



# HIGH-LEVEL DISCUSSION *Food for life & the life of food*

FAO, IFAD, WFP, BIOVERSITY INTERNATIONAL, AND THE WORLD BANK

21 JUNE 2012, 19:00 - 20:30

RIO CENTRO ROOM T-4, RIO DE JANEIRO

## Purpose

Hunger eradication is fundamental to achieving the Rio vision of sustainable development, and we must recognize that human beings are at the centre of sustainable development. Current pathways have left 1.4 billion in extreme poverty, 925 million hungry and many more malnourished and food insecure. There can be no sustainable development when billions of people are left in hunger, poverty and food insecurity on the side-lines of mainstream development, with no protection from risks and shocks, and no hope to contribute to and benefit from growth, nor to fully enjoy their human development potential. Moving sustainable development requires a shift to food production and consumption systems that are productive, sustainable and equitable.

The event aims to identify recommendations and actions based on successful national and international experiences, policies and programs aimed at reducing hunger and under-nutrition, building food security and resilience, and creating sustainable and equitable food production and consumption systems. We must eradicate hunger and poverty to achieve the Rio vision of sustainable development. Our food production and consumption systems need to be productive, sustainable and equitable. Faced with a global population of 9 billion in 2050 and the growing pressure on the world's agricultural and food systems, we can no longer afford to ignore the interdependencies between hunger and malnutrition and natural resources and the environment.

## Format

The High-Level discussion *Food for life & the life of food* will be held on 21 June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro within the context of Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. Co-organized by FAO, IFAD, WFP, Bioversity International and the World Bank, the discussion will engage high-level policy makers from member states and international organizations to discuss their experiences in working to achieve poverty and hunger reduction and sustainable development.

The format of this side event is a moderated discussion focused on four key messages: 1) that eradicating hunger and improving human nutrition are fundamental to achieving the Rio vision of sustainable development; 2) food consumption and production must be sustainable for healthy people and healthy ecosystems; and 3) more inclusive and effective governance of agricultural and food systems is essential to making the policy changes required to achieve the Rio vision 4) attention to smallholder farmers is central to issues of food production and consumption and environmental sustainability.

The side event will bring forward the actions that the represented governments and institutions are undertaking to tackle these challenges. A report on the actions identified at the side event as well as concrete actions identified by other stakeholders throughout the Rio conference will be produced and made available for the Rio+20 participants.



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## PROGRAMME

Heads of State from different regions in the world, Heads of Agency and other relevant UN High Level representatives will form a panel which will be moderated by David Nabarro. Building on the outcomes of the *Sustainable Development Dialogues* (16-19 June), **Agricultural and Rural Development Day** (18 June) and on the Rome-based Agencies Technical Seminar *Aiming for a Food Secure Future - Think Global, Act Local* (19 June), the panel will highlight what they see as the role of agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition to achieve the emerging global agenda for Sustainable Development and poverty eradication.

Some of the topics that will trigger the discussions are:

1. **Access to food** –how can we enable all people to access the food they need through nutrition-sensitive systems?
2. **Child under nutrition** – how can we ensure universal access to nutritious food and micronutrients and achieve zero stunting for children under 2 years?
3. **Sustainable food systems** – how can we ensure that all farmers, agribusinesses, cooperatives, governments and civil society establish standards for inclusive sustainability and responsible governance?
4. **Smallholders** – how can we increase smallholder productivity and income?
5. **Reducing food losses and waste** – how can we lose and waste less?

The panellists will be asked to share their reflections on two key questions: 1) what specific ways forward do we need to act upon the five challenges? and 2) How can we deepen our commitment to act and broaden our collective action with other stakeholders?

The event will be moderated by Dr David Nabarro, Coordinator of the High-Level Task Force on Food and Nutrition in a Davos style Dialogue, the invited speakers will be invited to share their experiences, views and recommendations for solutions in an interactive dialogue.



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## Programme: Moderator and Panellists

### Introduction and overview of the event by the moderator

#### **David Nabarro**

Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Food Security and Nutrition and  
Coordinator of the High-Level Task Force on Food and Nutrition

### Opening remarks by

#### **Ban Ki Moon**

Secretary General of the United Nations

### Panel Discussion with

#### **Dilma Rousseff**

President of the Federative Republic of Brazil (invited)

#### **Meles Zenawi**

Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (confirmed)

#### **Mahamadou Issoufou**

President of the Republic of Niger (confirmed)

#### **Nicholas William Clegg**

Deputy Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (confirmed)

#### **Mr. Heikki Holmås**

Minister of Development Norway (confirmed)

#### **Ertharin Cousin**

Executive Director of WFP (confirmed)

#### **José Graziano da Silva**

Director-General, FAO (confirmed)

#### **Mahmoud Mohieldin**

Managing Director, World Bank (confirmed)

#### **Emile Frison**

Director General, Bioversity (confirmed)

#### **Carlos Sere**

Chief Development Strategist, IFAD (confirmed)

#### **Tony Lake**

Chair of the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement and Executive Director of UNICEF (confirmed)

#### **Paul Polman**

CEO UNILEVER (confirmed)

#### **Esther Penunia**

Secretary General of the Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development  
(confirmed)

### Closing remarks by

#### **José Graziano da Silva**

Director-General, FAO (confirmed)



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## BACKGROUND

### 1. Access to food

Current pathways have left 1.4 billion people in extreme poverty, 925 million hungry and many more malnourished and food insecure. There can be no sustainable development when people have no protection from risks and shocks, and no hope to contribute to and benefit neither from growth, nor to fully enjoy their human development potential.

#### Key challenges

The need to ensure universal acceptance of the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger

- How to convert this into practical actions to ensure adequate supplies of food and effective access to food for all, and monitor the effectiveness of actions and the accountability of stakeholders and systems

#### Recommendations of Solutions

**Sustainability requires inclusive and equitable development pathways that ensure access to nutritious food and safety nets for the most vulnerable.** Ensuring access to nutritious food by all people at all times requires coherent approaches that involve broader development initiatives relating to poverty reduction, health and other areas, given the strong linkages between food and nutrition security and social equity. Social protection systems and 2 productive safety nets, aimed at protecting and empowering vulnerable communities

### 2. Child undernutrition

While the world has seen progress in poverty reduction over the past decade, 925 million people continue to suffer from hunger, and many more from “hidden hunger” – a lack of vitamins and minerals – and food insecurity. The first MDG target of halving the proportion of hungry people in the world by 2015 will probably not be achieved. In the absence of fundamental changes, the numbers of poor, hungry and marginalized people will hardly be reduced, and a large share of humanity will not be able to develop its full productive and cognitive potential to contribute to social and economic growth. In short, there will not be sustainable development. Rio+20 must reaffirm the eradication of hunger and undernutrition as a crucial global development goal.

#### Key Challenges

**Hungry people are poor, and poverty traps them in hunger.** Sustainable agricultural development provides a key pathway out of hunger – but the poorest farmers and households are seldom reached by development interventions and investments. Food insecure people have little to invest on their own in enhancing their livelihoods, or in the development of their children. Children of food insecure families often drop out of school – which in turn limits their future opportunities to escape hunger and poverty. Less educated girls are more likely to be food insecure and give birth to children who will be undernourished as well.

- How can governments and civil society best support the most vulnerable groups and people suffering from hunger and undernutrition?



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## Recommendations of Solutions

**Invest in the nutrition and education of food insecure children.** School feeding programmes and access to treatment of acute malnutrition and prevention of undernutrition through promotion of best infant and young child feeding practices and provision of specialized fortified complementary foods in certain contexts, especially in the critical first 1000 days of life<sup>1</sup>, can ensure that future generations are healthy, well-nourished and educated enough to contribute to sustainable growth.<sup>2</sup>

## 3. Sustainable food systems

**Balancing environmental sustainability and growth in agriculture.** More food will need to be produced to meet the changing needs of a growing human world population – An estimated 60% increase in global production and 100% in developing countries is necessary by 2050. Yet the world's ecosystems, biodiversity and associated goods and services are already under pressure, with loss of crop diversity, over-exploitation of fish stocks, deforestation, degradation and losses of arable land and aquatic ecosystems, and growing competition for increasingly scarce water and the impacts of climate change.

**Sustainable management of natural resources – land, water, fisheries, forests and biodiversity – is a precondition for long-term agricultural growth.** Adoption of responsible tenure systems of land, fisheries and forests and innovative, sustainable, “climate-smart” agriculture that makes full use of agro-ecological processes, modern technologies and traditional knowledge provides an important part of the response to this challenge. Depending on the context, they can deliver multiple benefits: not only increasing productivity and profits for farmers – small as well as large – and contributing to national food and nutrition security and development goals, but also enhanced resilience and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Promotion of crop diversification also contributes to sustainability, by ensuring that agriculture produces a diversity of foods suitable for health and nutrition.

## Key Challenges

- How to convert this into practical actions to ensure adequate supplies of food and effective access to food for all, and monitor the effectiveness of actions and the accountability of stakeholders and systems

## Recommendations of Solutions

**Engaging policy makers of Member States at all levels, in a multi-sectoral dimension: Better and more coherent global, national and local policies are needed for sustainable development and to support the reform of agriculture and food systems at scale.** Rio+20 must generate the political will to improve governance and reform policy to realize the necessary transition to sustainable agricultural and food systems. Government investment in public goods and institutions needs to underpin private investment and help to drive innovative solutions.

<sup>1</sup> See also United Nations Standing Committee on Nutrition: Scale Up Nutrition (SUN) Initiative

<sup>2</sup> WFP 2010: Feed Minds, Change Lives: School Feeding, the Millennium Development Goals and Girls' Empowerment, Rome. Analysis from 32 countries in sub-Saharan Africa showed that girls' enrolments in primary schools went up by 28% through school feeding. When on-site school meals were combined with take-home rations for a student's family, girls' enrolment in the highest primary grade surged by 46%.



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## 4. Smallholders

**Building resilience in view of growing uncertainty and risk:** increasingly uncertain weather patterns and conditions, and high and volatile food and energy prices. It is poor and marginalized communities in developing countries – both rural and urban - who are typically most exposed to these risks and least able to deal with them

### Key challenges

- How to significantly support smallholder production systems, and how to reach the most vulnerable communities (emphasizing the importance of smallholders for sustainable development)

### Recommendations of solutions

**Empowering smallholder households, landless farmers and other producers is critical to the Rio vision.** Many of these smallholders are women, playing a vital role throughout the entire value chain, and it is estimated that actions to empower rural women could lift as many as 150 million people out of hunger. The 500 million smallholder farming families in the world are the backbone of many rural economies, and custodians of a large proportion of the world's natural resources. Effective governance is critical for giving them a stronger voice in the formulation of policies, management of risk and strengthened rights to the natural resources on which they depend. Their membership-based organizations can play a key role in asserting that voice.

## 5. Reducing food losses and waste

**Food and nutrition security requires a comprehensive reform in agriculture and food systems that are focused on sustainable consumption and production.** There is need to increase productivity and efficiency and reduce losses and waste in food systems, and to take a broader and integrated perspective for managing them, for both smallholder and large scale systems, and to focus on the role of consumers and sustainable diets, There is also need to help build resilience of communities and ecosystems, to make them better able to deal with the increasing risks and uncertainties, including those of climate change. Making the changes necessary will require massive scale up of successful initiatives, major policy changes and supportive incentives, significant investments in research, innovation, human capacity and expanded market opportunities.

*On the basis of this specific on the ground actions can be identified:*

### 5 national actions

1. Establish and protect rights to resources, especially for the most vulnerable
2. Incorporate incentives for sustainable consumption and production into food systems
3. Promote fair and well-functioning agricultural and food markets
4. Reduce risk and increase the resilience of the most vulnerable
5. Invest public resources in essential public goods, including innovation and infrastructure