



Seminar on Policy and Programmatic Actions to Address High Food Prices in the COMESA and SADC Regions



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COMESA and SADC Sub-regions**

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Acronyms

ACTESA	Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern African
ADP	Agriculture Development Programme
ASDP	Agricultural Sector Development Programme
ASDS	Agriculture Sector Development Strategy Development Strategy
ASWAp	Agricultural Sector Wide Approach
CA	Conservation Agriculture
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme
CET	Common External Tariff
CFE	Compensatory Financing Facility
CISANET	Civil Society Agriculture Network
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
COMRAP	The COMESA Regional Agro-- Inputs Support Programme
DFID	Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EAC	East African Community
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FAPDA	Food and Agriculture Policy Decision Analysis
FISP	Farm Input Subsidy Program
GBI	Green Belt Initiative
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIEWS	Global Information and Early Warning System
IFAD	International Food and Agriculture Development
IFSP	Initiative on Soaring Food Prices
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
JFFLS	Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools
MAFAP	Monitoring African Food and Agriculture Policies
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MP	Member of Parliament
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NFDC	Net Food-Importing Developing Countries
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
REACH	Renewed Effort Against Child Hunger
REC	Regional Economic Community
REFORM	Regional Food Security and Risk Management
RISDP	Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan
RLC	FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SMART-FS	Strengthening Markets and Regional Trade for Food Security
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
SUN	Scaling up Nutrition
TAD	Transboundary Animal Disease
TAFSIP	Tanzania Farm Subsidy Program
UNJP	United Nations Joint Programme
USA	United States of America
VAT	Value Added Tax
WFP	World Food Programme
WTO	World Trade Organization
ZAM-SWAP	Zambia Sector-wide Approach

1. Introduction

1.1 Report outline

This is a report of a two-day seminar on policy and programmatic actions to address high food prices jointly organized by the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. The report covers the background and objectives of the seminar, welcome, opening and introductory remarks, overview of global and regional food price situation, FAO Guide on how to address high food prices, participating country experiences, regional policies and strategies, macro-economic and trade measures, policy and programmatic actions for consumers and producers, decision making tools from FAO, recommendations on next steps for regional and country actions and the role of cooperating partners, conclusions and annexes.

1.2 Background and objectives of seminar

Starting in mid-2010 and continuing into 2011, global food markets have experienced an increase in the prices of sugar, oils, meat, wheat and maize, while rice prices have remained stable, contrary to the spike in 2007-2008 (FAO, 2011). In response to these recent price increases and the lessons of the 2007-2008 crisis, COMESA, SADC and FAO jointly organized a seminar on policy and programmatic actions to address high food prices. This was part of a series of twelve seminars organized by FAO and its partners throughout the various regions and sub-regions to assist governments of member countries in designing their immediate actions in response to current and future food price hikes.

COMESA and SADC have embraced the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) as the framework for guiding investments in agriculture for enhanced agricultural growth, food security and rural development. In addition, both regional economic communities (RECs) are implementing programmes that have the potential to alleviate the effects of high food prices. High food prices have direct implications on the design and implementation of CAADP. A number of countries in the two sub-regions have designed detailed investment plans under the CAADP framework.

The specific objective of the seminar was to provide an opportunity for at least three policy decision makers from each country - one from a line ministry in charge of agriculture, one from the ministry responsible for trade and/or finance and one from a coordinating ministry such as Ministry of Finance or Ministry of Economic Planning - to share experiences about the 2007-2008 food price crisis, to discuss resource materials such as FAO's "*Guide for policy and programmatic actions at country level to address high food prices*" and to review the implications of policy and programmatic response options. The seminar explored current and prospective opportunities for accessing support for the envisaged responses. Representatives of regional organizations, the private sector, farmers' organizations and cooperating partners also participated in the seminar.

1.3 Expected impact and outcomes

The expected impact of the seminar was that governments design policies that better address rising food prices that threaten consumers while at the same time could provide opportunities for producers and/or exporters. The expected outcomes were as follows:

- Participants use and disseminate knowledge gained from the seminar in policy dialogue to design measures to address high food prices at country level;
- Participants engage at country level with cooperating partners to seize opportunities for collaboration and support discussed during the seminar; and
- FAO prepares a consolidated report to be shared with Member states.

The expected outputs were at the levels of participating countries, RECs and FAO and cooperating partners.

Participants from member countries:

- are exposed to resource material such as the FAO Guide and decision making tools and exchange with their peers and other stakeholders on measures for addressing high food prices, and the implications of these measures for on-going initiatives such as those undertaken in the context of CAADP design and implementation;
- are better informed about opportunities for collaboration and support from cooperating partners; and
- prepare a list of next steps to be implemented once back in the country in order to launch policy dialogue and mobilize development partner support.

RECs (COMESA and SADC):

- are better informed about the situation and needs of their member countries to address high food prices;
- have identified key response options of a regional nature requiring their attention; and
- prepare recommendations to be presented to their respective governing bodies.

FAO and development partners:

- are better informed about the situation and needs of participating countries to address high food prices;
- identify those areas in which they may be able to provide additional assistance to countries and RECs; and
- FAO prepares a seminar report that will include the situation and measures taken in participating countries as well as a list of next steps.

1.4 Participants and approach to the seminar

The seminar was attended by 99 delegates comprising representatives of COMESA and SADC, government officials, farmer organizations, private sector organizations, civil society organizations and academia from member countries of the two RECs and cooperating partners. The delegates represented key players in the areas of agriculture, food and nutrition security, rural development, trade, finance, employment, social protection and gender (see Annex 1 for list of participants). A total of 13 COMESA and SADC member countries (Angola, Botswana, DRC, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Seychelles, Swaziland, Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe) were represented.

The seminar sessions included presentations and plenary discussions, panel discussions and breakaway group work for detailed analysis of the issues (see Annex 2 for agenda).

2. Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Honourable Professor Peter N Mwanza, MP, Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, Malawi, officially opened the seminar and welcomed all participants.

He ascribed the causes of the 2008 food crisis and subsequent price increases to the use of grains such as maize in biofuel production and animal feed, crop failure due to climate change, rising fuel prices affecting the costs of inputs such as fertilizers and transport and world food price inflation due to speculative activities.

He pointed out that in Africa, agriculture continues to be a fundamental instrument for sustainable development, poverty reduction and food and nutrition security. Ensuring the right

policies and an optimal mix of supportive investments in agriculture are, therefore, imperative for meeting the MDG1 of halving poverty and hunger by 2015. In Malawi, agriculture accounts for about 36 percent of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 90 percent of foreign exchange earnings and employs about 87 percent of the country's population. As such, food price fluctuations present challenges to achieving food security and economic growth objectives, diverting resources from other equally important social obligations such as provision of health and education services.

The Minister noted that Malawi's response to food insecurity has included a number of both short- and long-term measures. The Farm Input Subsidy Programme (FISP), for example, which was started in 2005/06, has resulted in increased investments to the agricultural sector to more than 10 percent of national budget, transforming Malawi into a net food exporter. Other measures include the following:

- Agriculture Development Programme (ADP), now the Agricultural Sector Wide Approach (ASWAp), which incorporates the effects of rising food prices, is aligned with CAADP, and focuses on Food Security and Risk Management, Agribusiness and Market Development, and Sustainable Land and Water Management, with key support areas of technology generation and dissemination, and institutional strengthening and capacity building.
- The Green Belt Initiative (GBI) which is aimed at promoting irrigated agriculture to increase production and productivity of agricultural crops, livestock and fisheries.
- Regional strategic grain reserves to affect price stabilization in the face of maize surpluses and improve post-harvest management.

The Minister further highlighted the challenges of the agricultural sector in Malawi particularly high inter-seasonal price fluctuations due to thin markets and poor infrastructure, poorly developed risk management, increases in fuel and fertilizer prices and high transportation costs as the country is land-locked. Malawi has implemented a number of initiatives to address these challenges including: a weather-based insurance programme; the Shire–Zambezi Water Way Project; and the establishment of local companies to produce fertilizers locally.

In declaring the seminar officially opened, the Honourable Minister drew attention to the objectives of the seminar and assured participants that the Government of Malawi would incorporate the outcomes into appropriate strategies or investment plans.

Before the Minister's speech, Dr Gaoju Han, the FAO Sub-regional Coordinator for Southern Africa, Dr Sam Kanyarukiga, CAADP Coordinator/Senior Agriculture Advisor and Mrs Margaret Nyirenda, Director of the SADC Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources, made some opening remarks on behalf of their respective organizations.

Dr Gaoju Han, the FAO Sub-regional Coordinator for Southern Africa, thanked all participants for coming to the meeting jointly organized by COMESA and FAO. He noted that while the two-day meeting would discuss responses to high food prices, it was driven by a desire to spur growth in African agricultural sectors in order to maximize agriculture's contribution to people's incomes and livelihoods, achieve food and nutrition security and reduce poverty. These are the priority goals mapped out in the MDG1, CAADP as well as countless development plans across Africa, including in COMESA and SADC countries.

He further noted that, although there has been higher growth in the agricultural sectors of a number of countries in recent years, in Malawi and Zambia for example, the continent's poverty and undernourishment levels are still too high, up to a third in some countries. Since the middle of 2010, global food prices for some commodities have been increasing, most notably those for sugar, meat and cereals, with the exception of rice which has remained stable. The surge in food prices is not a reason to undertake seemingly rushed policy

decisions, as was seen in some cases during the food crisis of 2007–2008. Measures such as export bans, speculative purchases and hoarding of food commodities were said to worsen price volatility.

The lessons from the 2007–2008 food price crisis can inform immediate and future actions that countries may take in response to spikes in food prices.

Dr Han also noted that there were enough similarities in the challenges facing the countries in the two sub-regions to learn from each other's experiences, and to think proactively about what else can be done at regional and country level. He underscored the importance that FAO attaches to the diversity of participants from agriculture and non-agricultural ministries such as trade, finance and commerce to provide crucial cross sectoral linkages for both the formulation and implementation of effective policies for the agricultural sector and for food and nutrition security. This should become the rule rather than the exception if sustained growth in agriculture and reductions in hunger and malnutrition are to be achieved.

He concluded by re-affirming FAO's continued commitment to providing technical support to all countries as they seek to achieve agricultural sector growth, food and nutrition security and improved rural livelihoods in a sustainable way.

Dr Sam Kanyarukiga, CAADP Coordinator/Senior Agriculture Advisor gave the opening statement on behalf of COMESA. He congratulated the Government of Malawi for, once again, attaining a maize surplus of 1.2 million metric tonnes, demonstrating its commitment to food security.

He noted that despite various initiatives to address food insecurity, at both national and regional level, the recent rise in food prices had many similarities with the 2007-08 global food crisis. Rising food prices could potentially threaten both short- and long-term growth and developmental objectives for most of the sub-regional economies. Both COMESA and SADC recognize that where smooth regional integration prevails, a food shock in one country may not necessarily translate into a similar scenario in another, and that a food surplus and low prices in some countries may mitigate price shocks/spikes in neighbouring food-deficit countries, resulting in broad based regional food security.

Dr Kanyarukiga said that COMESA was spearheading the implementation of CAADP as an evidence-based initiative, seeking to encourage investments and a minimum sectoral growth of 6 percent annually. In addition, COMESA is implementing a number of programmes that have a bearing on food prices, including the promotion of cross-border trade and markets in food commodities among member states, increased investment in agriculture, input and output market interventions for smallholder farmers and climate change adaptation through conservation agriculture. However, these efforts must be integrated with other regional and continental programmes.

In concluding, he noted that the seminar should provide guidance on what actions the countries and RECs will need to implement in order to lessen vulnerability to future food crises, including sharing with cooperating partners the new forms of support that are now available to the Sub-Saharan African agriculture agenda, the commitment of farmers and the private sector and how food surplus producing countries can help sustain food security in the two sub-regions.

Mrs Margaret Nyirenda, Director of the SADC Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources, made some opening remarks on behalf of SADC. She noted the timeliness of the seminar, given the current rise in the world food prices that may have a significant impact in the two RECs (SADC and COMESA). Since the effects may be both negative and positive, this seminar may assist the governments in the two RECs to design better policies that will not

only reduce the negative effects, but also take advantage of those high prices to increase farm incomes.

She pointed out that the SADC region was endowed with a wide range of natural resources that can be used to ensure sustainable food security. However, the region continues to suffer from repeated food shortages, resulting in the importation of large amounts of food. The critical challenges facing the region include the need to increase agriculture productivity, to eliminate food deficits and to increase trade in agricultural products.

She noted that in 2007/2008, the SADC sub-region experienced high food prices, mostly in rice and wheat, which had high deficits of 0.9 million tonnes and 1.7 million tonnes, respectively, while the situation was more stable in maize with a deficit of 0.4 million tonnes. As a result, the SADC Heads of State and Governments established a Task Force of Ministers from Agriculture, Trade and Finance. The aim of the Task Force was to: (a) encourage regional collaboration for sustainably improving production capacity and productivity; (b) facilitating cross-border and internal food trade; and (c) giving immediate focus on the food crisis at that time. The Task Force met in July 2008 in Lusaka, Zambia and agreed on short- and long-term measures, part of which, are still being implemented.

Referring to the most recent situation, she noted that maize prices across southern Africa have remained relatively stable compared to the previous years. This is due to adequate supplies, especially during the 2010/11 marketing year ending in March 2011 when a maize surplus of 5 million tonnes was assessed. The region expects an even better harvest in 2011. Notwithstanding these recent successes, SADC has remained a net importer of wheat, rice and sorghum/millet. The deficits in these cereals have been increasing over the past three years, as demand has continued to rise, especially in urban areas. For the 2010/11 marketing year, the shortfalls were estimated at 2.89 million tonnes for wheat, 0.67 million tonnes for rice and 0.46 million tonnes for sorghum/millet. The continued rising prices of these commodities pose a great challenge.

This seminar, therefore, was considered timely as it aimed at assisting the Member States and the sub-region as a whole to review and design appropriate policies that better address this challenge. SADC Ministers responsible for Agriculture and Food Security were scheduled to meet on 14th July 2011 in Gaborone, Botswana, and this issue was to be part of their agenda.

3. Introductory Remarks

Dr Sam Kanyarukiga, CAADP Coordinator/Senior Agriculture Advisor, made introductory remarks on behalf of the two RECs, while Mr David Phiri, Chief, Policy Assistance Service, represented FAO.

Dr Kanyarukiga noted that the issue of high food prices has become a serious concern in the past two years for both COMESA and SADC. He looked forward to the meeting's suggested measures to mitigate the effects of high food prices in the respective countries in the two RECs.

Mr Phiri provided background information about the seminar and outlined the seminar objectives. He began by noting that high food prices were a major concern for low income families. He warned that policy responses to high food prices can, in some cases, hinder food production and the normal functions of private sector entities and markets, and as such policy makers ought to be careful. He alerted participants that government reactions have in the past contributed to a worsening of the problem. There is also a need for governments to consider the impact of their policies and actions on neighbouring countries. Therefore, it is important that the lessons of 2007-2008 be considered during the seminar deliberations.

He informed participants that following the food crisis of 2007-2008, FAO had published a guide as a way of responding to high food prices, incorporating the lessons from the food

crisis. The guide has since been revised and would be presented in a later session. The guide covers different policy and programmatic actions in response to high food prices and their advantages and disadvantages. Other initiatives in which FAO is involved in response to volatile food prices include the following:

- Monitoring and analysis of the causes of food price fluctuations
- The G20 and food price volatility, a collaborative initiative between FAO and OECD to write a paper on the implications of price volatility on global food security to inform the agenda of the G20 under the French Presidency.
- Sub-regional seminars to support the design of immediate country level actions.

Mr Phiri noted that the seminar was the seventh in a series of 12 seminars organized by FAO world-wide to ensure that high-level government officials are aware of the Guide and the lessons learnt in designing their immediate actions in response to the current food price crisis. Participants should take note of the lessons from the first six seminars held in Bangkok, Thailand (for Asia), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (for Eastern Africa), Nadi, Fiji (for the Pacific countries), Tunis, Tunisia (for North Africa), Amman, Jordan (for Near East and Middle East) and Libreville, Gabon (for Central Africa):

- Adaptation of the agenda to regional/sub-regional needs is important.
- Participation from a broad range of ministries is important for effective policies to be formulated and owned by all; it also facilitates cross-ministerial domestic dialogue.
- Effective participation of the private sector, NGOs and farmers organizations is crucial for sound debate.
- High-level government participation leads to concrete commitment to country-level follow-up.
- Participants appreciate why (coordinated) policy implementation matters for mitigating high food prices issues.
- Participants experience that sub-regional cooperation is an important step towards price stabilization.
- Discussion about country level follow-up is important for real impact.
- Very positive feedback has been received from the participants so far on the usefulness of the consultations.
- Very positive feedback has been received from the Rome-based food and agriculture agencies (FAO, WFP and IFAD) as well as participating partners.

4. Overview of the Food Price Situation at Global and Regional Levels

Dr Jamie Morrison, Senior Economist, Trade and Markets Division, FAO, gave the keynote overview on the food price situation at global and regional level. Mr. Morrison noted that following a decline since the late 1970s, global food prices had been relatively stable up to the early 2000s, before increasing markedly from 2007 and reaching a peak in 2008. The high and volatile prices of 2007-2008 occurred at a time when food stocks were generally low. The crisis followed a period of neglect of investment in agriculture and robust economic growth, particularly in emerging countries such as Brazil, China and India, which had contributed to increased food demand, increased use of food crops in biofuels, and an increase in speculative activities in financial and commodity markets. During the crisis, many countries began to question the reliability of international food markets as a source of affordable food, with some instead turning towards greater emphasis on self-sufficiency, and greater involvement of governments in food markets. Government interventions such as the imposition of export restrictions in some food exporting countries in order to protect their consumers, had exacerbated the situation, particularly in the global rice market.

The current global food price increases started in mid-2010 and peaked in February 2011. There have been marked increases in the prices of sugar, oils, meat, wheat and maize, while

rice prices have remained relatively stable. Increases in the price of wheat were primarily associated with weather-induced shocks, sometimes followed by export restrictions. Examples include drought in Russia, recent drought in France and floods in Pakistan, Canada, Australia and USA. The political changes and instability in North Africa and the Middle East have also raised concerns that wheat prices will increase further. Global prices of maize were said to rise with wheat, sugar and oil prices since maize, or its derivatives, are being used in the production of biofuels (40 percent of maize from USA), animal feed and high fructose corn syrup. With marked increases in oil prices, there have been strong increases in incentives for biofuel production. The price of rice has remained relatively stable, registering a modest increase of 4 percent compared to sharp increases of up to three times in 2008, although there have been recent declines following major harvests. This has been assisted by certain countries' trade strategies, with, for example, the Philippines limiting imports, and Thailand releasing stocks.

Factors that exacerbate high world food prices include:

- Longer term demand growth (over 2 percent per annum), including that for biofuels, high demand for animal protein in emerging economies and slowing growth in production, coupled with low growth in supply (1-2 percent per annum);
- Limited knowledge about current declining stocks, resulting in uncertainty among countries on how to react;
- Continued *ad hoc* use of trade and market intervention policies; and
- Possible negative impact of speculation by non-commercial traders, although they may also have a positive impact by providing liquidity into the market.

Dr Morrison noted that there are differential impacts of food price volatility, depending on the commodities, countries and types of households in question. Net food importing countries may be affected negatively by high food prices through fiscal difficulties, while exporters may benefit from high food prices. However, research shows that exporters do not necessarily benefit to the extent that one would expect due to structural problems in some markets resulting in imperfect global price transmission to the domestic markets.

At the commodity level, local maize prices in Southern Africa have been relatively stable during 2010 and have tended to follow normal seasonal trends, while there have been recent increases in rice import prices in southern Africa, contrary to global trends.

At household level, food price volatility has differential effects depending on the diversity of foods available to the household and livelihood means. Poor households generally use a significant share (up to 80 percent) of their expenditure on food, making them more vulnerable to high food prices. This means that they would have less expenditure on other household needs such as health and education, among others. However, in countries where there is a higher diversity of food types, for example in Uganda, households would switch to substitute foods, thereby reducing the impact on high prices of staples. A 50 percent increase in the price of maize in Malawi resulted in increased expenditure of 15 percent on maize in Malawi compared to about 3 percent in Zambia and less than 1 percent in Uganda.

A survey of 81 countries following the 2008 crisis showed that countries used different policy mechanisms to address high food prices, including trade and market related interventions such as reduced tariffs/customs duties, release of public stocks and export restrictions or bans. Consumer support mechanisms included cash transfers, food transfers and increased disposable income of target groups.

The following policy approaches were suggested as possible options for curbing price volatility and/or mitigating the impact of high prices, based on the lessons from the 2007-2008 crisis:

- Reduce *ad hoc* use of restrictions on trade;
- Improve information on stocks and production for better informed decisions and transparency;
- Regulate commodity derivative trading by speculators, although the level of regulation should reflect the fact that such trading may play an important role in price discovery, risk sharing and liquidity to facilitate commercial trade;
- Use targeted safety nets for consumers and producers which increase accessibility and affordability of food and access to affordable inputs, and cause fewer distortions than direct market interventions;
- Utilize small strategic reserves in areas at high risk of food shortages and/or where infrastructure may be poor; and
- Improve access to food import financing facilities such as through the application of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Marrakesh Net Food-Importing Developing Countries' (NFIDC) Decision, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Exogenous Shocks Facility.

It was noted that in the long term, it is important to improve the resilience of food systems by not only increasing smallholder productivity growth but ensuring their market integration. This could be achieved through increased public sector investment to establish basic conditions, requiring a reversal of the decline in ODA and increasing national budget allocations for agriculture. However, most investment will need to come from the private sector with governments enacting policies to reduce and/or share risks and transaction costs.

Emerging issues

During the discussion that followed the presentation, the following issues emerged:

- Need for micro-insurance for agriculture (the Malawi experience was shared) to reduce risk;
- Need to explore utilization of alternative foodstuffs other than cereals by increasing diversity of foods;
- Need for participants to get some lessons from countries that have built resilient agricultural systems, such as Vietnam;
- Need to consider suitable short season varieties as a way of addressing the issue of poor harvests caused by climatic conditions;
- Need to teach farmers conservation techniques to reduce post-harvest losses at farm level which can be as high as 40 percent; and
- Although increased wages for consumers may be inflationary, the level of wages among the poor are below the poverty datum line and should have minimal impact.

5. Policy and Programmatic Actions to Address Increases and Volatility: General Overview of the FAO Guide

Dr Jamie Morrison provided a brief overview of FAO's *Guide for Policy and Programmatic Actions at Country Level to Address High Food Prices*. Copies were made available to the participants for reference.

It was noted that the guide is 'a menu of options' which need to be adapted and combined according to the local context. It focuses on three categories of country-level actions as follows:

- Trade and market related measures such as reduction in import taxes, tax breaks for importers, facilities for importers, simplification of import procedures or reduced, banned or taxed exports. While such measures lower domestic food prices, stimulate and speed up imports and increase affordability of intermediate inputs, they may have

some negative effects such as budget deficits and depression of production and private sector activities.

- Measures to facilitate access to affordable food by consumers, including reduced taxes on food and fuel and subsidized freight, market management policies such as food aid in kind, release of public stocks, price controls on key foodstuffs, safety nets for the vulnerable and universal food subsidy.
- Measures to increase food production range from short-term (support to family gardens, direct crop seed distribution and input vouchers for vulnerable households) to sustainable agricultural production measures (fertilizer procurement schemes and subsidies, improved extension and advisory services on food production, reduced post-harvest losses and conservation agriculture / Integrated Pest Management).

These measures have *pros* and *cons*, which are adequately described in the guide.

The guide is not a ‘one size fits all’ solution. It focuses on short-term responses and does not consider regional and international actions. The choice of responses will depend on various considerations, including the impact of high food prices on different target groups, how well the domestic markets function, to what extent the different target groups participate, budgetary implications and the existence of an exit strategy.

Emerging issues:

The following issues were raised during the discussion:

- The need to take into account farmers’ preferences, especially with regard to choice of varieties and seed;
- The need for participation of all stakeholders when it comes to imports of varieties, in addition to involving farmers; and
- The need to consider the regional perspective when handling soaring food prices in terms of harmonized policy action as well as coordinated investments seeking to mitigate the effects of price volatility at regional and national levels.

6. Participating Country Experiences

The participating country representatives were allocated to four groups based on the characteristics of their countries as follows: (1) Exporters, self sufficient in staples, landlocked and non-landlocked countries (Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania); (2) Importers of staples, non-landlocked countries (Angola, Kenya and Sudan); (3) Importers of staples, landlocked countries (Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zimbabwe); and (4) Island countries (Mauritius and Seychelles).

Cooperating partners were asked to join any group of their choice. Each group was asked to discuss their countries’ recent and current food price experiences, policy and programmatic responses to food price increases and volatility and implications for CAADP design. The results are described below.

6.1 Exporting/self-sufficient (landlocked and non-landlocked) countries

The main types of food that were considered for Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia were maize, rice, sorghum, legumes, cassava, wheat, soya, meat and meat products. Although these countries were either producing surplus staples for export (Malawi and Zambia) or met their own needs for staples (Tanzania), recent price trends have been vary varied.

Maize prices declined in Malawi and Zambia, while they increased in Tanzania, largely because of difficulties in moving grain from surplus to deficient areas within the country. The

price of rice increased in all three countries, which is in line with regional trends but contrary to global price stability. The price of wheat also increased in all three countries and was in line with global increases. Cassava prices remained stable in all three countries, reflecting the fact that it is a substitute food rather than a main staple.

The policy responses varied by country. Depending on the situation on the ground, Malawi responded by regulating the price of maize or by banning exports. Zambia's response included administration of a floor price for maize to protect farmers, while exports were allowed but regulated. Tanzania controlled exports of maize. There were no controls for both rice and cassava in all three countries. Import controls were used for wheat in Malawi and Zambia, while Tanzania did not impose any controls.

Programmatic responses for producers have focused on short- to long-term support through the input subsidies for maize (FISP), the Green Belt Initiative (for maize and rice) in Malawi, input subsidies and maize floor price in Zambia, input support (Kulima Kwanza) and the ASDP in Tanzania. Consumer support has been in the form of strategic maize grain reserves in both Malawi and Zambia and food subsidies in Tanzania.

The main constraints that the three countries have faced in responding to high food prices and ensuring national food security include reliance on non-sustainable donor funding, dependence on rain-fed agriculture, reduction of farming families in the case of Tanzania due to drudgery leading to rural urban migration, lack of mechanization, inconsistent trade policies, poor market infrastructure and lack of policy coherence.

The policy and programmatic responses of Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia are in line with their CAADP plans aimed at improving productivity and agricultural growth through use of Public-Private-Partnerships (PPP), improved land and water management, improved food storage, market linkages, value chain development, integration of gender and HIV and AIDS, technology development and strengthening of extension services. Examples of national programmes aligned to CAADP include Mw-ASWAP, TZ-ASDP and TAFSIP and Zam-SWAP.

6.2 Importing (landlocked) countries

The group of importing landlocked countries comprised Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. Botswana faces weather-related challenges such as droughts. It imports most of its food and is thus vulnerable to exogenous price fluctuations. Botswana's responses to high food prices have included price monitoring, importation from South Africa, a ban on poultry imports to protect local producers, support to young farmers to secure land and input subsidies to smallholder farmers. Botswana recently launched its CAADP investment plan.

In common with Botswana, Lesotho is a net importer of food, importing 60 percent of its requirements from South Africa. Prices are determined by South African prices. Recent production has been adversely affected by drought, and food imports are affected by high transport costs. Responses have included consumer subsidies on maize meal and input subsidies to increase production. Lesotho has recently launched its CAADP compact.

Swaziland experienced high food prices in the recent past but prices have started coming down. The country produces 75 percent of its food requirements, and imports the rest, largely from South Africa. It has also been adversely affected by drought and has experienced high post-harvest losses. Responses to high food prices have included subsidies and developing the capacity of producers to conserve forage in the form of hay for livestock feed. Swaziland launched its CAADP compact in 2010.

Zimbabwe experienced food deficits and high prices driven by drought and a very hyperinflationary environment during 2007-2008. The country depended on imported food to meet its requirements. Since 2009, production has improved to about 80 percent of national

requirements for maize and 60 percent for wheat, with the balance being imported. The policy and programmatic measures included zero tariffs and VAT on imported basic food commodities, decontrol of grain marketing, promotion of food imports by the private sector and aid organizations, input distribution, cash and voucher transfers and subsidies by the donor community and civil society, input distribution by government, direct food aid and release of strategic grain reserves. The main challenge faced by Zimbabwe is the lack of credit and low liquidity to finance food imports and improve internal marketing systems. Zimbabwe is currently working on its CAADP investment plan, which should incorporate some of the suggestions from this seminar.

6.3 Importing (non-landlocked) countries

The non-landlocked importing countries were Angola, Kenya and Sudan. Angola experienced low prices for cereal staples (maize, millet and sorghum) but high prices for imported rice; DRC had slight increases in prices due to transport problems and speculation; Kenya moved towards stable retail maize prices during the period 2009-2011 following a 42 percent increase in production in 2009, although there was a 36 percent dip in wholesale prices; Sudan experienced low prices due to good rains, while wheat prices were stable due to government imports.

The prices of tubers and root crops were stable in Angola, DRC and the Sudan, while oil products are on the increase in Kenya due to the high cost of imported raw materials.

Responses have included the following:

- Angola: Agricultural strategic plan for coordination of actors, infrastructure development (roads), agricultural input subsidy and CAADP implementation based on the strategic plan.
- DRC: Duty exemption on agricultural inputs, state financing of inputs for local production (fertilizers, tractors, seed, farm tools, and implements), infrastructure development (storage, roads) and a CAADP plan anchored on a national food security programme.
- Kenya: Purchasing of surplus production, redistribution of food to food deficit areas/regions, warehouse receipt system, commodity exchange programme as marketing system, expansion of land areas under irrigation, improved market infrastructure (road networks, IT/communication, and implementation of CAADP through the Agriculture Sector Development Strategy Development Strategy (ASDS).
- Sudan: Input subsidy (fertilizer, seed, fuel), increase area under irrigation (sorghum), strategic research authority and export restriction.

The main challenges contributing to high food prices include poor food distribution mechanisms, unstructured food markets, increased cost of fuel, overreliance on rain-fed agriculture, lack of food/diet diversification and high post-harvest losses due to poor storage infrastructure.

6.4 Island countries

The island countries are small in terms of population, land size and market size; they are isolated and vulnerable to the effects of climate change. They tend to be price takers and are susceptible to both financial and commodity external shocks. They import 75-90 percent of their food, that is cereals, meat and dairy products and have supply-side constraints.

The responses to high and volatile food prices have included producer- and consumer-targeted responses. The producer-targeted responses have been a mixture of short and long-term measures and have included the following:

- Food Security/Livestock Trust Fund- support to farmers to increase production e.g. land preparation/irrigation facilities/concessionary loans/research and extension;
- Strategic Plan - to complement the Food Security Fund;
- Increase production of potatoes, meat and fish;
- Seed purchase scheme - potato, onion and garlic- 90 percent interest free advance and 10 percent grant- repayment at harvest time;
- Consolidation of farms – create economies of scale;
- Fisheries sector - concessionary loans for boats and fishing equipment;
- Fiscal incentives - fisheries and agricultural sector;
- Free advisory services;
- Fund to develop long-line fisheries; and
- Creation of farmers' association and cooperatives.

The consumer-targeted responses were as follows:

- Subsidies on staple goods - wheat, rice and LPG;
- School feeding programme;
- Stabilization of prices through Stabilization Fund;
- Increasing market access for staple goods;
- Outlets for food suppliers with government assistance;
- Removal of internal taxes on staple goods: onions, potatoes and dry grains; and
- Advisory Committee to advise government on pricing policies and strategies.

The island countries have had and continue to face a number of challenges such as lack of financial and technical capacity to run the schemes, decreasing farming population due to urbanization, shortage of farm labour, unsuitable topography, high price of inputs (maize, fertilizers), high cost of capital since agriculture is perceived as risky investment, competition for land with other sectors, wholesale markets increase cost of value chain – need to reduce intermediaries, inadequate information on production, demand and prices, crop failure due to adverse climatic conditions and piracy on high seas putting imports in jeopardy.

Mauritius and Seychelles have not yet developed their CAADP investment plans and have been under the impression that as non-members of least developed nations they would not be eligible for funding. This is a misconception as all countries that have approved investment plans are eligible for financial assistance under the CAADP framework.

Emerging issues:

The following issues emerged from the discussion of the country experiences:

- There were many cross-cutting issues affecting country responses and many of these could be addressed by paying attention to governance mechanisms in individual countries.
- There was need to strengthen institutional arrangements, especially related to evidence-base for policies through improved information management and the monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes. This includes reviews and accountability for pledges and commitments made by countries in the past.
- The areas of research, education and technology development are important for developing long-term resilient systems.
- The responses did not seem to have taken indigenous technical knowledge into account in promoting different responses.

- The issue of access to credit and financing for agricultural producers, with the attendant lack of collateral for smallholder farmers did not get enough attention.
- There was need to correct the misconception that middle income countries would not be considered for financing of agricultural investment plans through CAADP.

7. Regional Policies and Strategies to Address High Food Prices

Mrs Margaret Nyirenda of SADC and Dr Nalishebo Meebelo of COMESA were the discussants for the panel on regional policies and strategies to address high food prices.

SADC's approaches are three-pronged and cover agricultural production, finance and trade options. The objective of agricultural production is to increase domestic production in member countries to match increasing demand for food. This will be achieved through: increased availability and use of fertilizers; reduced competition between food and biofuels; improved food storage and use of irrigation; enabling countries to take advantage of high food prices and utilization of excess land and labour for production of biofuels. Implementation strategies are covered in the SADC Dar-es-Salaam Declaration and Action Plan on Agriculture and Food Security and the SADC RISDP, which highlight strengthening food safety (SPS), input, fertilizer, seed and crop protection, among other issues. SADC is also working on a transboundary animal diseases (TADs) control strategy.

Under the Dar-es-Salaam Declaration and Plan of Action, SADC member states agreed to increase allocation of national budget allocations to agriculture to at least 10 percent of total budget in order to achieve 6 percent growth per annum as per the African Union's Maputo Declaration of 2003. This will be achieved through improved investment policies and incentives, increased donor aid and fiscal and monetary policies targeted at microfinance institutions and promotion of SMEs.

SADC's aim is to liberalize crossborder trade, bring down non-tariff barriers and market protection, thereby improving south-south cooperation. It also hopes to harmonize sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) policies and regulations to promote inter- and intra-regional trade.

The SADC Common Agriculture Policy, which is being developed in collaboration with FAO Sub-regional Office for Southern Africa, is at an advanced stage. This will provide a package of legally binding policies for member countries and focus on issues of production and productivity, financing and investment for rural farmers, trade and markets, safety nets, gender and HIV and AIDS. Currently, the SADC Secretariat is finalizing studies to inform the final stages of policy formulation.

The current agriculture and food security in the COMESA sub-region is characterised by lower than sub-Saharan African productivity levels, some but insignificant regional trade, a net food import position, save for a few (e.g. Malawi and Zambia) countries that have recently transformed to exporters. Constraints to trade and market expansion include non-tariff barriers, standards requirements, SPS and bureaucratic processes at border posts. Similarly, investments in agriculture from both local and foreign sources are still low, with a handful of countries (e.g. Ethiopia, Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia) having achieved the 10 percent budget allocation to agriculture.

The objective of COMESA is to have a common regional agriculture policy and to achieve food self-sufficiency. COMESA is implementing a number of programmes that have a direct bearing on food prices. The CAADP framework calls for African countries to allocate at least 10 percent of their national budget to agriculture and to achieve at least 6 percent growth per annum.

COMESA's Agriculture Development Strategy is informed by the CAADP framework, encourages innovation and has three intervention pillars of increasing production and productivity, expanding agriculture markets at national, regional and global levels and increasing investment. The programmes to increase production and productivity include the use of scientific and technological innovations and other programmes such as the COMESA Regional Agro-Inputs Support Programme (COMRAP), the programmes under Australian Funding such as Strengthening Markets and Regional Trade for Food Security (SMART-FS) and development of legal and regulatory frameworks to support countries to be able to apply bio-technology.

Strategies for expanding agricultural markets and trade include the Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern African (ACTESA) – a specialized agency established to support integration of smallholder farmers into the wider market through input supply and capacity building; Regional Food Security and Risk Management/Cross Border Trade (REFORM/CBT), a programme to facilitate cross border trade and exchange of agricultural commodities across borders with minimum bureaucratic paper work; harmonization and simplification of SPS application guidelines; the COMESA Customs Union launched in June 2009; the Common External Tariff (CET) to regulate trade from outside the region; Tripartite Agreement with The East African Community (EAC) and SADC launch of the Grand Tripartite Free Trade Area in June 2011.

Strategies for increasing investment into agriculture include the CAADP framework, the Regional Annual Investment Forum, promotion of dialogue between private sector and policy makers through the Annual COMESA Business Forum, the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) Bank and the use of insurance to mitigate the effect of naturally-induced disasters.

The policy and programmatic actions at regional level are largely long-term and aimed at increasing the resilience of food systems. Other key issues include the value chain approach, public-private partnerships (PPP) and enhanced participation and increased capacity of women and youth. The RECs and member countries were urged to seriously consider the implications of inadequate provision of utilities such as water and electricity as they are major inputs in agriculture.

8. Macro-Economic Policies and Trade Measures

The panel discussion on macro-economic policies and trade measures was led by officials from Ministries of Finance from Seychelles (Mr Ebrahim), Trade from Zimbabwe (Mr Murombedzi) and Kenya (Mr Kitumu) and a representative of the Zimbabwe Commercial Farmers' Union (Mr Gambarara).

The following are the main issues that came out of the panel and plenary discussions:

- There is a need to consider rationalising the basis on which countries arrive at the proportion of the national budget they allocate to agriculture and other sectors or priorities. For example, the Seychelles uses contribution of agriculture to GDP.
- Governments should provide infrastructure such as roads and storage facilities to facilitate participation by the private sector.
- Market forces and the private sector alone are not enough to protect the poor from high food prices – governments must put in place measures to protect the vulnerable.
- Free trade should only apply to non-food items, while food should be regulated.
- The issue of land ownership and tenure must be addressed if farmers and other investors are to consider putting resources into agriculture.
- Reduction of tariffs on food discourages local production as farmers, especially those in landlocked countries such as Zimbabwe, cannot compete with imported food. Even

industries prefer to use imported raw materials than buy expensive locally produced food.

9. Consumer Policies and Programmatic Actions – A Nutrition Focus

Ms Juliet Aphane, Nutrition Officer in the Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division of FAO, made a presentation on consumer policies and programmatic actions focusing on a people-centered approach. This was followed by discussion in which the panelists comprised the FAO Nutrition and Consumer Protection Division (Ms Juliet Aphane), the University of Malawi Nutrition Department (Mr Mangene Katundu) and an independent consultant (Ian Kumwenda).

Following the food crisis of 2007-2008, food prices have increased in 38 countries since 2010, pushing more people into poverty. However, countries have largely focused on staple foods with limited attention to the quality of foods in terms of variety, diversity, nutrient content and safety and its impact on nutrition. Malnutrition will delay achievement of MDGs through poor health and wellbeing of both adults and children. Food security policies and programmes should incorporate nutrition, meeting both the immediate needs while at the same time building longer-term resilience of vulnerable groups. This can be achieved through improved targeting, refined problem identification, improved programme design, selection of crops and seed varieties based on nutritional needs and consumption patterns and improved monitoring and evaluation.

In times of food shortages, women sacrifice their food for their children, while they carry the burden of most agricultural work and the responsibility of providing family consumption needs. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge, support and promote the importance of food crops that are normally grown by women.

Although staple food prices may be stable in most countries in the two sub-regions, rates of malnutrition are unacceptably high. Progress in agricultural production needs to be complemented with increased efforts to raise income levels and improve food and nutrition security of vulnerable population groups. Nutrition must be addressed through integrated food and nutrition security, public health and social protection programmes; and by utilizing existing initiatives such as Renewed Effort Against Child Hunger (REACH), the United Nations Joint Programme (UNJP), Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) and the World Bank's call for "*The New Deal on Global Food Policy*".

Safety nets for vulnerable households should include cash to purchase other foods besides staples. Similarly, there is need to consider diversified production based on nutritional value of commodities. While supporting vulnerable consumers, it is important to balance this against possible negative effects on producers and the private sector participation in markets. In designing consumer protection measures, it is necessary to remember that farmers are both consumers and producers. In addition, the general belief that rural people eat better than those in urban areas is not supported by the higher stunting rates reported in rural areas.

Closing the nutritional gap – the gap between what foods are available and what foods are needed for an adequate diet - should be addressed through nutrition-sensitive food and agriculture-based approaches, nutrition education for maximizing production-consumption linkages and the strengthening of nutrition extension services. Inadequate diets may also be caused by lack of knowledge on the importance of consuming a variety of foods, taboos and social practices. For example, in the case of the DRC, malnutrition cases are high even among farmers who own livestock. Cultural practices and taboos could be changed through strengthening consumer awareness and nutrition education. Promotion of production of small livestock by women, in addition to crops such as pulses, may help to improve household nutrition.

10. Producer Policies and Programmatic Actions

This session comprised a presentation by Dr Peter Wobst, Senior Economist, FAO on employment-based safety nets and group work on productive safety nets, sustainable agriculture practices, value chain development and regional integration.

Employment-based safety nets

It was noted that rural workers are not only producers but also some of the most vulnerable consumers. Therefore, producer-targeted policies and programmes in response to high food prices need to include employment-based safety nets as well as youth employment promotion and empowerment of women in rural areas. Self-employment is the norm in rural areas and usually with earnings below the poverty datum line. Employment-based safety nets are characterized by regular payment, in cash or in kind, in exchange for work.

A number of case studies were reviewed, for example, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (India), Productive Safety Nets Programme (Ethiopia) and the Expanded Public Works Programme (South Africa). Some positive effects of employment-based safety nets include reduction of vulnerability, poverty alleviation, empowerment and rural infrastructure development, among others. Employment-based safety net programmes involve national and local government structures, communities, donors and NGOs.

Youth employment promotion in rural areas is aimed at integrating young people into the rural labour market and improving resilience to high food prices, through self-employment after undergoing agricultural, business and life skills education through Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS). This is important in Sub-Saharan Africa where an increasing number of youth join the labour market annually and the proportion (20.3 percent) of youth (15-24 years) persists at high levels compared to 17.6 percent for the rest of the world.

Productive safety nets

Productive safety nets are implemented by governments, cooperating partners and NGOs for targeted vulnerable producers to enable them engage in production during hard times. The main disadvantage is that they are not sustainable and beneficiaries can become dependent. Depending on the system, they may be subject to corruption and may be inflationary if the markets are not functioning well.

Programmatic measures may be targeted at increasing production (e.g. insurance schemes, food and inputs for work programmes), provision of market access (infrastructure development and institutional capacity building) and promotion of contract farming with guaranteed competitive pricing and access to inputs.

Sustainable agriculture practices

Sustainable agriculture practices are aimed at building resilience over the long term. Participants recommended the following practices: conservation farming; water harvesting and irrigation development; promotion of nutritional gardens; improved seed systems and use of appropriate varieties; agroforestry; integrated pest management (IPM); provision of services for post-harvest management and marketing.

Value chain development

Maize was used as a case study to illustrate the kinds of developments that should be considered. Moving from production in the field to the table, a number of policy measures were recommended. At input supply level, it is necessary to address high transportation and distribution costs by improving road and market infrastructure and input storage and by increasing the number of distribution depots in rural areas. The cost of inputs is also very high and may be mitigated by input subsidies for targeted households, but with a definite exit

strategy and time line. Producers need to have access to improved and appropriate varieties through an improved research and technology development service and on-farm variety trials. Lastly, post-harvest value addition is critical for value chain development. This includes reduction of post-harvest losses through technological improvement and local processing of produce.

Regional integration

Regional integration should aim to harmonize food security programmes in the RECs. This can be done through the sharing of information on what works in productive safety nets and rural employment creation through agriculture, including involvement of youth and women; short-term input subsidies; school feeding programmes; diversification of crops, livestock and diets; promotion of irrigation in Riparian states; expansion of integrated markets through processing of agricultural products, cross-border trade, harmonized SPS standards, removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers and improved transportation.

Emerging issues include the need to focus on the effects of climate change, integration of nutrition in agricultural programmes, consideration of fish farming as an option and short-term subsidies. It is important that countries put in place measures on how to transition from short- to long-term responses.

11. Decision Making Tools from FAO

FAO has developed a number of tools to help countries obtain evidence to inform their policy and programmatic responses to soaring food prices. These were presented by Jean Balié, Senior Economist, Agricultural Development Economics Division, FAO.

The Monitoring African Food and Agriculture Policies (MAFAP), is an FAO and OECD initiative supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The project seeks to help African policy-makers enact policies and investments that are fully supportive of agricultural development, the sustainable use of natural resources and enhanced food security, thereby contributing to CAADP. The project hopes to achieve the following outcomes: a monitoring system on African food and agricultural policies including indicators and analysis of market interventions, market development gaps and public expenditures. The project promotes the adoption of comparable and consistent methodologies across countries and over time. The system will help measure the scale of development challenges faced by the agricultural and food sectors.

The proposed indicators and analysis will help improve evidence-based policy dialogue on two key areas: how food and agricultural policies can best address the country's policy objectives with respect to development, food security, poverty reduction and natural resources use; and how aid and public expenditures can most effectively target areas where the need is greatest and potential returns are the highest. The information produced will feed into national decision-making processes and mechanisms for policy dialogue at pan-African, and regional level as well as with donors and others stakeholders at international level. Two countries in the COMESA/SADC region, Malawi and Mozambique, are already envisaged in the pilot phase of this project.

The FAPDA (Food and Agriculture Policy Decision Analysis) project is an initiative that started in 2008 within the framework of the Initiative on Soaring Food Prices (ISFP). In order to provide technical advice to member countries to mitigate the effects of the food security crisis exacerbated by the high food prices FAO developed the Guide for Policy and Programmatic Actions at Country Level to Address High Food Prices. This guide proposed a classification of policy decisions that was subsequently elaborated and used as a basis to design a policy decision monitoring system. This system presents findings from 78 countries: 13 in Asia; 28 in Latin America and the Caribbean; 7 in North Africa/Middle East; and 30 in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In 2008, FAPDA's work was mainly driven by an interest in short-term policy responses to the food security crisis, but later it was expanded to include medium and long-term food and agricultural policies as well as nutritional aspects. A methodology and a concept note were prepared and discussed with the FAPDA team members so as to ensure consistency, ownership and sustainability of FAPDA within FAO. The information collected was mainly gathered through periodic reports prepared weekly by FAO country, sub regional and regional offices, mission reports and online sources of information. The FAPDA project gathers staff from FAO headquarters as well as from FAO regional, sub-regional and country offices. It was led by FAO's Policy and Programme Development Support Division, Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS), and the FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (RLC).

The FAPDA project also offers an online tool for analysis of food and policy decisions by region/country, dates, policy classification (consumer, producer or trade oriented). Users can learn from what other countries have done to respond to high and volatile food prices. So far, a total of 78 countries have been surveyed. www.fao.org/tc/fapda-tool/

The Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) was created in the early 1970s to provide a reliable source of information on food production and food security for every country in the world, regardless of whether it is an FAO member. In the past 25 years, the system has become a worldwide network that includes 115 governments, 61 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and numerous trade, research and media organizations. Over the years, a unique database on global, regional, national and sub national food security has been maintained, refined and continuously updated, by collecting, analyzing, presenting and disseminating information.

GIEWS is making a significant contribution to improving evidence-based national- and regional-level policy making process. It is a starting point for policy measurement, analysis and monitoring exercise in the developing world. More recently GIEWS developed the GIEWS tool, with an upgraded version released in April 2011 that provides a very user-friendly, effective and comprehensive interface for monitoring food price trends in developing countries. The tool can be used to explore the impact of food prices at specific sites, assess global variation in price fluctuations, track transmission of global prices to regional markets, compare prices in net importing and exporting countries and assess price variations within country. It has data on monthly retail and wholesale prices, staple food commodities and selected markets in each of 78 countries to date.

The tools were well received but with a caveat that there was need to continue and expand coordination with existing efforts by different partners at country and regional level. It was noted that the targeting of public investments was critical and that the World Bank was already working on this.

12. Recommendations on Next Steps for Regional and Country Actions and the Role of Cooperating Partners

Participants worked in four groups to identify the next steps for regional and country actions and the role of cooperating partners in the various actions (see Annex 3 for details).

12.1 Macroeconomic, trade and marketing policies

Participants recommended the following trade measures, depending on the types of countries (see annex for details):

- (i) Reduce import taxes on food, agriculture inputs and equipment;

- (ii) Tax breaks for importers;
- (iii) Financial support or loans to private sector for funding imports of food commodities;
- (iv) Reduce customs procedures and other formalities for food imports with or without relaxation of regulations;
- (v) Engage in forward contracts for food imports to secure food availability in the medium term;
- (vi) Regulate exports of strategic food commodities; and
- (vii) Harmonize and relax SPS regulations and enforcement by all countries in the region.

The countries would require development partner assistance in cost benefit analysis of the various measures to facilitate decision making, risk management, facilitation of loan negotiations for private sector window and expertise in streamlining import/export procedures.

The following marketing actions were proposed: augment food imports by reserves (if available), food aid in kind and progressive release of public food reserves. All these measures may require assistance in rapid financing mechanisms (e.g. IMF Rapid Response Facility).

12.2 Consumer policies and programmatic actions

The following consumer targeted policy actions were proposed at country level:

- (i) Targeted subsidies for farming inputs;
- (ii) Removal of import tariffs and VAT on basic food items;
- (iii) Adequate labeling requirements and food standards to ensure consumer protection;
- (iv) Where possible, regulated quality control on imported staples e.g. importation of whole milled maize flour instead of the highly milled, less nutritious and often higher priced;
- (v) Price control on basic food products;
- (vi) Improved trade facilitation; and
- (vii) Relaxing import licensing (in times of crisis).

Measures such as subsidies and reduction of taxes will have negative impacts on the fiscus and countries may need budget support. Related programmatic actions include promoting backyard farms; enhancing price monitoring surveys; school feeding programmes; consumer education on nutrition; and food for work programmes.

12.3 Producer policies and programmatic actions

The proposed measures to protect producers included the following:

- (i) Promote sustainable intensification of crop production systems through irrigation systems and conservation agriculture;
- (ii) Promote market based quality standards along different product value chains, building the capacity of producers in marketing skills, packaging, post-harvest handling and value addition to ensure farmers access lucrative markets;
- (iii) Improve access of smallholder farmers to climate change adaptation technologies, including drought tolerant varieties;
- (iv) Promote risk management programmes to protect smallholder farmers from different shocks through insurance schemes, product diversification and warehousing systems;
- (v) Support and encourage targeted agricultural subsidy initiatives with inbuilt exit strategies;

- (vi) Promote public private partnerships (PPP) for different commodity value chains by strengthening farmer organizations and national and local private partnerships for development and implementation of commodity investment plans;
- (vii) Improve access to market information and other agricultural extension packages through mass media;
- (viii) Promote programmes on gender and nutrition mainstreaming in agriculture; and
- (ix) Promote long-term resilience through youth employment creation and youth entrepreneurship development programmes that provide productive employment and decent work opportunities in rural areas.

12.4 Regional dimensions

Regional actions should focus on harmonizing policies on increased access to agricultural inputs; research, development and dissemination of technologies; consolidation of the tripartite Free Trade Area; increased capacity for risk management; and food reserves.

Emerging issues

- The NEPAD representative, Mr Simon Kisira, suggested that countries should revisit their CAADP investment plans to include high food prices where this had not been factored in. He also highlighted the need for countries to take a proactive stance as reactive measures tended to militate against regional integration. There was a need to build capacity in policy analysis and tools at country level.
- It was also noted that policy formulation needed to be supported by strong evidence.
- Childhood pregnancy and child malnutrition were closely related and should be tackled as part of youth empowerment programmes.

It was important to note that most of the proposed measures were not new and that the two RECs were already dealing with SPS and non-tariff barriers as part of trade-related measures at regional level. Similarly, SADC is working on the implementation modalities of a financial food reserve. The various decision tools offered by FAO will help to identify gaps in existing efforts.

13. Official Closing of Seminar

The closing remarks were made by Mr David Phiri (FAO), Dr Sam Kanyarukiga (COMESA), Mrs Margaret Nyirenda (SADC) and Mrs Erica Maganga, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (Government of Malawi).

Mr Phiri thanked the Government of Malawi for hosting the seminar and the Minister of Agriculture and Food Security for opening the seminar despite his heavy schedule. He also thanked the facilitators, rapporteurs and the FAO team for their active role during the seminar. He reminded participants that the objective of the seminar was to design policies and programmes in response to the current problem of high food prices and asked them to use the information and knowledge learnt from the seminar in their respective countries.

Dr Kanyarukiga thanked the Government of Malawi for hosting the seminar and asked member countries to accelerate the implementation of CAADP provisions and to put in place programmes and measures that will mitigate the effects of high food prices.

Mrs Nyirenda thanked the presenters and participants for their positive contributions and FAO for exposing the participants to the various initiatives for addressing high food prices.

Mrs Maganga appreciated the participants' tireless efforts during the seminar and stressed the need for optimum producer and consumer policies. She also highlighted the importance of policies to enhance the capacity of youths to work in various sectors of agriculture and for

countries to align their national policies to regional policies. She concluded by thanking the participants for attending the seminar.

14. Conclusions

In general, the seminar achieved all its objectives (see Annex 4 for seminar evaluation). Participants agreed on a number of issues that will form the basis of future short- and long-term actions to address high and volatile food prices in member countries and RECs:

- Local and regional maize prices in the COMESA and SADC sub-regions have been relatively stable during 2010, while there have been increases in prices of imported rice and wheat. This showed that contextual developments may be more important in determining regional and national prices than price transmission from global markets.
- Past and recent responses by member countries to high food prices have included control or ban of exports and reduction in taxes on imported basic foods, some of which might have exacerbated the crisis.
- Some policy and programmatic responses, especially those in favour of consumers, may hinder local food production, the normal functions of private sector entities and markets and increase budget deficits, thereby worsening the situation. It is necessary to balance the needs of both consumers and producers including women and youth, when designing responses to high food prices.
- Although poor households are more vulnerable to high food prices, spending up to 60 percent of their budget on food, the impact is inversely related, among other factors, to the degree of diversity of their food sources. Therefore, promotion of alternative and diverse staple foods is one long-term option available to countries.
- Agriculture, food security and development programmes should integrate nutrition in order to address both the immediate needs of households while at the same time strengthening the resilience of vulnerable groups, including support for crops and livestock produced by women.
- The involvement of all key stakeholders in the decision making processes, including the choice of varieties and commodities by producers, is critical in addressing food and nutrition security.
- Given the high rates of undernutrition in the region, closing the nutritional gap – the gap between what foods are available and what foods are needed for an adequate diet - should be addressed through nutrition-sensitive food and agriculture-based approaches, and nutrition education for maximizing production-consumption linkages.
- Producer targeted policies and programmes should build long-term resilience of agriculture and food systems by promoting sustainable intensification of crop and livestock production systems, improved post-harvest management of produce, value chain development, improved risk management, strengthening of farmer organizations, and improved access to market information.
- Climate change adaptation mechanisms are critical for building the resilience of smallholder producers to food price shocks and should be promoted at country and regional levels.
- Institutional arrangements and capacity for policy analysis and monitoring to provide evidence in support of policy and programmatic measures should be strengthened at both regional and national levels.
- Promotion of investment in agriculture through increased budgetary allocation, increased private sector and foreign direct investment in agriculture and improved access to credit and financing by producers is necessary for developing more resilient agricultural and food systems.
- Regional integration efforts such as market expansion, increased investment in agriculture, regional strategic food reserves, information availability and policy harmonization to improve predictability are important measures to stabilize food prices.

- The CAADP framework is strengthening the resilience of food systems by focusing on increasing production and productivity, agricultural markets and investment through public-private partnerships, value chain development and enhanced opportunities for productive employment and decent work for women and youth and their effective participation in rural production processes.
- Countries should have exit strategies for short-term measures such as subsidies and consider how they will transition from short to long-term measures.

The meeting agreed that participants from member countries would use these results to initiate national dialogue on the issue of rising and volatile food prices, with a view to agreeing on appropriate policy and programmatic actions at national and regional level.

Annexes

Annex 1. COMESA/FAO/SADC Seminar on Policy and Programmatic Actions to Address High Food Prices: Participants

No	Title	Name	Position	Institution	Country
1.	Dr	Claudia Sicato Dias	Senior Veterinary	Ministry of Agriculture	Angola
2.	Mrs	Seipati Olweny	Deputy Director	Ministry of Trade & Industry	Botswana
3.	Dr	Hurbert Ali Ramazani	Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Agriculture	D.R.C
4.	Mr	Jacques Gascuel	Acting French Ambassador	French Embassy	France
5.	Mr	Gabriel Kaunda Kitumu	Deputy Chief Economist	Ministry of Trade	Kenya
6.	Dr	Isaiah Okeyo Onyango	Deputy Director	Min of Agriculture	Kenya
7.	Ms	Thuso Molapo	Marketing Officer	Ministry of Trade & Industry Co. Marketing	Lesotho
8.	Mrs	Lucia M. Phakisi	Chief Economist	Ministry of Agriculture	Lesotho
9.	Mr	Diop Abdoulaye	Country Director	WFP	Malawi
10.	Mr	Mr Misheck Banda	Lecturer	Mzuzu University	Malawi
11.	Dr	Cecily Bryant	Country Director	CARE	Malawi
12.	Mr	James Bwirani	Representative	FEWSNET	Malawi
13.	Dr	Regson Chaweza	Economist	Chancellor College	Malawi

No	Title	Name	Position	Institution	Country
14.	Mr	A.B. Chienda	Interpreter	Private	Malawi
15.	Dr	Samuel Chingondole	AFAOR	FAO	Malawi
16.	Mr	Davie Chunga	Economist	Min of development	Malawi
17.	Mr	Martin Clemensson	Director	ILO	Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia
18.	Mr	Matthias Eder	Chief Technical Advisor	UNIDO	Malawi
19.	Mr	Cosmas Gawani	Economist	Office of the President and Cabinet/Department of Nutrition HIV & AIDS	Malawi
20.	Ms	Sarah Hennell	Team Leader	DFID	Malawi
21.	Dr	Salmin O. Idrusa	Interpreter	Private	Malawi
22.	Mr	Felix Jumbe	Vice President	SACAU Malawi	Malawi
23.	Mr	R. Kachule	Research Fellow	Bunda College	Malawi
24.	Mr	Fumbani Kadokera	Principal Agric. Officer	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security	Malawi
25.	Mr	M. Kamtande	Reporter	Blantyre Newspapers Limited	Malawi
26.	Miss	Vanessa Kapeleta	Programme Officer	Civil Society Agriculture Network	Malawi
27.	Mr	Prince Kapondamgaga	Executive Director	Farmers Union of Malawi	Malawi
28.	Dr	Mangani Katundu	Senior Lecturer	Chancellor College	Malawi

No	Title	Name	Position	Institution	Country
29.		Vinda Kisiyombe	Agric. Officer	Africa Development Bank	Malawi
30.	Mr	Pinit Korsiepon	FAO Rep	FAO	Malawi
31.	Mr	Ian Kumwenda	Director	Agricultural Development Marketing Corporation	Malawi
32.	Dr	J.H. Leelyn	Controller	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security	Malawi
33.	Mr	Clement Lwanda	Operations Director	WFRA	Malawi
34.	Mrs	Erica Maganga	Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security	Malawi
35.	Mr	Tennyson Magombo	Executive Director	Arise & Shine International	Malawi
36.	Mr	Maurice Makuwila	Deputy Chief Fisheries Officer	Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries Department	Malawi
37.	Mr	John Mapira	Principal Trade Officer	Ministry Industry & Trade	Malawi
38.	Mr	Misheck Masula		FAO	Malawi
39.	Mr	P.Maulidi	Reporter	Zodiak Broadcasting Station	Malawi
40.	Mr	William Maulidi	Lecturer	Mzuzu University	Malawi
41.	Mrs	Rosebell Mbamba	FSNC	FAO	Malawi
42.	Mrs	M. A. Mgomezulu	Deputy Director	Dept of Agriculture Extension Department	Malawi
43.	Mr	Chaung Mtambo	Economist	Ministry of Development Planning Corporation	Malawi

No	Title	Name	Position	Institution	Country
44.		Aldwin Mtembezeka	Project Manager	Care International	Malawi
45.	Mr	Charles Mthepheya	Reporter	Private	Malawi
46.	Mr	R. Mtika	Journalist	Malawi Broadcasting Corporation	Malawi
47.	Mr	Felix Mtonda	Programme Manager	OXFAM	Malawi
48.	Mrs	T. Mtumodzi	Reporter	Malawi Broadcasting Corporation	Malawi
49.	Mr	Hyghten Mungoni	Country Director	Africare	Malawi
50.	Ms	Kettie Musukwa	Principal Economist	Ministry of Finance	Malawi
51.	Ms	Norah Mwamadi	National Project Coordinator	FAO	Malawi
52.	Mr	Alick Nkhoma	Assistant FAO Representative	FAO	Malawi
53.		E.P. Nyalugwe	Deputy Director	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security	Malawi
54.	Mr	Lovemore Nyongo	Economist	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security	Malawi
55.	Miss	Enrica Pellacani	Head sector	European Union	Malawi
56.	Mr	E. Mwendo Phiri	Food Security Manager	World Vision	Malawi
57.		Daisi Kachingwe Phiri	Principal Economist	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security	Malawi
58.	Mr	L. S. Saine	PLDO (M)	Ministry of Agriculture	Malawi
59.	Ms	Kufasi Shela	CLRCO	LRCD-Agriculture	Malawi

No	Title	Name	Position	Institution	Country
60.	Ms	Doreen Sonari	Journalist	Malawi Broadcasting Corporation	Malawi
61.	Dr	Alfred Mtukuso	Director	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security	Malawi
62.	Dr	Zanaira	Representative	World Health Organization	Malawi
63.	Mrs	Minakshi Dabee-Hauzaree	Senior Analyst	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Mauritius
64.	Mrs	Nathoo Moheenee	Principal Assistant Secretary	Ministry of Agro Industry & Food Security	Mauritius
65.	Mr	ZiYAAD Ebrahim	Director of Trade	Min of Finance and Trade	Seychelles
66.	Mr	Michael Nalletamby	Principal secretary	Dept of Investment & Natural Resources	Seychelles
67.	Mr	Simon Kisira	M & E Officer	NEPAD	South Africa
68.	Dr	Robert Thwala	Principal Secretary	Min. of Agriculture	Swaziland
69.	Mr	Abdel Magied ElTayeb	Director of Planning	Ministry of Agriculture	Sudan
70.	Ms	Jane R Lyatuu	Assistant Director	Public MIT	Tanzania
71.	Mr	Onasimbo Ntikha	Principal Economist	Ministry of Agriculture Food	Tanzania
72.	Dr	Francis Chipimo	Advisor	Ministry of Finance	Zambia
73.	Mr	Shilambwe Mwaanga	Principal Eco.	Ministry of Finance	Zambia
74.	Mrs	Faith Chikomo	Deputy country rep.	FEWSNET	Zimbabwe
75.	Mr	Peter Gambara	Director	ZCFU	Zimbabwe
76.	Mr	Donald Khumalo	President	ZCFU	Zimbabwe

No	Title	Name	Position	Institution	Country
77.	Miss	Agnes Mugova	Economist	Ministry of Agriculture	Zimbabwe
78.	Mr	Takawira Murombedzi	Deputy Director	Industry & Commerce	Zimbabwe
79.	Mr	Jonah Mushayi	Economist	Ministry of Finance	Zimbabwe
80.	Mr	P. Mutasa	Business Development Manager	Grain Marketing Board	Zimbabwe
81.	Mr	H. W. Olivier	CEO	Commercial Farmers' Union	Zimbabwe
82.	Dr	Sam Kanyarukiga	Senior Agricultural Advisor and CAADP Coordinator	COMESA	Zambia
83.	Mr	Daniel Njiwa	Private Sector Development Specialist	COMESA	Zambia
84.	Mr	Frederick B.M. Msiska	GISAMA Regional Coordinator	COMESA	Zambia
85.	Ms	Priscilla Mwiche	Administrative Assistant	COMESA	Zambia
86.	Dr	Nalishebo Meebelo	Country CAADP Process Facilitator	COMESA	Zambia
87.	Mrs	Margaret Nyirenda	Director	SADC	
88.	Mr	Bentry Chaura	Senior Programme Officer	SADC	
89.	Dr	Perpetua Katepa- Kalala	Senior Policy Officer	FAO	Zimbabwe
90.	Dr	Simbarashe Sibanda	Facilitator	FAO	Zimbabwe
91.	Ms	Debrah Maleni	Junior Technical Officer	FAO	Zimbabwe
92.	Dr	Gaoju Han	FAO Sub-regional Coordinator for Southern Africa	FAO	Zimbabwe
93.	Ms	Juliet Aphane	Nutrition Officer	FAO	Italy

No	Title	Name	Position	Institution	Country
94.	Mr	Jean Balié	Senior Economist	FAO	Italy
95.	Mr	Francisco Chimuco	Economist	FAO	Italy
96.	Ms	Melissa Nagadya	Consultant	FAO	Italy
97.	Mr	David Phiri	Chief, Policy Assistance	FAO	Italy
98.	Dr	Jamie Morrison	Senior Economist	FAO	Italy
99.	Dr	Peter Wobst	Senior Economist	FAO	Italy

Annex 2. Agenda for the Seminar

<u>Monday 6 June</u>	Arrival of participants
16:00	Registration
17:00	Introduction of participants and resource persons
18:00	Reception
<u>Tuesday 7 June</u>	
8:30-09:30	Official opening (Chair: Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, Malawi, Government of Malawi) FAO COMESA SADC Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, Malawi
09:30 – 10:00	Introductory remarks and objectives of seminar COMESA/SADC FAO – David Phiri
10:00 - 10:05	Group Photo
10:05 – 10:20	BREAK
10:20 – 11:00	Overview of food price situation at global and regional level Keynote speaker: J Morrison, FAO Characteristics of price hikes in 2007-2008 and today <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impact of high food prices during the 2007-2008 crisis and expected impact in 2011• Some preliminary lessons from the 2007-2008 crisis
	Plenary Discussion
11:00 – 12:00	Policy and programmatic actions to address increases and volatility (General overview of the guide to inspire group work) J Morrison, FAO
	Brief Plenary Discussion
12:00 – 13:00	Country experiences—parallel working group sessions to discuss participating country experiences (Groups: Exporters/self-sufficient countries (landlocked and non-land-locked); Importers (land-locked); Importers (non-land-locked); and Island countries)
13:00 – 14:30	LUNCH
14:30 – 15:10	Plenary Discussion
15.10-16.00	Regional policies and strategic to address high food prices – Panel discussion COMESA and SADC experiences

Plenary Discussion

16:00-16:15

BREAK

16:15-17:45

Macro-economic policies and trade measures

Presentation (10 minutes) Facilitator

Panel discussion: Officials from Ministries of Finance, Commerce and Trade, Regional Economic Communities, private sector and farmer organizations to present views on macro-economic and trade measures to address food prices, including impact of food aid on local supply chain and food prices.
(10 minutes maximum/ speaker)

Plenary Discussion

19:00

Dinner

WEDNESDAY 08 JUNE

08:30 – 08 45

Review of Day 1 and Agenda for Day 2: highlight key recommendations

08:45 – 10:00

Consumer policies and programmatic actions

Presentation (15 minutes) **Juliette Aphane**, FAO

Changing consumer trends – policy implications (e.g. for prices and health)

Panel discussion: 3 representatives of national consumer associations and NGOs

Plenary Discussion

10:00 – 10:20

BREAK

10:20 – 12:00

Producer policies and programmatic actions

Presentation: Employment and Safety Nets (10 minutes) Peter Wobst, FAO

Work in groups on:

- Productive safety nets
- Sustainable agriculture practices
- Value chain development
- Regional integration

Plenary Discussion

12:00 – 12:20

Presentation of Initiative on Monitoring African Food and Agriculture Policies (MAFAP), Food and Agriculture Policy Decision Analysis (FAPDA) projects, and Global Information and Early Warning System (GIEWS) on food and agriculture. **Jean Balié**, FAO

12:20 – 13:15	Role of cooperating partners in support of county efforts – Panel discussion Views of countries and partners (including bi-lateral donors and other multilateral agencies) on how countries in the COMESA and SADC sub-regions may be supported and the resources (technical and financial) they would require to support immediate actions. Plenary Discussion
13:15 – 14:30	LUNCH
14:30 – 16:00	Recommendations and next steps for regional and country actions – Working groups (for RECs, countries, DPs, private sector, producer organizations, civil society) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group 1 - Macroeconomic, trade and marketing policy• Group 2 - Consumer policies and programmatic actions• Group 3 - Producer policies and programmatic actions• Group 4 - Regional dimensions Plenary Discussion
16:00-16:15	BREAK
16:15-17:45	Final Session – Plenary (Chair: Government of Malawi) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wrap-up presentation by facilitating group on main conclusions coming out of working group sessions and plenary discussions• Seminar evaluation
17:45	Closing Session FAO – David Phiri COMESA – Sam Kanyarukiga SADC – Margaret Nyirenda Government of Malawi – Erica Maganga, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
18.00	Reception

Annex 3. Next Steps for Regional and Country Actions and the Role of Cooperating Partners

Group 1. Macroeconomic, Trade and Marketing Policies and Programmatic Actions

Type of action (Policy or Programmatic intervention)	Applicability to different types of countries					Type of support from cooperating partners
	Action	Exporters/self sufficient in staples	Importers of staples, landlocked	Importers of staples, non-landlocked	Importers Island Countries	
Trade Measures	1. Reduce import taxes on food, agriculture inputs and equipment	Only agriculture inputs and equipment	On all	On all	On all	Cost benefit analysis required to precede the decision to determine the impact.
	2. Tax breaks for importers	Not Applicable	As above	As above	As above	As above to determine budgetary effects
	3. Financial support or loans to private sector for funding imports of food commodities	As above	As above provided no impact on the national budget as it will be purely private transaction	As above provided no impact on the national budget as it will be purely private transaction	As above provided no impact on the national budget as it will be purely private transaction	Facilitation of loan negotiations and agreement through private sector window
	4. Reduce customs procedures and other formalities for food import with or without relaxation of regulations	Applicable	Applicable	Applicable	Applicable	Expertise of donor countries in streamlining procedures
	5. Engage in forward contracts for food imports to secure food availability in the medium term	Applicable	Applicable	Applicable	Applicable	Expertise in risk management
	6. Regulated exports of strategic food commodities	Applicable	Applicable	Applicable	Applicable	

Type of action (Policy or Programmatic intervention)	Applicability to different types of countries					Type of support from cooperating partners
	Action	Exporters/self sufficient in staples	Importers of staples, landlocked	Importers of staples, non-landlocked	Importers Island Countries	
Marketing Policies	1. Boost food imports by reserves (if available)	Applicable	Applicable	Applicable	Applicable only to Madagascar	Rapid Financing Mechanisms (IMF Rapid Response Facility)
	2. Food aid in kind	Applicable but only to vulnerable groups	Applicable	Applicable	Applicable	Assistance in cash and kind
	3. Progressive release of food kept in public food reserves	Applicable	Applicable but only to the level stocks held (if any)	Applicable but only to the level stocks held (if any)	Applicable but only to the level stocks held (if any)	

Group 2. Consumer policies and programmatic actions

Type of action (policy or programmatic intervention)	Action	Applicability to different types of countries				Type of support from cooperating partners
		Exporters/self- sufficient in staples	Importers of staples, land- locked	Importers of staples, non- land-locked	Importers - island countries	
Policies	1. Targeted subsidies for farming inputs	X	X	X		Immediate donor financial support
	2. Remove import tariffs and VAT on basic food items	X	X	X	X	Budget support
	3. Adequate labeling requirements and food standards to ensure consumer protection	X	X	X	X	Enhance human resource capacity
	4. Where possible, regulated quality control on imported staples e.g. importation of whole milled maize flour instead of the highly milled, less nutritious and often higher priced.	X	X	X	X	
	5. Price control on basic food products	X	X	X	X	
	6. Improve trade facilitation	X	X	X	X	Enhance human resource capacity
	7. Relaxing import licensing (in times of crisis)		X	X	X	
Programmes	1. Promote backyard gardens	X	X	X	X	
	2. Enhancing price monitoring surveys	X	X	X	X	Training of officials and finance for printing materials
	3. School feeding programmes (Primary schools and vulnerable people)	X	X	X	X	Financial assistance
	4. Consumer nutrition education	X	X	X	X	Technical and financial assistance
	5. Food for work programmes	X	X	X	X	Financial assistance

Group 3. Producer Policies and Programmatic Actions

Policy Measures	Corresponding Programmes	Applicability to different types of countries				
		Exporters/self-sufficient in staples	Importers of staples, landlocked	Importers of staples, non-landlocked	Importers-Island countries	Type of support from cooperating partners
1. Promote sustainable intensification of crop production systems	1.1 Promote and support irrigation systems	X	X	X	X	Technical expertise, grants and soft loans
	1.2 Train farmers and agricultural extension workers in good farming practices e.g. conservation agriculture etc.	X	X	X	X	
2. Inculcate market based quality standards along different product value chains	Capacity building for producers in marketing skills(e.g. packaging) and food quality standards as required by buyers and consumers, post harvest handling to minimize post harvest losses, best agricultural practices, value addition to ensure farmers access to lucrative markets	X	X	X	X	
3. Improve access and promote adoption of smallholder farmers to climate change adaptation technologies	3.1 Build farmers' adaptive capacity to climate change	X	X	X	X	
	3.2 Improve farmers' access to drought tolerant varieties.	X	X	X	X	
	3.3 Support research on development of drought tolerant varieties	X	X	X	X	
4. Promote risk management programmes to protect smallholder farmers from different shocks	4.1 Promote and support crop and livestock insurance	X	X	X	X	
	4.2 Promote and support crop and livestock diversification	X	X	X	X	

Policy Measures	Corresponding Programmes	Applicability to different types of countries				
		Exporters/self-sufficient in staples	Importers of staples, landlocked	Importers of staples, non-landlocked	Importers-Island countries	Type of support from cooperating partners
	4.3 Promote and support warehousing receipting systems and commodity exchange	X	X	X	X	
5. Support and encourage targeted agricultural subsidy initiatives	Support agricultural subsidy initiatives with exit strategies	X	X	X	X	
6. Promote public private partnerships (PPP) for different commodity value chains	6.1 Strengthen national and area specific public private partnerships for development and implementation of Commodity investment plans	X	X	X	X	
	6.2 Promote and support smallholder farmers organizations capacity to competently position themselves along the value chain	X	X	X	X	
7. Cross Cutting Programmes	7.1 Improve access to market information and other agricultural extension packages through mass media.	X	X	X	X	
	7.2 Promote programmes on gender and nutrition mainstreaming in agriculture	X	X	X	X	
	7.3 Promote long-term resilience through youth employment creation and youth entrepreneurship development programmes that provide productive employment and decent work opportunities in rural areas.	X	X	X	X	

Group 4. Regional Policy and Programmatic Dimensions

Policies	Programmes	Exporters/ Self sufficient	Importers of staples, landlocked	Importers of staples, non- landlocked	Importers/ Island countries	Type of support from cooperating partners
1. Increased access to agricultural inputs	1.1 Bulk purchasing of inputs	X	X	X	X	Financial and technical assistance
	1.2 Implement market-friendly input subsidy programme	X	X	X	X	
	1.3 Agro-dealer development programme	X	X	X	X	
2. Policy harmonization on research, development and dissemination	2.1 Regional database/inventory on food security and food prices	X	X	X	X	
	2.2 Dissemination and monitoring programme	X	X	X	X	
	2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation of the programme	X	X	X	X	
3. Consolidate the tripartite Free Trade Area	3.1 Removal of tariff and non tariff barriers	X	X	X	X	
	3.2 Investment in infrastructural development	X	X	X	X	
4. Increased capacity for risk management	4.1 Crop insurance	X	X	X	X	
	4.2 Integrated farming systems	X	X	X	X	
	4.3 Implement climate change mitigation strategies	X	X	X	X	
5. Food reserve policy	5.1 Establishment of grain reserve structures	X	X	X	X	
	5.2 Improvement of transport network	X	X	X	X	
	5.3 Develop information dissemination strategy	X	X	X	X	

Annex 4. Seminar Evaluation

At the end, participants were asked to evaluate the retreat by completing individual evaluation forms. The evaluation was categorized into different sections as follows: general, specific objectives, additional topics in future retreats, comments on information shared during the retreat, communication, time management, and other comments.

General evaluation

A total of 93 percent (53/57) of the participants who completed the evaluation form rated the seminar as being *good to very good*. About 70 percent (39/56) of respondents stated that on balance the seminar objectives had been achieved, while the remainder stated that they had been partially achieved.

Evaluation of specific objectives

Participants were also asked to evaluate the specific workshop objectives of the seminar sessions. Over 80 percent of the participants rated all specific session objectives as having been covered with a score of 3-5 (see Table 1). Participants rated the coverage of regional and development partner perspectives to be not as good as that of the rest of the issues. Most cooperating partners were not represented and therefore could not share on how they could help countries address their challenges on how to address high food prices.

Table 1. Specific Objectives: Summary of Results

Questions	Scores (% of respondents)					Number of respondents
	1	2	3	4	5	
Official opening, introductory remarks and objectives of seminar			14.3	33.9	51.8	56
Overview of food price situation at global and regional levels			12.5	51.8	35.7	56
Policy and programmatic options to address price increases and volatility		3.6	19.6	51.8	25.0	56
Country experiences – parallel working group sessions to discuss participating country experiences		1.8	35.7	48.2	14.3	56
Regional perspectives (COMESA and SDAC experiences)		15.8	21.0	43.8	19.3	57
Macro-economic policies and trade measures	3.5	7.0	29.8	50.9	8.8	57
Consumer policies and programmatic actions	1.7	5.2	32.8	48.3	12.1	58
Producer policies and programmatic actions	1.8	3.6	26.8	55.4	12.5	56
Monitoring African Food and Agriculture Policies and Food and Agriculture Policy Decisions Analysis projects		5.4	21.4	53.6	19.6	56
Development partner perspectives	9.1	12.7	30.9	40.0	7.3	55
Recommendations and next steps	1.9	7.5	34.0	43.4	13.2	53
Next steps for regional and country actions	1.8	10.9	29.1	45.4	12.7	55
Participants encouraged to contribute and share		3.4	13.8	32.8	50.0	58

Strengths and suggestions for improvement

Strengths

The following strengths of the seminar were noted, with figures in parentheses indicating the number of times a given issue was cited:

Adequately prepared resource persons, good presentations and evidence-based information sharing (30)
Group interactions and discussions (16)
Cross-sectoral participation at country level – government, NGOs, private sector, farmers' associations (13)
Sharing of country, regional and global experiences (9)
Excellent venue and logistics – services (translation, public address system) (9)
Broad-based topics, relevant, useful, forward looking (8)
Well-facilitated, open and structured sessions (8)
Timely meeting – stimulating, new information sources (3)
Networking and sharing of ideas (2)
Learnt on how to seek information and assistance available (2)
Good documentation (2)
Committed participants (2)
Frank discussions
Public address system
Provided good opportunity to address regional issues
Minister's presence
Variation in programme – plenary, panel discussion, group work.

Suggestions for improvement

Time too short – needed more time (29)
Improve time management (18)
Distribute presentations and programme to participants in advance in all languages (10)
Programme too packed – prioritize and focus on a few issues (8)
Improve organization and terms of reference for group work – need to narrow focus (7)
Participants to be alerted in advance if presenting/in panels (5)
Participation of non-agricultural institutions and cooperating partners (4)
Representation of ministries – some were missing (3)
Need more time for interactive processes (3)
Need for field visits to see host country (3)
Include country paper presentations, not just FAO (2)
Hold seminar more regularly (2)
Dwell more on recommendations for articulated problems
Need to select the right candidates for participation
Format could have been more dynamic and interesting for participants
Energizers in between sessions
Include farmers and traders
Flexibility of programme
Venue to be away from offices to promote participation of host country
Improve gender balance among participants
Use case studies to illustrate different presentations
Involve FAO-TCSF and RAF
Needed country-specific next steps
Needed highlights of different country policy performance
Make sure policy makers are involved

Need to give time to livestock issues – important for food security
Improve liaison with host country in opening formalities
Was value for money achieved?
Are we wiser now on what to do about high food prices?
Add internet service to conference package.