility Programme and Health Support Programme provide support assistance for reducing poverty in the country, and ECHO provides support to Internally Displaced Persons (IDP). Thus, the Social Transfers Programme in the Philippines is a success thanks to a number of factors: strong institutional support; good integration and coordination with existing and successful WFP programmes; participatory and transparent setup; WFP's high capacity for implementation in the country.

5.4.2 Social Transfers in Bangladesh

In recent years, Food Security has become a core priority for all the stakeholders in Bangladesh. Many donors are involved in social transfers, which are directly coordinated by staff at the Prime Minister's office. The global objectives are social protection and growth. The EU Delegation is funding 14 social transfer projects in Bangladesh (e.g. FSUP, VGDUP, CLP, CFPR, etc.) and it is now necessary to evaluate the effectiveness and the impact of the Social Transfers Programme. Finally, social transfers in Bangladesh enjoy a number of advantages: firm government commitment, coordination and dialogue between the main donors and an anticipated increase in budget.

Question and Answer session

Q1: How do we factor population growth into social transfer interventions?

A1: This should be considered at the design stage of a social transfer programme.

Q2: How do we solve the problem of errors in assigning inclusion/exclusion?

A2: Normally donors are more anxious about making *inclusion* errors, as they do not wish to pay for people who have been included by mistake. Targeting is a critical point, but for poverty reduction we should be more concerned about exclusion errors.

Q3: How do you tackle the risk of beneficiaries and programmes overlapping in the Philippines?

A3: As we are aware that there is a real risk of this, we pay very close attention.

Mr. Buchon commented that the Yemen government does not want donors to give cash directly to the people because when the project ends some beneficiaries could be rejected, which leads to a risk of revolution.

Exit strategy: as the project stands, if vulnerable people lose their main asset in a disaster (e.g. losing a cow due to flooding) they find themselves back in their initial situation, i.e. poverty. A possible solution is to continue to accompany individuals after the end of the programme, through microcredits, but this is only possible if they are entrepreneurs.

Q4: How can the use of cash transfers be monitored correctly?

A4: The first 70% of cash transfers is used to buy food, and then the remainder is used for education and other purposes. In an unconditional cash transfer we should emphasise the results, not the number of beneficiaries, so tracking the money should not be the focus.

The more fragile the states, the more the government should be involved in building the programme.

WFP is getting involved in social transfer projects, but is this appropriate? In the future, should it deal with both emergency and development, or focus purely on emergencies as ECHO does?

One of the main successes of the projects in Bangladesh is that they empower women, making them less vulnerable.

Ideally the government should be responsible for the cash transfer and the donors should bear all the other costs – for instance identification of beneficiaries, related activities, etc. – but of course this is not always feasible.

5.5 Reference document on social transfers, by N. FREELAND

Mr. Freeland presented the reference document on Social Transfers; a concept note was released in early 2010. The purpose was to produce a practical manual for the EU Delegations and HQ.

The targets of social transfers are poor and vulnerable individuals or households, and in scope the transfers aim to reduce these people's consumption deficits, protect them from shocks (including economic and climatic), and in some cases strengthen their productive capacity. There are important overlaps between social protection, nutrition and agriculture. School feeding is a very expensive intervention which covers social transfer, education and nutrition. There are important preconditions to be kept in mind before designing a social transfer programme, touching on the nature of poverty and the institutional, legal, financial and policy contexts. During design of the programme, discussions should consider the nature of the transfer, targeting, delivery issues (frequency, mechanism, etc.), conditionality and management.

Question and Answer session

Q1: Is this guideline aimed only at EC staff, or is it also for governments and other donors?

A1: The intention is to use it as a framework for discussions with other partners. And the EC would like it to become, as a minimum, an EU reference document applying to all the MS. It is a document which must be useful for cooperation work, and so, since AIDCO is cooperating with governments and MS, these latter need to be able to understand it.

Q2: Is it possible to migrate ROSA to the Capacity 4Dev website?

A2: The intention is indeed to do this; the possibility is under evaluation but will depend on the technical feasibility.

5.6 Work Groups

The participants were divided in two work groups.

Each group was requested to draft a social transfer programme in a specific country. One group worked on Bangladesh, the other on Laos. The group who worked on the Bangladesh case focused on the process, and decided to cooperate with the Government from the programme's design stage onwards, in order to enhance its ownership and make it more likely to succeed.

The Laos work group focused on mothers and children, and proposed an intervention on cash transfers and rice banks, to be discussed with the government. The Lao women's organisation would work in partnership with the project.

5.7 Closing remarks, by Mr. Prade

Mr. Prade said that in his opinion, the seminar could be considered a success if the participants went away with the following skills:

- First skill: to be efficient Delegation and HQ officers and to be able to look ahead and understand the overall Food Security situation.
- Second skill: the capacity to broaden their mental approach to Food Security and understanding of it. While ten years ago FS was mainly related to agriculture, nowadays it has connections with health, gender, human rights and more.
- Third skill: the capacity to work together in a network. Professional networks, such as ROSA, are very important.
- Fourth skill: to strengthen their technical knowledge.



Annexes

ANNEX 1: Agenda

Monday 21 June 2010

- 9.00 – 9.30 Welcome and registration of participants and distribution of conference kits
- 9:30- 9:50: Official opening by Mr. Henry Prankerd, Charge of Affaires and Dr. Phouang Parisak Pravongviengkham – DG of MAF
- 9:50-10:10: Presentation of objectives of seminar
- 10:10-10:40: Clarification of concepts used in Food Security, Nutrition Security, Transition and LRRD.
- 10:40-11:00: Tea/coffee break
- 11:00-11:15: The Key Questions to be addressed during the seminar sessions:
- Key questions related to Transition/LRRD
 - Key questions related to Nutrition
 - Key questions related to Social Transfers
- 11:15-13:00: The participants present the main Food Security issues in respective countries and regions:
- Cambodia
 - Philippines
 - Laos
 - Tajikistan
- 13:00-14:00 : Lunch Break
- 14:00-14:30 Continuation of presentations by participants:
- Indonesia
- 14:30-16:40 Food Security: EU Policy Framework
ECHO's activities in the region
Discussion
- 16:40-16:50 Tea/coffee break
- 16:50-18:00 Presentation on Food Facility
Questions and answers discussion

Sessions on Transition and LRRD

Tuesday 22 June 2010

- 9:00-9:30 Continuation of presentations by participants:
- Myamar
 - Pakistan
- 9:30-9:40 Last development at HQs level on LRRD/Transition
- 9:40 – 10:10 Situations of transition and LRRD interventions
- Presentation
 - Discussions

10:10 – 10:50	Tea /coffee Break
10:50 – 12:50	3 Working Groups: Lessons learnt from examples of transition situation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yemen • Sri Lanka • Afghanistan
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00– 15:30	3 Working Groups. Lessons learnt from examples of transition situation
15:30-15:50	Tea /coffee Break
16:00-17:30	Plenary session Synthesis of the discussions of the working groups. Proposals for improving EC interventions in Transition situations Discussions
17:50-19:00	Informal session on Food Facility implementation issues

FIELD VISIT

Wednesday 23 June 2010

7:00-8:00	Visit That Luang Organic Market
8:00-8:30	Visit to Lao Farmers' Products Company
8:30-11:30	Travel to Sangthong
11:30-11:30	Discussion with District authorities (Department of Agriculture and Forestry)
11:30-12:00	Travel to 3 different villages
12:00-13:00	Lunch with farmers and DAFO staffs in the villages
13:00-15:30	Visit rice fields, discussion with farmer groups
15:30 -18:00	Drive back to Vientiane
20:00 – 22:00	Dinner for all participants to the seminar

Sessions on Nutrition/ FSTP

Thursday 24 June 2010

9:00 – 9:50	Part 1 – A reminder of the basics in nutrition Nutrition – Introduction Session Outline reference document on nutrition Indicators Discussion
9:50 – 10:15	Part 2 – Nutrition at regional level Malnutrition in Asia Discussion
10:15 – 10:55	Maternal and Young Children Nutrition Security in Asia Questions and answers on the two initiatives
10:40 – 11:10	Tea/coffee break
11:10 – 12:30	Part 3 – Nutrition at national level Addressing undernutrition: deciding where to invest Introduction Group work: Yemen exercise on Nutrition Plenary discussion and conclusions

12:30 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 15:00	Part 4 – Nutrition reference document Presentation of the outline Discussion Working Groups on nutrition Discussion in plenary session
15:00-15:30	Tea/coffee break Part 5- Session on DCI "Food Security Thematic Programmes"
15:30-15:50	Food Security Thematic Programme Implementation 2007-2010 Lessons learnt
15:50-16:10	Mid Term Review of the Food Security Thematic Programme: main conclusions and recommendations for the Food Security Thematic Programme strategy 2011-2013
16:10-17:30	Discussion focused on the identification of suitable interventions under the new Multiannual Indicative Programme for 2011-2013
17:30-19:00	Cocktail organised by the EU Delegation

Sessions on Social Transfer

Friday 25 June 2010

9:00 – 10:45	Role of social transfer in food security
10:45 – 11:00	Tea/coffee break
11:00 – 11:10	Food Security Network - ROSA
11:10 – 13:00	Examples of EC involvement in Social Transfer in the region – Presenters from EU Delegations and ECHO regional offices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philippines • Bangladesh
13:00-14:00	Lunch
14:00-15:00	Exercise: Design and Implementation of a Social Transfer Programme 2 working Groups (each group will design a social transfer programme in a country selected among those of the participants) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laos • Bangladesh
15:00-15:20	Tea/coffee break
15:20-16:00	Exercise: Design and Implementation of a Social Transfer Programme Presentations in plenary and discussions
16:00-16:30	Conclusions and recommendations for action Official closing

ANNEX 2: List of Participants

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ANNEX 3: List of Presentations

	Day 1	
1.1	Clarifying concepts to better understanding each other	By Jacques Prade
1.2	Key questions on Nutrition and Social Transfer	By Claire Chastre
1.3	Food Security: EU Policy Framework	By Ria Ketting
1.4	The policy framework for EU HFA	By Abi Masefield
1.5	ECHO's activities in the region	By Vitor Serrano
1.6	Food Facility -	By Bogdan Stefanescu
1.7	Food security in Asian Countries	
1.7.1	Food Security in Cambodia	By Lea Jenin
1.7.2	Food Security in The Philippines	By Raffaella Boudron
1.7.3	Food Security in Laos	By Mélanie Bride
1.7.4	Food Security in Tajikistan	By Erkin Mamadaliev
1.7.5	Food Security in Indonesia	By Edhie Rahmat
1.7.6	Food Security in Myanmar	By Silvia Facchinello
1.7.7	Food Security in Timor East	By Pedro Campos Llopis
	Day 2	
2.1	Situations of transition and LRRD interventions	By Isabelle Le Normand
2.2	Case Studies	
	LRRD in Sri Lanka	By Ignacio Oliver Cruz
	LRRD in Yemen	By Damien Buchon
	LRRD in Afghanistan	By Wali Farhodi
2.3	Working Groups presentations	
	Day 4	
4.1	Nutrition – Introduction Session –	By Claire Chastre
4.2	Malnutrition in Asia - UNICEF	By France Begin
4.3	Food and nutrition security overview –Yemen	By Claire Chastre and Damian Buchon
4.3	Presentation of the working groups	
4.4	Nutrition security in Asia	By Ria Ketting
4.5	Food Security Thematic Programme	Ria Ketting
4.6	Food Security Thematic Programme	Bogdan Stefanescu
4.7	Outline reference document on nutrition	Claire Chastre
4.7	Presentation of working group on reference document	
	Day 5	
5.1	Food Security Network - ROSA	By Vanessa Alby Flores
5.2	Objectives of Social protection	By Nicholas Freeland
5.3	Social Transfers	By Nicholas Freeland
5.4	EC experiences in Asia with Social Transfer Social Transfer in The Philippines Social Transfer in Bangladesh	By Raffaella Boudron By Massimo La Rosa
5.5	Reference document on Social Transfers	By Nicholas Freeland