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Status of Food Security in Africa

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ACRONYMS

AAMIS-NET	African Agricultural Market Information Systems Network
ACTESA	Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa
AFCR	Africa Food Crisis Response
AfDB	African Development Bank
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
CILSS	Comité Inter-états de Lutte contre la Sécheresse au Sahel (Inter-State Committee against Drought in the Sahel)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FAFS	Framework for African Food Security
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FAPRI	Food and Agriculture Policy Research Institute
FEWS NET	Famine Early Warning Systems Network
GAIN	Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition
GHI	Global Hunger Index
GAFSP	Global Agricultural and Food Security Programme
HLTF	High Level Task Force
IHS	IHS Global Insights, Inc
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISAAA	International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications
ISFP	Initiative on Soaring Food Prices
MIS	Market Information System
MMT	Million Metric Tons
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NPCA	NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PAFFO	Pan-African Forum Organization
RATIN	Regional Agricultural Trade Information Network
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
RESIMAO	Réseau des Systèmes d'Information des Marchés en Afrique de l'Ouest
SSA	Sub Saharan Africa
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary and Key Messages

Achieving food security in Africa remains a challenge. This report shows that the root causes of food insecurity in Africa are still not well addressed. Low production, induced by low productivity and the inability of people to gain adequate access to food due to poverty are the core challenges. The fact that 239 million (30 per cent of Africa's total population) of the total of the world's 1 billion undernourished live in Africa. The region is still recovering from the 2008 financial and food crises. The hike in oil prices contributed to the high food prices in many parts of the world, including Africa. Political instability in Africa, coupled with adverse weather conditions and lack of agricultural inputs played a role in the persistent food insecurity this year. African countries need to shape their policy response around increased agricultural productivity and production, development of markets and building resilience of vulnerable populations.

Key messages:

(1) An effective regional mechanism should be put in place to monitor the food security status so that appropriate actions are timely taken, based on lessons learned, to address the current food crisis and prevent future ones. Food reserve systems should be instituted in the region so that emergencies are swiftly and efficiently dealt with.

(2) Policies should focus on increasing food and agricultural productivity and production and developing agricultural market channels. Particular attention should be paid to African smallholder farmers in effort to increase agricultural productivity and production.

(3) Governments should promote agricultural transformation programmes, supported by significant investments with a view to enhancing competitiveness and value addition, diversifying staple production and ensuring social and environmental sustainability of the food and agricultural systems.

(4) Rapid population growth and climate change negatively impact food security and need to be factored in policy responses to food insecurity. In this regard, African countries ought to enhance policy coherence, taking into account population growth and rapid urbanization and ensuring that energy policies (especially biofuel expansion) do not jeopardize food security.

(5) Building resilience and safety nets should be core elements in the design of policy responses to food insecurity in Africa. Effective food security strategies should build on a combination of factors, including increased productivity in agriculture, good governance, rural transformation and strong resilience, within a context of sustainable development.

(6) Experience sharing and cooperation among African countries should be promoted within the framework of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), with a view to boosting investment in agriculture and enhancing food security across the region.

(7) Africa's partners need to come forward and deliver on promised pledges and partnerships to support the development and structural transformation of the region's food and agricultural systems.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Objectives of the report

1. This report presents an updated review of the "Status of Food Security in Africa" from a succinct analysis using most recent and available data and research results. It takes the different elements that impacted the global status of food security into consideration and gives details on the four commonly accepted dimensions of food security, namely food availability, accessibility, stability and utilization. The concept of food security is a broad term, which is defined in different ways by a number of organizations around the world. The basic definition of food security refers to the ability of people to secure adequate food. According to the FAO (Trade Reforms and Food Security, 2003), "food insecurity exists when people do not have adequate physical, social or economic access to food as defined above." The report shows that poverty, unemployment and underemployment have strong causal effects on food insecurity. In most cases, food insecurity manifests itself in multiple deprivations. Food insecurity, poverty and hunger[1] are particularly severe in the sub-Saharan part of Africa. In general, only limited progress has been achieved in moving towards the target of halving the number of people who live in hunger by 2015. As the recent impressive economic growth rates across Africa have yet to trigger employment and generate income for the poor, more than one-fourth of the continent's people remain food insecure.

B. Scope and structure of the report

2. This report is structured as follows. The introduction presents a general overview of the food security status and introduces the different parts of the report. It briefly discusses the main factors that impacted the region's food security status in, including the political uprising and instability, the recent drought in the Horn and the Sahel, the increase and volatility of food prices, and climate change. The second section reviews the state of food security in Africa. It highlights key features and facts of the current state of food security at both regional and subregional levels. It further discusses changes in the main dimensions of food security: food production including domestic production, commercial imports and food aid; access to food; and food consumption. The third section of the report focuses on recent developments in food and nutrition security policy, as they relate to Africa. It briefly discusses the drivers of and forces behind the observed changes in food security, including market and non-market variables. This is followed by a review of recent policy responses to food insecurity from within Africa as well as from the international community. The section further draws some lessons learned from past efforts and recommends key actions for the way forward at addressing the root causes of food insecurity in Africa. In conclusion, the report underscores the need to address food security in Africa in a comprehensive, structural and sustainable way.

II. State of Food Security

A. Overview

3. Despite a good performance with high economic growth rates over the last decade, Africa has not made significant progress on some of its major challenges, especially food security and

[1] Hunger is the physical sensation of desiring food, the uneasy or painful sensation caused by want of food; craving appetite. Also the exhausted condition caused by want of food (2012 World Hunger & Poverty facts and Statistics).

employment for the growing youth population. From 2011 to 2012, the state of food security has not changed much. Although there were silver lining situations in Ghana and Malawi, which have been declared food secured due to their agricultural policies and performance, the food security situation in the majority of African countries remained the same or even worsened. The situation is still under the impact of the food crisis of 2007-2008, which reinforced the need for effective commitment to the development of the food and agriculture systems in the region. In this regard, many African countries have aligned their strategies with the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) process, which has received renewed commitment and support for its implementation since 2008. Many countries have also developed national agricultural strategy blueprints within which national food security priorities have been identified for investment and policy support.

4. At the global level, the FAO Food Outlook for 2011 reports that estimates of people experiencing chronic hunger increased dramatically over the period 1990 to 2007 and even more with the 2008-2009 financial and economic crises. Political instability, wars, harsh weather and lack of incentives for agricultural transformation played a major role in compounding food insecurity in Africa. Food and agricultural production and productivity have barely improved (except in few cases such as Malawi and Rwanda) and other critical elements such as inter-sectoral linkages and diversification in staple production are lacking as well. Rapid population growth and climate change continue to negatively impact food security and need to be factored in efforts at sustainable strategies and policies. The political and social uprising in North Africa and West Africa have increased household food insecurity, displaced thousands of people and affected local economies. The drought in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel has persisted, leaving millions of people destitute.

5. The Global Hunger Index (GHI)[2], an indicator used to measure hunger, combines three equally weighted indicators in one index number: (a) proportion of people who are undernourished; (b) prevalence of underweight in children below five; and (c) the mortality rate of under-five children. In October 2011, the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) released a report of GHI estimates for 122 countries, showing that, over the 1990-2011 period, the GHI score for sub-Saharan Africa fell by 18 per cent, much less than in South Asia (25 per cent) and the near East and North Africa (39 per cent). Although 16 countries in Africa improved their GHI score during this period, only one country in sub-Saharan Africa - Ghana - ranked among the 10 best performers. Five of the six countries in which the hunger situation worsened were in sub-Saharan Africa.

6. Table 1 in the Annex shows that the total number of the undernourished in Africa increased by 52.7 million from 1990-1992 to 2006-2008. The figure is a staggering 239 million people for 2010-2012 (table 6). Some countries in Africa made real progress, though, in the fight against hunger. However, challenges remain for the majority of the countries, especially in East Africa, a subregion that was host to 73 per cent of the estimated total number of hungry people in Africa over the period 2006-2008[3]. Any substantial progress in this subregion and the Sahel would have an important impact on the containment of hunger in Africa.

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[2] The GHI score varies between zero and 100. A higher score indicates greater hunger ; the lower the score, the better the country's situation. GHI scores ranging from 10 to 19.9 are considered serious; 20 to 29.9 are considered alarming and scores above 30 are extremely alarming. The GHI is calculated as follows: GHI + (PUN + CUW + CM)/3 (PUN = proportion of the population that is undernourished (in per cent); CUW = prevalence of underweight in children younger than five (in per cent); CM = proportion of children dying before the age of five (in per cent).

[3] 2008 data is the latest data compiled by FAO for technical reasons as mentioned on page 10 above.

7. Rapid population growth, compounded by massive reflux of refugees as in the cases of Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, is another major aggravating factor of hunger. It conceals progress in achieving the World Food Summit (WFS) hunger reduction target in countries such as Rwanda, Ethiopia and Tanzania that had the largest and the fastest reductions in the proportion of under-nourishment.

B. Subregional highlights

8. In North Africa, the Arab spring effects in Libya resulted in the displacement of large numbers of people and disruption in the flow of goods and services in this heavily cereal-import-dependent subregion. Later on, the situation in Libya spread to the Sahara desert belt with the infiltration of armed groups throughout northern Mali, which further exacerbated the displacement of population. The World Food Programme (WFP) has initiated a regional emergency operation, covering Mauritania, Mali and the Niger, to provide food assistance to the affected people. In Southern Africa, prospects for the main 2012 maize crop are generally favourable; and relatively low prices have helped stabilize food security (FAO, 2012).

9. In West Africa, post-election violence caused a large population disruption, which disturbed trade and livelihoods in Côte d'Ivoire and the neighbouring countries, especially landlocked countries whose goods transited through the port of Abidjan. The coup d'état of March 2012 in Mali, coupled with the taking over of Northern Mali by armed groups, has caused displacement of populations to neighbouring the Niger, Mauritania, Senegal and Burkina Faso and towards the southern part of the country, which is still under Government control.

10. In the Horn of Africa, food insecurity has increased in drought-affected pastoral areas of Somalia, Kenya, Djibouti and Ethiopia despite bumper harvests in 2010 and generally low and stable food prices. The recent drought of 2011-2012 has been qualified by experts as the worst drought in 60 years, caused by a prolonged lack of rain and resulting dry conditions. The drought has severely degraded vegetation throughout the subregion and depleted pastoral land, leading to serious crop failure and the loss of thousands of livestock. South-eastern Ethiopia, northern and eastern Kenya, and southern Somalia, are the worst affected areas. The severity and scale of the drought has raised concerns because 80 per cent of the population in this subregion depend on crops and livestock for their livelihoods and food security, while only about 1 per cent of arable land is irrigated (GIEWS, February 2011). The drought has led to a humanitarian crisis and heavy economic costs. Currently, more than 13 million people are estimated to be in need of emergency food aid and livelihood assistance in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. Thousands of Somalis have been forced to seek refuge in Ethiopia and Kenya, where the host population itself faces a severe food security crisis. According to Save the Children's report (May 2012[4]), East Africa is facing a "double-dip" hunger crisis[5] that could plunge millions of people back into emergency levels of hunger and malnutrition. Early warning systems and the aid agency's analysis suggest that unless immediate preventive action is taken, any improvements in the situation following last year's catastrophic food crisis could be wiped out by poor rains, crop shortages and difficulties in reaching conflict-affected areas.

[4] www.reliefweb.int: Save the Children's report posted on 1 May 2012.
[5] Double dip hunger crisis refers to a hunger crisis followed by a short-lived recovery, followed by another even worse hunger.

11. In the West African Sahel zone, a new food and nutrition crisis is affecting millions of people in 2012, due to a combination of drought, high grain prices, decrease in remittances, environmental degradation, displacement of population, chronic poverty and vulnerability. More than 16 million people are facing food insecurity and more than 1 million children under the age of five are at risk of acute malnutrition. Just like in the Horn of Africa, the causes of hunger and malnutrition in West Africa's Sahel region are deeply rooted and multifaceted. Chronic underdevelopment and multiple droughts in recent years have left the population vulnerable, even to small shocks. Below-average rainfall and crop production shortages in 2011 have resulted in reduced food and livestock fodder availability in parts of the Sahel, where many vulnerable families are still recovering from the 2009/2010 food crisis. Of the 16 million people at risk, 8 million currently face severe food insecurity and may require emergency food assistance in 2012, according to FEWS Net.

12. Global acute malnutrition levels are consistently between 10 per cent and 15 per cent in the region, with some localized areas exceeding the World Health Organization emergency threshold level of 15 per cent. Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, and Senegal are receiving some assistance. According to FAO, the food security situation in the Sahel is critical, owing to rainfall and hydrological deficit registered during the rainy season. Cereal production in 2011/2012 is forecasted at 55.4 millions tons, 8 per cent below the level of the previous year, which was considered a good year. Also, a recent market assessment by FEWS/USAID[6] in the Sahel countries shows an increase of 25 to 33 per cent in coarse grain prices in the western basin (Mali, the Niger and Mauritania). The Food Crisis Prevention Network meeting held, April 2012, in Paris confirmed that cereal production in the Sahel was 26 per cent lower than in 2011. The most seriously affected countries by this decline in cereal production include the Gambia (56 per cent), Chad (49 per cent), Senegal (36 per cent), the Niger (31 per cent), Mauritania (34 per cent) and Burkina Faso (20 per cent). The food security situation in the Sahel, therefore, is very daunting and needs immediate attention from national Governments and donors, taking full account of early warning information. Timely livelihood support interventions in agriculture and livestock sectors are essential.

C. Food availability

Domestic production

13. According to an FAO report[7], favourable cereal harvest is expected for 2012 and the world cereal production is forecasted to increase by 3.2 per cent. At the 2012 level of 2.419 million tons, global cereal production would exceed the anticipated utilization in 2012/2013. However, this record does not mean much if needy people, especially in Africa, cannot get access to the expected surplus. Currently, 35 African countries feature on the FAO and WFP list of countries needing external food assistance. Cereal production is expected to increase everywhere in Africa except for Southern Africa and Central Africa due to a prolonged dry spell.

14. In West Africa, cereal production is expected to increase by 7 per cent from the 2011 level of 55 millions tons. The biggest increase will be registered in Nigeria (26.7 per cent), Ghana (14 per

[6] The market assessment held from 9 to 21 January 2012 was conducted by the Joint FAO-Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), World Food Programme (WFP) and national partners in the Sahelian countries. (FAO - Subregional Emergency and Rehabilitation Office West Africa/Sahel), February 2012.
[7] FAO, GIEWS, June 2012 Crop Prospects and Food Situation.

cent) and Burkina (10 per cent). The forecasts give a clear picture as the Sahel countries are facing enormous food shortages at the moment. The latest official estimates from FAO (2011) put the aggregate cereal production in the nine West African countries[8] at 16.4 million tons - 27 per cent lower than the 2010 bumper crop and about 5 per cent lower than the average over the five previous years (2005-2009). Even with coastal countries included, the aggregate cereal production for West Africa in 2012 is 9 per cent below the 2010 level.

15. In North Africa, the crop prospects are mixed, with unfavourable outlook in Morocco, where severe drought has sharply reduced wheat yield prospects, and more favourable prospects in Algeria and Tunisia. In Egypt, the largest producer of the wheat in the subregion, the expected harvest of irrigated wheat in 2012 is forecasted to be above the 2011 output.

16. In Central Africa, the Central African Republic and Cameroon are recording no significant change in cereal output in 2012, relative to 2011. Similarly, overall growing conditions were favourable in Gabon and the Republic of the Congo, yet cereal production is very limited and the bulk of national cereal requirement is imported.

17. In East Africa, the food availability situation has not improved much despite an increase in cereal production. The worse cases remain those of Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti and Kenya. As mentioned above in the narrative of the “drought in the Horn of Africa”, there are over 13 million of people in that region in need of food assistance.

18. Southern Africa has observed a decline in cereal production, from to 33.2 million tons 2010 to 32.1 million tons in 2011. The subregion is forecasted to experience an additional 4.6-per cent decrease in cereal production in 2012, with the hardest hit countries including Zimbabwe, Malawi, Madagascar and Zambia.

Food imports and aid

19. According to the FAO Crop Prospects and Food Situation of June 2012, Africa imported almost 43 million tons of food in 2011, 2 million tons of which was food aid. Because of lack of income (reduced purchasing power), commercial food imports are expected to decrease in 2012-2013 while projected food aid would rise from 2 million to 2.3 million tons (table 8 in annex for details).

20. Clearly, Africa continues to fail to produce enough food to meet its fast-growing demand for cereals. Figure 1 shows the resulting escalating trend of the food import bill of the region, which now hovers around $50 billion per year. This calls for urgent action to invest in Africa’s agriculture in order to decisively increase food production in the region (ECA, 2011: Status of food security report). Africa’s needs in cereals are being increasingly met by imports from the rest of the world, which currently cover 45 to 50 per cent of total rice consumption and 80 per cent of wheat consumed in the region (FAO, 2011; CIMMYT, 2012).

[8] The nine West African countries: Burkina Faso, Chad, Ghana, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Nigeria and Senegal.

D. Access to food

21. According to the World Bank "Food Price Watch, April 2012", "Global food prices have increased by 8 per cent since December 2011 and, in March 2012, the prices were almost comparable to those of February 2011, which marks the period of historical peak food prices. Prices have increased for all key food products except for rice. This is due mainly to the increasing international oil prices, adverse weather conditions, and the persistent financial crisis in Europe. In general, domestic prices remain high in many parts of the world, with the magnitude of increases typically unusual across countries. FAO reported in June 2012[9] that 35 African countries were required food assistance. These include nine countries from ECOWAS, Mauritania, eight countries from East Africa, four from Southern Africa and six from Central Africa. Access to food in the above countries has been hampered by a variety of factors such as erratic rains, drop in local production, decrease in household income and purchasing power, high food prices, market deficiencies and conflicts.

E. Food consumption trends

22. Food consumption results from a multi-factorial behaviour influenced by availability and affordability of the food, prevalent culture, religion and food eating habits. As a result, food consumption and nutrition trends vary depending on regions and agro-ecological zones. The Hunger Project and FAO (2012) reported that out of a global population of 7 billion in the world, 1 billion people are either food insecure or at risk of food insecurity. Moreover, 98 per cent of undernourished people live in developing countries; an alarming fact given that there is enough food to feed everyone on the planet.

23. Table 2 in the Annex shows that the food consumption level in Africa is the lowest compared to other regions of the world. This aggregate situation obviously masks variations among subregions and individual countries across Africa. This notwithstanding, Africa has the highest growth in per capita food consumption in the entire world. This is particularly so for sub-Saharan Africa where per capita food consumption increased by 7.5 per cent over the last 15 years and is expected to continue to grow by another 7.6 per cent by 2030, with rapid population growth and a rising middle class population of the region (Mc Kinsey Global Institute, 2011)[10].

24. To meet this fast-growing demand, African States would need to put in place appropriate policies and institutions and invest in infrastructure and research and development with a view to decisively boosting the capacity and productivity of the region's food and agriculture systems. This can be done through optimal harnessing of Africa's abundant endowment in land and water resources and also through readily available improved agricultural production technologies. Efforts in this regard should pay special attention to the strategic food commodities identified by the 2006 Abuja Food Security Summit, as well as to wheat, whose consumption grew at the fast rate of 4.5 per cent per annum over 2000-2009[11].

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[9] FAO: GIEWS: Countries requiring external assistance for food, June 2012.
[10] Lions on the move: The progress and potential of African economies. 2010.
[11] Nicole M. Mason, T.S Jayne, Berkele Shiferaw, Michigan State University and CIMMYT. 2012.

III. Recent Developments in Food Security Policy

A. Drivers and forces behind the changes

25. Key drivers of the status and dynamics of food security that need to be taken into account in devising appropriate responses include market and non-market variables such as high and volatile food prices, speculation, climate change and biofuel expansion.

1. Market variables

26. High and volatile food prices remain one of the key driving forces behind the changes in food security status of millions of people worldwide. The high food prices since the 2008 food crisis have had prolonged effect on both food availability and food access in Africa. The surge in global food prices was still observed in the third quarter of 2012 (WFP, 2012), causing large spikes in the price of rice, maize, wheat and many other staples across Africa. Given the fragile balance between global food demand and supply and the low levels of global cereal stocks in recent years (USDA, 2012)[12], food prices are set to stay extremely unpredictable.

27. High fuel prices continue to significantly contribute to the increase in the food prices. Indeed, high fuel prices translate into high transportation costs which make up about 25 per cent of food prices (D. Mitchell, 2008). Other factors that have contributed to raising food prices include the bio-fuel policies pursued in several global food providers such as USA, EU, Brazil, erratic weather conditions, trade policies, and speculative activities in derivative markets. For instance, FAO estimated that about 40 per cent of global maize production is diverted from food consumption for biofuel production.

28. In West Africa, staple food prices have stayed at above average level due to the negative effects of droughts on cereal production in several countries of the Sahel. Prices of major staples increased above 30 per cent according to a market survey in six countries, due to the combined effects of higher prices of imported cereals and crop failure.

29. In Central and Eastern Africa, food prices remained high as the recovery from the 2011 drought is still underway. Food price increases were particularly high in Ethiopia: 101 per cent for maize, 85 per cent for wheat and 65 per cent for sorghum.

30. In Southern Africa, the highest price increases were observed for maize meal (34 per cent) and rice, white sorghum (56 per cent) and rice (69 per cent) in Swaziland, and maize (33 per cent) in Zimbabwe.

31. Overall, as wages did not increase in proportion to the food price rises in Africa, the most affected by high food prices are poor rural and urban households who spend the highest proportion of their budget on food. In the absence of adequate safety nets and social protection measures, many of these have turned to wheat in countries such as Nigeria, Kenya, Mozambique and Cameroon where bread has become more affordable than key staples such rice and maize (Nicole Mason and others, 2012).

[12] US Department of Agriculture, WASDE report. Various issues. 2012. See www.usda.org.

2. Non-market variables

32. Non-market factors that influence food security in Africa include climate variability and change, armed conflicts, political instability and economic embargoes. The political and social uprising in North Africa and West Africa have negatively impacted household food security, sending thousands of people into displacement and affecting local economies as never imagined before. Political instability and the related armed conflicts in many parts of the region significantly exacerbate food insecurity, as arable land lies fallow in many of such cases. The droughts in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel continue to keep millions of people in precarious situation.

B. Recent policy responses to food insecurity in Africa

1. Responses from within Africa

33. During the last 12 months, the food security situation in Africa barely improved. The situation is still under the impact of the food price crisis of 2007-2008. This reinforces the need for effective commitment to the development of the food and agriculture systems. In this regard, many African countries have aligned their strategies with the CAADP process, which, in 2008, received renewed commitment and support for its implementation. Many countries have also developed national agricultural strategy blueprints within which national priorities in food security have been identified for investment and policy support.

34. Building on the experiences of ECOWAS, other Regional Economic Communities are working to complete their regional agricultural strategies within which investment priorities can be addressed in a more concerted and coherent manner. Indeed, there is need to go beyond country-level dialogue to strengthen regional policy dialogue frameworks, whereby African countries can share lessons, capitalize on various experiences, while introducing best policy practices and scaling up food security initiatives that are worth financing.

35. Appropriate policy responses to take against market and non-markets shocks were discussed at the 8th CAADP Partnership Platform Meeting held May 2012 in Nairobi. The meeting reiterated the need to deliver on member States' commitment to allocate at least 10 per cent of public expenditure to agriculture and rural development, and to develop tools for assessing the effectiveness and future roles of public-private partnerships in addressing the investment gap in agricultural development. With reference to policy alignment, the meeting called on the African Union Commission (AUC) and the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency (NPCA) to support member States to strengthen a transparent and inclusive policy formulation process to compliment efforts at developing evidence-based investment plans. It also urged the AUC and NPCA to give significant attention to countries that are lagging behind the CAADP roundtable processes.

36. Beyond the CAADP implementation, the Food Security Trust Fund (FSTF) that was discussed during the FAO regional conference in the Republic of the Congo in April 2012 features as an important initiative for food security in Africa. Supported by African countries themselves, this Fund will be used to manage food security issues in the region. It would aim at raising resources to fight hunger, and also scale up ongoing efforts to prevent and respond to recurring food and agricultural crises in the region.

37. "African Solidarity" has also been touted as a way to address Africa's problems, such as the recurrent food crises, more effectively. In this regard, the Brazzaville meeting mentioned above suggested that African oil producing countries should invest resources in agriculture in a sustainable manner in order to lift the continent out of its continuing food insecurity situation. The African Heads of State and representatives at the meeting reiterated the need to implement CAADP pillars II and II.

38. In this regard, the recent and increasing momentum for accelerating the pace of investment in African agriculture is encouraging. Indeed, since the 2008 food crisis, CAADP has received renewed commitment for its implementation, and new funding commitments have been made by the international community to support agriculture in Africa.

2. Responses from the international community

39. Food security is high on the agenda of world leaders, as evidenced by several high-level meetings and forums held on the issue since 2008. The UNDP 2012 Human Development Report - the first of its kind focusing specifically on Africa - takes on the issue of food security and provides specific related recommendations. According to the report, "Malnutrition is an obstacle to human development. And without much more effective interventions, it will continue to inflict irreversible damage on individuals' early lives and large economic and social losses on countries for years to come." It recommends that African countries should focus on building resilience for food security and human development in order to be able to reduce deep-rooted vulnerabilities.

40. Likewise, food security in Africa featured highly on the agenda of the recent G8 Summit held in the United States, during which the US Government announced a $3 billion pledge towards alleviating hunger and boosting food security in Africa. The pledged funds will support a new public-private partnership programme in an effort to recalibrate the US Government's effort towards food security in Africa. The funds will focus on market development methods to boost production among small-scale farmers in Africa, who are believed to hold the key to improved world food supplies.

41. Other relevant initiatives include the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), which is led by a civil society organization to develop nutrition-specific public-private partnerships. GAIN has developed an assessment tool to identify opportunities for public-private partnerships across agricultural value chains, with a view to improving project nutritional outcomes, especially for women and children before two years of age[13]. Also noteworthy is the Global Agricultural and Food Security Programme (GAFSP), for which the G-8 recommended mobilizing private capital for securing commitments of $1.2 billion over a period of three years, in addition to sharing relevant agricultural data with African countries so as to reduce and manage risks.

C. Lessons learned and recommendations for the way forward

42. The food crisis of 2007-2008 repeated itself in 2010 and 2011, causing substantial economic and social hardships for vulnerable communities across Africa. The unprecedented food price rise had devastating effects, as it sent more people to the brink of poverty, malnutrition and food insecurity.

[13] GAIN completed assessments of specific agricultural value chains, including staple crops, horticulture and dairy, in Bangladesh, Kenya, and Mozambique. They are assisting donors and project planners to identify the most cost-effective, high-impact value chain improvements for addressing under-nutrition.

Yet, many of the policy prescriptions did not find their way to implementation in the aftermath of the first crisis, despite indications of the likelihood of another global food crisis.

43. Emerging from the experience at managing the recent and ongoing food crisis are the following issues, which need to be effectively addressed:

- Low attention and/or slow response to early warning indicators;
- Lack of strategic food reserves and food security trust funds to manage risk in food insecurity hot spots - especially the Horn and the Sahel - and slow emergency response;
- Lack of effective safety net programmes targeted at vulnerable people (chronically poor households);
- Poor coordination and cooperation among African countries and development partners.

44. The following recommendations aim at addressing these gaps:

(a) An effective regional mechanism should be in place to monitor the food security status so that appropriate and timely actions are implemented to address the current food crisis. Strategic food reserves systems need to be instituted in the region (especially in food insecurity hotspots) so that emergencies are swiftly and efficiently dealt with.

(b) Policies should focus on sustainable agricultural productivity, leading to increased food and agricultural production and development of agricultural market channels. Particular attention should be paid to African smallholder farmers in efforts to increase agricultural productivity and production.

(c) African Governments must promote and support agricultural transformation programmes by significant investments, appropriate policies and effective institutions, with a view to enhancing competitiveness and value addition, increasing strategic staple production and ensuring social and environmental sustainability of the food and agricultural systems.

(d) Rapid population growth and climate change negatively impact food security and need to be factored in policy responses to food insecurity.

(e) Building resilience and safety nets should be core elements in the design of policy response to food insecurity in Africa. Effective food security strategies in African countries should therefore build on a combination of factors, including increased productivity in agriculture, good governance, rural transformation and strong resilience within a context of sustainable development.

(f) Experience sharing and cooperation among African countries should be promoted within the framework of the RECs, with a view to boosting investment in agriculture and enhancing food security across the region.

(g) Africa’s partners need to come forward to deliver on pledges and partnerships to support the development and structural transformation of the region’s food and agricultural systems.

(h) African countries need to enhance policy coherence in order to ensure that climate change or energy policies do not jeopardize food security, through, for the promotion of biofuel at the expense of food production for instance.

IV. CONCLUSION

45. The food security situation in Africa still remains challenging and worrisome. Some 239 million people are struck by hunger across the region, which is greatly lagging behind in the quest for the poverty and hunger Millennium Development Goal. Overall, low food and agricultural productivity and production, land degradation, climate variability and change, high population growth and rapid urbanization, high and volatile food and fuel prices, are all part of the intricate set of factors that contribute to this dire situation. Compounding the difficulties associated with these factors is the extreme fragmentation of the African agricultural market which, along with the poor integration of farmers (especially smallholders) in subregional and regional food value chains, seriously impedes intra-African flows of food, thereby constraining the full realization of intra-regional food production, trade and access.

46. Besides short-term measures to cope with recurrent emergency food crises, African countries need to tackle the food security challenge on a structural, comprehensive and sustainable basis which, beyond principle commitments, calls for decisive actions at implementing strategies and policies for developing the food and agricultural systems of the region. In this regard, there is a need for strong leadership and determination to effectively implement agreed relevant strategies, policies and related frameworks such as CAADP, the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) and the African Union Common Market in Agricultural Products (AUCMAP).

47. Key parameters of the global food market are set to remain instable and uncertain over the medium to long-term, resulting in recurrent shocks.[14] Accordingly and given Africa's current endowment in land and water resources, greater self-reliance through the exploitation of the full potential in regional food production and trade should be at the core of viable strategies for sustainable food security across the region.

[14] *La Terre. Planète à Hauts Risques: son histoire explique ses colères.* Science & Vie, Hors series no. 254. Mars 2011. publication du groupe Mondadori, France.

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Annex

Table 1: Prevalence of under-nourishment (Number of under-nourished people): 2011 data

World Region/Subregion/ Country	Total Population	Number of People Under-nourished				
	2006-08	1990-92	1995-97	2000-02	2006-08	Change in 2006-08 relative to 1990-92
	(Million)	(Million)				(%)
World	6652.6	848.4	791.5	836.2	850.0	0.2
Africa	962.9	170.9	193.6	203.3	223.6	**30.8**
Sub-Saharan Africa[8]	**801.5**	**165.9**	**188.2**	**197.7**	**217.5**	**31.1**
Asia	3884.3	607.1	526.2	565.7	567.8	-6.5
Eastern Asia	1401.8	215.6	149.5	141.8	139.4	-35.3
Southern Asia[9]	1642.8	267.5	269.0	307.9	330.1	23.4
Southern Asia-excluding India	478.1	90.5	101.9	99.9	105.5	16.7
South-Eastern Asia[10]	564.0	105.8	85.0	89.6	77.4	-26.9
Caribbean[12]	36.1	7.7	8.9	7.4	8.3	7.6
Latin America[13]	528.2	46.7	44.5	43.4	38.6	-17.2

Source: FAO (The State of Food Insecurity in the World, 2011.

Table 2: Global and regional per capita food consumption trends (Kcal per capita per day)

Region	1964-66	1974-76	1984-86	1997-99	Percentage from 1995-2011	2015	Expected percent change	2030
World	2358	2435	2655	2803	4.88	2940	3.74	3050
Developing Countries	2054	2152	2450	2681	6.30	2850	4.5	2980
Near East and North Africa	2290	2591	2953	3006	2.79	3090	2.5	3170
Sub-Saharan Africa (excluding South Africa)	2058	2079	2057	2195	7.51	2360	7.6	2540
Latin America and the Caribbean	2393	2546	2689	2824	5.52	2980	5.36	3140
East Asia	1957	2105	2559	2921	4.75	3060	4.24	3190
South Asia	2017	1986	2205	2403	12.35	2700	7.4	2900
Industrialized Countries	2947	3065	3206	3380	1.77	3440	1.74	3500

Source: WHO: Global and regional food consumption patterns and trends, April, 2012.

Table 3: Price Trend of Major Staples in West Africa

Regions	Countries	Main Staple Food	Monthly change from 2011 (% change)	Quarterly change from last year (% change)	Quarterly change from 5-year average (% change)
WEST AFRICA	Benin	Maize	-9	-7	64
		Cassava products	0	0	23
		Rice	0	0	85
	Burkina Faso	Sorghum	32	27	45
		Millet	13	10	34
		Maize	41	41	67
		Wheat flour	7	7	19
		Maize	0	0	99
	Chad	Sorghum	4	5	36
		Millet	40	31	54
		Maize	114	66	71
		Imported rice	28	18	37
	Côte d'Ivoire	Imported rice	14	12	50
		Palm oil	-8	-21	6
		Maize	11	26	12
	Gambia	Rice	9	10	28
		Millet	-8	-7	22
	Guinea	Local rice	51	47	157
		Palm oil	-12	-5	70
	Liberia	Butter rice	26	23	62
		Cassava	45	44	2686
		Palm oil	2	5	78
	Mali	Imported rice	11	12	31
		Millet	33	22	41
		Sorghum	61	41	31
		Maize	53	39	55
	Mauritania	Wheat	10	11	N/A
		Imported rice	8	9	N/A
	Niger	Millet	30	22	45
		Sorghum	18	11	42
		Imported rice	11	10	47
		Maize	20	17	46
	Senegal	Imported rice	8	6	35
		Maize	18	27	36
		Millet	23	28	21
	Sierra Leone	Imported rice	44	46	N/A
		Palm oil	-10	-2	N/A

Source: WFP: Market Monitor, Issue 14 January 2012.

Table 4: Cereal production[1] of LIFDCs

(million tons)				
	2010	**2011 estimate**	**2012 forecast**	**Change: 2012 over 2011(%)**
Africa (39 countries)	**132.8**	**126.4**	**130.8**	**3.4**
North Africa	18.8	20.5	21.0	2.3
Eastern Africa	39.8	36.5	38.3	4.7
Southern Africa	14.8	15.4	14.0	-9.0
Western Africa	55.9	50.4	54.0	7
Central Africa	3.6	3.6	3.5	-0.8
Note: Totals and percentage change computed from under-sounded data.				
[1]Includes rice in milled terms.				

Table 5: Cereal import position of LIFDC (Thousands of Tons)

		2011/2012				**2012/2013**	
	2010/2011	**Requirements[1]**		**Import position[2]**		**Requirements[1]**	
	Actual imports	**Total imports:**	**of which food aid**	**Total Imports:**	**food aid pledges**	**Total imports:**	**of which food aid**
Africa (39 countries)	**39.940**	**43.006**	**2.084**	**23.491**	**979**	**42.246**	**2.276**
North Africa	16.081	16.971	0	13.513	0	16.2	0
Eastern Africa	6.639	8.190	1.458	2.218	643	8.484	1.663
Southern Africa	1.758	2.080	186	1.554	168	2.4	181
Western Africa	13.450	13.784	296	5.513	155	12.7	288
Central Africa	2.013	1.982	144	693	13	1.914	144

Source: FAO Crop Prospects and Food Situation: Issue No. 2, June 2012: Note: Totals and percentage change computed from under-sounded data.
[1]The import requirement is the difference between utilization and domestic availability, data from May 2012.

Table 6: Prevalence of under-nourishment - 2012

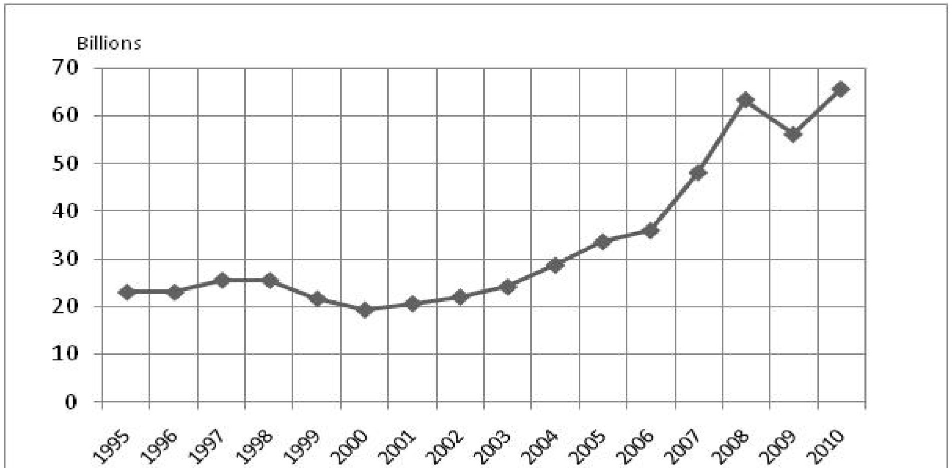
World Region/Subregion/country	Number of people under-nourished						Progress towards WFS target	Proportion of under-nourished in total population					
	1990–1992	1999–2001	2004–2006	2007–2009	2010–2012	Change so far		1990–1992	1999–2001	2004–2006	2007–2009	2010–2012	Change so far
	(millions)					(%)		(millions)					(%)
WORLD	1 000	919	898	867	868	–13.2	▼	18.6	15	13.8	12.9	12.5	–32.8
AFRICA	175	205	210	220	239	36.8		27.3	25.3	23.1	22.6	22.9	–16.1
Northern Africa	5	5	5	4	4	–2.5	◀▶	3.8	3.3	3.1	2.7	2.7	–28.9
Sub-Saharan Africa	12	170	200	205	216	234	37.8	32.8	30	27.2	26.5	26.8	–18.3
Angola	7	7	6	6	5	–21	▼	63.9	47.5	35.1	30.7	27.4	–57.1
Benin	1	1	1	1	1	–33.7	▼	22.4	16.4	13.1	10.8	8.1	–63.8
Botswana	< 0.5	1	1	1	1	45.3	▲	27.4	34.5	32.9	31.9	27.9	1.8
Burkina Faso	2	3	4	4	4	99.9	▲	22.9	26.4	25.8	24.4	25.9	13.1
Burundi	3	4	5	6	6	124	▲	49	63	67.9	72.4	73.4	49.8
Cameroon	5	5	3	3	3	–35.2	▼	38.7	29.1	19.5	15.6	15.7	–59.4
Central African Republic	1	2	2	1	1	–9.8	▼	49.5	45.1	40.6	32.6	30	–39.4
Chad	4	3	4	4	4	1.7	◀▶	61.1	41	37.3	36.4	33.4	–45.3
Congo	1	1	1	1	2	47.1	▲	42.8	30.1	32.9	34.6	37.4	–12.6
Côte d'Ivoire	2	3	4	4	4	143	▲	13.7	19.9	19.6	19.3	21.4	56.2
Eritrea	2	3	3	3	4	54.3	▲	72.4	76.2	74.8	69.1	65.4	–9.7
Ethiopia	34	36	35	35	34	0.1	◀▶	68	55.3	47.7	43.8	40.2	–40.9
Ghana	6	3	2	1	1	–87.0	▼	40.5	16.6	9.5	5.8	< 5	na
Guinea	1	2	2	1	2	57.2	▲	18.4	20.6	17	15.5	17.3	–6.0
Kenya	9	10	12	12	13	46.3	▲	35.6	32.8	32.9	32.4	30.4	–14.6
Liberia	1	1	1	1	1	88	▲	32.9	34.9	29.6	29.6	31.4	–4.6

Madagascar	3	5	5	6	7	147	▲	24.8	32.4	28.1	29.1	33.4	34.7
Malawi	4	3	3	3	4	–16.9	▼	44.8	26.8	24.7	23	23.1	–48.4
Mali	2	2	2	1	1	–44.3	▼	25.3	21.5	14.7	9.5	7.9	–68.8
Mozambique	8	8	8	9	9	18	▲	57.1	45.3	40.3	39.9	39.2	–31.3
Namibia	1	< 0.5	1	1	1	43.5	▲	37.5	24.9	26.8	32.7	33.9	–9.6
Niger	3	3	3	2	2	–31.7	▼	36.9	25.8	20	13.6	12.6	–65.9
Nigeria	19	13	10	11	14	–28.1	▼	19.3	10.2	6.8	7.3	8.5	–56.0
Rwanda	4	4	4	3	3	–11.9	▼	52.6	46.5	42.1	34.2	28.9	–45.1
Senegal	2	2	2	2	3	61.9	▲	21.7	24.2	16.9	16.5	20.5	–5.5
Sierra Leone	2	2	2	2	2	3.5	◄►	41.9	41.1	35.5	33.1	28.8	–31.3
South Africa	ns	ns	Ns	ns	ns	na	na	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	< 5	na
Sudan	11	11	12	15	18	53.8	▲	42.1	31.7	32	36.6	39.4	–6.4
Togo	1	1	1	1	1	–17.1	▼	32.8	25.2	20.4	19.8	16.5	–49.7
Uganda	5	6	8	10	12	146	▲	26.6	26.5	27.9	31	34.6	30.1
United Republic of Tanzania	8	14	14	15	18	131	▲	29.4	40.4	35.1	36.1	38.8	32
Zambia	3	4	6	6	6	131	▲	34.3	43.9	48.3	47.5	47.4	38.2
Zimbabwe	5	5	5	4	4	–11.7	▼	44.1	43.1	38.2	33.9	32.8	–25.6

Source: FAO, The State of Food Insecurity in the World, 2012.

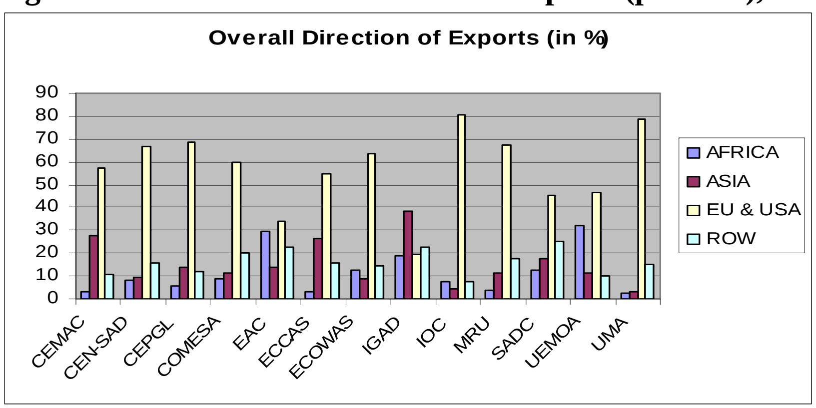
Figures

Figure 1: African food import bills escalating beyond control since the 1980s



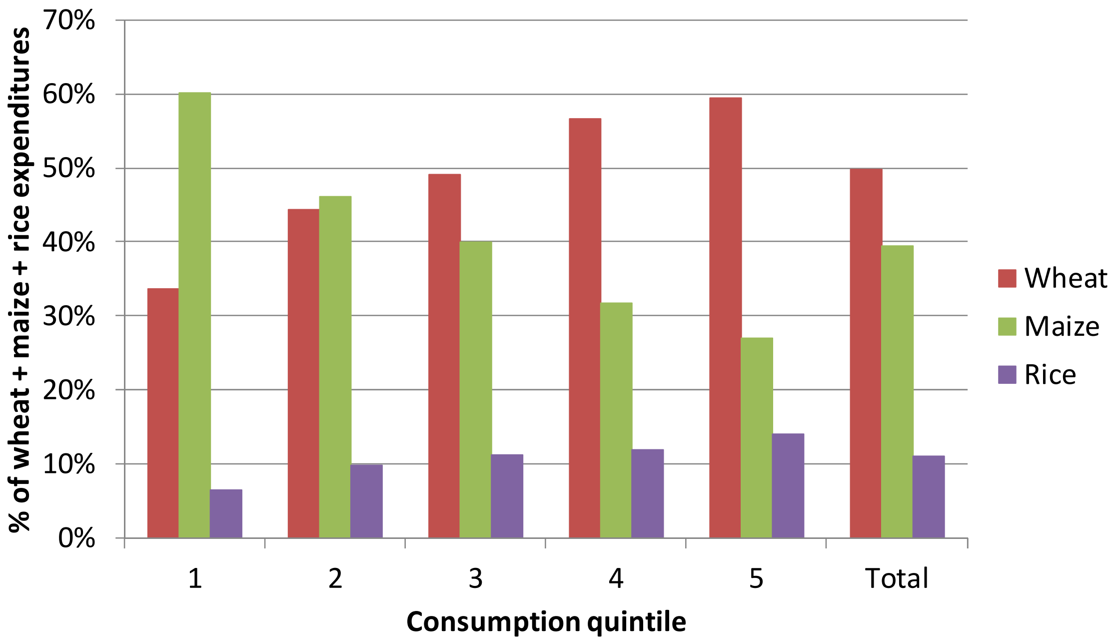
Source: UNCTAD, UNCTADStat accessed on 17.17.2011

Figure 2: Africa's overall direction of exports (per cent), 2010



Source: Compiled from DOTS, IMF.

Figure 3: Wheat becoming no. 1 staple in Lusaka, Zambia-2007/2008



Source: Mason and Jayne, 2009.