



**Global
Forum**
on Food Security
and Nutrition

 Topic note

From economic growth to food security and better nutrition

Discussion No. 84 from 30 October to 13 November 2012

This year's report on State of Food Insecurity in the World (SOFI) published by FAO, WFP and IFAD introduced a new and improved methodology for assessing the number of the chronically food insecure and undernourished on this planet.

These new figures are significantly lower than previous estimates, however, with almost 870 million people living in food insecurity, the total numbers still remain remarkably and intolerably high. The food insecure population is still growing in absolute terms in some regions and we are still very far away from reaching the World Food Summit goals of halving, between 1990 and 2015, the number of people who suffer from hunger.

The report shows that in the last decade economic growth has taken place in all regions and provides evidence showing that this growth can be a powerful driver for increased food security when translated into agricultural growth and in particular when it is inclusive and reaches smallholder farmers and women.

However, the impact of economic growth on food insecurity reduction has not been the same everywhere. While some regions have fared particularly well, other seem to lack behind and have not have been able to fully capitalize on the potential created by the growth their economies experienced as it seems that that growth has failed at reaching the poor.

To reduce poverty and hunger, growth needs to reach the poor and the increased income needs to generate demand for the assets controlled by them. Poor households need to be able to use the additional economic assets to improve their diets both in quantity and quality.

Some elements that have been identified as being instrumental for facilitating a pro-poor, inclusive economic growth are education, social protection, good governance and purposeful public action and governments need to use the additional resources generated by economic growth to put them into place.

However, as conditions vary from country to country we need to better understand how good governance and social protection have to function to translate economic growth into improved food security and nutrition.

Given the diverse background of the FSN Forum members, we would like to learn from your experience and ask you to share with us your views on the following issues.

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- Can you share specific experiences in which social protection and better food security governance have led to advances in local food security and improved nutrition?
- Can you tell us about policies that led to better nutritional status as a result of investment into agriculture?
- How can we mobilize the political will necessary to put policies for hunger reduction and improved nutrition higher on the list of political priorities?

We look forward to receiving your inputs .

Thank you very much

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