



**REGIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY  
ACTION PLAN**  
(RFNSAP)

**15 October 2011**

## *Foreword of the Secretary-General of CARICOM*

*In the quest for food and nutrition security, we face formidable challenges, ranging from climate change to energy security, population growth and youth unemployment, global land acquisition, migration and urbanisation, water scarcity, decrease of remittances, bio-fuel demand, the decrease of investment in research for the past two decades. Increased purchasing power from an emergent middle-class and changes in diets in many parts of the world towards meat-orientated diets, barriers to food access and distribution, the competition between food and fuel, are driving food policy changes and pose complex challenges to global agriculture, which has to ensure food and energy security in ways that are environmentally and socially sustainable.*

*In this context, the challenge to reduce food insecurity and poverty in Caribbean countries has increased as it has become more difficult for our traditional agricultural exports to compete on world markets, as increasing food imports have displaced domestic small farmers and as external economic shocks, climate change and the consequent increased frequency and violence of natural disasters have increased the vulnerability of the region. The Caribbean Region is now faced with another food crisis, as international prices of most agricultural commodities have increased in 2010-2011, some sharply.*

*In response to these challenges, Heads of Government of CARICOM have agreed that new approaches to agricultural and rural development are needed to achieve a resurgence of the Region's agricultural potential and adjust to the changed economic, political and natural environment. In May 2011, the Thirty-Second Meeting of the Council for Trade and Development - COTED (Trade) agreed that "to adequately respond to the urgent economic and other issues associated with..... the upsurge in commodity prices.... CARICOM's responses must be bold, innovative and multi-sector, to be effected through partnerships that include the private sector, regional institutions (e.g. UG, UWI, CARDI etc.) and international development partners such as FAO, IICA, EU etc".*

*As a component of the overall regional food and nutrition security policy (RFNSP), the RFNSAP aims to implement the actions necessary to achieve the food and nutrition security goals established in the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. By endorsing the RFNSP, the Heads of Government committed themselves to making the protection and realisation of the human right to food for all a high priority in the Region.*

*An effective and efficient response to price volatility and food crises, which are highly likely to recur in future, should include a long-term strategy to reduce both consumer vulnerability to rising food prices and producer vulnerability to sudden falls in farm-gate prices. This is the context in which the CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy was formulated and endorsed in Grenada at the special meeting of the CARICOM Council for Trade and Economic Development-34<sup>th</sup> Special COTED (Agriculture) in October 2010.*

*The wider context in which the RFNSAP is being pursued and in which development efforts in the CARICOM region in general are to be conceived is the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), established by the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas.*

*However, to improve food security and general nutrition levels, effective leadership, development, and good governance are central elements of any strategy. Leadership must be exercised and policymakers need to engage with the issues of food and nutrition security. Building political awareness of the deleterious effects of malnutrition on welfare and on development prospects at the local level is crucial. The message that poverty is an intrinsic component of food and nutrition insecurity must be disseminated widely.*

*Advocacy is also a critical element of any effort to raise the policy profile of food security and nutrition. Indeed, a key component of the advocacy effort will be raising the general level of knowledge among the population at large of the importance of good nutrition so that malnutrition becomes a political issue for which political leaders, the government, and individual sectors of government are held accountable by CSOs and by the general public.*

*There is little time left and this may be the last window of opportunity. It is imperative that we take swift and decisive action to achieve and maintain food and nutrition security for ourselves and succeeding generations!*

<b>ACRONYMNS .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. THE DETERMINANTS OF REGIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION INSECURITY .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. THE RFNSAP - PROGRAMME SELECTION CRITERIA .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4. THE RFNSAP - DEVELOPMENT FOCUS AND ISSUES .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5. THE RFNSAP – VISION AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>6. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND COORDINATION MECHANISMS 20</b>	
<b>7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE ACTION PLAN .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>8. IMPLEMENTATION WORKPLAN.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>PHASE 1 IMMEDIATE ACTIONS .....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>PHASE 2 MEDIUM-LONG-TERM ACTIONS.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>PROGRAMME COMPONENT 1: FOOD AVAILABILITY .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>PROGRAMME COMPONENT 2: FOOD ACCESS .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>PROGRAMME COMPONENT 3: FOOD UTILIZATION/NUTRITIONAL ADEQUACY.....</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>PROGRAMME COMPONENT 4: STABILITY OF FOOD SUPPLY .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>PROGRAMME COMPONENT 5: CROSSCUTTING/EMERGING ISSUES ...</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>PROGRAMME COMPONENT 6: INSTITUTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT .....</b>	<b>46</b>

## ACRONYMNS

CABA	Caribbean Agribusiness Association
CaFAN	Caribbean Farmers' Network
CAHFSA	Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency
CAP	CARICOM Community Agricultural Policy
CARDI	Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARIWIN	Caribbean Water Information
CARPHA	Caribbean Public Health Agency
CBO	Community-based Organization
CCCCC	Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre
CCH	Caribbean Cooperation in Health
CCPAD	Caribbean Community Programme for Agricultural Development
CCS	CARICOM Secretariat
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency
CDPM	Caribbean Drought and Precipitation Monitoring Network
CEHI	Caribbean Environmental Health Institute
CFNI	Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute
CFP	Common Fisheries Policy
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
CHOG	CARICOM Conference of Heads of Government
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIMH	Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology
CIRAD	Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement
COFAP	Council on Finance and Planning (of CARICOM)
COHSOD	Council on Human and Social Development (of CARICOM)
COTED	Council for Trade and Economic Development (of CARICOM)
CPIP	Communication and Public Information Programme
CRFM	Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
CROSQ	CARICOM Regional Organization for Standards and Quality
CSME	CARICOM Single Market and Economy
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCAFNS	Department for Community Agriculture and Food and Nutrition Security
ECLAC	UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EDF	European Development Fund
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FNS	Food and Nutrition Security
FSTP	Food Security Thematic Programme of the European Union
GAFSP	Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme
HFLAC	Hunger Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IFNSC	Inter-ministerial Food and Nutrition Security Committee
IICA	Inter-American Institute for Co-operation on Agriculture

ISFNS	Information System for Food and Nutrition Security
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KBC	Key Binding Constraints
LTA	Lead Technical Agency
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MS	Member States
NAHFSA	National Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency
NCD	Non-communicable Diseases
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRI	Natural Resources Institute
NWIS	National Water Information System
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
OTN	Office of Trade Negotiation
PAHO	Pan-American Health Organization
RAFNSC	Regional Agriculture Food and Nutrition Security Council
RFNSAP	Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan
RFNSP	Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy
RPG	Recommended Population Goals
RTPA	Regional Transformation Programme for Agriculture
SPFS	Special Program for Food Security
SPS	Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade
TMAC	Technical Management Advisory Committee
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UG	University of Guyana
US	University of Suriname
UWI	University of the West Indies
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Why Food and Nutrition Security are Issues of Policy Concern for CARICOM

1.1 CFNI research indicates that issues related to inadequate access to food and dietary patterns are of greater and more immediate concern to food and nutrition security in CARICOM than lack of food availability itself. This is evidenced by research which shows that high levels of obesity exist alongside high levels of under-nourishment and malnutrition<sup>1</sup>. The latter is a consequence of unacceptably high levels of poverty, inequality of income and access to resources. At the extreme is Haiti where the estimate of the undernourished population approaches 50 percent. In several countries, the indigenous (Caribs, Amerindians, Bush Negroes) and displaced populations (Haitians) are a disproportionately large segment of the food insecure. They are also increasingly female headed households and persons living with HIV/AIDS. A high GDP per capita and human development index in a few countries masks the severity of the food security problem in the region as a whole.

1.2 It is also clear from an analysis, recently carried out jointly by ECLA, FAO and IICA, that a number of forces will continue to drive world food prices upwards and create volatility in international food markets for the foreseeable future. These include oil prices, expansion of ethanol production from corn, increased demand from developing countries such as China and India, climate change – giving rise to an increased frequency of natural disasters. This reality, coupled with the region's exposure to natural hazards and other economic vulnerabilities, have prompted CARICOM Member States, in October 2010, to establish a Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy (RFNSP) **“to ensure that the regional food production, processing, distribution, marketing, trade, and food safety and agricultural public health system is capable of providing safe, adequate, nutritious and affordable food for the region’s inhabitants at all times, thereby achieving food and nutrition security”**.

### The CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy

1.3 The overall objective of the CARICOM Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas regarding cooperation in agriculture and rural development is the achievement of food and nutrition security and rational, market-oriented and environmentally sound agricultural production, processing and trade. To this end, the RFNSP aims at attaining food security through increased agricultural production, processing, storage and marketing in a value-chain approach; the use of productive safety nets in the context of National Poverty Alleviation Strategies; improved linkages between health, nutrition, food retailing, manufacturing and production along the food supply chain; and effective disaster prevention, mitigation, management and early warning systems and climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. However, before and since the signing of the Treaty, the ability of the Member States to achieve durable individual and collective food security has been elusive. This has been further compounded by the negative impacts of Climate Change.

1.4 The RFNSP seeks to provide a clearly articulated, holistic policy framework (for the period 2011-2025) that translates the major orientations and elements of the overarching and underexploited regional development agreements and initiatives into concrete policy priorities that will guide the design, implementation and monitoring of specific future periodic national and regional strategic action programmes to address the major food and nutrition security challenges in CARICOM.

---

<sup>1</sup> Nutrition Challenges in the Caribbean, Henry, CFNI.

1.5 The policy articulates a shared vision on the issues on which CARICOM Member States can effectively collaborate in areas until now not perceived as appropriate for collective regional action and not covered adequately and explicitly in the sector development policies for agriculture, health, infrastructure, trade etc. It provides a coherent, convergent and comprehensive framework within which national governments, civil society and private sector actors can join forces with regional organizations and development partners in cross-national, multi-sector and synergistic partnerships to identify, finance, implement and monitor an integrated set of concrete actions to achieve the four objectives of **a) food availability; b) food access; c) proper food utilization for good health, nutrition and wellbeing; and d) stable and sustainable food supplies at all times.**

#### **International Obligations and Commitments to which CARICOM MS have subscribed**

1.6 Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) is a cross-cutting issue and the many linkages between the various national development policies, strategies and programmes and FNS call for these concerns to be incorporated into the formulation and implementation of a FNS policy. The RFNSP and Action Plan have been developed by CARICOM Member States consequent on their adherence to the 2009 World Food Summit declaration and the 2025 Hunger Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative (HFLAC), endorsed by the FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean in April 2006, and subsequently ratified in several regional summits.

#### **Obligations of CARICOM MS Governments to Ensure the Right to Food for all**

1.7 In endorsing the RFNSP, the Member States of the Caribbean Community committed themselves to the principles of equity and participation in decision-making processes and of targeting the most vulnerable groups, in particular small producers (farmers, fishermen etc.), women and children. Thus the RFNSP aspires to identify and focus on the welfare of the most vulnerable and to address pro-actively the structural causes of hunger and malnutrition by means of appropriate development strategies and empowering marginalised groups to participate actively and meaningfully in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of national programmes. In this context, Member States have subscribed to the UN Declaration of Indigenous Rights as well as the FAO Right to Food Guidelines that entail supporting strategies that tackle the root causes of hunger and malnutrition.

## 2. THE DETERMINANTS OF REGIONAL FOOD AND NUTRITION INSECURITY

### Contrasting Food Security and Nutrition Security

2.1 Food security is usually defined as covering the physical availability of food supplies over time and space, while nutrition security includes the socio-economic and nutritional aspects of having adequate economic and physical access to safe and nutritious food supplies. Hence food and nutrition security in the wider sense emphasizes how food and nutrition policy overlaps with many other sectors - health, trade, agriculture, environment, marketing and culture<sup>2</sup> In the Caribbean this broadened definition is particularly important.

2.2 It appears then that at the national level, food is generally secure, the main challenge being one of inequity - inadequate access and inadequate consumption, particularly in the vulnerable groups. Thus the main challenge is associated with vulnerabilities at three levels: the household level, for poor, socially excluded and economically marginalised groups; the national level, linked to the small size and the openness of the economies of the region, with the exception of the mainland states (Belize, Guyana and Suriname); and at the regional level, which represents the cumulative impacts of these two factors.

2.3 The long-term food security of most of the small island Member States thus depends on their economies' ability to maintain a level of exports sufficient to cover their import requirements for food and other goods and services. Given the high ratio of their external debt to their exports (in 9 MS greater than 100%), this outcome is not assured. So although under nutrition has declined, the threat of its resurgence still lurks in the background and may erupt into epidemic proportions in the face of recurring external economic shocks (soaring international food prices) and natural disasters. Hence, in this sense the region is food insecure<sup>3</sup>.

### Determinants of Nutritional Insecurity

2.4 While the above applies to the national level, the same is also true at the household level. Few households in the Caribbean are totally self-sufficient in meeting their food requirements. Most households today purchase some (or all) of their basic food needs. Food and nutritional security in the Caribbean region is mainly related to the capacity of people to obtain access to the food they need and to use it properly to maintain a healthy and active life. Its achievement requires effective demand for food. Thus poverty issues are central to addressing problems of food and nutrition security in the Caribbean. Employment opportunities must be available to enable individuals and households to earn sufficient income to ensure access to adequate food for their families.

2.5 Obesity and NCDs are preventable lifestyle diseases and are caused by several factors such as:

- Poverty and income inequality which constrain household access to nutritious foods.
- Consumption of processed foods, high in salt, fat, trans-fat and sugar.
- Inadequate consumption of indigenous roots and tubers, fruits, vegetables and legumes.

---

<sup>2</sup> Caribbean Declaration on Food Security, COTED (Agriculture) 1996

<sup>3</sup> Nutrition challenges in the Caribbean, Henry, CFNI



- A general lack of knowledge among households about the nutritional and health-enhancing value of indigenous foods.
- Public policies that do not consider the link between food, nutrition and health.

Since these are known facts for which there are many solutions, prevention of ill health and death is a reachable target.

### **The Status of Food and Nutrition Security in CARICOM**

2.6 It is clear then that the immediate, urgent problems concern **household access and nutritional adequacy. This means a departure from equating food security with food availability.** For although sufficient food calories are available to meet recommended population goals in the region, food security is being compromised through lack of access and excessive utilization/consumption of sweeteners and fats/oils.

### **Identification and Characterization of Vulnerable Groups in CARICOM**

2.7 It is generally agreed that the highest concentration of vulnerable and food insecure persons and households is found among those groups which are at the economic margin of society, such as small farmers, families living in urban and peri-urban marginal areas, small scale artisanal fishermen, indigenous peoples, street vendors, the unemployed and underemployed and displaced persons. Many of the plans and actions of governments address various issues of food security, but not in a comprehensive and mutually supportive manner, and not for the explicit purpose of improving conditions of food security. Poverty is a major constraint on improving livelihood systems in general, and conditions of food security in particular, amongst people who live in difficult circumstances. Yet few Member States have specific policies and strategies aimed directly at poverty alleviation as an underlying solution to food insecurity.

2.8 Individuals have ultimate responsibility for their own health, but governments, international partners and other agencies can play a critical role in making healthier diets more affordable and accessible, especially for poor and vulnerable groups. The food industry should be mobilised to reduce the fat, sugar and salt content of processed foods. This industry could reduce portion sizes and re-orient current marketing practices towards innovative, healthy, and nutritious food choices. This is a matter for public policy and is a major plank of the RFNSP and the Action Plan.

### **3. THE RFNSAP - PROGRAMME SELECTION CRITERIA**

#### **Scope and Timeframe of the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan (RFNSAP)**

3.1 The Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan is to implement the CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy and the first plan covers a fifteen-year period from 2012 to 2026. The formulation of the RFNSAP involved consultations with relevant bodies/stakeholders at the regional and national levels to obtain the inputs necessary to ensure consistency of the Strategic Thrusts and Action Programmes/Activities with the objectives of the RFNSP. The consultative process aimed at creating a strong sense of ownership among regional and national stakeholders, which is essential for the implementation of the RFNSAP. The process is in line with the Right to Food provisions of the RFNSP which promote widespread participation and inclusiveness.

3.2 The programme focuses on actions that will benefit all households (with special emphasis on small, poor producers, indigenous peoples, youth, women and consumers). Particular attention will be paid to private/private partnerships, governmental/private strategic alliances and participation of non-governmental institutions, civil society and community-based organizations and producer and consumer associations involved in development. The budget is structured to ensure that regional actions are in all cases linked to national level follow-up within countries where the intervention is relevant and assigned a high priority.

3.3 The Action Plan contributes to four of the eight Millennium Development Goals: eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; promoting gender equality and empowering women; reducing child and maternal mortality; and ensuring environmental sustainability. The five priority actions, determined by the COTED in 2010, all fall under the above objectives.

#### **Linking the Action Plan to the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy**

3.4 The RFNSAP is designed to contribute to improved standards of living, greater social security protection and sustained economic development. It covers a number of strategic actions under the four FNS components of the Policy, distinguishing between actions at the regional and country levels and addressing income and gender inequalities between and within Member States as well as the relatively higher incidence of poverty among indigenous peoples. It follows the set of guiding implementation principles laid out in the Policy; establishes an institutional framework for implementation; and defines a number of objectives as the basis for measuring its impact.

3.5 The RFNSP guides the development of strategies, programmes and projects for the realization of the above goals of CARICOM in line with CARICOM Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas principles. This Action Plan has been developed to guide the implementation and achievement of a regional food and nutrition security objective.

#### **Rationale - Multi-Sector and Cross-cutting Nature of the RFNSP/AP**

3.6 The RFNSP is an integral part of the CARICOM Community Agricultural Policy (CAP). It does not however deal directly with those issues of **food availability** that fall within the exclusive purview of ministries responsible for agricultural development (land and water availability, conservation and management, agricultural production and yield increasing measures etc.). This policy focuses on the wider issues of food and nutrition security that have not until now been properly addressed since they are at the interface between agriculture, health and nutrition, education etc., and

have therefore been largely neglected because the institutional framework and mechanisms for dealing with such multi-sector issues did not exist.

3.7 The issues addressed by the RFNSP have ramifications which transcend the agricultural and rural sectors and cut across the existing division of functions and responsibilities of the various ministries and agencies of the public sectors of most Member States as currently structured. To avoid the mistakes of the past and to give effect to the provisions of Article 57 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas concerning the implementation of the CAP of which the RFNSP is an integral element, the policy implementation mechanisms are therefore to be founded on the principles of public-private partnership, financial and operational autonomy and vested with the resources, budget and legal authority to ensure that approved RFNSP activities are undertaken at both regional and national levels.

3.8 The required measures are a composite of policy, legislative, and institutional realignment actions, enhanced professional, technical and institutional capacity, improved processes, infrastructure and client-service orientation, and public-private sector partnership arrangements. At national level, some Member States have already established Food Security/Prices Commissions/Committees that address some, albeit not all, of these issues.

### **Programme Selection Criteria**

3.9 In approving the RFNSP, COTED agreed that the next step in the process would be the preparation of an Action Plan, giving priority to the following areas identified by Member States:

- Promotion of increased availability of regionally produced quality nutritious food (looking at the whole supply chain from farmer to consumer) at remunerative market prices so as to increase production, productivity and returns to farmers;
- Identification and mapping of vulnerable groups (who are the food insecure, why are they food insecure and where are they located?) with special emphasis on women, children, the elderly and the physically and mentally handicapped, and establishment of a national and regional database of this information;
- Removal of non-tariff barriers to trade (SPS-TBT barriers) that increase marketing costs and hinder access to and distribution of food within the Region, as well as the development of strategies to address regional transportation so as to reduce distribution costs and improve the movement of food commodities across the Region;
- Promotion of healthy Caribbean diets and optimal nutrition, especially at all stages of the education system, to reduce Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), obesity and malnutrition,;
- Building of resilience to the recurring threats to food security bearing in mind that the Region is prone to the risks posed by climate change and natural disasters, through the establishment of a Regional Information and Early Warning System for Food and Nutrition Security, the construction of risk profiles for the Region's main crops in support of emergency preparedness, agricultural risk management and crop insurance.

3.10 The COTED also agreed that “the region, led by the Secretariat, must embark upon more proactive approaches which focus on risk analyses, forecasting, research and development, utilization of regional natural resources, aggressive resource mobilization at the international level and exploiting opportunities under existing south-south cooperation e.g. with Brazil where the agricultural institution EMBRAPA can assist the Region to boost agricultural research and agro-tourism linkages”.

### **RFNSAP Strategy**

3.11 The strategy that informs the RFNSAP is based on lessons learned and ongoing initiatives and recognizes the critical role of both public (infrastructure and institutional development) and private (enterprises, innovation and competitiveness) sector investments as well as the need for a revitalized rural sector, emphasizing a value chain approach for the development of a large number of agricultural, forestry, and fishery activities. In this regard, the strategy is designed to address both the constraints identified by the Jagdeo Initiative and advance the achievement of the goals of the CSME, most directly the establishment of competitive production systems leading to a greater variety and quantity of products and services to trade with other countries.

3.12 Further, the RFNSAP pays particular attention to the fact that availability and access to safe and nutritious food are not automatic under the current circumstances and appropriate policies and programmes must be established to ensure this as well as to mitigate the negative impacts on livelihood systems of natural and manmade shocks. In this way the RFNSAP is designed to contribute to improved standards of living, greater social security protection and sustained economic development.

3.13 The interventions proposed in the RFNSAP take place at both the regional and national levels. Regional level interventions promote the development of synergies across countries by addressing cross cutting issues and are largely related to institutional and policy development that strengthens the regional investment climate and facilitates strategic alliances. National level interventions included in the RFNSAP are those that will also receive regional level support, such as specific production and institutional strengthening projects, and national actions to increase access to sufficient, nutritious and safe foods for food-insecure and vulnerable households.

3.14 The framework of the RFNSAP reflects a comprehensive, integrated and flexible approach emphasizing both national and regional level interventions, strategic alliances, and participation of the broadest cross-section of representative organizations, including those that are truly representative of the grass roots level. These institutions and organizations will contribute to the design and implementation of policies and programmes that provide incentives and a framework for addressing both short term vulnerability aspects and longer term growth and sustainability aspects of food security and nutrition.

## 4. THE RFNSAP - DEVELOPMENT FOCUS AND ISSUES

### Focus of Regional Actions: Issues and Activities

4.1 The wider context in which the RFNSAP is being pursued and in which development efforts in the CARICOM region in general are to be conceived is the **CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME)**, established by the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. The CSME is intended to benefit the people of the Region by providing more and better opportunities to produce and sell goods and services and to attract investment. It will create one large market among the participating member states.

4.2 The RFNSP explicitly recognizes the potential of regional agricultural value chains supported by agribusiness and agro-processing as a basis for linking farmers, especially smallholders, to markets for food and other agricultural products. The CSME provides the best opportunity for building such value chains because it provides a framework for exploiting economies of scale in the production and supply of food.

### Development of Agro-industries for Value-Addition/Processing in a Value Chain Approach

4.3 The World Development Report 2008 called for an accelerated expansion of the share of agro-industries in agricultural GDP as a way of making agriculture an engine of economic growth and reduction of poverty. This is because agro industries create forward and backward linkages, leading to significant multiplier effects, generating demand for agricultural produce and associated inputs and services, creating on- and off- farm employment, enhancing incomes and contributing to value addition and increased public sector revenues. Through the development of agro-industries, access to markets, finance and technical assistance can be facilitated for smallholder producers, promoting their inclusion in modern and efficient value chains.

4.4 Self-sustaining domestic markets for food are under developed in the rural areas due to lack of purchasing power. Poor and inadequate storage and transport infrastructure result in a situation in which a large part of the surplus food production is left to go to waste. This is a poverty trap which is perpetuated by intervention programmes that have focused more on providing inputs and extension to increase production than on income generation to increase/improve purchasing power. To resolve this problem, more investments are required in deliberate efforts to transform a proportion of smallholders/rural households from direct producers of food commodities, to entrepreneurs dealing with non-food and high value commodities, non-farm agricultural enterprises especially in the value-addition processing industries, and non-agricultural rural enterprises such as cultural/agro-tourism, forestry and services.

4.5 Value-adding agro-processing of food commodities increases food security in four major ways:

- 1) Reduction of post-harvest losses, which are currently estimated by several organizations (FAO, CIRAD, NRI and UNIDO) to be as high as 30% in cereals, 50% in roots and tubers, and up to 70% in fruits and vegetables;
- 2) Extending the shelf-life of food, making most food, especially perishables, tradable and easier to move over long distances from surplus to deficit areas;
- 3) Enhancing incomes and creation of employment along the food chain from production to marketing; and

- 4) Improving food quality and safety through appropriate certification, traceability systems and harmonization of standards, thus improving access to markets.

Furthermore, expanded agro-industries will contribute to poverty reduction through the combined effects of employment gains, income enhancement, inclusiveness and food security.

### **Food Security and Early Warning Systems**

4.6 Rural producers and communities need to be resilient against the effects of external economic shocks, food-related crises, natural disasters, and in the face of climate change. There is a strong shared interest across the sub-region in putting in place systems to deal with these concerns. While short term responses to crises often require mobilisation of ad hoc humanitarian instruments, other mechanisms and capacities need to be built and maintained to reduce the risks of crises occurring and to manage their effects. Close linkage between humanitarian and development actors and instruments is essential and should be promoted. These are all issues that were addressed in Antigua during the FAO-organised Workshop on Agricultural Risk Management and Crop and Livestock Insurance in June 2010.

4.7 For this purpose, national or sub-regional early warning systems capable of predicting imminent disasters need to be strengthened or developed where they do not exist, and better linked to decision making and response organisations. Linking weather and water resource data with nutritional information, crops and animal disease outbreaks and market prices, the systems need to draw their data from all levels, including community-level.

4.8 In this regard, given that the regional database will only be as good as the information it receives from the national level, it is important that national level databases are strengthened to ensure the reliability of the data. In this respect, regional action can build on work already begun in this area. FAO has provided technical assistance to St Lucia and Grenada, in collaboration with the Caribbean Water Information (CARIWIN) project to develop a National Water Information System (NWIS). This system is considered a best practice because of the computer technology used. Similar NWISs have been established in Jamaica and Guyana, based on the systems developed in St Lucia and Grenada. These systems could be extended across the CARICOM region as part of a regional system to be established at the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH).

4.9 The CIMH has also developed the Caribbean Drought and Precipitation Monitoring Network (CDPM), which was launched in January 2009 under CARIWIN. Under the CDPM Network, drought and the general precipitation status are monitored at regional level, encompassing the entire Caribbean basin and at national level, using a number of indices and indicators. In addition, short term and seasonal precipitation forecasts are used to provide a projection of future drought and excessive precipitation in the short and medium term.

4.10 Policies to address the challenge of price volatility can either tackle volatility itself, or its impacts. To mitigate volatility, the stock-to-use ratio of food products needs to be improved by creating conditions for production increases and for adequate stock levels to be kept, mainly by private traders. These outcomes can only be based on improved food market functioning at global, regional and national levels. This will include responding through market transparency (information on production, reserves, prices, etc.), and promoting storage and local/national food reserves where appropriate and feasible. The impacts of price volatility can be mitigated by using a range of measures, including the establishment of scalable safety nets, food security information systems, use of (weather, index) insurance and an enhanced capacity to use price risk management instruments.

4.11 Accurate data collection, collation and analysis are essential for the achievement of these results; this will require the reinforcement of the sub-regional and national information systems in

support of agricultural feed and food manufacturing, food security and nutrition policies, and those for early warning purposes. This will entail the harmonization and coordination of the collection and collation of agricultural, fisheries and forestry production (output/catch, yield and acreage) and trade/marketing (domestic, intra and inter-regional) and agro-meteorological statistics and information. These actions will permit the development and implementation of sub-regional level agricultural policies and strategies, including on livestock, fishery and forestry management and food safety, to step up integration of sub-regional food and agricultural markets, and particularly regional and national information systems in support of agriculture, forestry and fisheries), food security and nutrition policies, and those for early warning purposes.

### **Development of Insurance Instruments**

4.12 Agriculture in general and food crop production in particular face many risks, including:

- Production Risk – due to weather calamities such as drought and floods as well as pest, disease, fire and many other perils mainly impacting primary producers;
- Market or Price Risk – caused by volatility of prices in which case in some years market prices received may not cover basic costs of production;
- Input Cost Risk – the cost of inputs fluctuates, impacted by rising raw material costs, and may be higher than the market price of the final commodity;
- Transaction Risk – associated with receiving payment and/or the delivery of agriculture commodities within an international trading environment; and
- Food Safety Risk – associated with producing a safe food product (or one perceived as safe) for consumers.

4.13 However, temporal and spatial variability of climate, especially rainfall, is the major risk facing producers, agro-processors and consumers in the Caribbean region. Evidence is emerging that climate change is increasing this variability with greater frequency of extreme events such as hurricanes, drought and floods, which sometimes occur within one season in one location. It is therefore important to understand, adapt to and cope with climate variability so as to ensure food security. The Food Security and Early Warning System referred to in the previous section is an essential foundation stone for agricultural risk and crop insurance.

4.14 Insurance is one of the means for mitigating the financial effects of risks associated with variability of weather and prices. Its main purpose is to provide monetary means of offsetting losses suffered by producers and other agro entrepreneurs in the case of severe and catastrophic weather events such as hurricanes, drought and floods. If well applied, weather-indexed based insurance has several positive outcomes particularly important for smallholders as well as the agricultural system that supports them:

- a. Encourages investments by farmers in productivity-enhancing inputs leading to better exploitation of good seasons. Currently, to avoid the risk of losing their investment in inputs, most smallholders adopt strategies that work best during poor seasons. Thus they do not reap the benefits from the more frequent normal and better rain seasons.
- b. Facilitates credit availability. Due to the risk associated with agricultural production, producers in general and smallholders in particular have historically been unable to access credit financing. The administrative cost of financing small, high risk loans has effectively precluded many smallholders from credit. With an insurance arrangement that will pay off part or the entire loan in case of natural disaster, the chance of default (and hence credit recovery costs) is reduced. This outcome should encourage lenders to provide more credit to smallholders.

- c. Reduces the need for food aid and hand-outs. Since there is less dependence on these welfare-type programs, confidence will be built among smallholders in their ability to be self supporting. Furthermore, governments will be under less pressure to provide such support programs.
- d. Many markets require sufficient volume to justify the necessary infrastructure. Insurance may encourage the use of inputs or other cultural practices that enhance agricultural productivity. The increased volumes should lead to increased agri-business investments in the necessary marketing structures so the smallholder producer can access a wider array of market alternatives.

### **Agricultural Inputs and Fertilizer Use**

4.15 Agricultural land under cultivation in the Caribbean region experiences accelerated degradation through loss of vegetation cover and reduction of soil productive capacity from soil erosion, salinization and nutrient over-exploitation. Most food crop production is by smallholder farmers mainly using low inputs. The intensive low-input systems accelerate the lowering of soil quality i.e. the capacity of soil to maintain productivity through plant growth and environmental health. While fertilizer use on commercial crops (sugarcane, bananas, rice, cocoa etc.) in the Caribbean is widespread, the level of use on food crops is much lower because of the high cost of fertilizers relative to the farm gate price of food crops; at the same time, the effectiveness of fertilizer use is hampered by inappropriate rates of application (limited soil testing).

4.16 There is similar misuse of agricultural chemicals and pesticides with deleterious effects on the quality of food crop production and the environment. There is a need to reduce the cost of fertilizer procurement at national and regional levels and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its use. Procurement could be addressed at regional level through the establishment of Regional Fertilizer Procurement and Distribution Facilities through strategic public-private partnerships and the promotion of national/regional fertilizer production and intra-regional fertilizer trade to capture a bigger market and take advantage of economies of scale. At national level, the following measures will need to be taken concurrently:

- Strengthening of soil testing services and extension service provision of training in proper use of fertilizers, pesticides and other agro-chemicals for smallholder farmers;
- Developing and scaling up input dealers' and community-based networks in rural areas;
- Granting, with the support of the region's Development Partners, targeted subsidies in favour of the fertilizer sector, with special attention to poor farmers;
- Accelerated investment in infrastructure, particularly transport, fiscal incentives, strengthening farmers' organizations, and other measures to improve output market incentives.

### **Water for agriculture**

4.17 The supply of water is skewed both temporally and spatially. In most cases, it is the temporal variations rather than the amount of rain which brings most problems to rain fed systems. However, it is important to pay attention to rain fed crop and livestock systems as they currently supply most of the food produced in the region. Even in the Leeward Islands and other regions of lesser rainfall in the Caribbean Region, there is plenty of rainwater but more than 60% often goes back to the atmosphere unutilized for any productive purposes. The main requirements are management interventions which enable beneficial plants to use effectively, through transpiration, the rainwater available on-farm. The basic principles are simple and have been known for a long time:



- a. Optimizing infiltration – the main purpose being to reduce non-productive depletion of the rainwater through evaporation and run-off, while reducing erosion and increasing re-charge of ground water;
- b. Increasing the water-holding capacity of soil within the root zone – to make most of the captured water available to plants;
- c. Ensuring an efficient water uptake (i.e. high ratio of transpiration/evapo-transpiration) by beneficial plants – achieved through appropriate agronomic and husbandry practices;
- d. Optimizing the productivity of water used by plants, in value of products – through the choice of crops with sufficient demand in accessible markets.

4.18 With the decline in the agricultural sector in most Caribbean countries, Caribbean governments have increased their thrust in the tourism sector, with the construction of a number of new hotels, condominiums and guest houses. Notwithstanding the decline in tourist arrivals due to the financial crisis, the number of tourist arrivals to the Caribbean is expected to increase in the coming years. This increase in arrivals will place greater demands on the region's water resources, not only to meet the demands of the tourism sector but also that of the growing population, housing and manufacturing.

4.19 For the agricultural sector to be competitive there must be adequate supplies of all inputs, particularly water and the application of new and improved technologies such as **irrigation and drainage** is required. Where such schemes already exist, there is need for improvements. Irrigation development has focused more attention on civil engineering structures for water diversion rather than the management practices needed to optimize water use efficiency at field level. In most cases, once a field is treated to meet the four principles above, irrigation may only be required as a strategic supplement to mitigate the effect of dry spells. There is a role for CARDI at regional level to strengthen the capability of national extension services in this area.

4.20 The severe drought experienced throughout the region since August 2009 may be indicative of the water stress that is likely to occur as a result of climate change. There is, therefore, need for an **assessment of available water resources**. Most importantly, **water policy** should include **allocation strategies** which view the agricultural sector as an important component of the economy, so that water for agriculture is not sacrificed during periods of drought. Moreover, there is need to develop **national water information systems** to provide reliable data to assess the available water supply and promote sustainable use of the resource. The information system would also assist in developing **Early Warning Systems** as an important planning tool for sustainable water management. There is also a need for **increased capacity in rainwater harvesting and other water efficient technologies including managed aquifer recharge, run off capture and water conservation techniques**, which promote integrated water resources management to enable farmers to produce and be competitive even under conditions of reduced water availability. Incentives for the development and improved management of water systems also need to be addressed.

4.21 Most of the river flow in the region has not been mobilized and the installed capacity for storage of water is quite limited. In the USA or Australia the installed water storage capacity is more than 5,000 m<sup>3</sup> per caput. Nothing demonstrates the important role of water control infrastructure more than the sheer scale of investment on such infrastructure by the rich countries. For example, in Japan, heavy investment in water control infrastructure since the 1970s has reduced annual economic losses due to floods from 20% of GNI, to less than 0.5%. In both the developed world and developing countries, investments on infrastructure to harness water for agriculture have led to tremendous positive impacts in the creation of wealth and improvement of food security. Furthermore, experience from both rich and developing countries shows that, apart from securing water supply, infrastructure plays a major role in protecting people and their properties against the vagaries of floods and drought.

4.22 Two other important emerging issues that need to be addressed are **water pollution** and **water reuse and recycling**. In the case of water pollution, land based sources of pollution, for example from agricultural activities, have implications for the pollution of groundwater supplies as well as coastal ecosystems in Small Island Developing States. By extension, the destruction of the coastal ecosystems could adversely affect the livelihoods of coastal communities (for example fisher-folk) and the tourism industry. Water reuse and recycling in agriculture are often applied in water management of golf courses but not widely used in other areas of agriculture. In situations of water scarcity for example with climate change, it may be considered among the adaptation strategies which can be used by farmers.

4.23 Key issues in respect of water resource development and management in the Caribbean region are:

- **National water policies** based on an assessment of available water resources, and including **allocation strategies** which view food/agricultural production as an important economic sector.
- Development of **national water information systems** to provide reliable data to assess the available water supply and promote sustainable use of the resource.
- Improving the productivity of water at farm level through a strategic mix of enterprises, integrated Agricultural Water Management (AWM) approaches and water management technologies in both rain fed and irrigated agriculture;
- Enhancing economic benefits while containing environmental impacts at local, watershed basin or national levels, as a result of increased use of innovations and technologies for enhancing the farm level productivity of water in the upper catchments;
- Improving incentives (such as trade) and governance mechanisms to bring about beneficial uses and management of water in the upper catchments while maintaining or improving water availability for downstream or ecosystem needs;
- Combining indigenous knowledge with cutting edge information technologies to develop the most appropriate decision support tools for different stakeholders (including individual resource users) to improve planning for sustainable use of water; and,
- In-building adaptation to climate change in all agricultural and water development strategies and programmes.

### **Commodity Coverage**

4.24 The selection of commodities takes into account the food consumption patterns of the most vulnerable and food insecure segments of the region's population and the need to improve nutrition standards as well as the provision of incentives to expand food production by small scale producers.

4.25 The initial priority commodities for food security, competitive import replacement and export for the CARICOM region include rice, maize, dried coconuts, wheat flour substitutes (cassava flour etc.) starchy roots and tubers (sweet potato, cassava, dasheen, yam), legume grains (cowpeas, red kidney beans), sugar, fish (yellow fin tuna, snapper, grouper, trout, tilapia, conch, shrimp and lobster), poultry, small ruminants (sheep and goats), spices, condiments and fruits and vegetables (salad vegetables, onions, carrots, pumpkin, squash, bora beans, bananas, plantain, mangoes, golden apples, pineapples, papaya, melons, avocados, breadfruit and ackee)<sup>4</sup>. Other important commodities especially new alternative crops for staple food may be identified during the course of implementation of the RFNSAP.

---

<sup>4</sup> Developing an Action Plan Nutrition challenges in the Caribbean, Henry, CFNI for Promotion of a Regional Agribusiness Sector and Targeted Commodity Enterprises – Landell Mills Development Consultants – Final Report – February 2011

## 5. THE RFNSAP – VISION AND STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

### The Vision, Goal and Objectives

5.1 The RFNSAP envisions a rapid transformation of the regional rural and agricultural sector and its renewal as a vibrant and productive economic sector with an enhanced role and contribution to the regional economy. The sector is envisaged to evolve as an important driving force in expanding livelihood options for rural people, enhancing employment and income opportunities, and improving food security and the nutritional status of people in the CARICOM Member States. These goals are in keeping with those of the Community Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the RFNSP.

5.2 The development goal of the CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan 2012-2026 is **to contribute to ensuring long-term food security and the enjoyment by all of the right to food in the CARICOM Member States**. This will be pursued through the following four specific food security and nutrition objectives that simultaneously increase agricultural and rural development and reduce poverty:

- ❖ To strengthen agricultural production, marketing systems and enterprises including building up institutional capacity to support their development. **(RFNSP Objective 1-Food availability)**
- ❖ To improve the capacity of policy and programme frameworks for managing key threats to food security. **(RFNSP Objective 2-Food access)**
- ❖ To promote the consumption of safe and nutritious food. **(RFNSP Objective 3-Food utilization/Nutritional adequacy)**
- ❖ To ensure stability of food supplies. **(RFNSP Objective 4-Food stability)**.

### Specific Objectives

1. *Supporting a healthy start* – Good nutrition and safe food during the first five years of life pay dividends throughout life. Good maternal nutrition promotes optimal foetal development, and this reduces the risk of chronic disease in adulthood.
2. *Ensuring a safe, healthy and sustainable quality food supply* - Increase the capacity of individuals and households to access food with balanced nutrition needed for healthy living. Policies in agriculture and fisheries influence public health by affecting the supply, local availability, safety, affordability and accessibility of foods.
3. *Providing comprehensive information and education to consumers* - Increase knowledge, attitude and behaviour of the general public to benefits of healthy living with public health and nutrition education and awareness campaigns as part of the efforts for improvement of people's nutrition.
4. *Integrated action to address related determinants* - Ensuring nutritional well-being and preventing diet-related non-communicable diseases requires “integrated action on risk factors and their underlying determinants across sectors to be combined with efforts to strengthen health systems towards improved prevention and control.”
5. *Strengthening nutrition and food safety* - Increase security, quality and hygiene of food consumed by the people by reducing food safety risks and increasing research in order to provide safer and more nutritious and affordable food for the poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups.

6. *Monitoring, evaluation and research* - Process, outcome and output indicators are necessary for assessing the impact and effectiveness of policies or programmes.

### **The Nutritional Targets**

5.3 Regional nutrition, food safety and food security goals should be established. However, individual Member States may consider setting suitable targets with respect to the proportion of their populations that will be able to achieve the goals in 2026, in light of considerations of feasibility and resources.

- Regional population nutritional goals should be adopted in line with CFNI/PAHO/FAO/WHO recommendations:
  - ❖ <10% of daily energy intake from saturated fatty acids
  - ❖ <1% of daily energy intake from trans fatty acids
  - ❖ <10% of daily energy intake from free sugars
  - ❖ ≥ 400g fruits and vegetables a day
  - ❖ <5g a day of salt
- Increase the consumption of food per capita to meet the need for a balanced nutrition with adequate energy of 2,000 kcal/day and protein of 52 grams/day and sufficient micro nutrients.
- At least 50% of infants should be exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life and continuously breastfed until at least 12 months.
- Food safety goals and targets should be risk-based and established in individual Member States with reference to their current incidence of food-borne diseases and the prevalence of microbiological and chemical contamination in the food chain, based on adequate surveillance systems.
- A food security goal should be established in line with Millennium Development Goal 1, to reduce by 50% the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. The availability and affordability of healthy foods, such as fruit and vegetables, should be improved and the supply of energy-dense and nutrient-poor foods should be reduced, if needed. The achievement of food security goals should be linked to the attainment of dietary goals in different socio-economic groups.
- Prevent the increasing prevalence of obesity and NCDs due to over nutrition.
- Increase knowledge and capacity of the family to apply the healthy living approach and awareness behaviour in food and nutrition, which is indicated by increased access to nutrition services and family food consumption.

### **Strategic Framework**

5.4 The RFNSAP comprises six Programme Components (PC), four of which correspond to the four policy objectives of the RFNSP; the remaining two cover cross-cutting issues and organizational matters. They are distinct but interrelated in nature to facilitate cooperation in addressing food insecurity and malnutrition in the CARICOM region. The PCs are supported by eight corresponding Strategic Thrusts as follows:

5.5 **Programme Component 1: Food Availability** – (a) Promotion of increased availability of regionally produced quality nutritious food (looking at the whole supply chain from farmer to consumer) at remunerative market prices so as to increase production, productivity and returns to farmers through agricultural innovation. (b) Removal of non-tariff barriers to trade (SPS-TBT barriers) to decrease marketing costs and facilitate access to and distribution of food within the

Region. (c) Development of strategies to address regional transportation so as to reduce distribution costs and improve the movement of food commodities throughout the Region.

**Strategic Thrust 1:** Promote sustainable production of local, safe and nutritious foods by providing incentives for their production by small-scale producers

**Strategic Thrust 2:** Promote conducive and efficient food marketing systems and trade to increase the availability of nutritious and safe foods in areas and locations where food insecure and vulnerable persons and households reside.

5.6 **Programme Component 2: Food Access** – Establish programmes to help rural farming households diversify away from direct production of food commodities to becoming agribusiness entrepreneurs dealing with non-food and high value commodities, non-farm agricultural enterprises, especially in the value-addition processing industries, and non-agricultural rural enterprises such as cultural/agro-tourism, forestry and services. (Investments must be linked to creating greater opportunities (employment, incomes) in food industries for the neediest households, and be linked to small-scale food production).

**Strategic Thrust 3:** Encourage greater investment in food and agro-based industries in such ways as to increase incomes, employment and access to food by the most vulnerable households and population groups.

5.7 **Programme Component 3: Food Utilization/Nutritional Adequacy** - Promotion of healthy Caribbean diets and optimal nutrition, making maximum use of locally grown, nutritious foods to reduce significantly the incidence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as hypertension, diabetes and heart failure, and the prevalence of obesity and malnutrition, especially targeting children and adolescents.

**Strategic Thrust 4:** Promote public education and undertake advocacy aimed at sensitizing and educating relevant governmental stakeholders, regional and national civil society organisations, commercial food sectors and the public at large about the importance of good nutrition and about the health consequences of current food consumption patterns among all households including those that are resource-poor.

5.8 **Programme Component 4: Stability of Food Supply** - Food Security and Emergency/Shortage Relief/Sustainable Food Trade Development. Building resilience to the recurring threats to food security bearing in mind that the Region is prone to the risks posed by climate change and natural disasters, through the establishment of a Regional Information and Early Warning System for Food and Nutrition Security, the construction of risk profiles for the Region's main crops in support of emergency preparedness, agricultural risk management and crop insurance and preparation of a Disaster Management and Mitigation Plan. The risk of losing crops, livestock or other products is a major disincentive to small scale agricultural producers. Shocks in the form of natural disasters such as hurricanes, droughts or pest all reduce incentives to produce, as do man-made risks, in particular praedial larceny. Often, markets do not adequately allow for managing such risks, because of price competition and perceived high administrative costs by private insurance companies in dealing with small farmers. This is associated with difficulties in designing appropriate insurance products or in the case of small economies, insufficient insurance market sizes to spread risk across participants.

**Strategic Thrust 5:** Strengthen the Region's capacity to deal effectively with emergency conditions and minimise their negative short- and long-term impacts on food security and nutrition, especially among food-insecure households and those most vulnerable to food insecurity.

**Strategic Thrust 6:** Establish an Integrated Regional Food and Nutrition Security Information System to Effectively Forecast, Plan and Monitor Basic Food Supplies, Nutrition Conditions, Intra- and Inter-Regional Food Trade and Identify the Food Insecure and Those Vulnerable to Food Insecurity.

5.9 **Programme Component 5: Crosscutting Issues** – Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies, Bio-fuels and technology

**Strategic Thrust 7:** Identify and address emerging food and nutrition security issues, particularly as these threaten the food security and nutrition status of the most vulnerable and marginalised households and population groups.

5.10 **Programme Component 6: Institutional and Organizational Development and Capacity-Building**

**Strategic Thrust 8:** Institutional and Organizational Development for Good Governance of Regional and National Food and Nutritional Security Actions.

5.11 The first activity to be carried out at the start of the implementation of the RFNSAP will be a baseline survey to determine the current state of food insecurity in the Member States. This will provide the basis for agreement on a common framework for priority setting and outcome targets and the current position of MS on a measurable scale of food security as a basis for determining the rate and extent of progress towards the goal of food security over time in successive plan periods. Follow-up surveys will be done every year after the start of operations under the RFNSAP.

5.12 Detailed information on RFNSAP Programme Components (and corresponding Strategic Thrusts), and a chronogram of activities to be carried out as well as a conceptual diagram of the CARICOM Integrated Food and Nutrition Security Framework, appear in the Annexes.

## **6. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND COORDINATION MECHANISMS**

### **Advocacy for Good Leadership and Governance**

6.1 To improve food security and general nutrition levels, effective leadership, development, and good governance are central elements of any strategy. Leadership must be exercised and policymakers need to engage with the issues of food and nutrition security. Building political awareness of the deleterious effects of malnutrition on welfare and on development prospects at the local level is crucial. The message that poverty is an intrinsic component of food and nutrition insecurity must be disseminated widely.

6.2 Advocacy is a critical element of any effort to raise the policy profile of food security and nutrition. Indeed, a key component of the advocacy effort will be raising the general level of knowledge among the population at large of the importance of good nutrition so that malnutrition becomes a political issue for which political leaders, the government, and individual sectors of government are held accountable by CSOs and by the general public.

### **Coordination**

6.3 Food and nutrition security are cross-cutting issues. With no strong sector advocates responsible for seeing that attention is paid to these issues, they can easily be ignored or addressed in an uncoordinated piece-meal fashion.

6.4 A national institution should be vested with statutory powers to direct action effectively on these issues across sectors. It must be given responsibility for coordinating and overseeing necessary actions against malnutrition at the level of the relevant sectors, engage in budgeting and planning processes that guide the allocation of the resources required to the various technical sectors concerned, holding those sectors accountable for the use of their resources.

6.5 The national entity's principal role lies in ensuring that the sectors responsible for food production, importation, distribution and trade and food crisis management fulfil adequately their mandated tasks that contribute to food security. Similarly, it will ensure effective joint action by the health, education, and water and sanitation sectors, in particular, towards the attainment of good nutritional status for all citizens.

### **Empowerment**

6.6 Reflecting a human-rights approach to food and nutrition security, empowerment of duty-bearers and rights-holders is an essential component of the strategy. It is important that the comparative strengths and weaknesses of various actors be recognised. Each group of actors needs strengthening to differing degrees and in different ways. Duty-bearers must be assisted to recognise their responsibilities and have sufficient capacity to fulfil them, while rights-holders must be assisted to recognise their rights and engage in the policy process to argue for their fulfilment. Capacity and knowledge must be built among local government leaders and officers so that they are able to carry out their duties effectively in order to ensure that the right-to-food of all citizens is respected adequately.

### **Decentralisation**

6.7 Ultimately, food and nutrition security needs to be attained by households and individuals where they live. The devolution of action under this strategy to local governments is therefore essential.

### **Gender Targeting**

6.8 It is crucial to mainstream gender within the Action Plan. Improving nutrition inherently requires a strong gender perspective to achieve lasting success. In the end, all children born in the region will be raised so that they are enabled to attain their full potential over their lifespan. It is the care that they receive from conception through the first two years of life that is biologically the most critical for them in this regard.

### **Human Resource Capacity Building**

6.9 Improved nutrition requires access to knowledge on how to prepare and maintain a proper, balanced diet and how to provide proper feeding, care and medical attention to children and other dependents. All levels of policy implementation must be empowered to know how to make use of available resources to achieve good nutritional status and a healthy, active life. The nutrition education messages that need to be learned include: components of a balanced diet and information on how locally available foods can be used to build balanced diets, the value of exclusive breastfeeding, the importance of prenatal care and regular child growth monitoring, maintaining clean water, sanitation and a healthy environment, and the control of infant and childhood illnesses.

### **General Principles**

6.10 The relevant CARICOM sector institutions (see paras. 7.10 -7.15 below) will coordinate the implementation of the RFNSP and RFNSAP, while relevant government agencies will be responsible for overseeing the implementation and preparation of more detailed national action plans within the general framework of the RFNSAP. Partnership and cooperation arrangements with international organisations, donor agencies, private sector, industry associations and the wider community at the regional and national levels will also be actively sought where required to ensure participation of all stakeholders in the implementation process.

6.11 For the successful implementation of the RFNSP/RFNSAP, sustained political will and adequate resources will be necessary; an appropriate institutional framework and/or mechanism for the coordination and management of resources and activities will need to be created; and an implementation strategy will need to be formulated and agreed by CARICOM's governing bodies (COTED and COSHOD, Community Council and the Conference of Heads of Government).

### **Regional Institutional Governance of Food Security and Nutrition**

6.12 In the area of governance for regional food and nutrition security, CARICOM shall be guided by the following considerations:

- Food security should be a recurring item on the agenda of COTED (Agriculture), the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) and the Conference of the Heads of Government.
- Food and nutrition security, being a multidimensional issue, it may be appropriate that responsibility for it be shared between COTED and (COHSOD) reporting periodically to a Head of Government on the State of Food Insecurity in the Caribbean Region. The preparation of this report could be entrusted to CARPHA/CFNI/CARDI under the oversight of the CCS.
- At regional level, the organizational structure should be minimal yet effective, making maximum use of, but not limited to, existing resources. There is a role and function for CCS to plan, foster and promote food security; this will require additional human resources.



- The implementation mechanism at national and regional levels should be autonomous with public and private sector representation and provided with an independent budget in the interest of economic efficiency and effectiveness and to ensure its financial and political independence.
- A Regional Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security Council (RAFNSC) will be responsible for the development and preparation of regional multi-sector programmes for submission to COTED and COHSOD as well as for the oversight of these programmes.
- For consideration of the recurring agenda item on food and nutrition security, COTED and COHSOD should constitute a joint technical advisory committee on food and nutrition security. CCS will then do the ground work to convene this sub-committee every six months (possibly through alternate video conferencing and face to face meetings at CCS HQ in Georgetown).
- Member States should ensure consistency at the national level with regional initiatives on food security policy.
- The governance and programmes of regional institutions, such as CARDI, CARPHA, CFRM, CAHFSA, CDEMA, CROSQ, etc., working in the agriculture and food and nutrition sectors should be reviewed and appropriately transformed to incorporate the dimension of food and nutrition security, without prejudice to the achievement of their core mandate.
- Linkages with other food security initiatives (e.g. Hunger-free Latin America and the Caribbean).
- The Region presently has a Disaster Mitigation fund and a food security window should be opened under this fund dealing with issues of availability, access, use and stability. This fund will be triggered when the region faces economic shocks and natural disasters (which are aggravated by the effects of climate) such as floods, hurricanes etc.
- SPS – There is need for a regional programme to keep farming practices and the entire value chain under continuous review and certify their fulfilment of SPS regulations on the use of pesticides and other agricultural chemicals, maximum levels of chemical residues etc., and appropriate post-harvest storage and handling;
- A comprehensive baseline survey of the food security, nutrition and right to food situation in the Region should be carried out. This survey should generate *inter alia* statistics on the determinants of food demand.

### **Institutional Framework**

6.13 Having learned from past initiatives, and to give effect to the provisions of Article 57 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas concerning the implementation of the CAP of which the RFNSP is an integral element, the policy implementation mechanisms will be founded on the principles of public-private partnership, financial and operational autonomy and vested with the **resources, budget and legal authority** to ensure that approved RFNSAP activities are undertaken at either regional or national level. Specifically, the institutional framework should:

- facilitate the integration with the relevant policy environment, and thus prevent implementation of diffuse, punctual and uncoordinated actions;
- generate and disseminate critical information for planning and monitoring;
- facilitate inclusiveness and participation of actors in the private commercial sector;
- promote the alignment of national food and nutrition security and relevant sector policies with the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy;
- mobilise adequate support infrastructure and technical capacity;
- facilitate effective interface throughout the Region between the CARICOM Secretariat and relevant institutions in MS which have needed technical capacity and adequate human and financial resources;
- provide a clear mandate for the CCS that spells out its roles in coordination, management, oversight, action implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

6.14 Consideration of the lessons learnt underscores the importance and timeliness of “**the creation of an institutional framework to ensure integrated and concerted action at the national and regional levels to achieve the goal of food and nutrition security and facilitate the linkages between the various levels and the global level**” through the constitution:

- **at the national level**, of National Food and Nutrition Security Committees/Councils comprising all the relevant ministries, the private sector, CSO/NGO representatives as well as representatives from Consumer Groups with a rotating Chair and a permanent technical secretariat, to coordinate, manage and oversee the preparation and implementation of national Food and Nutrition Security Policy measures and action programmes, and ensure their coherence with the RFNSP; and
- **at the regional level**, of an Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security Council, serviced by a Food and Nutrition Security Desk within the CCS”.

6.15 In the framework of the RFNSP, approved by the COTED (Agriculture) in October 2010, in line with developments at the global and national levels and so as to reap benefits of coordination, harmonization and concerted action, Member States have already agreed to establish a Regional Food and Nutrition Security Council (RFNSC), comprising representatives of Member States and regional institutions (public and private sectors, civil society/consumer representative bodies and farmers’ organizations), having its focal point in the CARICOM Secretariat (CCS). The mandate of this body should be expanded to cover agriculture, forestry and fisheries issues and this should be reflected in its name and functions. Thus the Regional Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security Council (RAFNSC) will provide oversight, management and direction for implementation of the CAP as well as the RFNSP, which constitutes the first pillar of the CAP.

6.16 As set out in the RFNSP, CARICOM Member States are encouraged to make similar institutional arrangements at national level, based on the principle of public-private sector partnership and giving a voice to civil society and, where appropriate, to indigenous peoples. Further, the CCS will take appropriate administrative action to ensure that it is capable of discharging its new functions and responsibilities in the field of food and nutrition security under the RFNSP.

### **Functions and Specific Terms of Reference for the RAFNSC**

6.17 The Regional Council will report directly to the COTED (Agriculture). It will be responsible for providing overall policy guidance for the RFNSAP (essentially broad policy thrusts and conceptual oversight, including review of performance evaluations for the Action Plan as a whole). More specifically, the RAFNSC will be responsible for:

- Providing general policy guidance for the implementation of the plan;
- Advising national food and nutrition security councils and other bodies on establishing mechanisms for redress, as mandated by the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy;
- Reviewing progress and advising on necessary adjustments;
- Reviewing reports for submission to the Heads of Government and other relevant bodies of the CARICOM governance system.

### **Membership and Composition of the RAFNSC**

6.18 **Regional Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security Council (RAFNSC)** The Regional Council will comprise the following representations:

- Chair of the Council for Finance and Planning (COFAP)
- Chair of COTED
- Chair of COSHOD
- Academic and Research Institutions (3)

- Caribbean Commission on Human Rights
- Regional representatives of CSOs/NGOs/Producers Organizations (3)
- Representatives of National Councils on Food and Nutrition Security:
  - Trinidad and Tobago/ Guyana/Suriname (2)
  - Jamaica/Bahamas/ Belize/Haiti (2)
  - Organization of Eastern Caribbean States -OECS/Barbados (2)

### **Existing Institutional Arrangements and Coordination Mechanisms**

6.19 The mandates and functions of several existing CARICOM technical institutions cover some of the activity programmes assigned priority by the COTED for implementation in the RFNSAP. These are:

- **Caribbean Research & Development Institute (CARDI)** Trinidad & Tobago Agricultural research, development and outreach;
- **Office of Trade Negotiations (OTN)** Guyana Regional, multi-sector trade issues and agreements including agriculture;
- **Caribbean Regional Fishery Mechanism Secretariat (CRFM)** Belize Regional fishery policies and implementation mechanisms;
- **Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA)** Suriname Responsible for agricultural public health and food safety (not yet in operation);
- **Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA)(Successor agency to the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute (CFNI)** Jamaica/T&T Food and nutrition related issues, incl. food safety and testing of food);
- **Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI)** St. Lucia Human health related environmental health issues (air/water), water resource management, pesticides residues, marine life safety in coastal areas, etc.)
- **Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC)**, the **Caribbean Regional Drug Testing Laboratory (CRDTL)** and the **Caribbean Health Research Council (CHRC)**;
- **Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH)** Barbados Improving and developing meteorological and hydrological services through training, research, investigations, and the provision of related specialized services and advice;
- **Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)** Barbados Coordination of regional disaster management
- **Caribbean Regional Organization for Standards & Quality (CROSQ)** Barbados Facilitation of development of standards for agricultural products and produce).

6.20 To deal with the 9 Key Binding Constraints (KBC) identified under the Jagdeo Initiative for Sustainable Agricultural Development, **Technical Management Advisory Committees (TMACs)** were set up within a new regional framework of coordination and implementation mechanisms. Each TMAC is assigned a Lead Country and Lead Agency, includes major stakeholders and institutions concerned by the respective KCB, and is chaired by the Minister of Agriculture of the Lead Country<sup>5</sup>

6.21 To ensure proper cooperation and communication among the 9 KBC TMACs, a **Committee of all Lead Agencies** meets annually to coordinate activities, avoid duplication in work programs and provide technical direction. The **CARICOM Agricultural Cluster Group (CFNI,**

<sup>5</sup> The TMAC work programs outline priority actions and results and annual progress reports are submitted to COTED Agriculture. Financing of TMAC work programs depends largely, however, on external support by development partners, which has to be attracted by the lead country or the lead agency. Moreover, the effectiveness of the TMACs has been constrained by the lack of clearly defined Terms of Reference, technical and administrative support and a communication strategy.

CRFM, CAHFSA, CEHI, CDEMA, FAO, IICA, UWI, UG, etc.) also meets annually under the chairmanship of CARDI to coordinate work programs and resource mobilization, identify synergies and avoid duplication. These bodies are subject to the same constraints as the TMACs.

6.22 It is noteworthy, however, that the Community institutions currently have a purely advisory role, lack executive authority and enjoy widely varying levels of financial support and acceptance among Member States. Moreover, there appears to be no overall institutional mechanism to ensure effective coordination of their activities. In the implementation strategy, these constraints will have to be taken into account and actions identified and agreed upon for their removal. Specific resources will also need to be earmarked for the strengthening and rationalization of the regional institutional framework insofar as it deals with issues of food and nutrition security.

### **Proposed Reform of the Institutional Framework and Coordination Mechanisms**

6.23 The CARDI led Agricultural Cluster and Jagdeo Initiative TMAC Lead Agency Committees and the current Technical Working Group (TWG), responsible for the preparation of the CAP/RFNSP/RFNSAP, should be reconstituted as a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to provide technical support and advice to CCS. More specifically the TAC would:

- provide technical direction for the implementation of the RFNSAP/CAP;
- ensure synergies among all the regional policies concerning food and agriculture and integrated work programming without duplication of activity;
- provide technical advice on progress achieved regarding RFNSAP implementation; and,
- improve communication and coordination among core community institutions concerned with agricultural matters.

The reports of this technical body should be submitted for consideration to all Member States 2-3 weeks ahead of COTED meetings.

6.24 **CARICOM - Institutional Retooling:** The Agriculture Unit within the CCS Agriculture and Industry Program should be upgraded to a **Department for Community Agriculture and Food and Nutrition Security** (DCAFNS) with a Department Head for Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Security; the functions and responsibilities of this Department under the RFNSP would be:

- **Public advocacy and awareness campaign** to all Ministries (officials and Ministers) and relevant institutions - on the Action Plan and the need for food and nutrition security (including the Right to Food) with a strong regional focus and a holistic, value chain approach.
- **Coordination, management and facilitation** through related CARICOM institutions (CARDI, CAHFSA, CFNI, CFRM, CEHI, CDEMA, CROSQ, CIMH), key associated institutions (especially UWI, UG, University of Suriname (US), OECS) and key stakeholders from the private sector (especially CABA, CAFAN CAIC, CSOs/NGOs etc) of activities to ensure synergies and facilitate cooperation and coordination among stakeholders and effected through:
  - ✚ Established nucleus at the regional level (RAFNSC) and national nodes (National Councils) for mandatory coordination, information exchange etc. This must be established in a legal framework for budgeting and authority.
  - ✚ Well resourced Implementation Unit (DCAFNS) for the Action Plan at the CCS – with specific Terms of Reference and human resources expertise and capacity.

6.25 The DCAFNS will have the following operational responsibilities in connection with the implementation of all regional activities of the Action Plan:

- ❖ Ensure compliance with agreed work plans by maintaining linkages with regional institutions and other partners to ensure synergy with other public and civil society programmes

- ❖ Manage the RFNSAP monitoring system based on information collected at regional and national levels
- ❖ Assist with the administrative management and support for all project components and carry out the planning and delivery of activities emanating from the regional level, being vigilant that good governance practices are consistently applied to all action programmes and activities
- ❖ Facilitate access to global expertise from international development partners and international NGOs.

6.26 On the administrative side the DCAFNS will:

- ❖ Be responsible for regional level administrative management of the programme ensuring that the funds allocated to the programme are managed effectively, including with transparency and integrity of all transactions in accordance with the rule of law,
- ❖ Prepare monthly and semi-annual reports
- ❖ Conduct mid-term reviews and end-of-project evaluations
- ❖ Contribute to administrative backstopping of the national implementing entities.

6.27 On the technical side, the DCAFNS professionals will work closely with CARICOM regional institutions such as CARDI, CAHFSA, CROSO, CCCCC, CFNI, CDEMA and others and have as a major responsibility the promotion of strategies that result in ensuring the continuation of their functions by institutionalizing the functions within regional and national institutions beyond the period of the RFNSAP. There will also be short term consultants to perform specific tasks such as preparation of analytical studies and delivery of training courses in such areas as nutrition, trans-boundary diseases and forestry/tourism linkages.

6.28 **Capacity strengthening** The Implementation Unit will design and coordinate the program of work for capacity strengthening. This function will be facilitated by a network of experts to provide the relevant inputs.

6.29 **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)** of the RFNSAP in the region will involve the continuous monitoring of situation, constraints, opportunities, progress, etc. and feed back to plan design and decision makers. The reviews will be guided by RFNSP/AP implementation principles, including those related to the Right to Food, while taking into consideration dynamic regional and global developments during the implementation period. The reviews will be conducted by independent external institutions as much as possible and the results will serve to define remedial actions as needed in the implementation process.

- ✚ The DCAFNS will rely on various sources of information for delivery of progress on the Plan every 6 months;
- ✚ The DCAFNS will also ensure the carrying out of impact monitoring and evaluation every two years. This function will be outsourced to ensure transparency.
- ✚ Support to the establishment/utilization of an integrated electronic information platform at the national level.
- ✚ Impact evaluations are to rely on various sources of information – such as CFNI, MOA, MOH, MOE and National Statistical Units.

6.30 **Provision of technical support** – the DCAFNS will support the LTAs in the mobilization of expertise to implement the work plan related to technical support - such as workshops, short term technical expertise etc. An agenda for South – South technical cooperation will be established.

## **Public Awareness and Partnership with Civil Society and the Private Sector**

6.31 **Dissemination of information** – Success in the implementation of the RFNSP/RFNSAP will require the creation and maintenance of a clear understanding by all stakeholders of the goals established and the ways and means by which they are to be achieved. An effective Communication and Public Information programme (CPIP) is required to create the widest possible public awareness of what the Regional Policy and Action Plan intend to achieve and how they will go about doing this. Special efforts should be made to reach out to grass root levels and those who are suffering hunger or are food insecure and/or malnourished.

6.32 The CPIP should also serve to keep all stakeholders continuously informed about progress in RFNSAP implementation and its effects and impact. This is an important instrument for holding those responsible for RFNSAP implementation accountable, while it provides transparency for the decisions that are made based on the periodic review of progress. Social communication and monitoring and evaluation should go hand-in-hand, with the latter providing information for the former. This function will be performed by establishing a central integrated electronic platform. Other means of information dissemination will be through the production of bulletins – newsletters – use of several distribution points and means.

6.33 **Civil Society and Non-Governmental Organizations** In accordance with the relevant decisions of the CARICOM Heads of Government in 2003, CARICOM will respect and recognize the principles of CSO self organization and self autonomy when appointing their representatives to the RAFNSC. Special attention will be devoted to ensuring not only NGO representation but also that of People and Community-Based Organizations and Social Movements.

6.34 **Establishment of national and regional platforms/networks of stakeholders for civil society and private sectors to inform and influence the decision making process and to be involved in, and take responsibility for aspects of implementation.** They would (a) participate in and technically contribute to RFNSAP M&E, (b) initiate and contribute to dialogue on current FNS issues, (c) provide advice and feedback to the Regional Council (through direct participation by CSO/NGO representatives on the Council), and (d) participate in social communication and advocacy regarding food and nutrition security issues and the Right to Food in the Region, and the need for response actions. In this regard, steps will be taken to ensure that CSOs are strengthened by facilitating their access to the required resources (human and financial) to discharge these responsibilities. A fund for this purpose is proposed.

## **National Level Coordination, Management and Implementation**

6.35 The planning and delivery of the major national level RFNSAP activities will be through the arrangements developed by respective Member States, with the support of the DCAFNS. The final form of these mechanisms will be determined by each Member State on the basis of its requirements and needs. However the institutional structure chosen must be such as to enable the efficient and effective performance of the essential functions of formulation, implementation and coordination of activities, mobilisation of partners, monitoring and evaluation and the assurance of multi-sector inter-ministerial collaboration. Moreover, national activities must be integrated into the work programmes of the relevant ministries in each Member State and not viewed as “stand-alone” initiatives accorded special and differential treatment.

6.36 Governance arrangements must ensure transparency, accountability, participation, respect for human rights, responsiveness, non-discrimination, equity, etc. And, in accordance with the RFNSP, the country-level institutional framework should include redress mechanisms when governance practices fall short of agreed upon standards, or when the right to food is not respected,

protected or not adequately fulfilled for certain individuals. The final form of the institutional framework should be decided by each Member State based on an institutional assessment carried out as part of the process of formulating a national FNS policy and action plan.

6.37 The national project management arrangements will be funded by the national government and donors and should be seen as part of the normal requirements for in-country project delivery. The tasks will include ensuring compliance with agreed work plans, maintaining linkages with national/regional institutions and other partners to ensure synergy with other programmes, facilitating the obtaining of information/data required to meet project needs, assisting with the administrative management and support for all project components, planning and organization of national training activities and participation in regional activities, procurement of goods (equipment and supplies) and the provision of services (consultants, experts) and maintaining financial records of national programme activities.

### **Next Steps**

6.38 The proposed changes in the existing institutional framework and coordination mechanisms outlined in the preceding sections need to be discussed, agreed upon by COFAP, COTED, and COHSOD and included in the RFNSAP in order to provide an enabling framework for effective and coordinated action at the regional and national levels.

6.39 The design for the implementation of the RFNSAP must also take into account the fact that at national level, readiness and capacity for implementation will be constrained by varying levels of human and financial resources and technical capability as well as the interest in and priority accorded to agricultural development, food and nutrition security and the regional integration process. It will therefore be essential to commence activity in those areas where there is a clear community of interest shared by all Member States with clearly defined activities, timelines, responsibilities, resource requirements and monitoring mechanisms.

6.40 Given the fact, highlighted in all the studies, that food price volatility around a rising trend will remain a permanent feature of international food commodity markets, the region needs to have a forward looking mechanism, possibly within the institutional framework established for the ISFNS and the Early Warning System, which examines global agri-food commodity trends, anticipates price shocks and proactively takes steps to address them such as negotiating supplies with large commodity cartels and promoting private sector hedging on the commodity futures market.



## 7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE ACTION PLAN

### Overview

7.1 The RFNSP and the RFNSAP shall be reviewed periodically and their effects and impacts evaluated at the end of the first five year period in 2016, or more frequently as deemed necessary. The reviews will be guided by the RFNSP implementation principles, including those with respect to the right to food and good governance, while taking into account dynamic regional and global developments during the implementation period. The reviews will be conducted by an independent external institution and the results will serve to define remedial actions as needed in the implementation process. The final impact evaluation will be conducted by an independent external institution and will focus on the achievement of the RFNSP/RFNSAP objectives.

### Monitoring the Implementation of the RFNSAP

7.2 As the Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy points out, to facilitate effective decision making the Action Plan implementation process will need to be monitored as well as the Plan's impacts on food security, nutrition and the protection and realization of the right to food. In addition, the Region's vulnerability to natural disasters, exacerbated by the effects of climate change, and its dependence on external markets for the greater part of its food supplies, underline the importance for governments to have access to timely, reliable and accurate information on domestic food output, availability and prices, and the nature, extent and geographic distribution of food security and nutrition vulnerability, including crop yields and areas planted, as part of an early warning system of probable crop failures, sharply rising food prices and other shocks.

7.3 There is, therefore, a need for monitoring systems at national and regional levels to fulfil three purposes:

- inform national and regional decision-makers and stakeholders in relation to disaster management, mitigation and response through early warning systems
- inform the oversight and management of the process of implementation of the RFNSP and the Action Plan in order to decide on remedial actions in the implementation process – performance monitoring
- provide information about the impacts of the RFNSAP in achieving its time-bound overall and operational objectives as a basis for assessing the need for additional actions to be included in the Action Plan – impact monitoring.

7.4 With respect to establishing a regional ISFNS (see Section on Food Access Actions), steps will be taken to harmonise data collection and analysis of agricultural and climate statistics across Member States and regional bodies applying uniform criteria to prepare and provide updates, analysis and recommendations relating to preparedness for shocks.

7.5 Performance and impact monitoring will be closely tied to the log frame that underlies the RFNSP Action Plan and the log frames of national FNS Action Plans. Performance monitoring will be a continuous process and will involve the implementation of periodic work plans (see Chapter 9 Preliminary Phase-Immediate Actions) focusing on outputs to be produced, activities, planned resource flows and the application of good governance practices. By continuous monitoring of the implementation process, information is generated for decision makers and other actors on the remedial actions to be implemented to keep the Plan on track if this should prove necessary.



7.6 Impact monitoring links up directly with the overall and operational objectives and their achievement. It assumes that certain minimum baseline information is available<sup>6</sup>. Time is needed to produce measurable and meaningful changes in the conditions described in the objective statements. Consequently, impact monitoring will take place periodically, perhaps every two or three years, at the same time broadly keeping track of external changes that also impact on food and nutrition security, and on the protection and realisation of the right to food. Performance and impact monitoring are directly linked: poor performance in implementing the RFNSP Action Plan cannot be expected to produce much impact in achieving the Plan's objectives.

### **Thematic evaluations**

7.7 In addition to monitoring and making use of FNS monitoring information, the CARICOM Secretariat will commission thematic evaluations of policy and strategic issues relevant to food and nutrition security and to the protection and realisation of the right to food. The purpose is to conduct an in-depth analysis of current regional and national issues allowing food and nutrition security to be cast in a broader development context. These thematic evaluations will be designed to produce concrete recommendations to decision makers and actors for actions that need to be included in the Action Plan.

### **Information flows**

7.8 Both horizontal and vertical information flows need to be considered and this requires close coordination among national sector agencies, Member States, and international organisations. Food and nutrition security issues and actions are multi-sector and multi-disciplinary in nature. Thus, at both regional and national levels, information from different sources (such as ministerial information management systems, research studies, national surveys and those conducted by non-governmental organizations,) needs to be brought together to support comprehensive measurement of RFNSAP impacts over time. This issue will receive special attention through the setting up of an information-sharing and exchange mechanism for the collation of information from different sources.

7.9 Monitoring and evaluation of the RFNSAP at regional levels will largely depend on information produced in each of the Member States. Thus, a mechanism will be set up to facilitate the flow of information from national to regional level guided by the monitoring framework established at regional level in consultation with Member States. The return flow of information from regional to national levels will consist of integrated and comparative information analysis of interest to Member States, while also informing about extra-regional developments that affect the CARICOM Region and its Member States.

### **Implementation of the RFNSAP M&E Process**

7.10 Special attention in setting up monitoring systems will be given to the following M&E principles:

- The monitoring process consists of collecting, collating, processing, analyzing, interpreting and disseminating information, and adequate capacity needs to exist and adequate resources need to be allocated for each of these monitoring activities. Dissemination of well-targeted monitoring information is critical to have an impact on decision making.
- Development of a monitoring framework is an important first activity that is to be undertaken in direct consultation with targeted users of the monitoring information and with direct reference to the log frame of the RFNSAP.

---

<sup>6</sup> It may involve, for example, updating the information contained in Overview of Vulnerability and Food and Nutrition Security in the Caribbean, CFNI (August 2007) and Challenges and Outlook for the Caribbean Region, FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean (April 2010), which were used in the formulation of CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy of 2010.

- The monitoring frameworks will cover the following items: (a) performance and impact indicators that are SMART<sup>7</sup>, (b) frequency of measurement of each indicator, (c) information/data needed for each indicator, (d) information/data transformations required to construct the indicator, (e) source(s) of the needed information/data and methods of obtaining the information/data, (f) responsibilities for producing, analyzing and disseminating each indicator. An assessment of information/data availability and comparing the results against the monitoring framework will identify information/data and/or capacity gaps.
- In implementing the monitoring framework, an incremental approach will be used, that is, in a first phase, a minimum set of core indicators will be defined guided by the assessment of information availability. The analysis of the minimum set of indicators will nevertheless tell a meaningful story. In time and in subsequent phases the set of indicators can be expanded, as it becomes clear where to invest to fill information gaps and enhance monitoring capacities.

---

<sup>7</sup> Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Reliable and Time-bound.

## 8. IMPLEMENTATION WORK PLAN

8.1 As pointed out in Chapter 6, the RFNSAP comprises six Programme Components (PC) four of which correspond to the four policy objectives of the RFNSP; the remaining two cover cross-cutting issues and organizational matters. Eight Strategic Thrusts are defined, each of which is supported by Action Programme(s), Activities, Responsible Agencies and Work Schedules. A detailed break-down of the RFNSAP is summarized in a Chronogram/Matrix (see Annex 1).

### PHASE 1 IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

#### **Programme Component 1: Food Availability**

8.2 The identified short term priorities are:

- Identification of the supply of selected priority commodities in each MS and linking food producers/suppliers to markets (pilot project driven by CaFAN - farmers/private sector and supported by CCS to reduce the imports of fruits, vegetables and root crops).
- Adoption of the value chain approach by MS for selected commodities taking into account lessons learned and transfer of models developed with all stakeholders regarding the value chains under the FAO/CC Food Security Project.

#### **Programme Component 2: Food Access**

8.3 Removal of non-tariff barriers to trade (SPS-TBT barriers) that increase marketing costs and hinder access to and distribution of food within the Region, as well as the development of strategies to address regional transportation so as to reduce distribution costs and improve the movement of food commodities across the Region:

1. Bring CAHFSA into full operation.
2. Approve the SPS protocols for trade facilitation.
3. Fast track the harmonisation of Food Safety Legislation.
4. Agree on appropriate nutritional targets at national and regional levels.

#### **Programme Component 3: Food Utilization**

8.4 Promotion of healthy Caribbean diets and optimal nutrition to reduce Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), obesity and malnutrition, especially at all stages of the education system:

1. Promotion of breast feeding and school feeding programmes. Initiate a public education campaign:
  - a. To encourage a school policy on vending with more nutritious products and the removal of 'deleterious' products (targeting in the first instance the pre-primary, primary and secondary levels).
2. Promote and support appropriate infant and young child feeding practices at public/private hospitals, clinics, health centres and schools
  - a. Breastfeeding
    - i. Assess status of BFHI of MS
    - ii. Design of communication strategy on breastfeeding
    - iii. Conduct training of health workers in breastfeeding practices

- b. Young Child Feeding (YCF)
  - i. Assess feeding practices
  - ii. Design communication strategies for execution by MS on YCF practices.
- 3. Develop and implement programmes to influence food tastes and preferences in schools and other institutions:
  - a. Develop an evaluation tool to assess the levels of inclusion of nutrition and health in the present curricula.
  - b. Advocate that at least 50% of food used in school meals should come from local or regional production.
  - c. Review current school gardening programmes to identify challenges and opportunities.
  - d. Develop regional standards and guidelines on meals served in school cafeterias and sold on school compounds.
  - e. Collection and dissemination of recipes for local food preparations throughout the region and;
  - f. Identification of existing best practices in this regard across the region.
- 4. Promote current regional recommended population dietary goals.
- 5. Develop and disseminate food based dietary guidelines for MS.
- 6. Encourage physical activity in line with WHO recommendations.
  - a. Promotion of campaigns to emphasize benefits of PA.
  - b. Design educational materials.
  - c. Promote PA/wellness programmes in work places.
- 7. Consider Taxes on selected items – highly non nutritious foods
- 8. Promotion of the School Feeding Programme based on appropriate dietary guidelines using local foods
- 9. Nutrition education campaign for preparation and use of locally produced foods, use of school curriculum – making available the nutritional content of local produce – use of labels on value added products sold in supermarkets, etc.
- 10. Enlist national media to highlight regularly the use of local foods etc...recipes,
- 11. Dialogue with chefs and promotion of national and regional competitions for best local dishes.
- 12. Regional models and messaging for disseminating information for use by all MS (as used in the HIV Aids campaigns in the Region)
- 13. Encouraging as national/regional policy the use of a specified percentage of domestic agricultural commodities in the food service sector.

#### **Programme Component 4: Stability of Food Supply**

8.5 Building of resilience to the recurring threats to food security, bearing in mind that the Region is prone to the risks posed by climate change and natural disasters, through the establishment of a Regional Information and Early Warning System for Food and Nutrition Security, the construction of risk profiles for the Region's main crops in support of emergency preparedness, agricultural risk management and crop insurance.

8.6 Identification and mapping of vulnerable groups (who are the food insecure, why are they food insecure and where are they located?) with special emphasis on marginalised groups including women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, and establishment of a national and regional database of this information.

1. Carry out a baseline study of the state of food insecurity and vulnerability within CARICOM.
2. Complete the definition and quantification of the vulnerable groups and identification for all MS (based on work currently being done by CFNI under the Food Security Project) for defining national programmes and policies.
3. Enhance/encourage/establish crop mapping systems (using existing technology including GPS) as a major tool to assist in forecasting production and gathering information on harvest estimates, losses and compensation.
  - a. Follow up on the recommendations of the Disaster Risk Management Workshop – (Antigua) including the proposal for agricultural crop insurance.
  - b. Completion of Praedial Larceny Legislation for at least seven MS and encouragement of implementation/enactment/enforcement (including farmer registration and introduction of a farmer and warehouse receipts system etc.).
  - c. Sharing of best practices for disaster preparedness – livestock care, crop damage, infrastructure.
  - d. Initiate action to establish a pilot project on agricultural insurance.
  - e. Expand the FAO programme on building national community resilience to disasters to all MS.
  - f. Promote the incorporation of insurance in agricultural loans.
  - g. Start the project for seed and other germ plasm collection.
  - h. Improve the innovative use of ICTS in extension/training in Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and pest and disease management.

**Programme Component 5: Emerging/Crosscutting Issues Climate Change Bio-technology Water Resource Development and Management Food Reserves and Hedging on the Commodity Futures Market**

8.7 Assist member states to develop and implement their Disaster Risk Management plans for drought and floods.

- Initiate discussions on a plan for expanded food storage reserves – to be supported by improved agro processing techniques so that there is an increased range of processed food products to enhance availability over a longer period of time
- Promote Climate Smart Agriculture
- Identify areas where rainwater harvesting is feasible and promote the establishment of RWH pilots
- Capacity building in Irrigation scheduling
- Capacity building in irrigation and drainage technology (esp maintenance and operation of irrigation systems) and Rainwater Harvesting technology
- Establishment of National Water Information systems
- Promote water reuse and recycling for agriculture

**Programme Component 6: Institutional and Policy Development**

8.8 **Action Area 1:** Coordination and Management

**Operational Objective:** Implement the RFNS Action Plan in effective, efficient and timely ways applying good governance practices

**Immediate Actions:**

1. Establishment of a coordination mechanism for interventions/initiatives in the agricultural sector – agricultural organisation cluster and in other relevant sectors; establishment of the

management mechanism to manage the implementation of the CAP/RFNSAP and links to the national coordinating mechanisms.

2. Initiate the strengthening of small farmers' organisations and 'clusters' to improve the availability of food - targeted at the household and individual levels. This will need to proceed in tandem with the strengthening of extension services' delivery of "tech packs" including innovations.
3. Develop a work plan for the first year, and subsequent annual work plans that take into account the results of performance monitoring of the RFNSAP;
4. Assess the capacity of the RFNSAP implementation arrangements (regional and national), identify any capacity gaps and formulate a plan to fill those gaps.
5. Undertake a governance assessment of key institutions and organisations to identify current governance practices and the need for changes therein, and develop an action plan based on the assessment results with the aim of improving governance of food security, nutrition and right to food actions.
6. Reach agreement among key decision makers and actors at different levels about practices to be considered good and appropriate, and widely disseminate these governance norms to all stakeholders including population groups that are to benefit from actions under the RFNSAP.

#### 8.9 **Action Area 2: Monitoring and Evaluation**

**Operational Objective:** Regularly collate, analyse and disseminate the necessary information for decision makers, key stakeholders and other actors about progress in implementation and impacts of the RFNSAP compared to its time-bound objectives.

##### **Immediate Actions:**

- Develop a monitoring framework covering two major components (a) performance monitoring and reporting, and (b) impact monitoring, in accordance with the general outline included in the M&E section;
- Assess the institutional capacity and internal and external information flows to implement the monitoring framework, and develop an action plan to implement the monitoring framework;
- Support the establishment and the utilisation of an electronic platform for the dissemination of monitoring information, integrating national and regional levels.

#### 8.10 **Action Area 3: Institutional Capacity Strengthening**

**Operational Objective:** Ensure that regional and national institutions and organisations that participate in implementing the RFNSAP have adequate capacities (mandates, human resource capacities, and internal organisation) to assume their roles and responsibilities in the implementation of the RFNSAP.

##### **Immediate Actions:**

- Undertake an institutional capacity assessment as part of a comprehensive Right to Food assessment at regional and national levels.
- Identify areas where institutional capacity strengthening is needed and develop appropriate corresponding action plans.
- Organise face-to-face training events as well as e-learning courses

#### 8.11 **Action Area 4: Provision of Technical Support**

**Operational Objective:** Identify technical support needs at regional and national levels and organise and manage timely technical support responses

**Immediate Actions:**

- Draw up an inventory of available relevant expertise in the CARICOM region and elsewhere;
- Mobilise short term technical expertise as needed, subject to financial resource availability;
- Establish an agenda for South-South and intra-regional technical cooperation, and make the necessary contacts in other countries to initiate discussions about cooperative arrangements.

8.12 **Action Area 5: Resource Mobilisation and Administration**

**Operational Objective:** Mobilise adequate resources from different sources and manage those resources in an effective and transparent manner in support of the implementation of the RFNSAP.

**Immediate Actions:**

- Establish an RFNS Donor Fund group coordinated by the Caribbean Development Bank
- Develop profiles of donor and financial institutions (their policies, areas of interest and requirements) to be made available to relevant stake holders
- Prepare informational materials targeted at different donor groups as well as at national budget decision makers about the aims, goals and objectives of the RFNS Policy and Action Plan and their main strategic actions, and how these relate to internationally agreed goals such as the MDGs, Rights of the Child, Progressive Realisation of the Right to Food and other economic, social and cultural rights.
- Plan and execute a Donor Conference
- Develop capacity in project cycle management utilising available web based training materials
- Establish legislative and institutional frameworks to facilitate cross border investments.

## **PHASE 2 MEDIUM-LONG-TERM ACTIONS**

### **Programme Component 1: Food Availability**

8.13 **Strategic Thrust 1:** Promote sustainable production of local, safe and nutritious foods by providing incentives for their production by small-scale and other producers.

**Country Level Actions**

8.14 **Operational Objective 1.1:** Improve agricultural infrastructure to secure the production system, minimize post-harvest losses and reduce transaction costs.

**Activity 1.1.1:** Promote the development of value/supply chain systems in Member States through the replication of demonstrated models and sharing knowledge gained under the FAO Italian Trust Fund Project **Promoting CARICOM/CARIFORUM Food Security Phase II.**

**Activity 1.1.2:** Development of physical infrastructure strategically placed to facilitate storage and distribution for both the domestic and export market segments.

**Activity 1.1.3:** Training and development programme to improve post-harvest handling, grading and storage and warehouse management for food commodities

**Activity 1.1.4:** Improvement of animal slaughtering and processing infrastructure and the management thereof along Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles

**Activity 1.1.5:** National and regional programmes encouraging linkages between livestock and crop production as well as the addition of value in the livestock industry through

improved cutting and processing techniques and the expansion of the range and quality of by-products

8.15 **Operational Objective 1.2:** Efficient utilization of land and water resource potential for agricultural development (in specific targeted locations with concentrations of small-scale producers).

**Activity 1.2.1:** Develop a holistic land and water management plan to support agricultural development and growth.

**Activity 1.2.2:** Promote the optimal utilisation of land and other natural resources for food production through the creation of independent agencies at national level with responsibility for the construction, management and maintenance of water control, management and storage infrastructure up to the farm gate, in the context of a master plan to guide irrigation development projects within a framework of priority areas for irrigation development, including establishment of water user groups and a system of charges.

**Activity 1.2.3:** Promote public and private sector partnerships to foster efficient and sustainable food production, food consumption, post-harvest practices & loss reduction, marketing and trade.

8.16 **Operational Objective 1.3:** Promote closer collaboration to accelerate the transfer and adoption of new technologies (to be adopted by small-scale farmers).

**Activity 1.3.1:** Promote the adoption of new technologies.

**Activity 1.3.2:** Support initiatives to promote greater access to land and water resources, agricultural inputs and capital, particularly among small-scale farmers, to support food production.

**Activity 1.3.3:** Strengthen development of agricultural cooperatives and farmers' organisations to enhance small-scale farmers' resilience to market shocks.

**Activity 1.3.4:** Forum among private sector stakeholders and associations involved in production, marketing and trade.

8.17 **Operational Objective 1.4:** Promote agricultural innovation through CARDI and national agricultural research institutions, including research and development on improving agricultural output and productivity (possibly with assistance from Brazil-EMBRAPA) targeted at small-scale producers.

**Activity 1.4.1:** Support initiatives to minimise postharvest losses of main food products.

**Activity 1.4.2:** Promote research to improve agricultural productivity and production as well as storage characteristics of major food crops and fruits and vegetables.

**Activity 1.4.3:** Promote alternative approaches and practices for sustainable food security.

## **Regional-level Actions**

8.18 **Operational Objective 1.1:** Improve agricultural infrastructure to secure the production system, minimize post-harvest losses and reduce transaction costs.

**Activity 1.1.6:** Conduct a feasibility study on development of potential arable and irrigable land resources available in Member States for food production.

**Activity 1.1.7:** Encourage initiatives/supporting systems for greater access to agricultural inputs (including environmentally friendly systems such as organic fertilizer), particularly seeds, animal breeds, agro-chemicals and irrigation facilities for food production in areas with farming potential throughout the region.

8.19 **Operational Objective 1.2:** Efficient utilization of land and water resource potential for agricultural development (in specific targeted locations with concentrations of small-scale producers).



**Activity 1.2.4:** Assist MS in training staff and mobilizing resources to provide the materials and supplies to develop water control infrastructure.

**Activity 1.2.5:** Assist MS in preparing Irrigation and Drainage Policies and carrying out feasibility studies of potential irrigation schemes.

**Activity 1.2.6:** Promote the adoption and implementation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) in the CARICOM region.

8.20 **Operational Objective 1.3:** Promote closer collaboration to accelerate the transfer and adoption of new technologies (to be adopted by small-scale farmers).

**Activity 1.3.5:** Promote collaborative research and technology transfer in agricultural and food products.

**Activity 1.3.6:** Strengthen regional networks of small-scale farmer associations for agricultural research, outreach and development.

8.21 **Operational Objective 1.4:** Promote agricultural innovation through CARDI and national agricultural research institutions, including research and development on improving agricultural output and productivity (possibly with assistance from Brazil-EMBRAPA) targeted at small-scale producers.

**Activity 1.4.4:** Coordinate research and development initiatives to minimise postharvest losses of main food products.

8.22 **Strategic Thrust 2:** Promote conducive and efficient food marketing and trade systems to increase the availability of nutritious and safe foods in areas and locations where food insecure and vulnerable people reside. (This will require location targeting for the development of local food marketing and trade systems).

8.23 **Operational Objective 2.1:** Promote initiatives supporting sustainable food trade.

**Activity 2.1.1:** Full compliance with and implementation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) provisions with respect to trade in food products.

**Activity 2.1.2:** Collect, review and analyse international/regional trade information, including prices, quantities traded, distribution and logistics.

8.24 **Operational Objective 2.2:** Improve terms of trade between traditional crop exports and food imports.

**Activity 2.2.1:** Facilitate stronger linkages between buyers and sellers and reduction of information asymmetries through the implementation of a Regional Market Intelligence system.

**Activity 2.2.2:** Improve food safety systems and harmonisation of food standards across the Region to facilitate trade among Member States.

**Activity 2.2.3:** Encourage Member States to establish a regional network of reserve food stocks in partnership with the private sector as a Risk Mitigation Response; and CDEMA should take the lead in mobilizing resources for this purpose.

**Activity 2.2.4:** Improve port logistics and reduce bureaucratic rigidities at ports.

## **Regional Level Actions**

8.25 **Operational Objective 2.1:** Promote initiatives supporting sustainable food trade.

**Activity 2.1.3:** Develop and establish a regional food and agricultural market information and intelligence system (MIS) for CARICOM countries (FAO TCP on Early Warning Systems).

8.26 **Operational Objective 2.2:** Improve terms of trade between traditional crop exports and food imports

**Activity 2.2.5:** Provide tariff protection for regionally produced crops (*inter alia* starches, roots and tubers) in direct competition with imported convenience foods e.g. frozen potato chips etc.

**Activity 2.2.6:** Remove non-tariff barriers to trade (SPS-TBT barriers) that lead to higher transaction costs and hinder access to and distribution of food within the Region, especially for the identified basket of food commodities/products. (This will also have a positive impact on availability).

**Activity 2.2.7:** Develop strategies to address regional transportation problems so as to reduce distribution costs and improve movement of food commodities across the region. Public/private partnerships to deal with maritime and air transport and port infrastructure in and between the Member States will be fostered.

**Activity 2.2.8:** Encourage Member States to implement trade facilitation measures to improve intra-regional trade in food products (raw and processed as well as beverages). In this regard, emphasis will be placed on the improvement of port logistics and reduction of bureaucratic rigidities at ports.

## Programme Component 2: Food Access

### Country Level Actions

8.27 **Strategic Thrust 3:** Encourage greater investment in food and agro-based industries in such ways as to increase incomes, employment and access to food by the most vulnerable households and population groups.

8.28 **Operational Objective 3.1:** Promote food and agro-based industry development.

**Activity 3.1.1:** Encourage public investment in food and agro-based industry.

**Activity 3.1.2:** Strengthen capacity building for adoption of international standards for food safety and quality assurance and certification systems.

**Activity 3.1.3:** The adoption and incorporation of international and CARICOM food safety standards into national law and the streamlining and reconciliation of the current legal framework and institutional arrangements for enforcement

**Activity 3.1.4:** The establishment of a single agency at national level to regulate and manage all aspects of food safety e.g. *inter alia* effective enforcement of plant protection and animal health certification systems and food standards; promotion of public awareness of the standards; training of producers, wholesalers, retailers, processors, restaurateurs and food caterers in the practical application and observance of the standards; compliance of all producers/processors (cottage and commercial) with the Codes of Practice and HACCP principles to be established under the above-mentioned legislation, in respect of food crop, fisheries and livestock products.

8.29 **Operational Objective 3.2:** Increase employment among the most vulnerable.

**Activity 3.2.1:** Develop/access Micro-credit and carbon credit schemes to encourage diversification of economic activity in rural and urban areas will be promoted.

**Activity 3.2.2:** Widening and deepening vocational training programmes for artisans, farmers, fishermen, forest workers and vulnerable groups (women, youth) to improve their skills and employability.

8.30 **Operational Objective 3.3:** Diminish inequality in income distribution.

**Activity 3.3.1:** Implement social safety net programmes.

**Activity 3.3.2:** Implement specific food distribution programmes for persons with disabilities.

**Activity 3.3.3:** Ensure that provisions to target the food insecure and vulnerable are included in relevant legislation, in accordance with the state obligations related to the right to food.

**Activity 3.3.4:** Promote equitable access by all nationals to the country's resources.

8.31 **Operational Objective 3.4:** Increase earnings from food production

**Activity 3.4.1:** Improve the livelihood of the rural population, especially small producers and marginalized urban dwellers, through the promotion of entrepreneurship

**Activity 3.4.2:** Promote home food production (backyard/container/protected environment gardening and small ruminants rearing)

**Activity 3.4.3:** Establish programmes to pay stakeholders for good environmental practices and services which provide a national good e.g. in watershed conservation and water pollution in rivers etc - .

**Activity 3.4.4:** Promote urban agriculture

**Activity 3.4.5:** Member States shall be encouraged to improve farm to market channels, for example, access roads and post harvest grading and handling.

**Activity 3.4.6:** Upgrade local food storage facilities

**Activity 3.4.7:** Member States shall be encouraged to develop wholesale and retail market facilities and packaging centres as public goods to facilitate efficient markets, which will improve availability and lower market prices.

8.32 **Operational Objective 3.5:** Reduce the incidence of poverty and diversify rural incomes.

**Activity 3.5.1:** Identification and mapping of vulnerable groups<sup>8</sup> (taking a gender-sensitive approach) that are prone to chronic or transitory food insecurity and establishment of a national and regional database of this information, recognizing that each group may require a different intervention, to ensure their access to livelihoods based on self-sufficiency and sustainable income earning activities.

**Activity 3.5.2:** Promote the broadening of the income base of poor rural households through income/livelihood diversification programmes.

**Activity 3.5.3:** Implement Poverty Reduction Programmes encompassing safety net mechanisms/programmes and complementary measures to preclude a dependency syndrome.

**Activity 3.5.4:** Incorporate nutritional considerations - a minimum nutritious food basket in setting the national minimum wage.

**Activity 3.5.5:** Encourage Member States to develop policies to ensure that the food distribution services industry (including fresh food markets, supermarkets, institutional food services etc.) operates in a cost efficient manner and delivers the targeted basket of foods at minimal prices.

**Activity 3.5.6:** Strengthen legal entitlements of vulnerable households and individuals to social assistance and security through legislative reform and improved recourse mechanisms.

**Activity 3.5.7:** Improve social protection of the most vulnerable population groups.

**Activity 3.5.8:** Promote the establishment of child care facilities in workplaces and in communities so as to enable women to participate fully in the workplace, and in learning and training activities.

---

<sup>8</sup> Households that cannot meet basic food needs- including people living with HIV/AIDs, children and the elderly.

## Regional Level Actions

- 8.33        **Operational Objective 3.1:** Promote food and agro-based industry development.  
**Activity 3.1.5:** Consolidate the establishment of CAHFSA and enable it to coordinate and oversee capacity building at national level for adoption of international standards for food safety and quality assurance and certification systems.
- 8.34        **Operational Objective 3.4:** Increase earnings from food production  
**Activity 3.4.8:** Consider adjusting the CET on agricultural inputs along the value chain in agriculture sector  
**Activity 3.4.9:** Purchase of agricultural inputs in bulk to obtain economies of scale.
- 8.35        **Operational Objective 3.5:** Reduce the incidence of poverty and diversify rural incomes.  
**Activity 3.5.9:** Encourage Member States to prepare Poverty Reduction Programmes encompassing safety net mechanisms/programmes and complementary measures to preclude a dependency syndrome  
**Activity 3.5.10:** Identify a minimum nutritious food basket and advocate for this to be used as a key element in setting the minimum wage in Member States.

## Programme Component 3: Food Utilization/Nutritional Adequacy

- 8.36        **Strategic Thrust 4:** Promote public education and undertake advocacy aimed at sensitizing and educating relevant governmental stakeholders, regional and national civil society organisations, commercial food sectors and the public at large about the importance of good nutrition and about the health consequences of current food consumption patterns among all households including those that are resource-poor.

## Country Level Actions

- 8.37        **Operational Objective 4.1:** Programme to develop regional population dietary (nutritional) goals in line with international standards  
**Activity 4.1.1:** In-depth assessment of the dietary consumption patterns of the poor and vulnerable, the constraints they face in accessing, preparing and consuming foods, cultural food beliefs as a basis for designing culturally sensitive education and demonstration programmes.
- 8.38        **Operational Objective 4.2:** Develop public education programmes with respect to:  
Appropriate infant (breast feeding) and young child feeding practices;  
Encouragement of physical activity in line with WHO recommendations;  
Dissemination of food-based dietary guidelines and information on the nutritional values and characteristics (micro-and macro-nutrients) of locally produced foods;  
Encouragement of healthy and nutritional food choices in schools;  
Collection and dissemination of recipes for local food preparations throughout the region;  
Identification of existing best practices in this regard across the region;  
Organization of culinary festivals and competitions featuring local foods and recipes at national and regional levels

8.39 **Operational Objective 4.3:** Control the identified nutrition conditions and influence food tastes and preferences starting in early childhood in the education sector at Early Childhood Centres and primary and secondary schools

**Activity 4.3.1:** Promotion of the preparation and implementation of national school health and nutrition policies;

**Activity 4.3.2:** Implementation of nutritional awareness-raising campaigns; support to school feeding programmes, restructuring of agricultural curricula to include importance of nutrition, peer to peer animation etc. to orient children's tastes and preference towards locally grown nutritious foods.

**Activity 4.3.3:** Adoption of a policy, where feasible, that the meals provided under national school feeding programmes should have at least a 50% regional food content.

**Activity 4.3.4:** Review the school gardening programmes in the Region to identify strategic areas for intervention, e.g. the provision of technical support, promotional materials, distribution of seedlings in schools to be grown at home etc.

**Activity 4.3.5:** Strengthen community organizations for delivering nutrition information to vulnerable groups

**Activity 4.3.6:** Development of standards of care for the elderly, mentally challenged and persons living in institutions e.g. orphanages, prisons etc.

### **Regional Level Actions**

**Activity 4.1.1:** In-depth assessment of the dietary consumption patterns of the poor and vulnerable, the constraints they face in accessing, preparing and consuming foods, cultural food beliefs as a basis for designing culturally sensitive education and demonstration programmes

**Activity 4.1.2:** Development of regional population dietary (nutritional) goals in line with international standards.

8.40 **Operational Objective 4.3:** Control the identified nutrition conditions and influence food tastes and preferences starting in early childhood in the education sector at Early Childhood Centres and primary and secondary schools

**Activity 4.3.7:** Support for the development of curricula at teacher training colleges and at pre-school, primary and secondary school levels that include nutrition and family education for good health and lifestyle choices.

**Activity 4.3.8:** Developing regional guidelines on school health and nutrition as a guide in school meal preparation and in respect of the foods allowed to be sold in schools. This may include the development of manuals (e.g. recipes, food safety and food service etc.) in collaboration with the Health, Education, Social Development and other relevant Ministries.

### **Programme Component 4: Stability of Food Supply**

8.41 **Strategic Thrust 5:** Improve the food and nutrition security resilience of the region to natural and socio-economic shocks and climate change. Identify and map food insecure and vulnerable households (who are the food insecure and malnourished, where are they located and why are they food insecure and malnourished?) with special focus on women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, for the purpose of formulating, implementing and monitoring targeted food and nutrition security interventions that protect and contribute to the realisation of the right to food.

## Country level actions

8.42 **Operational Objective 5.1:** Increase the capacity for food crisis prevention and risk management

**Activity 5.1.1:** Promote the creation of an Information System for Food and Nutrition Security at national level for food security development as well as food crisis prevention and risk management and the construction of adequate risk profiles for the main crops<sup>9</sup>.

**Activity 5.1.2:** Establish programmes for capacity enhancement within such entities as Ministries of Agriculture (extension services in particular), Research Institutions and Hydro-Meteorological Departments so that they can provide accurate and timely climate information to the farming community.

8.43 **Operational Objective 5.2:** Develop national and regional food security reserve initiatives and mechanisms.

**Activity 5.2.1:** Increase storage infrastructure as part of a national and regional system of emergency food reserves;

**Activity 5.2.2:** Support the establishment of a long-term mechanism for a CARICOM emergency food reserve.

**Activity 5.2.3:** Development of a food aid policy consistent with national food security and agricultural policies.

**Activity 5.2.4:** Enhance targeted food assistance programmes for food-insecure households and those vulnerable to food insecurity and malnutrition.

## Regional Level Actions

8.44 **Operational Objective 5.1:** Increase the capacity for food crisis prevention and risk management

**Activity 5.1.3:** Promote non-distorting intra-regional trade policies and programmes to be applied in times of food crises to reduce the risk to the most vulnerable and reduce market uncertainty.

8.45 **Operational Objective 5.2:** Develop regional food security reserve initiatives and mechanisms.

**Activity 5.2.5:** Establish (within CCS) a capability for the compilation, management and dissemination of statistics and information within the region on food and food security as a basis for effective planning of food production, trade and hedging on the international futures markets.

**Activity 5.2.6:** Conduct a study on the possibility of establishing a CARICOM Fund for Food Security.

**Activity 5.2.7:** Advocate with Member States for the establishment of additional safety nets for extremely vulnerable groups.

---

<sup>9</sup> This will entail the harmonization and coordination of the collection and collation of information *inter alia* on : a) markets – sources and volume of commodity supply to the market, number of traders and prices of commodities, agricultural labour and livestock and terms of trade including trends; b) production-type and level; c) income sources and reliability; d) government policies affecting trade and distribution of food products; e) Baseline information on food availability, access, utilization; f) Population numbers and distribution; g) Infrastructure – roads, financial institutions, etc. h) Household coping mechanisms; i) Rainfall information (volume, water deficit, flooding, drought and climate outlook; j) Crop and livestock diseases; k) Monthly state of crops in the fields; l) Security conditions-extent of praedial larceny; m) Health and nutrition situation; n) areas affected by food crises and/or chronically food-insecure; o) the number of food insecure persons; p) level of food insecurity (long term or short term); q) major causes of food insecurity (structural and cyclical) etc.

8.46 **Operational Objective 5.3: Development of insurance schemes for farmers** This programme, building on the findings of the Caribbean Regional Symposium on Disaster Risk Management held in Antigua and Barbuda on 16-19<sup>th</sup> of June 2010, will in particular focus on supporting the development of multi-peril insurance schemes with global/regional insurance companies and promote incentives to general insurance firms to insure farm assets.

**Activity 5.3.1:** The activities will include:

- Review of regional and global insurance schemes targeting in particular small and marginal farmers, production as well as assets.
- Design of farm insurance schemes in collaboration with regional and national insurance companies and possibly international reinsurance companies.
- Establishment of permanent insurance schemes for Caribbean farmers, based on pilot testing.
- Establishment of an agricultural disaster fund.

8.47 **Strategic Thrust 6:** Improve the regional capacity to forecast, plan and monitor basic food supply, nutrition, inter and intra regional food trade and identify the food insecure and those vulnerable to food insecurity.

### **Country level actions**

8.48 **Operational Objective 6.1:** Establish an Integrated Regional Food and Nutrition Security Information and Early Warning System (CRIFSIS) on a sustainable basis and a Regional Disaster Management and Mitigation Plan to forecast, plan and monitor basic food supplies, nutrition conditions, intra- and inter-regional food trade and identify the food insecure and those vulnerable to food insecurity (To be carried out with FAO TCP assistance).

**Activity 6.1.1:** Using a harmonised methodology, conduct a food security assessment and identify underlying causes of food insecurity.

**Activity 6.1.2:** Integrate (or where appropriate create in line with regional efforts) a national early warning, monitoring and surveillance information system with the CRIFSIS.

**Activity 6.1.3:** Collect and periodically update and share information on supply and demand/utilization for main food commodities such as rice, corn, soybean, cassava and sugar, and maintain food security related baseline data (including data on sources of financing, income and insurance) for each Member State in a regional database.

**Activity 6.1.4:** Develop vulnerability analysis and mapping to provide timely nutrition and socio-economic information on vulnerable population groups to decision-makers to enable the design of more effective emergency and relief responses.

### **Regional Level Actions**

**Activity 6.1.5:** Assess the regional and national capability (in National Statistical Offices, Ministries of Agriculture, Industry and Trade as well as private sector Industry and Commerce Associations) to produce timely, reliable and accurate information on domestic agricultural production and manufactured food (plant, livestock and fish produce) output, market availability and prices; the nature, extent and geographic distribution of vulnerability and food insecurity; and the state of the crops in the fields, to have early warning of the probability of crop failures and livestock epidemics etc.

**Activity 6.1.6:** Assess capacity enhancement needs within such entities as Ministries of Agriculture (extension services in particular), Research Institutions and Hydro-Meteorological Departments so that they can provide accurate and timely climate and weather information to the farming community. Identify the gaps and shortcomings at national and

regional levels in the institutional capability and technical capacity for the collection, collation and analysis of the above-mentioned data sets.

**Activity 6.1.7:** Construct adequate risk profiles for the region's food commodities, including fisheries and forestry resources. This will entail the harmonization and coordination of the collection and collation of relevant socioeconomic information as well as data on soil, water and meteorological conditions, food and agricultural production, processing, marketing and trade.

**Activity 6.1.8:** Assess the extent of the need for harmonization and coordination of systems and criteria for the collection and collation of food production, trade, processing and marketing, agro-meteorological and social vulnerability data.

**Activity 6.1.9:** Identify the gaps and shortcomings at national and sub-regional levels in the institutional capability and technical capacity for effective monitoring and evaluation activities to assess the impact of actions and programmes aimed at raising food production, processing/manufacturing and availability and ensuring stability of supplies.

**Activity 6.1.10:** Provide animal health and food safety information to producers, consumers, private sector and community organizations. There are several institutions established in the region to address animal health and food safety issues but little activity takes place in terms of diffusion of information to the critical stakeholders. As a result there is need for information system activities that transfer information products from such entities as CROSQ, CAHFSA and CFNI to both the direct users of the information and the general public.

**Activity 6.1.11:** Develop effective disaster preparedness and mitigation systems/plans (CDEMA).

**Activity 6.1.12:** Develop a crop, livestock and fisheries plan for the sub-region, taking into consideration hurricane patterns, in order to reduce overall production risks.

**Activity 6.1.13:** Identify and monitor regional and international supplies of key staple food commodities/products in Member States, for storage at an agreed minimum level and managed by an institution with a specific mandate, which would be available for distribution in times of crisis. This would include public/private partnerships and build on the system already in place with WFP assistance for Latin America and Caribbean region.

### **Programme Component 5: Crosscutting/Emerging Issues**

8.49 **Strategic Thrust 7:** Identify and address emerging food and nutrition security issues, particularly as these threaten the food security and nutrition status of the most vulnerable and marginalised households and population groups.

#### **Country level actions**

8.50 **Operational Objective 7.1:** Increase regional and national capacity for adaptation to Climate Change

**Activity 7.1.1:** Include adaptation strategies in the curricula of all training institutions and extension training mechanisms for farmers and other producers e.g. farmer field schools.

**Activity 7.1.2:** Retrain farmers in appropriate production practices (e.g. conservation farming, zero tillage etc.) to adapt to the changing environment.

**Activity 7.1.3:** Integrate climate adaptation into agricultural adjustment programmes through a risk management approach.

**Activity 7.1.4:** Promote cost-effective alternatives to fossil fuels that improve energy efficiency in agriculture.



**Activity 7.1.5:** Increase understanding and integration of scientific knowledge of climate change into farm management decisions.

**Activity 7.1.6:** Promote more efficient water and land management systems *inter alia* to address shortages and excessive rainfall.

**Activity 7.1.7:** Invest in new or existing water management and control infrastructure.

**Activity 7.1.8:** Re-zone agricultural production as necessary to reduce vulnerability.

8.51 **Operational Objective 7.2:** Increase the capacity for Mitigation of the effects of Climate Change

**Activity 7.2.1:** Provide incentives for the reduction of Greenhouse Gas.

**Activity 7.2.2:** Include mitigation strategies in the curricula of all training institutions and extension training mechanisms for farmers and other producers e.g. farmer field schools.

### **Regional Level Actions**

8.52 **Operational Objective 7.1:** Increase regional and national capacity for adaptation to Climate Change

**Activity 7.1.9:** Develop farm management tools/practices and build industry and farming community capacities to increase resilience through: (i) developing dynamic farm/agricultural management tools that integrate climate change risks into existing and emerging farm management systems; (ii) developing, where possible, environmental management systems for the agricultural sector; (iii) identifying and building on successful indigenous knowledge and strategies for adaptation.

**Activity 7.1.10:** Integrate the pest, weed and disease implications of climate change into strategies that minimise their impact on the agricultural and natural resources systems.

**Activity 7.1.11:** Foster the development of an early warning system and a preparedness strategy (short-medium-long term) dealing with climate change parameters.

**Activity 7.1.12:** Conduct a study to identify possible impacts of climate change on the food security of vulnerable and marginalised households.

**Activity 7.1.13:** Identify measures to mitigate/adapt to impacts of climate change on food security.

**Activity 7.1.14:** Develop collaboration with other Sector Bodies (CCCCC etc), which address the impact of climate change and ways and means of adapting to and mitigating its effects.

**Activity 7.1.14:** Promote the harmonisation of agro-meteorological data;

**Activity 7.1.15:** Facilitate the development of innovative financial instruments through partnerships (e.g. Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, Carbon Partnership Facility, Global Environment Facility, etc.).

8.53 **Operational Objective 7.3:** Monitor the development of bio-fuels both within and outside the region and their effects and impact on food security.

**Activity 7.3.1:** Review the status and trend of bio-fuel development in the region and potential impacts on food security of vulnerable and marginalised rural households.

**Activity 7.3.2:** Develop collaboration with other Sector Bodies, which handle the development of bio-fuels.

### **Programme Component 6: Institutional and Organizational Development**

8.54 **Strategic Thrust 8:** Strengthen the Region's capacity at national and regional levels to prepare and implement multi-sector FNS programmes as well as to deal effectively with emergency

conditions and minimise their negative short- and long-term impacts on food security and nutrition, especially among food-insecure households and the most vulnerable to food insecurity.

8.55 **Operational Objective 8.1:** To strengthen capacities for policy and programme analysis at national and regional levels and integrated and harmonized actions in each Member State (MS) to produce a national FNS Policy and Action Programme as well as the design of an institutional framework bringing together all relevant stakeholders from the public and private sectors to oversee and manage its implementation and periodic updating (with FAO TCP assistance).

### **Country level Actions**

**Activity 8.1.1:** Establish an appropriate national institutional framework, vested with the requisite legal authority and technical capacity for preparing and managing FNS programmes.

### **Regional level actions**

**Activity 8.1.2:** Programme to support Member States' efforts to prepare national FNS policies and Action Programmes and strengthen the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat and Member States capacities to:

- Prepare FNS policies and programmes;
- Design and set up institutional mechanisms, which provide space for civil society participation, to formulate, oversee, manage, implement and evaluate FNS policies at national and regional levels;
- Review and assess measures being taken by member countries to address FNS issues;
- Harmonize actions being taken by MS;
- Mobilize resources for use in up-scaling activities directed at dealing with FNS issues at national and regional levels;
- Fast-track ongoing actions to harmonize policies and procedures on FNS issues (food safety and agricultural public health, nutrition and lifestyle choices training and education, food access and stability of supply (early warning systems, agricultural risk management trade etc.) in the context of strengthening the operations of and deriving the benefits from the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) in the sub-region.

**Activity 8.1.3:** Programme for capacity building to strengthen national food security programmes, including management of national food reserves, planning of potential land use for agriculture, and technical support for preparing national food balance sheets.

8.56 **Operational Objective 8.2:** To foster integrated institutional and organizational development, at both regional and national levels, cutting across all components, strategic thrusts, action programmes and activities of the RFNSAP. It is equally critical for food and agricultural enterprise development and for the establishment and implementation of policies and programs for addressing vulnerability and ensuring availability of safe foods and the practice of improved food consumption habits. The responsibility is as much private as it is public and therefore both types of institutions are focused on in the activities. The past experience has indicated that premature public withdrawal of critical services in the hope that the private sector would supply them has undermined development of the agricultural and rural sectors. Thus, the synergies between public and private institutions and organizations, and the phasing and gestation periods of activities are critical elements in ensuring that the anticipated results are realized.

**Activity 8.2.1:** Assessment of governance practices by institutions involved in designing and implementing FNS actions, identifying gaps as the basis for development and implementation of a capacity strengthening programme;

**Activity 8.2.2:** Development of regional and national public/private and private/private sector linkages. This is essential to ensure that the production factors that need to be connected for success in the development of products from an idea (farmer/university lab) to commercial development (entrepreneur/processor/marketer) to the consumer are linked.

**Activity 8.2.3:** Training and education to increase capacity of entrepreneurs, government policy planners and community organizers in all areas relevant to the RFNSAP. Persons should also be trained in improving research and development skills. This would include areas such as - entrepreneurship and enterprise management; employment creation; leadership; strategic planning workshops; risk assessment and management training; community risk response mechanism development; social protection framework planning; food security information system development.

**Activity 8.2.4:** Facilitating incentive policy development and incentives for product and market development, including the provision of on-going funds for market studies, income and price analyses; feasibility analyses, and assistance to mentor youth who are interested in establishing new enterprises.

**Activity 8.2.5:** Preparation for trade and market negotiations at the bilateral and multilateral levels, particularly as these relate to the development of policy space for non-traditional exports and products important to food security, rural development and livelihood systems.

**Activity 8.2.6:** Community organization and rural producer organization development and training to enable community members to better access public services and establish relationships with the private sector to further development of the community.

**Activity 8.2.7:** Policy analysis training, at both national and regional levels, in food security and policy analysis, macro/micro policy analysis, sector linkages analysis, commodity, market and terms of trade analysis, investment analysis, social and environmental analysis.

8.57 **Operational Objective 8.3:** Integration of Right to Food concepts and principles and good governance practices in national legal and institutional framework for food security and nutrition and related programmes (poverty reduction, social development/welfare and social and productive safety nets).

**Activity 8.3.1:** Advocacy through public awareness campaigns and workshops at regional and national levels to sensitize policy-makers, parliamentarians and legal draughtsmen in the public sector and civil society and private sector organizations on the scope and nature of the right to food and mechanisms for its implementation.

**Activity 8.3.2:** Conduct a baseline survey to assess the situation (institutional framework and capability) in each Member State with respect to vulnerability mapping and analysis, social welfare programmes, social and productive safety nets and the existing policies, legal instruments and recourse mechanisms, to provide the basis for recommendations on the way forward.

**Activity 8.3.3:** Strengthen the capability of the CCS Legal Affairs Division to deal with RTF issues and the drafting of guidance notes including model legislation on RTF and on the roles of the Ombudsman institutions that can be adapted to the needs of each Member State.