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Figure 1: Graphic recording by Gabriele Schlipf- http://momik.de

DIALOGUE FORUM I | Summary

Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) and the Agenda 2030: complementing or competing?

RAPPORTEURS

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INTRODUCTION

From a conceptual point of view, the understanding of food security has been evolving over the past decades. On the one hand, we are seeing an increasing awareness regarding nutritional dimensions of food security. On the other, there is a growing understanding that a productivistic approach to food security contradicts the comprehensiveness and connectedness called for by the different sustainable development goals (SDGs). There is a growing consensus that food security in its classical definition – the 1996 World Food Summit definition of four pillars: availability, access, utilisation, and stability – remains valid, but it cannot single-handed address the complexities of inequitable access to food and nutrition in an increasingly environmentally constrained world. New and more comprehensive framings such as those of Agenda 2030 can help in analysing FSN. One example is Food Sustainability which is a concept that integrates different normative requirements than those currently being discussed in ongoing global debates on the topic.

From a policy perspective, the Agenda 2030 enters a food governance landscape that is densely populated by ongoing initiatives at different levels and by a diverse group of organisations. In terms of topics, these range from global food governance and decision-making reforms pushed by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) to a stronger focus on family farming policies as found in

Latin America. In addition there has been an increasing level of attention being paid to the nutritional dimension of food security in Europe and elsewhere around the globe. Gender and gendered approaches to humanitarian response and long-term development in Southern Africa have also been at the forefront of FSN debates.

Considering both the conceptual evolution and the policy interaction, the major questions discussed at this session were: how will the "localisation" of the SDGs interact with these political processes? Do these processes support the efforts of bringing us closer to Food Sustainability? Does the 2030 Agenda support and complement existing initiatives or compete for political emphasis and resources?

PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION

Stephan Rist (Centre for Development and Environment – CDE, Switzerland) discussed the paradigm shift that the Food Sustainability concept brings to debates on food security. Food Sustainability is understood as one integrative normative framework for assessing sustainability of all policy options targeting food systems. It considers five dimensions necessary for its materialisation, where food systems should ensure: i) food security (the classical four pillar definition); ii) right to food; iii) reduction of poverty and inequality; iv) environmental integrity of socio-ecological systems, and; v) socio-ecological resilience. With this framework in mind it is possible to comparatively analyse different food systems and evidence their strengths and weaknesses.

Two main questions were posed by the audience: i) How will the the Food Sustainability framework be operationalised? ii) Does the framework take power asymmetries into consideration? Stephan responded that the operationalisation of the framework is the challenging part as it is derived from a wide range of social science methods and backgrounds the different aspects of the framework can potentially be operationalised in several different ways. The framework does not intend to recreate methods but rather use existing ones and consolidated literature on each subject in an integrative manner. Regarding power asymmetries, these are normally addressed through the Right to Food dimension, since this directly relates to who has the autonomy and capacity of making decisions (i.e. who is entitled to decide) how food is produced and consumed.

Michael Krawinkel (Institute of Nutritional Sciences, University of Giessen, Germany) addressed the nutrition dimension focusing on a global healthy diet approach. He reminded the participants that SDG 2 which reads "to achieve food security and improved nutrition" places this topic in a prominent position within the Agenda 2030 and global debates on FSN. He clarified that "improved nutrition" means that both caloric overnutrition as well as diet quality need to be addressed, a point confirming that simply increasing food production is insufficient to achieve this SDG. Improved nutrition would require at least three aspects: i) Improve access to food by reducing post-harvest losses; ii) Increase and maintain dietary diversity, and; iii) Promote healthy diets. Diet quality is the appropriate concern when the challenge is to prevent nutrition-related diseases. It is generally measured in terms of dietary diversity taking into account the share of vegetables and fruits consumed and the intake of bioactive plant compounds in the diet.

Michal's presentation led to a lively debate on the differences between a nutritional approach that is based on nutrient supplementation versus one based on diet quality. One of the questions was in regards to policy options that could potentially increase diet quality, in particular the role of regulation and taxation in certain ingredients or formulations (e.g. the increased use of sugary-drink taxes in a number of countries to reduce their overall consumption). Participants generally agreed that these are policies that should be considered, especially if followed by more public debate and more information on the matter.

Julia Dennis (Germanwatch) initiated her talk by presenting a video about the growing challenge of malnutrition, a serious global problem affecting both, the so-called developing and developed societies. Malnutrition demonstrates that in spite of the progress in achieving some measures of food security, the world still faces significant challenges. Julia discussed interesting initiatives that are emerging in varied social contexts for tackling malnutrition: from Refood Label for food recyclers in Denmark, to food councils for local governance in Berlin, to agroecological practices for soil protection in Malawi. In her view, such relatively small projects can work as catalysts for larger-scale positive changes. The challenge remains how to connect these and others in networks and how to influence societies in general. In other words, how to scale them up without losing their rationale, objective and engagement methods.

Julia's presentation triggered an interesting debate on the role of communication tools in addressing malnutrition. Coming from a background in journalism, she stressed that information and dialogue do have the power to change mindsets and behaviour as witnessed elsewhere. Another point of debate was on who shapes and decides the instruments that regulate or favour one type of consumption pattern over another? As consumers it was noted we are seldom involved in decisions relating to food production and consumption. Additionally, the framings of 'producer' and 'consumer' are insufficient; we ought to look at people as citizens with rights and responsibilities, which is an understanding that is increasingly taken up by literature of food democracy.

Before turning to the working groups, **Hans Herren** (Biovision and Millennium Institute) reviewed the latest developments in debates on FSN and sustainability from global perspectives, bridging the discussion with those taking place on review mechanisms of the Agenda 2030. Hans recovered the spirit of the key report *The International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development* (IAASTD), a major inter-governmental initiative which brought together more than 900 participants from over 100 countries. This report stressed the need for tangible paradigmatic changes in food systems and framed relevant global debates on the matter. Nevertheless, if this more transformative perspective finds its way into negotiation processes of the SDGs, then it will have to compete with conventional and counter-reformist pushers that are operating through traditional advocacy and lobby strategies. He concluded that since the goals are practically set, this framing battle shifts closer to national levels, making these fundamental for the review of the effectiveness of the SDGs in shifting food policies towards food sustainability.

MESSAGES FROM THE WORLD CAFÉ GROUPS

Group A | Family Farming in Latin America
Moderated by **Ricardo França**, Brazilian Ministry of Agrarian Development

Using Latin American as a starting point, the group discussed the contribution of family farming based strategies for food security, nutrition, its relations to the SDGs and its complementary and competitive aspects.

The group reached two main conclusions: First, the reaffirmation that the Agenda 2030 will need family farming for its success which in turn requires public and political support, resources, investments, targeted interventions, market development and several other policies. Second, the Agenda 2030 implementation process will move faster if it uses existing institutional structures and mobilised resources.

Group B | The Committee on World Food Security and the Agenda 2030
Moderated by **Michael Bergöo**, Biovision

The group looked closer at the work of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS), and in particular its engagements within follow-up and review structures of the Agenda 2030. A major point of discussion was the ongoing negotiations on the contributions of the CFS via-à-vis the work stream of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF).

It was concluded that the HLPF will likely play a more technical review role with reports focusing on indicators and related issues, and that they face the risk of superficiality in debating roots and impacting policies. Here the CFS could provide a clear added-valued to the review processes. As a political forum where a significant majority of relevant proponents of diverging food discourses meet, the CFS is well positioned to go deeper into issues, to explore reasoning behind one or the other measure, and to debate particular political contexts that could provide faster transformations towards food sustainability.

This is one of the issues that will be discussed in a forthcoming event organized by IASS on the sides of the HLPF meeting in New York, July 2016.

Group C | CAADP and financing options for agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa
Moderated by **Augustin Wambo Yamdjeu**, NEPAD

The group discussed different financing options and instruments for agriculture investment in Sub-Saharan agriculture with a particular emphasis on those targeting smallholder farmers. African countries have been working to renew their national agricultural development strategies for a decade now with financial and technical support from international agencies. In spite of the technical qualities of these strategies, real transformation can only occur when governments and communities have the capacities to operate these imported financing models that have succeeded elsewhere but to a large extent in Africa these same models are generating few, if any, successes. Innovation in agricultural financing is fundamental and its successes is directly proportional to levels of integration and compatibility with local contexts and institutions.

Group D | Gendered approaches in humanitarian assistance and long-term development
Moderated by **Leisa Perch**, UN-Women

The Agenda 2030 as a framework brings together gender, humanitarian action and long-term development in a way that has probably never been seen before. These issues are critical elements of the food security and nutrition agenda, and bring with them not only potentially great opportunities but also increased risks. The group discussed the issue of economic empowerment and women's economic and social participation in this new context.

Three major conclusions were named by the group: First, some SDGs and targets have catalytic effects on others. That is, by achieving one goal we would also be facilitating the achievement of another, and the goal of gender equality seems to produce this effect. Second, land and natural resources are a common challenge in many aspects of the agenda and play a pivotal role as they are intrinsic to women's economic empowerment in many countries. Third, as droughts and flooding are occurring more frequently, crisis management ought to be substituted for building resilience and disaster risk reduction. In this context, women have been playing a leading role especially in rural areas as community leaders, farmers and extension workers.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS:

The richness of the debate demonstrated that there are no simple answers to the main question of the session: will the Agenda 2030 compete or complement with ongoing initiatives for food sustainability? It is very likely that it will do both, compete and complement. It could boost those initiatives that are in line with the spirit of the SDGs by offering new and stronger arguments for

transformative change. It could assist aligning initiatives that are not necessarily in accordance with Agenda 2030 proposals, so they do not compete for political resources that should be directed for SDG implementation. There was a consensus that the Agenda 2030 should not reinvent the wheel but rather use and build on existing institutional structures and mobilised resources to catalyse its implementation. There are interesting examples in this direction, for instance, those brought by the potentially complementary relationship between the HLPF and its more technical dimension, the CFS. But this should certainly be further explored while keeping in mind that national levels will be key for the successful localisation of SDGs within current policy practices.

Figure 2: Session discussion. Photo credit: Piero Chiussi

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