



**SUSTAINABLE FOOD
SECURITY
FOR ALL BY 2020**
September 4–6, 2001 ! Bonn, Germany



SUMMARY NOTE

Panel Discussion: Setting the Priorities for Action

Panelist: Rajul Pandya-Lorch, Head of the 2020 Vision Initiative, International Food Policy Research Institute

Good morning!

When we first began planning this conference about 15 months ago, we had hoped about 300–400 people would be interested to participate. There were occasions I would wake up in the middle of the night wondering how we were going to fill enough of the room so that it did not look too empty. Never did I imagine the level of interest our conference would generate! I am humbled and awed by the energies coming together in this room. Imagine what we can do together to end hunger as we know it.

Let me remind you of what we are trying to accomplish at this conference. Our ultimate objective is to influence and catalyze action to achieve sustainable food security for all by 2020. We hope to break the malaise that is causing woefully slow progress in tackling hunger and malnutrition.

This conference builds on an earlier IFPRI 2020 Conference held in June 1995 in Washington. At that conference, a global vision was articulated and priorities for an action plan were identified. However, as we heard from IFPRI's director general a few minutes ago, progress in tackling hunger and malnutrition has been marginal at best and certainly far less than hoped. Moreover, there have been a number of emerging or intensifying developments with extraordinary implications — sometimes positive, sometimes negative, and sometimes unknown — for global food security. These emerging or intensifying developments include sweeping technological changes, the accelerated pace of globalization, the explosion or re-emergence of health and nutrition crises, and the emergence of major new actors accompanied by the sidelining of traditional actors in the food security arena. We felt there were compelling reasons to share new information and new ideas, not just from IFPRI but from elsewhere, on the driving forces shaping global food security; we felt there were compelling reasons to revisit the priorities for action at the global level and assess whether they need to be changed; and we felt there were compelling reasons to bring together key actors and key perspectives so that we can improve our understanding of roles and responsibilities. From the very beginning, we have made an effort to keep our conference open — no registration fee and the conference to open to all who wish to participate

I want to make sure that you are all aware that this Conference is not an intergovernmental conference like those held by the United Nations where binding or non-binding resolutions are sought. We are not going to be staying up all night hammering out revision after revision of any conference document. What we will engage to do in these three days is inform and educate each other, exchange in dialogue and debate, and energize ourselves to translate the dialogue into action following the conference.

All of you should have copies of the conference program. I do not intend to go through it in detail with you but I thought that I would briefly draw your attention to the three parts. The first part sets the stage in effect by addressing where we have come from, why progress in reducing food security is slow, and where we could be headed. The second part focuses on the emerging or driving forces shaping the prospects for food security in coming decades. Of course, these are not the only driving forces influencing food security but these are the forces that, in our judgement, appear to have the largest impact on food security at the global level or for the largest number of countries. These are clustered into four sets: demographic, health, and nutrition forces; economic forces; technological

and environmental forces; and socio-political forces. The third part of the conference focuses on the priorities for action and on roles and responsibilities for ending hunger. In other words, on what absolutely needs to be done and by whom. We have drafted a vision document identifying the priority actions required to achieve the 2020 Vision of a food-secure world for all. Copies of this document are in your conference bag. This document does not pretend to be an all-inclusive action plan — that is not our intent. Our intent is to suggest the key priorities for action at the global level. Highlights of this draft document will be presented on Thursday but I would like to note that you may already be familiar with some of what is in the document — I have news for you — there are some fundamentals that simply need to be in place without which sustainable food security will remain elusive. We invite and welcome your comments on this draft. If any of you feel that there are items in there that are simply not a global priority, let us know. And if you feel that there are actions that should be considered priority but are missing from the document, again don't be shy about letting us know, either here at the Conference or thereafter. Let me assure you that is no desire on our part to arrive at a document to be collectively signed or authored by all those who participate in the Conference. This is an IFPRI document and we will not hold anyone but ourselves responsible for the views that are articulated in it.

The issues that we are tackling in this conference are very complex. We recognize that there is simply no way to deal with all of these issues in three days if we are not disciplined. We have asked speakers to be very brief in their presentations, in most cases no more than 10 minutes each. I know that all of them will rise to the challenge of being informative, provocative, and stimulating in the time allotted to them so that we have time for audience participation. We have also arranged for a simple but very interesting technique to survey the opinions in this room.

The entire conference is being taped — a proceedings volume will be prepared following the conference. Summary notes prepared by the speakers will be available outside the room following their sessions. The proceedings of each day will be summarized and shared with you the following day. We have prepared a lot of background reports and other publications for this Conference some of which are available in your conference bags and others are on display or can be picked up at the IFPRI table outside.

In designing this conference program, we have benefitted considerably from the advice and guidance received from a conference advisory committee composed of representatives from conference sponsors as well as of a sub-group of the 2020 International Advisory Committee. We are grateful for the support received from the Conference co-sponsors as well as others who have facilitated participation from developing countries — all of the co-sponsors and supporters are listed on the back of your conference program and on all the publications. We appreciate the kind invitation of the German government to hold this conference in the lovely city of Bonn. This Conference would not have taken place in Bonn without the strong and sustained support and encouragement received from Jochen de Haas from the very beginning. Finally, let me thank all of you for dedicating your time and energy to participate in our Conference. We hope that you will find it informative, enriching, and stimulating and that you will walk out of here on Thursday evening energized to take action and to influence others to take action to realize the 2020 Vision of sustainable food security for all.

Thank you.

Note: The views expressed in this summary note are those of the author and are not necessarily endorsed by or representative of IFPRI or of the cosponsoring or supporting organizations.