



COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

Forty-fourth Session
"Making a Difference in Food Security and Nutrition"

Rome, Italy, 9-13 October 2017

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF IFAD

Excellencies
Dear colleagues
Ladies and Gentlemen

Global food security will only be achieved through local food security. Not only are more and more people suffering from hunger, but they are to be found around the entire world, particularly in low and middle-income countries. The majority of them live in rural areas.

Consequently, the journey towards global food security must include these rural areas, home to the poorest populations as well as those suffering the most from hunger. But achieving this goal requires sustained investment at the national level and the creation of a conducive environment.

In this context, allow me to emphasise two key principles of the 2030 Agenda: we must "leave no-one behind" and countries must take ownership of the sustainable development goals and their implementation.

The rise in under-nutrition and food insecurity is alarming, as are the conflicts and climate shocks that have contributed to it. But the question that we must ask ourselves is the following: what strategies do we have at our disposal to increase our impact on the ground, in countries suffering from hunger?

Achieving food security in developing countries depends on agriculture, and particularly on small-scale farmers. If there is to be rural development, then production and processing must take place in the rural areas as well.

For results to be universal, actions must reach the poor and the hungry wherever they are. In other words, they must target people and be implementable in very varied contexts. That is why we must work very closely with governments, support national strategies and align our efforts with theirs.

This document can be accessed using the Quick Response Code on this page; an FAO initiative to minimize its environmental impact and promote greener communications. Other documents can be consulted at www.fao.org.



mv022

The lesson from SOFI 2017 is that hunger can reappear, and that it can come back more strongly than before. Only long-term strategies and investment can put an end to hunger and poverty and stop them from returning. That is what sustainability means.

In 2016, IFAD' portfolio stood at 6 billion USD in total, half of which was in Africa. If we include cofinancing and national contributions, it reached 13.4 billion USD. This modest figure is the tangible illustration of the leverage that cofinancing and stronger commitments to rural investment at the national level can have, allowing us to work together to renew our efforts and bring an end to food insecurity and malnutrition.

Taking into account the growing challenges caused by climate change, fragility and conflict, and the growing complexity of the context in which we work, political commitment is increasingly important. The Rome-based agencies have undertaken to coordinate their activities more closely to collectively underpin the work of the Committee on Food Security, the CFS.

As the leading global platform for stakeholders working in the area of food security and nutrition, the CFS offers a powerful contribution to policies, but we have another difficulty to resolve: we must reinforce adhesion at the country level.

The conditions that create hunger are clearly linked to weak policies, poor governance and the lack of sustained support to national and global food security policies and actions. That is where the CFS can have the greatest impact.

The CFS is a powerful tool, but it is a tool and not an end in itself. What is important at this stage is to find a way to increase the uptake of policy guidance generated by the CFS at the country level. One of the solutions would be to work with other organisation such as regional economic commissions, the SADC and ECOWAS for example, to ensure more effective and more widespread dissemination and internalization of CFS guidance.

There could also be increased participation of civil society and the private sector in the CFS, for example through greater inclusion of rural populations, the very groups we are seeking to assist.

To turn the ambition of the 2030 Agenda into reality, all institutions need to undertake a process of self-examination, in order to identify not only what they can do better, but also how they can become better partners. I am sure that we are all eager to contribute to this process within the global Committee on Food Security.

Thank you for your attention.