The High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE) appoints the Project Team on Smallholder Investments

In October 2011, the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) requested the HLPE to conduct “a comparative study of constraints to smallholder investment in agriculture in different contexts with policy options for addressing these constraints, taking into consideration the work done on this topic by IFAD, and by FAO in the context of COAG, and the work of other key partners. This should include a comparative assessment of strategies for linking smallholders to food value chains in national and regional markets and what can be learned from different experiences, as well as an assessment of the impacts on smallholders of public-private as well as farmer cooperative-private and private-private partnerships”. Final findings are to feed the CFS in view of its plenary session of October 2013.

As per the HLPE procedures, the preparation of the report will be undertaken by an HLPE Project Team, under the responsibility of a Team Leader and under the oversight of the HLPE Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee of the HLPE is pleased to announce that it has appointed the following Project Team for its study on Smallholder Investments:

- Pierre-Marie Bosc (France, Team Leader)
- Julio Berdegué (Mexico/Chile)
- Mamadou Goïta (Mali)
- Jan Douwe van der Ploeg (The Netherlands)
- Kae Sekine (Japan)
- Linxiu Zhang (China)

Next steps

Based on the results of the electronic consultation on the proposed scope of the study, and under the HLPE Steering Committee oversight and guidance, the Project Team will elaborate a first version (V0) of the report, expected for end 2012, which will be submitted to further expert input and feedback through an open electronic consultation. According to the provisions of the Rules and Procedures for the work of the HLPE, prior to their publication, the draft reports shall undergo external scientific peer review and the final versions shall be approved by the HLPE Steering Committee.

On behalf of the Steering Committee of the HLPE, the HLPE Secretariat
Pierre-Marie Bosc (Project Team Leader)

Pierre-Marie Bosc is a Senior Researcher at the Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD) in Montpellier, France. After coordinating several collective reviews on the contribution of agronomic research to innovation and development processes in Sub Saharan Africa, his research aimed at a better understanding of the nature and roles of Rural Producers’ Organizations in development. He participated in the revision of World Bank Rural Development Strategy (2001-02) and in World Development Report 2008 on these issues. His thesis, published in 2005, explores the conditions allowing farmers’ organizations to improve the management of natural resources under customary rules [A la croisée des pouvoirs, Une organisation paysanne face à la gestion des ressources, IRD-Cirad]. Among other researchers, he conceived (1998) and directed (2002-2004) a research program called “Family agriculture and globalization”. He served three years as Scientific Director of a Department in CIRAD “Territory, Environment, Resources and Actors” (TERA). Then, he initiated and is now Scientific Coordinator of the World Agriculture Watch (WAW) International Initiative (FAO, IFAD, France) looking at the structural transformations of agriculture to inform policy debates.

Julio Berdegué

Dr Julio A. Berdegué, a Mexican national, is Principal Researcher at Rimisp-Latin American Center for Rural Development, Santiago, Chile. He holds a Ph.D. in Social Science from Wageningen University, The Netherlands. Presently, at Rimisp he coordinates the Collaborative Program on Rural Territorial Dynamics, a research-based policy advice and capacity-development program for rural economic growth, social inclusion and environmental sustainability in 11 Latin American countries. He served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of CIMMYT (International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center), in the Board of Trustees of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED, London), and is a member of ICCO’s International Advisory Council. Other recent assignments include participation in reform of the CGIAR, in the team that prepared the World Bank’s World Development Report 2008: “Agriculture for Development”, and in the Independent External Evaluation of FAO.

Mamadou Goïta

Dr Mamadou Goïta, is a development socio-economist and a specialist in education and training systems. Currently he is Executive Director of the Institute for Research and the Promotion of Alternatives in Development (IRPAD/Afrique), Bamako, Mali. Former Executive Secretary of ROPPA (West Africa small scale producers’ network), he remains special advisor for ROPPA’s board and executive Secretariat. He is a member and founder of the regional co-ordinating group of the Coalition for the protection of the African genetic heritage and of the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa. He has worked with UNICEF and UNDP, and international NGOs in West Africa, and is active with social movements. He is a member of several scientific boards, like the SEXAGON (Syndicat des Exploitants Agricoles de l’Office du Niger) of rice producers and the Network of African Women Economists. He works focuses on cotton, trade, extractive industries, conflicts management, governance, decentralisation and local development, investments in agriculture and migration. He teaches at the University of Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), at the “Applied Economic National School” ENEA, Dakar (Senegal) and CESAG (African Management Centre), Dakar, Senegal.
Jan Douwe van der Ploeg

Prof. Jan Douwe van der Ploeg is currently Professor of Transition Studies at the Wageningen University and Adjunct Professor of Rural Sociology for the College of Humanities and Development Studies at the China Agricultural University in Beijing. He holds a PhD in Social Sciences from the Leiden University, the Netherlands. His expertise include rural development, sustainable agriculture, rural transition and peasant agriculture. He worked in Guinea Bissau and served as coordinator for the Research Program on Agrarian and Rural Development Processes and Potentials in South Africa, was visiting professor at the University of KwaZulu Natal, conducted research in Italy and was assistant researcher of the Instituto de Estudios Peruanos, Lima, Peru. He coordinated, on behalf of the European Commission, several large, comparative research programs about European farmers. Some of his recent publications include: The New Peasantries, struggles for autonomy and sustainability in an era of empire and globalization, London; Remove Myth from Planned Intervention, Journal of China Agricultural University.

Kae Sekine

Dr Kae Sekine is an Assistant Professor in the College of Economics at Rikkyo University, Tokyo, Japan. Focusing on the fresh fruit and vegetable sector in Japan and France, Dr. Sekine has researched transnational agri-food corporations and the consequences of, and reactions to, their actions in rural society. She also investigated issues pertaining to food standards such as private and public driven quality certification schemes and their implications for stakeholders. She holds a Ph.D. (2011) in Economics from Kyoto University, Japan and studied at the French National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA), in Montpellier, France from 2007 to 2010. The article: Kae SEKINE and Shuji HISANO "Agribusiness Involvement in Local Agriculture as a ‘White Knight’? A Case Study of Dole Japan’s Fresh Vegetable Business" which appears in the International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food in 2009 [16(2):70-89] is among her most salient recent publications.

Linxiu Zhang

Linxiu Zhang is professor and deputy director at the Center for Chinese Agricultural Policy (CCAP), Institute of Geographical Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). She obtained her PhD from Reading University in the U.K. In 2003 she was awarded the Outstanding Young Scientist Award by China National Natural Sciences Foundation (NSFC). In 2007 she won the Chinese Academy of Sciences “100 Talents” award. She oversees a research programme on “Integrated Rural Urban Development Strategy and Policy” at CCAP. She is also the Co-director of a program named Rural Education Action Project (REAP). REAP is an umbrella programme initiated by a group of scholars from Stanford University, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Northwest University in Xi’an, Tsinghua University among others. Her research focus is on rural poverty, rural land and labor market development, community governance, public investments and social protection in rural areas, and the economics of rural education and health care.
The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and the High Level Panel of Experts for Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE)

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) is the central international and intergovernmental platform for food security and nutrition, where policies can be designed, interventions can be coordinated, options can be shared and decisions at different levels can be prepared.

The new CFS is inclusive. In addition to member countries, the Committee includes a wider range of organizations working on food security and nutrition, from UN agencies like the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP), the UN Secretary-General’s High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis and other UN bodies. It also includes civil society and non-governmental organizations, particularly organisations representing smallholder family farmers, fisherfolk, herders, landless, urban poor, agricultural and food workers, women, youth, consumers and indigenous people.

The High Level Panel of Experts for Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE) was created in October 2009 as an essential element of the reform of CFS, and as the scientific and knowledge-based pillar of the Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition.

The HLPE aims to help CFS to better understand the diversity of issues and rationales when dealing with food and nutrition insecurity. To do so, it will thrive to clarify contradictory information and knowledge, elicit the backgrounds and rationales of controversies, and identify emerging issues. This will among others build upon the diversity of disciplines, backgrounds and regional origins of the Steering Committee members and of Project Teams.

The HLPE is not mandated to conduct new research. The HLPE will draw its studies based on existing research and knowledge already conducted by various expertise-providing institutions (universities, research institutes, international organizations etc), and adding value by global, multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary analysis.

HLPE recommendations and studies will combine scientific knowledge with experiences from the ground, in a same rigorous process. The HLPE will translate the richness and variety of forms of expert knowledge from many actors (knowledge of local implementation, knowledge based on global research and knowledge of “best practice”) that draw on both local and global sources, into policy-related forms of knowledge.

Key functions of the HLPE, as stated in the CFS reform document

As directed by the CFS Plenary and Bureau, the HLPE will:
1. Assess and analyze the current state of food security and nutrition and its underlying causes.
2. Provide scientific and knowledge-based analysis and advice on specific policy-relevant issues, utilizing existing high quality research, data and technical studies.
3. Identify emerging issues, and help members prioritize future actions and attentions on key focal areas.

The HLPE is directly linked to the foremost international policy platform for food security and nutrition, the CFS. This ensures the legitimacy and relevance of the studies undertaken, and their insertion in a concrete political agenda at international level.

The HLPE produces its recommendations and advice independently from governmental positions, in order to enrich discussions and debates at CFS. Thus, the internal process and its results guarantee the independence of the HLPE.

The HLPE has a two-tier structure:
- A Steering Committee composed of 15 internationally recognized experts in a variety of food security and nutrition related fields.
- Project Teams acting on a project specific basis, selected and managed by the StC to analyze/report on specific issues.

More information about the HLPE can be found on its website: www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-hlpe