



**SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY
FOR ALL BY 2020**
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SUMMARY NOTE

Panel Discussion: Setting the Priorities for Action

Panelist: Klaus Leisinger, Executive Director, Novartis Foundation for Sustainable Development

- (1) The world's poor and hungry are suffering not so much from a lack of knowledge as from insufficient political will and civil wisdom to implement what we know is right and has worked. Hence the first priority for action is to implement what are known to be politically and technically best practices.
- (2) As more people suffer from deficits in food security due to lack of "good governance," the priority areas for implementation are the political arenas both in the "South" (e.g., land and leasehold reforms, effective agricultural extension programs for small farmers and their families) and in the "North" (e.g., agricultural protectionism).
- (3) Different actors of civil society have different concepts, skills, techniques, experiences, and different resources in terms of both personnel and finance. They are also driven by different motives. Although there is a rational and natural division of labor and responsibility, synergies for unorthodox purposes are nevertheless feasible through the co-operation of different actors. As a result of their differences of background and experience, these different actors are likely to analyze the issues and appraise not only the problems but also the opportunities differently — this "competition of ideas" provides the dialectic substance and tension for new innovative approaches. Fundamentalist approaches of any actor will block any constructive development. Food security is a multi-faceted task involving different actors with differing roles and responsibilities. As such, it can only be achieved if and when those who have something to contribute to the solution do so in constructive co-operation with all other relevant actors.
- (4) It is unlikely that we will see drastic increases in overseas development assistance and support for agricultural development. We must therefore increase the cost-effectiveness of development co-operation in agriculture and beyond. This again means focusing on what organizations can do best, coordinating and co-operating to ensure that time and effort are not wasted on re-inventing wheels. This includes making best use of public-private partnership opportunities.
- (5) Technology has been, and will continue to be, a powerful tool for human development and poverty reduction. And as technology-supported advances are usually not just one-time gains, all responsible actors should do their best to create more political and financial support for public research. Investments in the CGIAR have been shown to provide a particularly "big bang for the buck."

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