Implementation Conference (IC)

Stakeholder Action for Our Common Future

Food Security

Issue Paper V3, May 2002

Preamble

'Food Security' is defined as 'physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (FAO, World Food Summit, 1996). "The major thrust of food security is to bring about a significant increase in agricultural production in a sustainable way and to achieve a substantial improvement in people's entitlement to adequate food and culturally appropriate food supplies." (Chapter 14.6, Agenda 21, (1993)). Achieving food security requires a holistic approach as the extent to which individuals can attain the financial, natural and human resources necessary to produce or acquire food is influenced by a diverse array of social, economic and environmental considerations. Food security is inextricably linked to rural poverty, which has been exacerbated by the globalisation of agricultural commodities and ensuing relentless, downward pressure on commodity prices. Whilst reducing poverty would afford individuals more financial capital for purchasing either food directly or agricultural technology, increased food security would enable surplus to be sold at local markets, thus generating an income and reducing poverty.

Lack of food security may either be **transitory**, arising from flooding, drought or political unrest, or of a more long-term nature. Whilst more appropriate aid targeting and rapid mobilisation of emergency food reserves can help alleviate transitory food insecurity, overcoming poverty driven, **chronic** food insecurity is founded upon a fundamental lack of capacity on the behalf of communities / individuals to extricate themselves from the problem.

Problems meeting the growing **demand** for food world-wide have been exacerbated by **production / supply** impediments, such as crop land loss due to urbanisation and productivity declines from over-exploitation and degradation of agricultural land. Addressing how extant resources can be managed more effectively is crucial, as the need to increase productivity, without incurring further environmental degradation becomes ever more salient. Adopting short-term strategies to raise ecosystem productivity without adequate consideration for environmental protection[1] will ultimately undermine long-term ecosystem health, resulting in an ever-increasing cycle of want and need.

However, the challenge extends beyond increasing global food production. Despite the growth rate of global food production currently exceeding that of world population growth, the FAO's recent 'State of Food Insecurity' report still predicts that, at the current rate, it will take approximately 60 years to halve the number of hungry people by 2015 – the target set at the 1996 World Food Summit. Improving production *per se* will not provide a solution unless accompanied by improved equitability of distribution and access (FAO, 2001) [2]. Furthermore, access to adequate calories for survival is still not necessarily enough. Malnutrition has become increasingly prevalent in both food secure and insecure populations and this has a considerable number of detrimental consequences on human health and subsequent declines in labour productivity.

The World Food Summit, six years later in June 2002 offers more than an opportunity to reaffirm political commitments to achieving food security for all – it will also provide a forum to determine how to progress from discussion to implementation can be made.

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[1] Environmental protection must include protection of the hydrological supply, pollinators, genetic diversity of near relatives of domesticated plant and animal species, and biodiversity in general.

[2] 'The state of food insecurity in the world' – FAO, 2001

1. Framework for the IC process

The IC process is designed to facilitate joint stakeholder action in order to contribute to the implementation of recent international agreements, such as: Agenda 21, Chapter 14 (UNCED, 1992); Convention on Biodiversity (UNCDE, 1992), CSD Decision 2000; World Food Summit Plan of Action (1996); International Undertaking of Plant Genetic Resources (FAO, 2001), and Cartegena Biosafety Protocol (2000). Stakeholders must also consider the influence on other, potentially conflicting international agreements in place- including TRIPS and UPOV (International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants -1961,1978 and 1991).

All possible IC outcomes should be taking advantage of the value added through a multi-stakeholder approach:

- increased credibility by integrating different perspectives / interests
- increased quality by integrating a wider range of expertise
- increased outreach into various stakeholder communities

Linkages should not only be developed / strengthened vertically, between stakeholders working at international, national and local levels, but also horizontally – with especial focus on promoting linkages (local and potentially more long-distance) between community based organisations.

A multi-stakeholder approach will also enable the IC to capitalise upon potential synergies, interactions and inter-linkages between food security and other IC strands, especially health and freshwater,

2. History of the IC process on Food Security so far

- Dinner meeting with possible IAG members, 30 January 2002
- Bilateral conversations with some IAG members
- Finalised desired IAG membership list
- Issue Paper V.2 made available March 25th 2002.
- IAG **dinner meeting** on the Wednesday March 27th during Prep Comm III in New York; discussion on the Issue Advisory paper and possible areas for joint action; agreed process for next steps

3. Planned activities between now and the IC event

- IAG telephone conference call – Tuesday May 7th
- Stakeholder Forum to produce draft stakeholder action plans
- Stakeholder Forum to engage IAG members in bilateral consultations on draft action plans regarding content; possible partners; possible funding sources
- Draft Action Plans; identifying interested parties and participants; and considering how possible outcomes could be financed
- Hold workshop meeting with IAG members and possible action plan partners during
    - Prep Comm IV in Bali, May 2002
    - The World Food Summit Review Meeting in Rome, June 2002

4. **Possible focus areas and possible joint stakeholder action**

Possible Focus Areas	**Possible Type 1 Action**	**Possible Joint Stakeholder Action Towards Implementation** (Type 2)

1. Legally secure access to and control of financial resources
 	
Barriers:
• Inequitable wealth distribution
• Declining ODA levels, despite expanding populations in developing countries.
• High transaction costs for access to credit
• International financial institutions and bilateral assistance tied to sovereign states – makes it difficult for developing country producers to economically engage in economic activity throughout product cycle and benefit appropriately.
• Poor governance exacerbating the high level of risks from insecure property rights, lack of titles or ability to use land and other assets as collateral.
 	
Strategy:
• Promotion of social and economic conditions – employment conditions for permanent and temporary workers
• Support the establishment and replication of micro-credit / microfinance initiatives that succeeded in empowering marginalized groups (resource poor communities/ small scale farmers etc.)
		Catalytic / micro-credit schemes
		• Are they beneficial to all stakeholder groups
		– if not, are there more appropriate alternatives? Co-operatives, Microfinance systems for small producers, especially women.
		• **Identification of successful initiatives: are lessons /outcomes transferable / adaptable?**
		
		Overseas Development Assistance
		• How can extant ODA be utilised more effectively in a globalised economy?
		  • Further support for the current shift towards investment lending to offset domestic under-investment in rural public goods?
		• Support for further flexibility and unconditionality in funding allocation
		• **How can donors develop and utilise more appropriate 'objectively verifiable indicators'**
		
		Domestic investment in capacity building:
		• **Support and facilitate domestic resource investment in infrastructure development through**
		  • **Basic /applied R&D**
		  • **Training and education**
		
		Opportunities for public-private partnerships?

2. Legally secure access to and control of natural resources
 	
Barriers:
• Genetic resource ownership issues – TRIPS currently sanctions genetic resource ownership.
• Ownership of water sources
• Lack of appropriate legal protection of assets and formalised property right systems – (including the right to buy and sell) – often leads to poor being forced from their land
 	
Strategies:
• Prevention of multi-national IPR monopolisation
• Need for increased formalisation of resouce ownership, including land tenure systems
 	
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	Reaffirm recommendations of CBD Art 8 and FAO's International Undertaking (3.2.4) on recognising indigenous rights to biological resources, knowledge and technologies, and the need for community consultation prior to granting access to biological resources	**Stakeholder Forum is investigating the potential for joint-collaboration between Water and Food Security Issue Advisory Groups on access to water**
		
		Strengthen national and local capacity to negotiate access to and benefit sharing of natural resources
		
		Support for the broadening of existing initiatives in relation to land. This could include:
		
		• Supporting the establishment of independent, accountable land commissions
		
		• Encouraging capacity building regarding legislation and enforcement; suggested action in the women's caucus paper (2000), e.g. training paralegal advisors; information tools for women on land & tenure rights; etc
		
		• Strengthening community based organisation networks, in order to identify and disseminate lessons learnt and potential best practice examples of:
		  • existing systems for (collective) rights over shared land
		  • formal land tenure arrangements for small scale producers, especially women
		  • land registries and cadastre systems.
		
		Promote *sui generis* plant variety protection systems as an alternative to patenting genetic resources (plants, animals, micro-organisms) and natural processes
		
		WTO should consider / TRIPS should more broadly evaluate contributions to inventive steps undertaken by indigenous communities – **identify and raise awareness of such examples.**

3. Sustainable natural resource management
• Sustainable agrochemical use
• Improved natural resource stewardship (habitat/ biodiversity management in agriculture)
• Sustainable off-take during both land and marine harvesting.
 	
Barriers:
• Unsustainable land management regimes and detrimental influences on agricultural productivity (land degradation; soil nutrient depletion; pH imbalance; poor drainage; desertification; salinisation; agrochemical misuse)
• Displacement of rural communities through agricultural expansion, land degradation and demographic pressures.
 	
Strategies:
• Address how productivity can be improved on extant agricultural land
  • Utilisation of alternative crop varieties?
  • Utilisation of multiple-forest products?
 	
• Raise awareness of the benefits derivable from sustainable management strategies, including integrated crop/pest management, agroforestry, multi-species production systems, minimum tillage etc.
 	
Outcomes
• Improved integrated management of land and aquatic production systems
• Improved agricultural productivity
• Optimised agrochemical use
• Reduced environmental degradation / biodiversity loss
		Establish / expand upon a knowledge exchange programme
		• **An on-going initiatives database for reference / potential exchange opportunities**
		• **A unified compendium of lessons learnt from previous projects / programmes**
		• **How can various media be employed to raise awareness amongst local authorities, farmers, local communities and stakeholders within the wider development community – this should include local communication networks, including radio, internet technology (where feasible) etc.**
		
		Support for:
		• **Training in sustainable management techniques for**
		  • **Local producers, particular women**
		  • **Agricultural extension workers**
		• Sustainable management training foci to include biodiversity conservation, water management and social considerations including inter-community heterogeneity (gender, age, religion)
		• **Individual capacity building:**
		  • **Development of empowerment mechanisms for women to take on leadership and management roles in stewardship / management schemes**
		  • **Support for individual education / training opportunities (see also Technology section and above)**
		
		• **Development of practical, equitable mechanisms for marketing produce nationally / internationally where financial returns are**
		  • **captured by local producers and/or**
		  • **reinvested in national resource management (watersheds, soil conservation etc) – EXPLORE ACTION LINK TO FAIR TRADE**

4. Promotion of fair / ethical trade Barriers: • Distortive subsidies / tariffs that support unsustainable / unethical food production systems • Lack of established marketing infrastructure • Lack of consumer awareness of 'Fair Trade' product availability • Balance of interests between export crops as a source of income generation and crops for local consumption / markets. • Globalisation of agricultural commodities, resulting in continuous price depreciation • Rural producers have no financial returns on value added to the product through branding • Potential conflicting interests at regional levels – impact of tourism if production increasingly tailored to tastes of tourists. Strategies: • Raise awareness and thus stimulate demand for fair trade products at national and international levels. • Support development and promotion of Green markets • Strengthen supply chains for agricultural products		**Investigate the feasibility of initiating / supporting a campaign for a fair system of tariffs and subsidies internationally – focusing on** • **Phasing out distortive, production based subsidies in favour of stewardship incentives** • **Focusing national attention on the importance of support for domestic crop production** • **Eliminating the subsidized supply of agricultural products to developing countries as food aid** (this impedes developing country crops competition in global markets and exacerbates downward pressure on domestic prices in developing countries as surplus is dumped on local markets) Identify and expand upon initiatives focusing upon developing integrated systems to strengthen market access for resource poor farmers **Actively identify and strengthen linkages with community based rural producer organisations to further representation of community needs within higher level decision-making processes** Investigate the feasibility of developing / promoting new financial mechanisms that invest in and support producer co-operatives. Identify and support the creation of mechanisms to strengthen farmers' market information and power **Develop a common learning / information exchange between fair trade representatives in established sectors, e.g coffee, and other, less well advanced sectors** Invite representatives of other sectors, e.g. extraction industries, to discuss fair / ethical trade opportunities in their sectors and explore whether concepts could be translated into other sectors e.g. tourism (ongoing work); extraction industries (energy group)

5. Improved access to and uptake of appropriate technologies
 	
Barriers:
• Local capacity limitations to drive innovation and the development of appropriate[3] (production and information) technologies.
 	
• 'Appropriate' technology development (e.g new crop varieties) being predominately driven by Northern hemisphere demand and /or perceptions of 'appropriateness'.
 	
• Lack of access to potentially beneficial technologies
 	
• Absence of an enabling environment to support technology acquisition and underpin adoption (credit/loan facilities, extension services etc.)
 	
• Unstained technology uptake following acquisition (exacerbated by lack of information provision on potential benefits, costs, implications etc of adoption)
 	
Strategies:
• Foster innovation and thus technology development on a needs / demand driven basis – with consideration for:
  • Eventual markets
  • Potential adopters
• Improve availability of affordable, non-resource intensive technologies
• Strengthen the capacity of national and local R&D systems
	Reaffirm commitment to CBD Articles 16, 17 and 18 on the importance of facilitating information exchange, transfer of relevant technologies, access to genetic resources and technical co-operation.	**Partnerships to broaden the impact of successful initiatives to-date, especially instances of innovation driven from a grass-roots level.**
		Partnerships to increasingly facilitate knowledge and technologies dissemination and adaptation to specific contexts?
		• **Consider establishing national multi-stakeholder councils for developing strategies to transfer/ adopt knowledge and technologies** *
		• **Establish/ extend South-South community exchange programmes at a regional and potentially national level**.
		• **Develop / expand an information and technology bank**
		• **Public-private research partnerships as a means of capitalising upon institutional synergies / resource availability.**
		* **Technologies should include both production and information technologies.**
		Inexpensive, non-resource intensive technologies with potential to add value / realise benefits relatively rapidly should be key foci.
		
		Support the development of appropriate domestic R&D infrastructures:
		• **Develop recommendations for R&D programmes foci (at national/ regional levels?)**
		• **Broaden awareness of beneficial examples of collaborative public / private sector iniitiatives**
		Reaffirm long-term commitment to develop and support extension services and educational programmes to:
		• **Raise producer awareness of the potential implications of adopting specific technologies (benefits and costs)**
		• Advise and assist with management and implementation.
		• Encourage participatory, community based training - including the training of trainers to facilitate knowledge transfer

[3] Appropriate technologies will be contingent on local (and to a lesser extent national) needs, priorities and resource availability.

6. Improved capacity to manage risk and uncertainty
 	
Barriers:
• Abiotic influences on agricultural productivity, including current climatic variability, potential climate change in the future and non-climate related natural disasters
• Cultural and political instability, resulting in a reduced workforce.
• Lack of financial capital to take risks, for example adopting new technologies / methodologies - especially if benefits are not immediately apparent.
• Public concerns regarding regarding GMOs (Ethical, social (and environmental concerns)) – potential costs (, undetermined impacts on human and environmental health, costs of implementing the precautionary principle) vs. potential benefits (improved productivity, nutritional content, pest/ drought resistance)
 	
Strategies
• Furthering information provision as a means of enabling decision making on the basis of readily available scientific and economic evidence with respect to the potential costs and benefits of novel technology adoption.
• Improve availability of risk management options to local communities– market / weather information, extension services, pest monitoring, crop insurance, debt restructuring
• Improve access to credit unions / micro-credit schemes
	• Reaffirm national commitment to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2000)[4]	• Encourage a shift from a disaster relief ethos amongst local communities (producers / local authorities) to mitigation / pre-emptive planning and preparation strategies
		
		• Promote voluntary labelling of products containing GMOs – affording individuals the right to chose
		
		• **Establish / strengthen advisory networks to enhance domestic ability to make appropriate decisions on the implementation of appropriate regulatory frameworks**
		
		• Strengthen local capacity for employing early warning systems and assessing potential risks through
		  • increasing availability of necessary technologies
		  • supporting local training in both
		  a) employing such technologies and
		  b) awareness raising re. the potential benefits of doing so.

[4] seeks to protect biodiversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology' and reflects the crucial need for countries to establish appropriate biosafety regulations to protect human and environmental health, regardless of their acceptance of novel biotechnologies.

7. Governance - encourage the development of appropriate decision making infrastructure at national and regional level Barriers: • Pro-poor decision making requires political courage • Prioritisation of short-term economic goals over longer term social / environmental goals • International, national and local governance priorities may not always align • National government reluctance to decentralise power to empower local authorities. Strategy: • Strengthen national, regional and local institutional frameworks for cross-sectoral co-operation • Establish common platforms for action / dialogue		• **Develop a multi-stakeholder statement / campaign on good governance, transparency and accountability (towards and beyond the Summit)** • **Establish an international food security multi-stakeholder forum** • **Establish/support local multi-stakeholder councils to develop locally appropriate strategies, collaborative management mechanisms etc. Co-operative frameworks require mutual trust, codes of conduct, thematic action plans.** • Develop decentralised, local-level consultation and support mechanisms to enable appropriate / informed decision making within the domain of local communities (goals, priorities, land ownership/demarcation, negotiation and conflict resolution capacities etc.) • Need to consider whether it is enough to encourage complementarity / harmonisation of customary and state laws. Will potentially marginalized groups (women, indigenous communities) receive adequate representation? • **Develop a peer network of development practitioners engaged in governance-related work to assist in capacity building working with governments, development assistance community etc.**