

**ASSURING FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY IN AFRICA BY 2020:
Prioritizing Action, Strengthening Actors, and Facilitating Partnerships**
April 1–3, 2004, Kampala, Uganda

SUMMARY NOTE

Parallel Session: **Strengthening Actors and Facilitating Partnerships: Nongovernmental Organizations, Farmers Organizations, and Media Forum**

Co-Chair: *Ayo Abifarin*, Director, Food Security Program, Africa Region, World Vision, Ghana

Title: Opening Statement: NGO/Farmers/Media Forum

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Food and Nutrition Security

Food security concept was first advanced in 1974 at the World Food Conference in Rome in response to the number of people affected by hunger in the early 1970s.¹ In 1986 the World Bank defined food security as “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active and healthy life.”² In 1992, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) defined food security as “when all people at all times have both physical and economic access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs for a productive and healthy life.”³ As we might have heard various definitions the past two days, food nutrition is within the concept of food. In WVI, Africa Region we recognize four food security components, which we use to program FS interventions. The components are: food availability, food use, food access and asset creation. Nutrition is addressed under food use component. Although nutrition deals in general with the quality and quantity of the food consumed, it emphasizes more on the balance among carbohydrates, proteins, minerals and vitamins intake. In this forum I hope that we will come out with ways the three stakeholders can promote the achievement of food and nutrition security by 2020 through working together.

Present Position

Presently we are not meaningfully integrated in our approach to contribute towards the goal of achieving food and nutrition security by 2020. Although most NGOs work with farmers most of the time, often not at the project designing stage. NGOs often react to the donors’ wish and bring the farmers onboard after the proposals have been granted. The relationship between the media and NGOs is even worse. Most of the time the media are excluded in the design and even in the execution of food and nutrition projects. In some cases at the end of the projects NGOs may invite one or two media personnel to cover the closing ceremonies. They are usually not involved in mid-term or end of project evaluations. Granted, there are pockets of acceptable level of collaborations between NGOs and the media, often, the opposite is the case. This leads to the media seeing nothing good in NGOs’ work and the NGOs complaining of negative coverage of their efforts. On the part of the media, unless there is a disaster in a given community they would wait to be invited before they publicize a need

¹ United Nations, “Assessment of World Food Situation, Present and Future,” World Food Conference Document E/CONF.65/3 (New York: United Nations, 1974).

² World Bank, *Poverty and Hunger: Issues and Options for Food Security in Developing Countries* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1986).

³ USAID, “Food Aid and Food Security: USAID Policy Paper,” unpublished report, (February 1995); and USAID, “U.S. International Food Assistance Report, 1998” (January 1999).

for or an ongoing project on food and nutrition security or the dissemination of their good results. There are many reasons for doing what the three of us are doing working in parallel and not integrated. I hope that this forum will discuss and suggest how to improve the situation as we all have significant roles to play to achieve our goal by 2020. Among what others would present I would like to include a few suggestions that may assist us to be more effective, collaborate better and produce positive impacts.

Way Forward

Knowledge of Causes of Food and Nutrition Insecurity. There should be regional, sub-regional and national forums in which the three stakeholders discuss key factors that are responsible for the insecurity. Having this knowledge, the media will continue to keep it alive with the policy makers, donors, farmers and NGOs.

Joint Design of Projects. Farmers, NGOs and media should participate in the design of projects that would enhance food and nutrition security. Joint base line surveys or participatory rapid assessments should take place for good project design.

Joint Advocacy on a Long-term Basis. Media has very important roles in advocating for desirable policies on F&N security. The media, NGOs and farmers should both agree on the policies and continue to push them at all levels of government institutions. Africa has long list of bad policies and habits on food production and food consumption that we need to advocate for against. Trade, agricultural subsidies, extension, land tenure system, prevention of some items of food to be eaten by women and children are some of those that need to be changed.

Multiple Partners. Future efforts should not only be integrated among the three stakeholders but should involve multiple partners. For example WVI could work with CRS or CARE in a given community, two media houses could champion together a cause of change or promotion of useful technologies.

Joint Contact with Donors. As much as feasible, the three stakeholders should contact donors together. A joint concept paper of 2-3 pages may even be useful at the initial stage of project designing. A donor would be sympathetic to a funding request if representatives from one or two NGOs, farmer associations, and media houses present their joint request to the donor.

Project Impact. In the project design, stakeholders should include expected positive impacts and measurable indicators in their joint projects.

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