



FOOD SECURITY ONLINE CONSULTATION 2014

All contributions from July 1 till September 15, 2014

Food & Business
Knowledge Platform



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Contributors to the online consultation

Please find below a list of all contributors to the food security online consultation. By clicking on a number in the last column, you go directly to the comment they have written for that target:

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First Name	Last Name	Organization	Targets
Francis Ouruma	Alacho	NWO-WOTRO	1
Geoffrey	Andrews	ZOA	1 - 2 - 3 - 5
Emmanuel	Bahati	Agri-Hub RD Congo	1 - 2 - 3 - 4
Rohan	Bennett	Agri-Hub RD Congo	4
Gemma	Betsema	LandAC	4
Lalita	Bhattacharjee	FAO	2
Edith	Boekraad	Cordaid	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
Hans	Bogaard	Rabobank Development	1
Jean	Bosco	Sovucoc	1
Dave	Boselie	IDH the sustainable trade initiative	1
Herman	Brouwer	Wageningen UR	policy
Evelijne	Bruning	The Hunger Project	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - policy
Jolanda	Buter	MDF Training & Consultancy	1
Jeroen	Candel	Wageningen UR	1 - 5
David	Connolly	The Hague Institute for Global Justice	1 - 2
Han	de Groot	UTZ certified	3 - 4
Bart	de Steenhuijsen Piters	KIT (Royal Tropical Institute)	1
Ton	Dietz	African Studie Centre	1 - policy
Aalt	Dijkhuizen	Topsector Agri&Food	1
Hans	Eenhoorn	Worldconnector	4 - 5 - policy
Jan Willem	Eggink	Agri-ProFocus	5
Paul	Engel	ECDPM	policy
Rian	Fokker	Heifer Nederland	1
Guus	Geurts Swadeshi	Bureau for Alternative Globalization	1 - 3 - 4 - policy
Nehemiah	Gitonga	Tenacious systems Kenya	1 - 3 - 5
Rob	Glastra	IUCN	3
Greet	Goverde	Platform Aarde Boer Consument	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - policy
Carol	Gribnau	Hivos	1 - 3 - 4 - policy
Johanne	Harnmeijer	ETC Foundation	2 - 3 - 6
Selim Reza	Hasan	Solidaridad Network	4
Sharon	Hesp	Newforesight	3 - 4
Wim	Hiemstra	ETC Foundation	2 - 3 - policy
Danielle	Hirsch	BothENDS	1 - 3 - 4 - 5 - policy
Christiaan	Hogenhuis	Oikos	policy
Bashir	Jama	AGRA	4
Nico	Janssen	SNV – Tanzania	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - policy
Ries	Kamphof	NCDO	5
Sylvia	Kay	Transnational Institute	3 - 4
Acham Hellen	Ketty Elungat	North East Chilli Producers Ass. Uganda	4
Boniface	Kiome	HIVOS Kenya	1 - 3 - 4 - 5 - policy
Wijnand	Klaver	African Study Centre	1 - 4 - policy
Nano	Kleiterp	FMO	3
Daniel	Knoop	Solidaridad	3

First Name	Last Name	Organization	Targets
Rentia	Krijnen	Founder kenyaproject.nl	3
Martin	Kropff	Wageningen UR	1
Willem-jan	Laan	Unilever	1 - 3 - policy
Niels	Louwaars	Plantum	4
Agnese	Macaluso	The Hague Institute for Global Justice	1 - 2
Peter	Mbiyu	Kenya Markets Trust	1
Mariel	Mensink	Terrafina	1
Mariska	Meurs	Wemos	1 - 2 - policy
John	Muhimbise	Apex business skills ltd.	1
Frank	Nagel	Rabobank Development	1
Clementine	O'Connor	Deloitte	5
Stineke	Oenema	ICCO	1 - 2 - policy
Klaas Johan	Osinga	LTO Nederland	1
Helena	Pachon	Food Fortification Initiative	policy
Rajul	Pandya-Lorch	IFPRI	1
Konrad	Plechowski	IICD	4
Ruerd	Ruben	LEI Wageningen UR	1
Sidi	Sanyang	AfricaRice	1 - 5
Bert	Satijn	NWP	3
Rolf	Schinkel	SNV World	1
Claudio	Schuftan	Peoples Health Movement, Vietnam	2 - policy
Jur	Schuurman	Agriterra	4
Angelica	Senders	Agri-ProFocus	3
Anneke	Sipkens	Deloitte	5
Peter	Sloot	Aequator Groen & Ruimte	3
Lotte	Sluiter	NCDO	5
Herbert	Smorenburg	GAIN Health	2
David	Sogge	Independent consultant	policy
Kahindo	Suhene Marie	Chimie Agro-Alimentaire	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5
Amos	Thiongo	Agri-ProFocus, Kenya	5
Anton	Timpers	FMO	3
Francis	Tucungwirwe	VAI institute	1 - 4
Arine	Valstar	ETC Foundation	1 - 3
Christy	van Beek	Sr Scientist Soil Fertility&Nutrient Mgmt	3
Aart	van den Bos	Soil & More	4
Nelleke	van der Vleuten	Bop Innovation Center	policy
Niek	van Dijk	Bop Innovation Center	4
Jacques	Van Nederpelt	Platform Aarde Boer Consument	policy
Barbara	van Paassen	ActionAid	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - policy
Jeske	van Seters	ECDPM	3
René	Van Veenhuizen	RUAF Foundation	3
Panos	Varangis	IFC	4
Jose Luis	Vivero Pol	Universite Catholique de Louvain	policy
Sabina	Voogd	Oxfam Novib	1 - 3 - 4 - policy
Danny	Wijnhoud	ActionAid	1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - policy
Pieter	Windmeijer	Wageningen UR	3

Target 1 – 100% access to adequate food all year round

Frank Nagel & Hans Bogaard [September 14th, 2014](#)

Director Advisory Services; Head Agri Business - Rabobank Development

"Development of the Agri-Food sector requires a strong local financial sector"

Rabo Development supports financial inclusion in developing markets by providing advisory services (via RIAS) to banks, multilateral institutions and agribusiness companies. Besides advisory services, RD takes minority shares in promising banks with strong rural potential. A combination of management services and technical assistance is provided to help the development of the bank into a leading commercial bank with a strong rural footprint. Aim is to increase the outreach of the bank's financial services to SMEs and private individuals with a special focus on agriculture.

In the agricultural sector, the focus is on commercial smallholders and medium and large sized farmers, farmer organisations and agri-businesses in emerging economies. Whereas Rabo Development and its partner banks focus on commercial operators, Rabobank Foundation is working with the Bottom of the Pyramid, i.e. projects that focus on developing semi-commercial farmers and semi-commercial farmer groups into commercially viable farmers and groups. Focusing only on the rural-agricultural sector has too many risks and is not a sustainable strategy. Therefore, Rabo Development aims at strengthening the overall financial sector in a country including SMEs and private individuals.

In several African countries the productivity increases fuelled by increased Government attention and investments by the private sector. However, despite of increased attention for local production, imports of particularly staple foods are still growing faster, which does not help to build sustainable local food systems. Also, the lack of economies of scale, in-transparent landownership systems and infrastructural deficiencies still hamper agricultural development. Rabobank expects that the development of agriculture in Africa will inevitably (as has happened in the Netherlands and other western countries) lead to a consolidation of farm land with a gradual exit of smallholders (e.g. via urbanization), which poses a challenge for society. This could be accelerated by lack of interest in farming by the young generation.

The main role of Rabobank is to support the local financial sector with financial means and with knowledge of the agri-food sector (triangle of finance, knowledge and network). The Dutch government could support the efforts of Rabobank by for example:

- Assist Rabobank building local networks and strategic collaboration (e.g. through RNEs which requires sufficient staffing of the embassies).
- Bundle programmes and work in fewer countries (efforts are now scattered over many countries).
- Enhance the development of the cadastre (clarity on land rights is crucial for farmers).
- In theory DGGF (Dutch Good Growth Fund) could be used as a guarantee fund for financing farmers, but the impact would be limited. Other guarantee funds are already available, but it's the economic viability of the farmer/agri-business which is the leading criterion. However, the DGGF could stimulate investments by Dutch food & agribusiness companies either by providing guarantees/risk sharing or seed funding.

Rabobank supports the direction taken by the Dutch government on 'Trade & Aid' since it is the only way to achieve a truly sustainable result. The Dutch agro-business is constructed of many SMEs which often do not have the resources to invest in risky countries and should get support. Large Dutch companies often pull along SMEs in clusters. Africa also offers many opportunities for the Dutch logistic and food-processing sector, certainly around the growing cities of Africa. For example '[Seed 2 feed](#)' shows many opportunities in Africa for the greenhouse sector.

Rian Fokker [September 14th, 2014](#)

Director Heifer, Netherlands

"Unlocking the potential of small-scale farming"

It has been said several times before on this forum: food insecurity is a multi-faceted problem that needs integral solutions and clever cooperation between public, private and civil society stakeholders.

In this effort smallholder farmers play a key role. They are part of the problem – as most people living in poverty and food insecurity still live in rural areas and are dependent of agriculture. But more importantly, they are part of the solution. With productivity generally very low, they have great potential to reduce the productivity gap and contribute to vibrant local and regional food systems.

- The sheer number of small-scale farmers (half a billion farms is smaller than 2 hectares) and the lack of alternative employment requires that any food security policy includes strategies to unlock that smallholder potential. In the view – and experience – of Heifer, successful strategies are built on five pillars:
- Food security involves increased productivity and diversity of food production. Increasing farmers' knowledge of sustainable farming practices, and improving access to assets and technology is key to achieve this.
- Increasing incomes is just as important to improve access to food. Enabling better access to markets for smallholders, strengthening their position through strong producer organisations, building entrepreneurial skills and knowledge and improving access to new technology are crucial elements to achieve this.

- Empowering women to get more influence on decision making within families and communities, get better access to knowledge and assets and to improve their status is key both to increase agricultural productivity and improve family nutrition.
- Make production more sustainable and climate-proof. Building healthy soils with high organic matter content is a first priority to improve soil fertility and water retaining capacity. Crop-livestock (and tree) integration is an effective way to achieve this. Promoting farming techniques that restore and prevent soil degradation is a second. And strengthening agro-diversity to create robust and resilient farming systems is another element.
- Finally: building social capital. Strong social structures – communities, producer organizations, cooperatives, are essential to reduce vulnerability for shocks and to strengthen the voice of people that have traditionally little influence on decision making.

All of these pillars are indispensable to build strong, resilient and sustainable local and regional food systems; take one pillar away and the system collapses.

Oxfam Novib [September 14th, 2014](#)

Oxfam Novib, Netherlands

"The role of the financial sector"

The financial sector has a huge roll to play in supporting rural SMEs and more generally promoting the rights and opportunities of smallholders and agricultural workers. Financial institutions can:

1. Provide adequate financial products for the poor and for the development of SMEs: loans, credits, equities, saving possibilities, insurances, and remittance services. Agricultural SMEs have few credit opportunities; banks are reluctant because of systemic, market and credit risks, relative slow investment returns, and geographic dispersion of customers. This is compounded by constraints in infrastructure and lack of local knowledge and capacities. Women have even more difficulties to access finance, due to lack of required documents, land rights, collateral, literacy, etc.
2. Abstain from facilitating tax avoidance and instead stimulate their clients to pay taxes in the production countries to improve the national income of governments, which can be invested in public goods such as infrastructure.
3. Avoid food commodity price speculation.
4. Invest in sustainable, (social/ecological) certified, inclusive business that respect the rights of local communities and avoid greenhouse gas emissions; and/or opt for impact investment in social business and companies who are part of the circular economy. Currently many banks and investment funds focus more on the bigger clients, with high turn over. They have insufficient policies in place to prevent their investments contribute to practices such as land grabbing, slavery, pollution, or climate change, that negatively impact the food system and food producers. .
5. Adhere to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: being transparent regarding their investments, their clients; acting responsible using investment criteria, increasing financial, environmental and social capital, and addressing adverse impacts. Other key principles business should comply with are the OESO guidelines, Equator principles, and UN-PRI.

The Dutch government can work with the financial sector, governments of developing countries, and CSOs to ensure that Dutch banks, pension funds, insurance companies and other investors take a lead financing sustainable, inclusive food production and trade. Moreover, it can work with these stakeholders to promote financial literacy and to enable access to financial services for SMEs. Furthermore, it can encourage the Dutch financial sector to respect international guidelines and standards and to assume a worldwide role model in transparency and inclusive, sustainable finance. Finally, in the Netherlands and at international level it can promote laws and policies that put an end to excessive food commodity price speculation as well as tax avoidance and evasion.

CSOs play an important role in holding financial institutions to account as well as in promoting financial (and fiscal) literacy. Civil society engagement with the financial sector to promote sustainable inclusive banking and investment practices, should be more internationally coordinated to create a level playing field, thereby promoting that financial institutions collectively raise the bar.

Oxfam Novib [September 14th, 2014](#)

Oxfam Novib, Netherlands

"Fixing the broken food system requires a multifaceted approach and action by multiple stakeholders"

Our food system is broken. The world produces sufficient food to feed everyone, yet one in eight people go to bed hungry every day: 842 million women, men, and children are chronically undernourished.(i) Ironically, 70 per cent of them are directly involved in food production.(ii) Pressure on the food system will increase: demand for food is expected to increase by 70 per cent(iii) by 2050, due to population growth, economic development and resulting changing diets. Further pressure on the food system will come from climate change and increased competition for natural resources from biofuels, industry and urbanisation.

Ensuring access to food for all at an affordable price, requires building on the potential of the various existing farming systems, and building on complementarities between small- and large-scale farms, while ensuring that working and living conditions for smallholder and agricultural workers are advanced, and environmental safeguards are taken into account.

500 million smallholder farmers already produce 80 percent of the food consumed in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.(iv) Oxfam Novib research shows that tapping into their potential will lead to increased and sustainable food production while simultaneously reducing poverty.(v) It is particularly critical to empower female smallholders. Tapping into the potential of smallholders requires ensuring:

1. Secure access to land and water (see our input under question 6);
2. Access to appropriate and quality seeds (see our input under question 6);
3. Tackling climate change and helping farmers adapt to climate change (see our input under question 3);
4. An enabling environment for smallholders by improving their access to credit (see our input on the financial sector), knowledge and markets (see our input under question 4).

Furthermore, it is vital to ensure fair prices for smallholders. They struggle with farm gate prices that often do not cover the cost of production, which may force them to cut the cost of labour, leading to deteriorating working conditions and jeopardizing agricultural investments.

It is critical to promote more inclusive business models for large scale investors, offering opportunities for the involvement of local farmers as well as waged workers. Sixty percent of agricultural workers employed by both large and small farms, live in poverty. In many parts of the world, they are denied fundamental human rights, and are typically excluded from participation in decision-making processes.(vi) Agricultural workers face job insecurity, low wages, bad health and safety conditions, difficulties in associating freely and collective bargaining and a lack of social security. It is important to promote job opportunities, fair wages and decent working conditions for agricultural workers.

Promoting food security requires a multi-faceted approach, tackling challenges in multiple areas. As we explain in more detail in our other inputs, it also requires action by multiple stakeholders, including women, farmers and agricultural workers, CSOs, the private sector (including the financial sector), governments, and international institutions. It is important that the Dutch policy on food security reflects the need for this multifaceted approach, involving multiple stakeholders.

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Greet Goverde September 14th, 2014

secr. Platform Aarde Boer Consument

"At the state and EU level we need food policies that integrate food production with social protection, health and environment"

The number of hungry and malnourished people is 1.2 or 1.3 billion rather than 850 million if we include the criteria 'all the year round' (march/april is the lean season), 'all the members of the family' (women and girls come last), and the higher number of calories needed for demanding physical work. These people can't buy enough and adequate food. This is a very difficult challenge because it needs reforms in the south as well as in the north.

1. Since the 70s the South has imported more and more foodstuffs – cheap food subsidised by the OECD taxpayers' money – and developed a dependency on international markets. Many poor countries now buy 30-35% of the food they consume from international markets. These governments should be encouraged to move towards social protection schemes, to reinvest in local production, redevelop local food systems and reduce their dependency on international markets.
2. We in the North must move away from the export-led agriculture that is making it difficult for governments in the South to make this transition.

Achieving these two transformations at the same time is very difficult to achieve, and it will not happen overnight, because of obstacles in the current system that we have inherited from the 1960's-70s:

1. Technical obstacles. Investments have been made in infrastructure – silos, the trucks, the ships – that has been developed for the growth of agricultural commodities the food processing industry, not for the local needs. There are many regions where, for example, local food processing facilities are basically absent, so that farmers are encouraged to produce maize or soy bean for the food processing industry.
2. Economic obstacles. Profits made in the middle of the food chain are huge, and those interests are very difficult to displace.
3. Cultural obstacles: we have developed a taste for heavily processed foods that are salty and contain a lot of sugar, e.g. from high fructose corn syrup.
4. Above all political obstacles: the systems that have developed, are dominated by a relatively small number of major actors who make it very difficult to circumvent them.

This is why food democracy / food sovereignty is important: we need to democratise the food system from the local level upwards. (see <http://www.voedselenders.nl> conference report, and speech by O. de Schutter.) Consumers should team with producers and local authorities. At the state and EU level we need food policies that integrate food production with social protection, health and environment. At the international level trade regulations should be adjusted. In that area there is as yet no serious attempt to link international negotiations to global food security and other concerns, on the contrary.

There are alternatives, see e.g. <http://www.alternativetrademandate.org>. We suggest that the Dutch politicians and institutes and citizens focus on the more detailed recommendations in the documents mentioned here. Human rights (including the right to food), women's rights, labour, environment and climate should have precedence over trade and investment regimes.

(This contribution and other by Platform ABC is partly based on Olivier de Schutter's speech at the 'Food Otherwise' conference, February 21-22 2014, Wageningen, see <http://www.voedselenders.nl>)

Stineke Oenema [September 14th, 2014](#)

Member of Independent Expert Group for Global Nutrition Report, Netherlands

"Diet, not products"

Access to adequate food all year round. This means among other things, that people have sufficient resources in order to buy the food (that should be available at affordable prices). I will not address that here, but please also make the link with smallholder productivity and income.

Adequate food all year round for all people does not mean the availability of "one" "wonder product" that will solve all your problems immediately. Adequate food is measured by sufficient dietary diversity (e.g. Number of food groups, % of diet from staples or carbohydrates). The objective should be a diverse and adequate diet. It is important to take into account the lifecycle here: people have different needs throughout the life cycle: One should take into account that children should be allowed exclusive breastfeeding up to 6 months. BF should continue up to two years and be complemented with adequate and safe complementary foods., leading to an optimal diet (measured by dietary diversity indicators, not the availability of one food product)

Aalt Dijkhuizen [September 13th, 2014](#)

President Topsector Agri&Food, Netherlands

"Highly-productive and efficient agri & food production systems: the way to go!"

The demand for food will substantially increase in the next few decades. Higher number of people and increasing wealth in major parts of the world will lead to a doubling of the global demand for especially high-quality proteins such as vegetables, dairy and meat. The available land and resources will not double, so we need to produce more per hectare, per animal, per litre water, per kilogram soya or whatsoever. This challenge of productivity and efficiency is exactly where the Netherlands is worldwide frontrunner. For each hectare not or less intensively used here, an additional 4 hectares are needed elsewhere in the world to produce the same amount of food. For each cow, chicken or pig less produced, we need two to three animals elsewhere to compensate. Think of the tremendous extra impact that would have on land, nature and the environment.

Available Dutch knowledge and technology could and should be used to help improve productivity and efficiency throughout the world. But also in the Netherlands, production can further be increased. If the less productive farms would be able to reach the levels of the top, the overall production would increase by at least 50%, while realizing a better footprint and so using less land and fewer resources and producing fewer greenhouse gas emissions. 'More with Less' so to speak. Moreover, the best-performing farms can further develop by using new technologies such as genomics and information technology (precision farming) to improve future productivity and efficiency.

In the view of most NGOs, however, the Netherlands and especially the best-performing farms should decrease production to reach sustainability. They link sustainability to topics such as small(er)-scale farming, regionalization, extensification and organic production, ignoring or even denying that these systems ask for more land and resources per kg of product and have higher greenhouse gas emissions. Life cycle analyses of the production chains show that transport of raw materials has minimal effect on the overall footprint, which means that one should produce according to the old but still valid economic adagium – ie, there, where it can be done most efficiently – to realize maximum sustainability. Moreover, most animal-welfare concepts lower the productivity and efficiency of the system and hence show a higher footprint. This asks for a clear priority setting between more animal welfare on the one hand and a lower footprint on the other.

Too often, industry is forced to adapt new concepts and production systems based on emotions rather than on considering the real pros and cons. Common agri & food production systems are easily forced to adapt into a direction, which will increase the footprint and hence harm nature and the environment. Perhaps a group of authoritative experts could help and analyse the available evidence from scientific research on these and related subjects to objectify the discussion and distinguish between facts and feelings in agri & food production. (This contribution is a summary of the presentation of Aalt Dijkhuizen at the annual meeting 2014 of CBL, the Dutch Retail Organization; in Dutch.)

Martin Kropff [September 12th, 2014](#)

Vice chairman Executive Board of Wageningen UR, rector magnificus Wageningen University

"Build on technological, social and economic knowledge in agri-food sector"

A major global challenge we are facing in the coming decades is to strongly increase food production, while reducing the use of natural resources and improving the nutritional quality. I summarize it often as: In 2050 we need 2 x more with 2 x less inputs and a 2 x better nutrition. Science will be pivotal in reaching these ambitions, and specifically a balanced interplay between technological and the socio-economic domains will be crucial. History shows the potential impact of agricultural science and technology. During the period of the Green Revolutions, production levels have increased in many countries. This was achieved by rapid technological developments in combination with social and economic support. However, this rapid increase in production had its draw-backs, as focus was on a higher production alone and ignored the other eco-system services of our production systems. This has to be balanced in the years to come.

For several reasons, African countries lacked behind and did not profit from the Green Revolution. This is mainly due to socio-economic and institutional factors, as much technology is already available. It indicates that food production in Africa can be improved. We have to leapfrog, however, and benefit from the lessons we learned from the Green Revolutions in other parts of the world. We need to optimize production rather than maximize it, in balance with other eco-system services. It is not about intensification of the African production systems, it is about sustainable intensification.

Food production is a societal challenge, but at the same time an economic opportunity. The advantages of a close interaction between private and public partners therefore is obvious. Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) are considered to be important agents for co-innovation. Collaboration of knowledge institutions, such as Wageningen UR and the Dutch and international private sector, combines academic and practical knowledge, strengthens capacity building, and supports implementation of innovations. The Netherlands is frontrunner regarding PPPs and its agri-food sector is globally an example of efficient production and processing systems. This strong position –The Netherlands is the 2nd exporter of agri-food products in the world-, in combination with the presence of world leading knowledge institutions in this domain, can help to address global issues related to food and nutrition security such as the challenge of feeding the expanding cities in different parts of the world. From the perspective of Wageningen UR, several interventions may help to capitalize on the strong position of the Netherlands. First, the issues at stake need to be addressed internationally. Wageningen UR has an excellent international position, and interacts with many global players like the CGIAR. A more coherent policy, however, where the considerable financial contribution of the Dutch government to the CGIAR strengthens the use of Dutch expertise and competences, may further optimize the efficiency of the funding. The Netherlands has much more to offer than money alone. Next, seed-money programs like FDOV, BOCI or ARF have demonstrated to lead to major innovative activities, and need to be continued and fine-tuned to allow the participation of the best partners in The Netherlands. Lastly, I consider capacity building as very important. We need to support actively the formation of research staff in Africa, Asia and other parts of the world, either locally or in Wageningen or both (as in PhD-sandwich construction). The local column of green education (farmer level, higher education, university) needs to be strengthened in addition to distance learning, peer learning, etc.

I do think that The Netherlands is excellently positioned to meet global challenges and grasp economic opportunities at the same time. I highly value the intense collaboration between government, scientific organizations, industry and civil society to formulate, design and implement the innovation needed to step forwards. Wageningen UR is very much committed to take its role and welcomes all partners to jointly improve the quality of life.

Guus Geurts [September 12th, 2014](#)

Author 'Wereldvoedsel - pleidooi voor een rechtvaardige en ecologische voedselvoorziening'

"Analysis - Free trade and 100% access to food don't go together"

Introduction

Because you propose that a lively discussion between contributors will be established, I first want to make some quotes of other contributors to this discussion (below).

I will first mention some quotes with which I fully agree. Then I will react to some other contributions in my analysis.

Because of the maximum of 500 words I will give my alternative at target 3, this alternative is based on the [Alternative Trade Mandate](#).

(Because of using the quotes of other people my text will be longer than 500 words, but my contribution is about 500 words.)

Quotes

VALSTAR (ETC) mentioned at target 3:

"Incorporate the rights angle taken by the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food"

ETC suggests to incorporate the rights angle taken by the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food – [see reports](#). In his recent final report the rapporteur includes a sector-by-sector list of recommendations and in so doing addresses various points that are relevant for food security. His conclusion says:

"The eradication of hunger and malnutrition is an achievable goal. Reaching it requires, however, that we move

away from business as usual and improve coordination across sectors, across time and across levels of governance. (...) In turn, local-level and national-level policies should benefit from an enabling international environment, in which policies that affect the ability of countries to guarantee the right to food – in the areas of trade, food aid, foreign debt alleviation and development cooperation – are realigned with the imperative of achieving food security and ensuring adequate nutrition. (...) food sovereignty is a condition for the full realization of the right to food. But it is the paradox of an increasingly interdependent world that this requires deepening the cooperation between States.”

Texts such as the above in our opinion rightly stress the urgency of the matter and also convincingly argue that “business as usual” will not do.’

KRIJNEN (kenyaproject.nl) mentioned at target 3: “The right to food sovereignty”

The right to food sovereignty for every country should be anchored in the assumptions of Dutch agricultural policy. That means that a country’s right to produce food for their own population should be secured: without the disturbance of foreign food import (or dumping) to local markets. (...) Actors such as the Dutch LTO and the government should take example from the ABC-platform (Platform Aarde Boer Consument, <http://www.aardeboerconsument.nl>, GG) that consists of multiple farmers organisations with a critical point of view from over the world.’

BOEKRAAD (Cordaid):

Food insecurity in the world is not related to a lack of food, but to a lack of access to food by a small but significant portion of people.

CANDEL (WUR):

“Think holistically, promote integrality” (...) The transcendence of jurisdictional scales results from the absence of a food security policy domain. Instead, food security is an issue that is scattered across various policy domains, such as agricultural, environmental, development, and trade policy-making. (...) ‘critique on current and previous Dutch food security policy: it is too much focused on food security as a development cooperation concern, and, within that focus, puts a relatively big emphasis on enhancing production, value chains, and the role that Dutch businesses can play within those efforts, and relatively little, although increasing, on aspects such as access, nutrition, and climate change adaptation. Little or none attention has been paid to how food security concerns could be genuinely integrated into other policy domains, such as the Common Agricultural Policy, Common Fisheries Policy, environmental policy, or trade policy.

HIRSCH (BothENDS):

‘One of the biggest challenges to contribute to access to adequate food is to overcome the focus on crop productivity only.’ (...) Refrain from bilateral and multilateral trade agreements that lead to dumping of food in LMIC as it destroys local production.

RUBEN (LEI/WUR):

‘This critical nexus between food, health and conflicts is further threatened by climate change and scarce natural and fossil resources, asking for more resilience in food systems and resistance against stress and shocks. (...) Food security policies are also part of interconnected regional and (inter)national trading regimes and company sourcing strategies that provide different and sometimes contradictory incentives. (...) In addition, local and regional programs focusing on price stabilization, storage and micro-savings mobilization enable households more effective access to food and nutrition. (...) Guaranteeing food security and safeguarding food sovereignty requires equitable access to resources and secure land and water rights.’

STEENHUIJSEN PITERS (KIT):

‘But most agricultural project interventions over the past decades have focused on one particular pattern, i.e. productivity increases per hectare (intensification). Interventions based on this paradigm mainly focus on other forces than labour: new technology, more capital intensive farming, land and water availability, household economics, mechanisation and, as a consequence, cash crop production, transformation and commercialisation for commodity value chains. Projects have, at best, benefitted the upper quintal of rural households, which follow, or are supposed to follow, a distinguished pattern with a degree of (labour) specialisation. The lower spectrum of households has not benefitted from these investments. Both theory and practice confirm that there is not anything like a linear rural development pattern or trickledown effect that automatically includes the less endowed households.’

SOGGE (Independent researcher),

“Don’t Overlook Political Economy and Public Politics”

‘A year ago, in his final report to the United Nations General Assembly, the UN’s Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier De Schutter, devoted a lot of attention to “the political economy questions that play such an important part in explaining the failure to achieve durable success in tackling hunger and malnutrition.” (...) A cursory look at your food security discussion up to now indicates that issues of political economy are hardly raised.’

OSINGA (LTO Nederland):

In the opinion of LTO, the creation of strong farmers’ organisations needs to be complemented by government

agriculture policies. These policies are needed to take the edge off market volatility, and provide market information. In regions that are prone to famine, food stocks may be built but always in close cooperation with local farmers organisations. Volatility can also be limited by regulating speculation and by creating instruments farmers can use to limit risks, like risk insurances against weather events, infectious diseases and sudden market collapse. (...) Farmers cannot be expected to produce more food if they are not getting a fair price for their products.

VIVERO POL (Universite Catholique de Louvain),

"A different narrative and ethical approach: food as a commons"

'The industrial food system only considers one dimension of food, seeing its tradable dimension and viewing it as a commodity. The main goal of agri-business corporations is not to sustainably produce healthy food for everyone but to earn more money. We are fed by a 'low cost' food system where price is the main driver of food production, processing and consumption, rather than aiming at delivering nutritious food for all. If we want to achieve a food-secure world we need to have more space for self-regulated collective actions for food and to re-claim more space for state-led initiatives, whose primary goal is their citizens' wellbeing. Because food security is within the mandate of every state but surely not within the mandate of every food and agriculture company.'

LAAN (Unilever) (Comments on this below)

'Unilever advocates for many years for:

1. A widespread adoption of sustainable farming practices;
2. A step change in government investment in agriculture (with a particular focus on smallholders);
3. The elimination of market distorting subsidies like those on bio fuels;
4. Finally we should constantly remind our political masters of the importance of completing the Doha Round. (...) the removal of agricultural tariffs and subsidies will do much to increase agricultural capacity and reduce global poverty.'

My own contribution

As I said I agree with most comments which I mentioned above. I however strongly oppose remark nr. 4 of Mr. Laan of Unilever.

As other contributors say, like mr. Osinga, farmers need a fair price to produce more. I would add 'to produce sustainable and secure food supply in future for local, regional and national consumers'.

The Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) within the WTO, the current negotiating text of the Doha Round, and bilateral and regional free trade agreements make this impossible. Because the following reasons:

1. Because government intervention measures like supply management, marketing boards, security stocks and import taxes to stabilize and guarantee fair prices are more and more abolished.
2. Within the AoA subsidised exports are legitimated instead of abolished, in bilateral agreements the EU refuses to negotiate about them.
3. It's 'forbidden' to take human rights, environmental and animal welfare concerns into account of these free trade agreement, they are not accepted to take trade distorting measures. Only sanitary concerns are accepted.
4. Because of lack of import taxes it's impossible to establish regionalised production in continents like the EU, with many social and environmental advantages. For example it's impossible to produce protein and oil crops in the EU because of competition of cheap imported soy beans and palm oil. So in the current free trade oriented world scarce natural resources in developing countries are used for 'the consumer' with the highest purchasing power. In this way Western meat eaters (based on soy beans) and car drivers (based on bio fuels) get priority above land, water and food rights of small farmers and indigenous people in those countries. Millions of hectares outside the EU are used for luxury products instead of food production. With climate change and rising population in developing countries future, this is an unacceptable situation.

TO BE CONTINUED WITH ALTERNATIVE AT TARGET 3

Mariska Meurs [September 12th, 2014](#)

"A Fair Bite for Food Rights" Consortium

"A rights-based approach, putting people at the center and protecting public policy space for food and nutrition"

This target and the introductory text point to a number of important issues, such as nutrition-sensitive agriculture, marketing, decent employment and incomes, supporting local food supply and well-functioning markets. We highlight three aspects that we feel are missing and where the Netherlands can make a difference:

1. A rights-based approach, putting the most affected people at the centre and addressing power imbalances and other underlying causes of malnutrition together with the unambiguous affirmation of the right to adequate food as the central pillar of policies and its profound interrelation with women's and children's rights and empowerment. Access to adequate food for many people is hampered because their rights – as workers, farmers, citizens – are not respected. To reach sustainable solutions, it is of utmost importance that decision-making affecting food and nutrition follows the human rights principle of participation and acknowledges the centrality of those whose lives and nutritional well-being are at stake and is transparent and accountable to people, in

particular small-scale and family food producers who are the key actors and drivers of local food systems and the main investors in agriculture.

2. The role of markets and trade policies in enabling access to adequate food is complex, and preventing food price volatility is not the only challenge. Access to adequate food means not only ensuring the supply of sufficient food of good quality and nutritional value, but also avoiding over-consumption of unhealthy food and drinks and for policies to be in line with peoples' food sovereignty. Under current trade and investment regimes, governments' policy space for taking public health and nutrition measures is at risk. For example, Thailand withdrew its proposal to make front of package traffic-light labelling on junk food compulsory after the USA and other countries claimed that this measure contravened the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade. Minister Ploumen stated in De Volkskrant of September 10, that "If we organise TTIP really well, it is my conviction that there will be mostly winners and even bigger winners." 'Organizing it well' is very necessary indeed. It implies at the least including the precautionary principle and clauses to protect the right to adequate food. TTIP can set an example, and attention is urgently needed for the many other regional and bilateral treaties that are being negotiated and where guidance and legal support to low-income countries is needed.
3. Marketing of certain food stuffs requires special attention. Foods for infants and young children fall into such a category, as stated by the World Health Assembly (WHA). To ensure that their marketing does not harm health and nutritional well-being of children, the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes was adopted as a global tool, followed so far by 15 relevant WHA resolutions (the Code). Within the framework of human rights, all states have an obligation to implement the Code and all manufacturers and distributors to comply with it. Furthermore, manufacturers should refrain from inappropriate marketing of complementary foods in order to not displace breastmilk and local/family foods.

Francis Tuncungwirwe [September 10th, 2014](#)

Value Addition Institute

"Accelerated Access and technology transfer"

Many partners have invested a lot of resources into breeding and other related research, but there are limited efforts to promote access and transfer of improved technologies to farmers. Hence the biggest problem for some of the key food crops is not necessarily lack of improved varieties, its accessing improved varieties and best practices to farmers. In the last 7 years there has been a lot of research and development of new varieties of seed, new technologies in irrigation, fertilizers that if well accessed to farmers we can record great improvements in incomes and food security. We have noted that what most countries need is not necessarily new research for new technologies but transfer of existing ones to small holder farmers first and faster. Illustrative activities for this focus area could include:

- Evaluate efficacy of new high-yielding varieties and hybrids with improved nutritional quality, pest and disease resistance, and industrial and other end-use traits and promote them
- Promote best options (e.g., varieties, for land preparation, crop management, harvest and post harvest processes) for small holder farmers
- Strengthen community seed systems to improve access and multiplication of improved seeds ;
- Introduce and disseminate different options for labor saving, energy efficiency and gender friendly tools/equipment for production and post harvest;
- Identify pre-adapted varieties to satisfy the needs of farmers and to find seeds that are likely to perform well in future climates
- Access to better adapted varieties reduced vulnerability increased food security to help farmers cope with the adverse effects of climate change on crop production
- Screening accessions using GIS technology farmers evaluate varieties selection is grown on-farm field days are organized to see how varieties perform and exchange information

The focus could also be on the transfer of knowledge and skills that are relevant and adaptable to the focus African countries. For instance, in India more than 60 percent of the population relies on agriculture for their livelihood while in most Africa countries it is more than 80%. In the later the agricultural sector productivity and output is very low. For India, over the years, millions of Indians have been lifted out of poverty as a result of India's leadership in innovating products, processes, and services in agriculture including through the adaptation of new technologies and production methods that improve farmer's adaptive capacity to impacts of climate change.

Specifically, there is need to focus on such existing, off-the-shelf technologies that will increase the productivity and competitiveness of smallholder farmers. The end goal is to help smallholder farmers increase their efficiency and profitability in a commercially sustainable way. We want to see the best technologies adapted and made available for sale to smallholder farmers. The focus will be for technologies that have completed testing and are ready to be introduced into the market. It should also target proven technologies that have been commercially proven in one market and can be brought to scale in a new market. Illustrative interventions could include:

- Innovative agricultural business models that can empower small producers and processors;
- Productivity and sustainability enhancing tools, climate-resilient technologies, services, and processes appropriate for target beneficiaries;

- Innovations that transform primary products to value-added goods and services for focus value chains and markets.

Improving nutrition and ending malnutrition

The focus under this area is to contribute to improving sustainable access to sufficient and healthy food for the most vulnerable people, by showing the applicability of newly developed or adjusted knowledge, insights, technologies, tools, products or services. Malnutrition severely hampers the quality of life and is an important constraint for economic growth. Malnutrition in children leads to irreversible physical and mental disorders. Investment in food quality is one of the most effective measures to stimulate well-being of people and economic growth of countries. Malnutrition can be caused by insufficient daily food intake, but also by lack of intake of essential nutrients such as vitamins and essential metals. For the consumer to have access to nutritious food, food must not only be available but the supply needs to be diverse and accessible to the consumer. Consumer awareness on the importance of diverse, nutritious, and healthy food may influence market supply and increase accessibility. Moreover, nutritious food must be affordable for low-income consumers. Fortification-when cereal grains are fortified with vitamins and minerals, commonly eaten foods become more nutritious like case of millet and maize flour that are widely consumed as food and porridge in Africa. Consequently consumers improve their health without changing their buying patterns or eating habits. The nutrition provided through fortification helps make people smarter, stronger, and healthier. Improved nutrition prevents diseases, strengthens immune systems, and improves productivity. Illustrative activities could include:

- Support research of development of local food fortificants
- Evaluate efficacy of available bio-fortified technologies like commonly taken food crops like genetic potential of the selected staple foods for increasing the micronutrient
- Promote promising available varieties of biofortified staple foods
- Develop and test new approaches to optimize fortification of staple food-based foods.
- Support and develop improved (traditional) processing methods of the staple foods concerned
- Strengthening private sector capacity in technological excellence in food-based processing approaches in focus African countries
- Undertake strategic nutritional value addition research for the local food crops
- Increase local production of food formula for children, therapeutic and supplementary foods for pregnant women and other categories of vulnerable people
- To identify food-based approaches to improve micro nutrient malnutrition for better health and development of populations in the focus countries for the four food crops.

Carol Gribnau [September 9th, 2014](#)

Head Green Entrepreneurship Programme, Hivos, Netherlands

"Adequate" includes nutritious and diverse"

More than 50 years of green revolution have not managed to achieve food and nutrition security, eradicate poverty or conserve biodiversity and ecosystems. In spite of existing knowledge, the dominant discourse in policy, research, business and technology development continues to be geared towards the mono-cultural industrial farming models that run counter to meeting the Millennium Development Goals and the Zero Hunger Challenge.

Access to food is still translated only into an increase in productivity of a few crops. While necessary, on its own it has shown not to lead to more food for everyone (the distribution of food issue) nor to sufficient quality of food. To achieve '100% access to adequate food all year round' we need a more democratic and diverse food system, in which 'access' and 'adequacy' are connected. Local consumer voices and especially voices of women do put pressure on policy makers and private sector players, but to date are insufficient to bring this closer to reality. A truly democratic food system brings the interests and needs of the many farmers and consumers at centre stage rather than corporate interests. There is a role to play for civil society actors in formal and informal policy debates, negotiations and platforms to call for such policies. Transparency of budgets and subsidies needs to be a key target area.

A diverse food system builds on the productivity and nutrition potential of agricultural biodiversity in food systems rather than bringing diversity into the hands of a few corporations. It enables women and men to use and develop their knowledge to further improve the diversity in seeds and production systems and to intensify production on their farm. Diversity on the farm = diversity on the plate.

Addressing the challenges in the use and improvement of local diversity (seeds and production systems) requires not only information sharing but also a fairer access to seed diversity and knowledge, financial support for research also on open source seed systems leading to improvements of local varieties and production systems, raising awareness among consumers about their diet and building trust in local food diversity. Other challenges to be addressed by multi partnerships include improvements in distribution of divers locally produced food to markets/supermarkets, reducing post harvest losses and the development of national government policies that support a more diverse and democratic food system.

Boniface Kiome [September 9th, 2014](#)

Prog Officer Green Entrepreneurship & Sustainable Development at Hivos - East Africa, Kenya

- 100% access to adequate food means **more focus on the nutrition, quality, safety & accessibility**. Support for research on nutrition, with the local/national context as basis, is needed. This should be accompanied by supporting government policy.
- **Consumer awareness should also be part of food security policy**: raise awareness amongst consumers about their food, what they eat, about nutritious food and increase consumer demand for good food. Consumers in Kenya in general are not really aware what they eat. Next to this, promotion of local and nutritious food and how to produce that is needed.
- Dutch policy in Kenya on food security and support of private sector is to **promote integrated food systems** e.g inputs and promotion of high quality seedlings such as high quality Irish potatoes from Netherlands (through Kenyan & Netherlands government partnership). This can be supportive of achieving food security. More importantly however, support should be given to local research institutes and gene banks for improvement and use of local varieties, and supporting government policies. Make more use of national available resources instead of external inputs, not only with a view to biodiversity, but also with regard to local private sector and development of research.

Jean Bosco [September 5th, 2014](#)

Directeur Général SUVUCOC, Burundi

"Mushroom cultivation as a solution"

The problem is food shortage in developing countries. Improving mushroom cultivation can be a good solution to this problem. In any sense, Dutch policy could improve food security by incorporating the following aspects:

1. Policy should take development factors in which agro-pastoral aspects should have priority into account.
2. Support research initiatives for developing countries.
3. Support access to micro-credit for SME's.
4. Support farmer investors financially and technically.

Barbara van Paassen and Danny Wijnhoud [September 3rd, 2014](#)

Policy Advisor; Senior Researcher - ActionAid Amsterdam - Netherlands

"Empowering women smallholders & prioritizing local food systems"

This is the most overarching and therefore priority target. It largely overlaps with all other targets. See also (forthcoming) input on missing elements.

We consider 3 policy priorities:

1. Empowerment (women) small-holder food producers and improving their access to and control over natural resources

Empowerment of currently deprived rural and urban poor, in particular women & girls, is most critical. The target will not be achieved by a mere increase of production without participation, ownership and access by vulnerable women and men. The pervasive downplaying of the importance and potential of smallholders, particularly women who produce up to 80% of local basic foodstuffs according to [FAO](#), is a key challenge and top priority to be addressed. Investing in land rights, particularly those of women smallholders, and climate-resilient sustainable agriculture provides multiple wins for women's rights, food and nutrition security, poverty reduction, health, climate change mitigation and adaptation, inclusive economic development, and combating growing inequality, unemployment, instability and violent conflicts. This is also emphasized by the High Level Panel of the Committee on [World Food Security](#) (CFS), the [Worldbank](#), [UNCTAD](#), [UNEP](#), [IFAD](#), [IOB](#) and many others.

Policy and interventions should prioritize:

- **Supporting agency and voice of women**, their access to and control over natural resources (land and water rights) and support for sustainable (climate-resilient) local food production, and (agri)enterprise development. This also implies the need for addressing high and gender unequal unpaid care work burden of women and need for investment in women's functional literacy and other human, social and political livelihood capital assets. Securing access to land and water, favorable credit, inputs, appropriate knowledge and technology, extension services and training on rights, sustainable farming practices and marketing, are particularly key as well as gender-specific. Supporting the organization of women and smallholders in groups or cooperatives has proven very effective.
 - See learnings and recommendations in 'What works for women' and recent '[Great Land Heist](#)', '[From Marginalisation to Empowerment](#)', experiences with [CRSA](#), as well as the [inspiring story of Maureen Adson](#).
 - See also our [most recent policy analysis and recommendations for Dutch policies](#), particularly highlighting the importance of inclusive and appropriate interventions with clear target groups, monitoring and impact evaluation.
- **Support the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and the implementation of the Tenure Guidelines**, as well as improve own policies to protect communities and women's land rights and ensure Free and Prior Informed Consent and other key principles for any investment taking place.

- Support and promote public investment by (African) governments in participatory land use planning and more inclusive agricultural policies, particularly targeting the needs of (women) smallholders and prioritizing local food production, e.g. via demand-driven public extension services (see for example also [our recommendations to CAADP](#)).
- Guarantees that the voices and land and water rights and production systems of (women) smallholders will be prioritized in international processes and initiatives such as SDGs, the Zero Hunger targets, Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) and Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture (GACSA).

2. Understanding and addressing risks and opportunity costs for local food producers

Many policies and interventions, despite good intentions, provide insufficient guarantees for local ownership of food production systems and affordability to access food being produced. When subsistence farming is being replaced with agricultural labor on larger commercial farms, the rising (opportunity) costs of accessing food to be sourced elsewhere is often underestimated and access to food reduced. Claimed positive impacts of larger agri-businesses on small-scale producers, food security and local economic development have not materialized with negative impacts exceeding any gains up to today (see UNCTAD 2013, Schoneveld 2013, De Schutter 2014 etc.). More careful and gradual ways of promoting inclusive agricultural development, whilst addressing risks faced by smallholders, particularly women, and micro and small enterprises, is essential. Risks of promotion of large scale agriculture schemes include land and water (control) grabbing, loss of seed and broader biodiversity, infringements on the right to food, monopolization of agri-inputs, divestment from public extension to smallholders, etc. Often these initiatives do not address root causes of food insecurity, i.e. power imbalances, exclusion and hurdles to build up livelihood capital assets as to reduce vulnerability. On the other hand there is much potential in supporting and upscaling initiatives that address these challenges, particularly also risk coping mechanisms of smallholders (WFP/FAO food security pillar missing in current food security policy).

3. Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) and prioritizing local and regional food systems

We consider that the strong emphasis on Dutch trade interests and private sector participation may converge, but often competes with local small-scale food producers and local food and nutrition security interests. We recommend preventing top-down blueprints and interest-driven initiatives that are unlikely to serve the complex needs of the poor and food insecure; and to be careful with overemphasizing export-oriented global commodity chains in food-insecure contexts. Instead we suggest creating space and support for people-centered solutions addressing the root causes of food and nutrition insecurity in a sustainable and inclusive manner requiring:

- **Assessing (potential) impacts of all relevant policies and interventions on food security** and particularly the access to food by the most marginal groups. Embassy PCD assessments could be a tool in this and cooperation with other Ministries is key. This would contribute to ensuring that any policies and interventions the Dutch support do not compete with, but rather promote, inclusive local and national food markets and the right to food.
- **Phase out biofuel and other commodity targets that compete with food production**; introduce strong social criteria for all commodities, including Free Prior and Informed Consent.
- **Ensure policy coherence and fair international policies**, in particular trade policies and negotiations to ensure space for addressing CFS priorities (in particular the rights and needs of smallholders and policy space for governments to promote local and national food systems).

Rajul Pandya-Lorch [September 1st, 2014](#)

Chief of Staff & Head of 2020 Vision Initiative, IFPRI

The global food system is increasingly vulnerable. Threats to food security and nutrition include increasing population and urbanization, rising incomes and demand (including diet changes), growing land and water constraints, soil degradation, rising agricultural-related diseases and food safety risks, increasing food price spikes and volatility, and climate change (leading to higher frequency and intensity of extreme weather events). Moreover, nearly 850 million people are hungry worldwide. More than 2 billion people suffer from micro-nutrient deficiencies and about 160 million children under five years of age (one in four children) are stunted, indicating a range of developmental setbacks including cognitive impairment. Overweight and obesity are increasing challenges with over 2 billion people affected.

- With hunger and malnutrition persisting in a changing global food system landscape, the elimination of hunger and malnutrition should be top priority within the SDGs—an anchor for the post-2015 agenda. [The global community should aim to achieve this goal by 2025](#). The experiences of countries such as Brazil, China, Thailand, and Vietnam in substantially reducing hunger and undernutrition suggest we should aspire to achieve this goal. However, to make the attainment of this goal a reality, governments and donors must allocate sufficient resources and pursue appropriate policies and investments.
- Changes in the agricultural and food policy landscape underline the need for rethinking the key strategic areas for enhanced knowledge and investment. IFPRI's [new strategy](#) has identified six priorities that respond to the most critical drivers affecting food security in developing countries, and address critical knowledge gaps and emerging trends: 1) ensuring sustainable food production, 2) promoting healthy food systems, 3) improving markets and trade, 4) transforming agriculture, 5) building resilience, and 6) strengthening institutions and governance.
- Sustainable intensification is key to produce more nutrition with more efficient use of all inputs and natural resources on a durable basis. Investments in [agricultural technology and practices](#) that support sustainable intensification are required to meet current and future nutrition requirements. For example, nitrogen-use

efficiency, improved varieties (drought- and heat-tolerant), integrated soil fertility management, no-till, and drip irrigation are technologies and practices that produce more with less.

- To accelerate investments in food security and nutrition, it is crucial to invest in nutrition-specific (e.g. micronutrient supplementation) and nutrition-sensitive interventions (e.g. social safety nets); reshape agriculture for improved nutrition and health; and enhance profitability of smallholders (policies should differ among smallholders, they should be helped to either move up or move out). IFPRI-led CGIAR research programs [PIM](#) and [A4NH](#) are well-positioned to leverage investments for improved policy, institutions, markets, and nutrition to accelerate the elimination of hunger and malnutrition.
- [Greater investment in resilience](#) will be critical to eliminate hunger and malnutrition. Resilience is about helping people, communities, countries, and global institutions prevent, anticipate, prepare for, cope with, and recover from shocks and not only bounce back to where they were before the shocks occurred, but become even better-off.

David Conolly and Agnese Macaluso [August 31st, 2014](#)

Head of the Conflict Prevention Program, The Hague Institute for Global Justice

"Food and violent conflict: long term impact of deliberate starvation on food security and post-conflict transitions"

Two intractable and related challenges to achieving this target are violent conflict and a lack of political will. Based on recent trends, these challenges include cases of insufficient commitment and/or capacity by governments to ensure food security and sustainable food systems for its citizens, and also the deliberate decisions by state and non-state actors to starve its citizens deliberately, as a weapon of war. This brief contribution focuses on the long-term implications of deliberate starvation on conflict-affected and fragile states in terms of food security and their ability to transition out of conflict.

Since 1994, armed conflicts have produced malnutrition, food shortages and poverty in more than 32 countries. Hunger also persisted in the aftermath of conflict in at least 10 countries. In Ethiopia, Somalia and Sudan, where access to food was deliberately limited by either governments or rebel forces, the evidence shows that deliberate starvation has triggered a cycle of hunger and in particular undermined economic recovery for decades. One of the most common practices of deliberate starvation is the intentional disruption of agricultural production and the killing of livestock. The shortage of food and natural resources can, in turn trigger social ethnic and cultural tensions, as happened in Liberia in the 1990s.

Hunger can also have devastating psychological and social impact, undermining the ability of people to produce food and increasing their dependence on humanitarian assistance. Displacement within and beyond borders and other demographic changes caused by food shortages can also spill over to create regional tensions and insecurity, as demonstrated by the plight of 3 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon, Jordan and other neighbouring countries.

In Syria among other emergencies, the international community has become frequently hindered in providing and facilitating the delivery of humanitarian assistance because it cannot gain the consent of the host government especially where starvation is deliberate, politicised and part of the conflict. The international community is also under pressure to find long-term solutions to prevent or stop such atrocities and to find a lasting peace.

How can the international community address more effectively deliberate starvation? What role could the Netherlands play at the policy level?

Legally, The Rome Statute lists deliberate starvation as a war crime only in international conflict. It can be persecuted under other headings, such as a crime against humanity, torture or genocide. However none of these options acknowledge the crime of starvation in its own right and provide a concrete legal basis for prosecution. Given the gaps, future policy could either promote an amendment of the Rome Statute, to include starvation as a war crime also in interstate conflicts, or the establishment of ad hoc international tribunals.

Operationally, the international community is weak in intervening in cases of deliberate starvation despite the precedence of Security Council authorisation for intervention in Somalia in 1993 and the current Responsibility to Protect doctrine. Given the leadership of the Netherlands in peace building and in food security, there is scope for more proactive diplomacy in exposing the long-term and regional damage from deliberate starvation, and in reaching greater consensus among states on ending this practice.

Wijnand Klaver [August 31st, 2014](#)

Senior researcher on food and nutrition security, African Studies Centre, Leiden

"What's in a term? On concepts and domains"

Several expert have commented that the focus of food security goes beyond food production. As Jeroen Candel notes (see his contribution under target 1), there has been a shift in focus since the introduction of the term more than 30 years ago.

What's in a term? ...food (and nutrition) security

The term "food security" invites the misunderstanding, that food security is a property of food. Instead, it is a

property of people: it refers to their experience (or even: perception) of being able to secure the food they need. In other words: the concept is about people's food-related security. This interpretation, which is actually from the consumers' perspective, got strengthened, when the term "access" became the central concept. Several experts have pointed to the embeddedness of food and nutrition security in broader livelihood security, social justice and ecological sustainability. Now often the social and environmental costs are not considered, but are externalized (see Sharon Hesp on Target 3 and Christiaan Hogenhuis on missing elements). While Rob Glastra (in his contribution to Target 3) rightly states that food security policies tend to neglect their ecological foundation, food security policies also tend to neglect their outcome in terms of nutrition, health and functional performance. Nowadays the preferred term is "food and nutrition security", implying that this security is not only food-related, but also related to (i) health (incl. sanitation) and (ii) care (a concept coined by UNICEF, that goes beyond health care). More on this can be found in a report of a Vijverberg session "Bridging the Gap — over voedselzekerheid en voedingszekerheid" ([see website](#)).

What's in a term? ...adequate food

More people suffer from 'hidden hunger' than from overt starvation, because their diet lacks micronutrients such as iron, zinc, vitamin A, iodine, and folate. This 'hidden hunger' is a main cause of health problems, high mortality and low economic productivity. Dietary diversification is one of the key strategies to combat this 'hidden hunger'. Thus the term "adequate food" in Target 1 should be interpreted as (i) enough food (energy-wise) and at the same time (ii) a diversified diet that meets all nutritional requirements (i.e. rich enough in proteins, fats, vitamins and minerals). The standard way of expression in food composition tables is amounts of energy and nutrients per 100g raw edible portion. In comparing foods from different food groups, the expression per 100g is not fair, as the water content differs a lot between dry and fresh foods. Nutritional analysis shows that when the food composition figures are expressed per 100g dry matter, vegetables appear as a particularly rich source of protein, fibre, vitamins and minerals. This makes vegetables the most affordable and accessible source of micronutrients to help fight 'hidden hunger' ([see website](#)).

Undernutrition 'broad' and 'deep'

Hunger and undernutrition can be seen as symptoms of an underlying system that needs a broader and deeper structural approach and even a systemic change. Deep=down from the soil up to the mouth and beyond (health and future functional performance). Broad: looking at cycles in time, for instance (i) seasonal fluctuations (see Nico Janssen's comment with target 1) and (ii) looking at the life cycle, where nutritional status in the 1000 days "window" starts with good adolescent nutrition (as they are the future mothers and fathers), while recognizing that the effects of hunger and malnutrition now may be passed on to the third generation (through the ova of a baby girl to the grandchildren of the mother).

Access broadened

Claudio Schuftan in his contribution on missing elements rightly places the issue of access in the framework of human rights while broadening access beyond access to food alone, when he states: "the right to the enjoyment of and access to a variety of facilities, services and conditions that are necessary for good nutrition."

Securing food security scattered over different domains

As Jeroen Candel in his contribution under target 1 states, food security is an issue that is scattered across various policy domains, such as agricultural, environmental, development, and trade policy-making. And so is nutrition security scattered across various policy domains. While in many countries it is relegated to the health domain, it is also influenced by such domains as education, gender and social affairs and home economics (traditionally in the domain of agriculture, but nowadays often marginalized).

All of this calls for an integrated approach that does justice to the embeddedness of food and nutrition security. It also has implications for data needs (an issue for missing elements).

Francis Ouruma Alacho [August 30th, 2014](#)

Country Manager, Africa Innovations Institute Uganda

"Ensuring availability of safe and nutritious food to institutions and the vulnerable"

Uganda is well endowed with a favourable weather and suitable agro-ecology for food production. It has adequate arable land to feed its current and future population as well as that of neighbouring countries in the region. However, there are sections of the population that are not getting adequate and safe nutritious food and are never a focus of interventions. These include school going students, patients in hospitals, prisoners and vulnerable families. Most of the food sold and eaten is of suspect safety.

School feeding programs: School going students can be categorized into nursery, primary, secondary and tertiary students. In many countries including Uganda there are no policies to ensure that educational institutions provide safe nutritious food when students are away from home. In Uganda there are close to 10 million students at all the above levels of learning representing about 29 % of the population whose feeding is adhoc with the majority especially in Universal primary schools (7 million) not eating breakfast and lunch. This does not only deprive a very significant portion of the population from access to food at all times but also implants a poor practice and culture of feeding to future parents who may think that eating meals like breakfast and lunch is optional. There is need to analyze the implications and effects of this further and provide evidence to support enactment of policies, strategies, guidelines and practices that rectify the anomalies.

Institutional members: The other significant category are those in hospitals, prisons and other institutions that mainly depend on Government for feeding. In such institutions the feeding regime is characterized by lack of a balance diet and in most cases they experience malnutrition.

Vulnerable populations: The other category is that of the vulnerable groups in the country such as households of the elderly, the chronically sick, people with disability and child-headed households who have limited resources to provide for themselves. The impact of this on national health and nutrition as well as economic productivity needs to be understood in order to develop practical interventions to ensure access to safe nutritious food for all.

Food safety and quality are one of the aspects that has received minimum attention. There are many legislative instruments and institutions that are mandated to ensure the populace consumes safe nutritious food but are not enforcing the laws and guidelines. Countries need to assess the economic and health impact of this on the health and productivity of the population in order to develop more robust actions to ensure safety and nutrition of food consumed in homes, eating outlets and that sold nationally, regionally and globally. In order to realize benefits from the above interventions there is need to strengthen the integration of agriculture, health and nutrition. There is need for studies to provide quantitative and qualitative impacts of the above scenarios on the economic productivity and health to ensure total access to food.

Mariel Mensink [August 30th, 2014](#)

Regional Coordinator East, Terrafina Microfinance - Netherlands

"Appropriate and accessible finance, but also access to markets and improved business capacities are needed"

Worldwide food security is a growing concern both in the developed and developing countries. There is increased realization that small producers also in Africa have to play a crucial role in addressing food shortages. International, regional and local value chains are established to cater for this, including small producers and producer organizations. World wide it is also shown (Rabo study) that there is a trend to shift from a buyers to a suppliers market in the food chains. This offers vast opportunities for small farmers to grow their income generated through food sales if they are well organized. However, producers still face constraints, a crucial one being access to appropriate and accessible finance, but also access to markets and improved business capacities. Across the board members of the rural finance working group of NpM, Platform for Inclusive Finance Agri-ProFocus experiences this in their daily practice.

Affordable, Accessible and Appropriate Inclusive Finance

Appropriate and accessible finance means access to timely working capital and input loans, medium term equipment loans or leasing products, alternative collateral constructions build on chain relationships and risk mitigation products such as insurance. A broad range of financial services is needed including loans to semi-subsistence farmers and smaller producer organizations to fully service the food chains. Mostly smaller farmers are serviced by MFIs or financial cooperatives while larger loans can come from banks and SME funds.

Product development support and high risk investments financial service providers.

In the current realities especially in Africa it is our experience that many financial service providers (banks and MFIs included) need guided capacity building interventions tailored to their needs especially for development of tailored agri- products for small producers, and the specific realities of their chains and countries. Furthermore these financial service providers need access to high risk baring investments to test the ground with such new products without risking their own sustainability immediately.

Stimulate business incubation through high risk investment

In the past few years we have seen the finance gap called 'the missing middle' become significantly smaller. Today there are many more funds looking to invest in agri-business in developing countries. However still very few of these funds are willing to take enough risk to stimulate business incubation. These funds are facing serious difficulties filling their pipeline with acceptable potential deals. There is an important lack of high risk capital, in the form of high risk equity and/or incubation grants, to stimulate agri-business-initiatives to emerge from the start-up stage and become interesting investment opportunities for (social) investment funds, MFI's and banks while contributing to food security on a local, regional or international level.

Value Chain Finance Facilitation

While investing in the lower end of the supply chains is necessary in order to contribute to food security, the risks involved are still perceived as very high. In many cases the (perceived) risk can be reduced to a more acceptable risk level if one makes use of securities offered by established value chain relationships. In order to create these multi actor market solutions it is often necessary to have a facilitator who sees the opportunities and can bring together the right parties at the right time. Unfortunately less and less funds are available for facilitators to play this crucial temporary role.

There is a concern among the members of the NpM rural finance group that these capacity building requirements and high risk investments find limited attention in the food security policy of the Dutch government. When financial services are mentioned often reference is made to the Dutch Good Growth fund. This could be an option for the larger and well established banks and MFIs that also offer services to SMEs and (semi) commercial

farmers, but the smaller MFIs and financial cooperatives that offer services to (semi) subsistence smallholders will not be able to easily access the funds available from DGGF.

Policy recommendations:

1. High risk investment fund: Establish high risk investment fund for smaller MFIs financial cooperatives; producer organizations and SME's that address the need of smallholder farmers, to enable them to innovate and pass the start-up phase.
2. Product development support to MFI's and capacity building to producers organizations; Give special windows for funding for capacity building interventions for producer organizations and flexible technical assistance trajectories for product development for MFIs.
3. Value chain finance facilitation. In calls for proposals or tenders allow for specific funds for brokering functions needed to connect MFIs to smallholder producers; to connect producers to companies and traders and to connect these also to banks.

Klaas Johan Osinga [August 26th, 2014](#)

Senior Policy Adviser International Affairs - LTO Netherlands

"Creating and strengthening farmers' organisations and co-operatives is key"

Food production will need to grow at least 60% until 2050 to meet rising demand, while not much additional agricultural land will become available. The costs of energy and other inputs will also rise. This means farmers need to become much more efficient. To achieve this, technological development will be important. But farmers, women and men, will only be able to grasp the benefits when they are able to respond to market signals. The only way they can do that is by co-operation in strong producer organisations. Such organisations need to be farmer-led and farmer-driven.

In the opinion of LTO, the creation of strong farmers' organisations needs to be complemented by government agriculture policies. These policies are needed to take the edge off market volatility, and provide market information. In regions that are prone to famine, food stocks may be built but always in close cooperation with local farmers organisations. Volatility can also be limited by regulating speculation and by creating instruments farmers can use to limit risks, like risk insurances against weather events, infectious diseases and sudden market collapse.

Governments need to create the right regulatory environment where farmers' organisations can thrive. However, it is the farmers who need to drive change. LTO believes this can only be achieved by programmes that treat farmers as (potential) entrepreneurs. This is what Agriterre is trying to achieve. LTO, NCR (Dutch co-operatives), NAJK (Dutch young farmers' association) and rural women organisations (Vrouwen van Nu) founded Agriterre in 1998.

Farmers cannot be expected to produce more food if they are not getting a fair price for their products. LTO believes that the best way to achieve that is the creation of strong farmers' organisations who are able to link up with markets, locally, nationally and then also internationally. This also helps to reduce harvest loss or food waste (target 5): where demand meets supply, economic incentives will be created to reduce losses. Strong democratic farmers' organisations are important to contribute to building democratic societies, more equality and economic growth and jobs for the rural poor.

EU's agricultural policies (Common Agricultural Policy or CAP) will continue towards less market-distorting subsidies, more 'greening' of farm support and open borders. This means farmers in developing nations get better access to the EU market. LTO supports this development as the Netherlands is already very much dependent on international trade. LTO is therefore against the reintroduction of old market measures like export restitutions and quotas like was done in the eighties.

Demand for biofuels is increasing. This will impact on agriculture and on food production. LTO acknowledges the possible adverse impact on food prices but stresses that during times of low food prices, production for biofuels can help lay a floor in the food markets and therefore help farmers through periods of low prices. In the medium-long term, LTO sees more scope for the so-called second and third generation biofuels, so that direct competition with food will be limited. However, as we all know, the amount of agricultural land will remain limited. Hence our emphasis on production efficiency.

Farmers' access to knowledge is also key to achieving 'zero hunger'. This means that farmers are driving the research agenda. Only when farmers feel ownership of whatever research is being done, the results of research may lead to implementation in practice, innovation and ultimately competitiveness. Again, this can only be achieved by strong farmers' organisations who can prioritise research needs bottom-up. In our view, the creation and strengthening of farmers' organisations and co-operatives is the key to achieving 'zero hunger'.

Edith Boekraad [August 21st, 2014](#)

Cordaid, Director Food Security

“Make the policy specific, targeted and catalytic”

Food insecurity in the world is not related to a lack of food, but to a lack of access to food by a small but significant portion of people. Seven out of eight people in the world, including us, however, are food secure and/or over-supplied with food. We must well be able to jointly end food insecurity.

International support (including Dutch food security policies) should respect, facilitate, build upon and be complementary to the national and local policies. Development interventions are sustainable only if beneficiaries (i.e. the food insecure) can give continuity to the results achieved with the support provided. The interventions need to be “owned” by them and should strengthen them in their entrepreneurship and support them in their connection to the local and national economy.

Many of the food insecure in the world are smallholders who do not have sufficient food year-round. Indeed, all of these women and men smallholders lack access to resources – whether natural (land, water), markets (for outputs and inputs), human (labor; in specific periods of the season) and/or financial (e.g. agricultural credit). As many food insecure live in remote rural areas, overall infrastructure is poor. The institutional support (e.g. education and training, and research and extension) they need to become food secure is often not available.

The developmental challenges in remote rural areas are much bigger than food insecurity alone, and budgets are tight by definition. Interventions need to be specific, targeted and catalytic. What international development interventions make sense to end food insecurity?

Cordaid believes that:

- International development support should target especially those regions where food insecurity is highest, such as the fragile areas; i.e. where effective institutions to implement policies are still absent or weak. Here, civil society plays a key role for change.
- Development is a multi-stakeholder process. Public policy support should facilitate an enabling environment for business and civil society. Public funding support for food security should be complementary to what the economy and society at large can provide.
- Innovation and investments in research is crucial and in order to make research and innovations accessible for smallholders Dutch policy should encourage research that deliberately seeks interaction with smallholders and learns from and with them about local traditional and modern scientific knowledge. Dutch funding support for agricultural research should put more emphasis on funding smallholder-compatible, participatory and applied research.
- Smallholders need organization (i.e. scale and collaboration) to build their production and trade, and to influence policies and institutions. Cordaid strongly advocates organizational support for women and men producer groups to achieve strength and scale for their farming and trading business.
- Women and men smallholders should be supported in their strengths – i.e. in what they are able to do in groups and individually. Most if not all do have resources available (e.g. land, water, labour, etc.) with which significant production and productivity increases can be achieved.
- Capacity-building through education and training remains a most sustainable way of supporting people to improve their own lives. The Netherlands has a long history and a strong track record both in developing, financing and implementing smallholder education and training. Dutch expertise in agribusiness and Dutch knowledge and expertise about the specific needs of smallholders, their production and their value chains should be banked upon.

Nico Janssen [August 21st, 2014](#)

SNV World Tanzania, Global Coordinator Nutrition Security

“Year Round Access to Food for Rural Household in Light of Agricultural Production Seasons”

This raises immediate as many questions as there are answers. Are we talking about access to (nutritious) food for rural farming households or urbanised households? At SNV we mostly focus on rural households, so let me speak about them. Year round access to nutritious food is very often a big challenge for many households in light of seasonality of cropping calendars. Not all food can be grown in each season and in many situations people are facing lengthy dry seasons in which little can be grown. So on the one hand we have to look at opportunities to lengthen production seasons through changes in cropping patterns, introduction of more drought resistant crops, investments in technology and infrastructure like irrigation. These interventions allow for more productive months per year to guarantee access to self-produced-food. At the same time there is ample scope for post-harvest interventions that allow for longer term storage without loss of nutritious value of crops. For essential foods that cannot be locally grown or stored people need access to income generating activities (from sales or labour) to purchase these food items. This requires at the same time functioning markets towards the rural areas. In many developing countries these supply markets function far from optimal. Rural areas are seen as providers for urban areas but not as consumption markets for essential food items.

The Dutch expertise in agriculture is not just on production but also on supply chain development and management, food processing and storage and last but not least capacity development and knowledge transfer. It is by combining these strengths that the difference can be made.

The success of interventions will depend on the in-depth understanding of local cultures and habits. What will motivate people to change their production systems and eating habits? The role of women, as producers, entrepreneurs and providers of care and food is crucial in this but often neglected. To empower them to gain more control over decision making vis-à-vis food production, food storage and food consumption is one of the main keys to success.

However, it is not just about access to food. It is evenly so about being healthy and productive. If we cannot improve food production and nutrition while at the same time addressing sanitation and access to clean water then it will not make much of a difference what people eat.

In SNV we have nearly 50 years experience in multi-sectoral development approaches that work. Food security, agricultural production, development of markets, water and sanitation are among the themes that have always been at the core of our work.

Jeroen Candel August 19th, 2014

PhD Candidate Food Security Governance, Public Administration & Policy Group, Wageningen University

"Think holistically, promote integrality"

Food (in)security is a multi-faceted issue. Since the introduction of the term in the 1970s, academic and policy debates about food security have witnessed a shift from a sole focus on production and availability, towards the inclusion of dimensions such as access and social inequality, utilization, nutrition, and, rather recently, impacts of the agricultural sector on the long-term potential to provide healthy food in a sustainable manner. Similarly, it is now widely recognized that food security crosses temporal, spatial, and jurisdictional scales.

Crossing temporal scales refers to the interaction between short- and long-term drivers and aspects of food (in)security. Short-term concerns and interests, such as price volatility or sudden disasters, can thereby sometimes come to dominate long-term concerns, such as soil fertility and the availability of essential natural resources, in policy formation. Ideally, short- and long-term efforts are coordinated through a concerted approach that promotes both short-term reliefs and long-term resilience.

The spatial scale, ranging from the individual to the global, refers to the various levels on which food security can be analysed and on which problems can arise. It also involves the governance level at which food security issues are addressed. Sometimes, mismatches can occur between the levels at which problems occur and the level at which they are governed. This requires continuous reflexive efforts regarding the appropriate governance levels and how these should interact.

The jurisdictional scale refers to the fragmentation of formal jurisdictions with respect to the dimensions of food security. These fragmentations can be identified at each governance level, for example between ministries at the national level, or between international organizations on the global level. The transcendence of jurisdictional scales results from the absence of a food security policy domain. Instead, food security is an issue that is scattered across various policy domains, such as agricultural, environmental, development, and trade policy-making.

Setting out these three types of cross-scale food security interactions brings me to a general critique on current and previous Dutch food security policy: it is too much focused on food security as a development cooperation concern, and, within that focus, puts a relatively big emphasis on enhancing production, value chains, and the role that Dutch businesses can play within those efforts, and relatively little, although increasing, on aspects such as access, nutrition, and climate change adaptation. Little or none attention has been paid to how food security concerns could be genuinely integrated into other policy domains, such as the Common Agricultural Policy, Common Fisheries Policy, environmental policy, or trade policy. Although many of these domains are primarily governed at the EU level, a proactive approach by the Dutch government could make a difference in Brussels, where holistic food security efforts are currently hampered by member states' reserves. In this respect, lessons can be learned from similar cross-scale issues, such as climate change adaptation, on which the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL) recently published a report pleading for increased integrality (Biesbroek et al., 2014). Only by recognizing this integrality, a truly holistic food security approach can be developed.

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Ton Dietz August 19th, 2014

Director African Studies Centre, Netherlands

"Look beyond policy: include urban-rural dynamics and agro-food cluster institutions as drivers of agricultural change"

At the African Studies Centre we recently produced a policy brief about '[agricultural pockets of effectiveness](#)', focusing on Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda since 2000. This policy brief and the four research papers about each of the countries can be found on <http://www.institutions-africa.org>. These papers have been a result

of the Developmental regimes in Africa project, which is a collaboration between the African Studies Centre in Leiden, and the Overseas Development Institute in London. It is a follow up of the 'Tracking Development' project, that compared the development trajectories of four Southeast Asian countries with four countries in Africa. See the [African Studies Centre website](#).

We believe that our findings and suggestions are of relevance to this policy consultation about food security. The core of the findings and suggestions are as follows:

- Africa experiences a rapid growth in agricultural production since about 2000, which is a result of both area expansion for most crops, rapid growth in livestock numbers, and considerable improvement of average yield levels for many food crops.
- The large majority of Africa's agricultural production feeds African consumers; only a limited part of Africa's agricultural land and labor is devoted to exports.
- We see three major reasons for the rapid agricultural growth since about 2000 in many countries in Africa:
 1. The expanding demand from Africa's cities, and particularly its rising metropolises (a result of demographic growth, urbanization, concentrated wealth in cities, and growing prosperity);
 2. A growing ability of African entrepreneurs to organize value chains between the hinterlands of metropolises and these big cities;
 3. A growing success of 'clusters' or 'hubs of innovation', where many different public and private agencies succeed to support particular subsectors, and where local and global agencies come together.
- In research and practitioners' circles dealing with agricultural dynamics in Africa there is too much emphasis on value chains, and not enough on clusters of innovation.
- A lot of the recent successes are a result of dynamics beyond the state. In quite some cases one can even say that they happen despite the central state. Many African states do not yet support their agricultural and rural sector in ways that support both a rapid transformation of the economy, and rapid poverty alleviation in both rural and urban areas. Many African states do not adhere to the principles laid down in the Maputo Declaration (e.g.; at least 10% of government budgets for the agricultural and rural sector).
- Many African states, but also African business, tends to talk a lot about transforming the economy towards a manufacturing and high-skilled service economy. In practice the manufacturing sector based on crops, forest products, aquatic products and livestock is not well supported and not well developed yet.
- In Africa's cities there is a wide gap between rich-end consumers (for which the expanding supermarkets and specialized shops cater) and the mass of poor consumers (who get their agro-products mostly through informal channels and open markets). However, the food web in cities should not be seen as compartmentalized, as there are many linkages between the agencies active in the food industry. Innovations (e.g. standardization; better quality control), which are a result in one segment or in one product, do have their repercussions in other segments and in the food chain as a whole.
- A one-sided focus on the rapid dynamics in agricultural production and distribution, without attention for nutritional aspects and consumption dynamics among people in different income brackets, results in images that are too positive. Looking at the recent evidence about under-nutrition among children, also in African countries with rapid increases in food production for local markets (e.g.; Nigeria), still shows dramatic figures. Only a focused strategy to make access to food inclusive (and that means: also available, at affordable prices, for the 20% ultra-poor in cities and often marginal rural areas) can improve this problem of massive stunting and wasting among young children, which is still one of Africa's basic problems.
- At the African Studies Centre we hope to contribute to better and useful knowledge about, what we call, 'agro-food clusters in Africa', and we welcome collaboration with other researchers and with the private sector.

Danielle Hirsch August 19th, 2014

Director of BothENDS, Netherlands

"Overcome the focus on crop productivity only in order to contribute to access to food"

The Special Rapporteur on the right to food uses the following definition of the right to food: the right to have regular, permanent and unrestricted access, either directly or by means of financial purchases, to quantitatively and qualitatively adequate and sufficient food corresponding to the cultural traditions of the people to which the consumer belongs, and which ensure a physical and mental, individual and collective, fulfilling and dignified life free of fear.

One of the biggest challenges to contribute to access to adequate food is to overcome the focus on crop productivity only.

We see 6 options for transition:

- Stimulate agrobiodiversity, diversification of crops and vegetable gardens (both in rural areas as in urban areas), as diversity contributes to nutritional value of diets and it mitigates the risk of single crop failure and dependence on one (low) crop prize only.
- Stimulate land restoration practices, like planting trees (permaculture and food forests), avoiding erosion by contour agriculture, upholding soil health by mulching etc. in order to halt land degradation and to make land productive again.
- Push knowledge and practice development on agro-ecology, mimicking natural processes while respecting the ecosystem through co-creation of farmers, agronomists, ecologists, soil scientists, practioners, consumers etc.

- Take away barriers for and stimulate local producers to supply local consumers, in The Netherlands, in Europe and elsewhere.
- Push participation of land users in decision-making processes over spatial planning and take a landscape approach as base for spatial planning.
- Refrain from bilateral and multilateral trade agreements that lead to dumping of food in LMIC as it destroys local production.

Muhimbise John [August 18th, 2014](#)

Director - Apex Business Skills Ltd - Uganda

"A holistic approach to resolving food adequacy problems"

Jane and her husband are peasant farmers living in rural Uganda. They have eight children who are currently in school under free primary and secondary school programme. Life for this couple is a struggle all the time. Even when the weather is good and the harvest is good there isn't enough food for the family because of the numbers. The story of Jane and her husband is the order of the day in the whole of rural Uganda where the average number of children stands at seven per family – which is third highest in the world!

For more than a decade now various initiatives have been introduced to improve agricultural production and productivity yet there is very little to show on the ground. Peasants are still using hand-held hoes of decades ago. Peasants still depend on erratic weather for their crops. Soil fertility has deteriorated over the years and nothing much has been done to improve the soils. Soil erosion and landslides with devastating effects are more common these days than they were mainly because of deforestation. If the Dutch government wants to achieve 100% access to adequate food all year around it must adopt a new approach along the following lines:

- Direct substantial financing to family planning campaigns because without small manageable families all other food security initiatives will fail.
- Direct more financing to education sector because experience has shown that the more educated people are the smaller the families and the more receptive they are to new initiatives and ideas.
- Channel funds directly to beneficiaries instead of the corrupt officials who have actually failed most food security projects.
- Consider financing large scale irrigation projects in partnership with the private sector.
- Intensify your dialogue with various stakeholders by sharing knowledge and skills using various platforms as dissemination of knowledge is one of the most effective channels in influencing change.

Netherlands is a success story in food production and productivity, why not share your story as loudly as you can?

Anyone involved in the war against hunger and food security will tell you they are facing insurmountable problems and will quietly confide in you that they have actually given up. There is no question that the problems are many but they are to a large extent manageable if only there was serious commitment at implementation level of the various food security initiatives.

Nehemiah Gitonga [August 18th, 2014](#)

Executive Director, Tenacious Systems Kenya - Farmsoft, ICT - Farming and Food Industry

"ICT Collaboration in the Food Supply Chain"

Today, technology and internet comes a generation of immediacy, we want information and we want it now! And managing food production and processing is no different. With the emergence of technology in farming and processing, we take a look at the opportunities that will help from managing food production from the farmers to the consumers.

1) Better support from agronomists/technical advisors and Farmers

By allowing remote monitoring of farming activities (you choose what information to share; your live data is accessible from anywhere, making you truly mobile). External agronomists, farmers, farm consultants, grower associations, and farm co-operatives have ability to access, record and share farming information and easily control farm operations simply over the web and using a computer, tablet, iPad, or even a smart-phone. This would help on farmers exercising good agricultural practices to increase the yield and meeting the food safety policies.

2) Collaboration is key to this next generation Supply Chain Link

No longer are the various stakeholders working independently of one another. Having software solutions in place, agronomists, contractors, farmers, customers, suppliers and transporters avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and speeding up operational processes.

Managing waste in the Supply chain: Ability to meet customer requirements and consumer demand accurately, efficiently and sustainably is vital. In product demand and supply forecasting, wireless syncing of data and notifications of record changes gives users immediate access in making time-critical decisions avoiding potential excess and shortages in supply. Freshness in the supply chain is part of minimizing wastage where the food producers and the link stakeholders to the consumer are sharing and similar platform of collaboration.

3) Reduced Traceability and Compliance Cost:

By aligning the entire supply chain from source to shelf, farmers can ensure they adhere to compliance standards

and maximise the success rate and security of their harvest. With all data easily accessible from a single, searchable online location, you'll never need to worry about an audit again. You can sleep easy knowing that your grower records are up-to-date and available at your fingertips. This comes when there is maximum residue levels (MRLs) concern in the market.

4) Technology in the third world is getting better:

Huge investment to improve efficiency in communication and sharing of information in the supply chain has resulted in significant advances and wider adoption of Management Software Solution in both farming and processing operations in the third world. Visibility on farming and food production discipline is a major boost to 100% access to adequate food all year round.

Willem-Jan Laan August 14th, 2014

Director Global External Affairs at Unilever

"Dutch embassies analyse gaps in countries' food systems"

One of the biggest challenges of today is to realise a major increase in agricultural productivity in a context where our climate is changing, temperatures rising, soil quality degrading and water becoming scarcer. Unilever advocates for many years for:

1. A widespread adoption of sustainable farming practices;
2. A step change in government investment in agriculture (with a particular focus on smallholders);
3. The elimination of market distorting subsidies like those on bio fuels;
4. Finally we should constantly remind our political masters of the importance of completing the Doha Round.

Tackling these issues will require long term multi-stakeholder approach. This contribution outlines a way forward with focus areas for the Dutch government according to Unilever.

Get the global framework right

- Ensure that world leaders include the five key objectives of the Zero Hunger Challenge in the new set of Sustainable Development Goals.
- Agreement on Doha round, working with the WTO and political leaders to ensure the removal of agricultural tariffs and subsidies will do much to increase agricultural capacity and reduce global poverty.
- Eliminate market distorting subsidies like those on bio fuels.
- Partner with governments on global level: progress Committee on World Food Security, on the 5 pillars of the ZHC.
- All the UN Rome based agencies rallied around Zero Hunger Challenge as part of their input to Post-2015. The joint initiative aims to develop targets and indicators for a new global development paradigm for sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition: [more information](#).

Create the enabling environment for sustainable agriculture

- Ensure governments prioritise the five key objectives of the Zero Hunger Challenge in their regional/national strategies.
- Involving local stakeholders is the key for success. Therefore, the role of the Dutch government is to identify and analyse gaps in countries' food systems that constrain food security together with local stakeholders.
- In mapping local gaps there is an important role for Dutch embassies in gathering partners and providing information.
- After identifying the gaps, local stakeholder meetings should be organised to prioritise key issues and discuss solutions. Dutch embassies in partner countries that show commitment to work on food security must facilitate and finance these studies and stakeholder meetings, which result in very concrete national and local food security programmes. Based on a realistic approach, making use of local opportunities, preferably with other donors.
- Government's incentive to increase investment in sustainable agriculture practices, supporting through an enabling framework and focussed commitment of financial resources and expertise.
- Key role for governmental contribution to support local access to finance, high quality infrastructure, and access to global markets.

Leverage the scale and size of multinationals

To support sustainability multinationals need to adopt sustainable agricultural practices. See examples from Unilever in its contribution to [Target 3](#).

Unilever is dedicated to support the Zero Hunger Challenge and in particular relates to Target 3 – All food systems are sustainable and Target 4 – 100% increase in smallholder productivity and income.

As Unilever we are embracing continued cooperation with governments, other public and private sector actors all over the world to work on sustainable food systems. Our Sustainable Living Plan – which we launched in November 2011 – still sets out how we intend to do this till 2020. The plan has three big goals:

1. To halve the environmental impact of our products;
2. To help one billion people take action to improve their health and well-being;
3. To source 100% of our agricultural materials from sustainable sources;

Ultimately there is only one agenda: growth and sustainability have to be parts of the same whole. And for big companies such as Unilever that means developing new business models which allow us to continue to grow but within the finite resources of a fragile planet.

Unilever is committed to engage with at least 500,000 smallholder farmers. We focus on sustainable agriculture practices, productivity, training, education, the role of women, and opportunities for the next generation. In February 2014, we signed the world's first public-private partnership with IFAD. This 5 year collaboration will build the capacity of smallholder farmers in countries such as India, China and Indonesia.

Creating a better future for smallholders

We will exceed expectations and are already engaged with more than 570,000 smallholders. Our expectation is that we may engage with close to 1 million smallholders by 2020, from tomato farmers in China to cocoa farmers in Ghana to black soy bean farmers in Indonesia.

[More on working with smallholder farmers.](#)

Rolf Schinkel [August 13th, 2014](#)

SNV, External relations manager - Netherlands

"Invest in infrastructure and invite the private sector"

Besides food production, investments in logistics, infrastructure and adaptation of production to the requirements of the market are needed. Private sector from the South and the North is probably the only player who can make those investments and build financially sustainable solutions. Governments, donors and civil society have to create the safe and enabling environment to make investment risks for the private sector acceptable.

At the short and medium term there is need to engage with the private sector: e.g. logistics and infrastructure for storage, trading, transport and distribution. Governments and (international) organizations have to take care of e.g. trade agreements, road and railway infrastructure, security, enforcement of regulations, borders that can be passed etc. to encourage private sector to invest. Decent logistics and infrastructure solutions like storage facilities, roads, enabling environment including rule of law will increase food availability, reduce losses, and avoid dependency of others.

At the long term, to deal with changing environmental conditions due to climate change for example, solutions like Climate Smart Agriculture need to be developed and tested before producers can safely apply them and private sector invest in them. Solutions for availability and accessibility of enough food need close collaboration of Governments, knowledge institutes, donors and civil society and producers and private sector. They, the entrepreneurs, producers and the private sector, are the ones to make the investments and apply the solutions. Those who need and eat the food should be taken seriously, as consumers. Whether it's about plantain bought on the street or ready-made lasagne from the supermarket, producers need to know and respect consumers' requirements to optimize their produce and production, increase its value and be surer of demand, avoid waste. More and better offer, the consumer is happier and the producer has more income. This may also help to have a coherent look at food availability in urban versus rural areas.

Finally, food prices have to be affordable to consumers, stable and reasonable in relation to the cost of production and trade at the same time. Again well-functioning logistics and infrastructure, including storage, but also financial and insurance products to pre-finance production, finance stock, and effective legislation to prevent food speculation e.g. are parts of the puzzle.

Governments, donors, Civil society and Private sector have to join, it's the only way to available, accessible affordable food of good quality for all. Public Private Partnerships can offer a platform; around concrete (food related) business cases, based on healthy business models. The PPPs can be subsidized or not, that depends on the development objectives of the action and the development risks that have to be taken.

Peter Mbiyu [August 5th, 2014](#)

Manager- Policy & Investment, Kenya Markets Trust, Kenya

"Financial and risk management products that will help de-risk agriculture are important"

Access to suitable and affordable finance remains a primary challenge for many farmers; crop farmers can't procure planting seeds at the onset of rains because of cash flow problems (NB: not because they can't afford, but because they don't have liquid cash at that particular moment), dairy farmers can't inseminate their cows at the onset of heat because they have to rely on monthly payments from the cooperative or milk aggregator (who will pay late most of the times). This poses a significant challenge to many farmers and significantly reduces the returns from farming business because some of the activities have only a limited window (the onset of rains for example) and the slightest amount of delay leads to significant losses to the farmer. Accessing long-term finance required for capital investment e.g. acquiring farm machinery or a new breed of cattle with better genetics and production, is still limited to a few farmers who have collateral.

Second, lending to the agricultural sector remains low despite effort from public, private and development actors to increase lending. Lenders perceive agriculture as a highly risky business (rightly so) and will want to minimize the portfolio of their lending in this sector. Financial and risk management products that will help de-risk agriculture are important to improve the risk profile of the sector. Crop and livestock insurance is emerging as an

option but it remains very limited, there is a need to scale up these products for the farmers to benefit from economies of scale that come with that growth and ensure many more can access and afford the products.

Different mechanisms are emerging to help address the financing challenges highlighted above; value-chain financing is one such mechanism which has demonstrated great potential. For example, in the dairy sector, milk processors are working with lenders and suppliers to ensure farmers can get the money or supplies they require for immediate needs without necessarily having to wait for monthly payments. Using emerging financial tools like mobile money, which lowers the transactions costs significantly, value-finance can be taken to significant scale and provide a much needed solution to the agriculture sector. More need to be done to convince more private sector actors to accommodate this mechanism and facilitate the flow of working capital that is required to make it happen, among other administrative and contractual issues.

Emmanuel Bahati [July 31st, 2014](#)

Coordinator of Agri-Pro FOCUS, DR Congo

"Connect agricultural producers to safe and rewarding markets"

The biggest challenges

Many producers face difficulties in accessing markets because of bad roads, long distances and bad conserving infrastructures.

- A lack of political will to take into account the complexity of food systems with food security as an outcome. How to put food security higher in the hierarchy of priorities and how to overcome the bureaucratic and organisational hurdles;
- Limited actions of the civil society;
- Limited actions of the private sector;
- Lack of purchasing power;
- Underperforming agriculture: (Soil- Infertility ; Lack of agricultural inputs-fertilizer, Good quality of seed for some speculation, pesticides, ... in some rural areas);
- Managing nutrition transition by rebuilding local food systems and the strength of links between local small-scale producers and urban consumers;
- Long term actions should focus on agricultural models that do not use costly input;
- Insecurity observed in some countries;
- The marketing of agricultural products is difficult within some rural areas because deserted farm tracks are in poor condition;
- Climate change observed.

The most effective intervention strategies

Central governments should rehabilitate the routes and construct infrastructures such as markets and warehouses. Also banks and the IMF should grant agricultural credits and private services. The Dutch government could financially support concerned institutions and organizations.

- Agricultural intensification through the promotion and use of fertilizers;
- Integration of livestock in agriculture;
- Professionalization of agricultural sector producers;
- Providing farmers with more agricultural information;
- Agricultural credits/loans and training to farmers;
- Good processing and storage of agricultural products;
- Integration of gender aspects and Youth in agriculture.

Prof dr Ruerd Ruben [July 31st, 2014](#)

Head coordinator Food security & sustainable Chain programs, LEI Wageningen UR

"The food puzzle: From pillars to a nexus approach"

The Dutch ministries of Foreign Affairs and Economic Affairs are jointly involved in shaping Dutch policies towards food security. Given the key roles that agriculture plays in development processes, attention for food security is considered of key importance. Dutch adherence to the MDGs/SDGs implies that the zero hunger challenge is adopted as central target.

LEI/Wageningen University and Research Centre embraces this ambition and is prepared to contribute to both the policy debate and the practice of implementing sound, effective and sustainable initiatives in the field of food and nutrition security: [‘The food puzzle: pathways to securing food for all’](#). For the ongoing consultation organized by the Food & Business Knowledge Platform (F&BKP), we consider that the following five issues deserve due attention in future policy formulation :

1. Strategic Food Security Focus

Targeting food security implies a full recognition of the importance of food and nutrition in the development process. Undernutrition and stunting are essentially caused by persistent poverty and reinforced by reproductive health deficiencies. Food security efforts therefore need to be embedded in local, domestic and international policies and programs that consider demographic dynamics (, better utilization of food, lower infant mortality,

lower population growth) as well as geopolitical security challenges (better access of food, stable prices, less conflict).

This critical nexus between food, health and conflicts is further threatened by climate change and scarce natural and fossil resources, asking for more resilience in food systems and resistance against stress and shocks. Some interventions outside the food system (e.g. infrastructure, education, R&D, water & sanitation, safety nets) might be helpful to address food security constraints. Food security policies are also part of interconnected regional and (inter)national trading regimes and company sourcing strategies that provide different and sometimes contradictory incentives.

Understanding these system wide interlinkages enables to identify critical, consistent and coherent (3C) interventions that address vital strategic nexus in food security policies.

2. Sustainable Food Production Incentives

Agricultural and food production in many developing countries is severely constrained by lack of resources (land, water, energy), inadequate application of inputs and losses due to pests and diseases. Current resource and crop management practices tend to further enhance soil and water degradation and undermine biodiversity in local environments. Sustainable production systems at farm-household, village and regional level can be identified that require substantial investments in terms of capital and knowledge and need credible expectations for rewarding revenues.

Bridging the yield gap between actual and potential production also asks for suitable incentives for smallholders, outgrowers and rural cooperatives that guarantee acceptable returns to labour. Balancing strategies for intensification, diversification or selective supply chain integration depends on the available options for reaching scale, quality and efficient resource allocation.

Promising innovative strategies for certification, climate smart agriculture, precision farming and food fortification need to be evaluated in their farm-household and landscape context in order to identify results-based pathways for overcoming key implementation constraints.

3. Effective Food & Nutrition Access

Access to food and nutrition essentially depends on food prices, disposable household income levels and whether households are net buyers and net sellers of food and nutrients. Even with increasing food production, nutrition security sometimes deteriorates. Many rural households and most urban people are essentially net buyers of food. Access to food thus depends mainly on the available options for farm, off- and non-farm income generation (employment security) and diverging preferences regarding food dietary intake by (male/female) household members.

Improving food access and reducing under/malnutrition is most effectively promoted through a mix of demand-side programs (food for work; safety nets, rural and urban employment) and supply-side activities (seed quality upgrading; enrichment of food; irrigation, ICT-based innovations) targeted at poorer households and particularly young children and pregnant women. Promising experiences are available from integrated approaches of health, education and nutrition through (un)conditional cash transfers implemented at nationwide scale in several Asian and Latin-American countries. In addition, local and regional programs focusing on price stabilization, storage and micro-savings mobilization enable households more effective access to food and nutrition.

4. Efficient Food Chains

Food chains provide critical linkages between – sometimes widely distant – producers, processors, retailers and consumers. Geographical distances and infrastructure deficiencies lead to high transaction costs and sometimes large price volatility in agricultural value chains. Moreover, post-harvest losses and product waste at respectively downwards and upwards stages of the chain lead to large inefficiencies.

Whereas agrologistic solutions are readily available to reduce food losses and waste, some inefficiencies are intrinsic to perishable food trade. Processing of waste streams is promising for increasing value. Other options related to local storage (warehouse receipts) and regional hubs offer opportunities for better linkages between chain parties that may result in higher prices or improved margins. Improving the efficiency of food chains requires a dynamic multi-agency understanding of transactions from local sourcing to futures markets, and the options for creating incentives and restructuring value added distribution within public-private partnerships for integrated supply chain networks.

5. Participatory Food Governance

Guaranteeing food security and safeguarding food sovereignty requires equitable access to resources and secure land and water rights. Interactive knowledge systems and democratic farmers' organizations provide critical linkages between smallholders, markets and institutions. Food and nutrition security can only be reached if all relevant stakeholders – from input provider to supermarkets – are able to exchange relevant information on best practices for guaranteeing food quality and regular supplies in order to reinforce trustful and loyal exchange relations.

Addressing these food policy challenges ask for wide options for participation in the governance of resource distribution and management systems that recognize the civic role of producers and consumers and duly consider the externalities for the natural resource environment. Major attention needs to be given to the governance of common-pool systems (fisheries, forests, migratory herding) where intrinsic incentives are notably failing. Moreover, options for reinforcing sustainable food access and use particularly in fragile regions and (post)conflict areas through local exchange and social innovation (impact investment) deserve to be further explored.

Bart de Steenhuijsen Piters [July 31st, 2014](#)

Head of KIT Sustainable Economic Development and Gender, Netherlands

"Focus on labour productivity when working with the poor"

Agricultural development theory clearly distinguishes a diversity of patterns that farming households can follow towards food and nutrition security and household prosperity. But most agricultural project interventions over the past decades have focused on one particular pattern, i.e. productivity increases per hectare (intensification). Interventions based on this paradigm mainly focus on other forces than labour: new technology, more capital intensive farming, land and water availability, household economics, mechanisation and, as a consequence, cash crop production, transformation and commercialisation for commodity value chains. Projects have, at best, benefitted the upper quintal of rural households, which follow, or are supposed to follow, a distinguished pattern with a degree of (labour) specialisation.

The lower spectrum of households has not benefitted from these investments. Both theory and practice confirm that there is not anything like a linear rural development pattern or trickledown effect that automatically includes the less endowed households. On the contrary, the above described pathway of intensification fixes the poorer households in their socio-economic position, as they don't follow a specific specialisation pattern, or are often contracted as labour force for the better-off households. In parallel to this phenomenon, men migrate to other regions with economic activities that are more rewarding than selling seasonal labour or marginal farming. It is therefore unlikely that a development paradigm and intervention strategy similar to the one of the past decades will impact on the poor in the future. The fact that labour is, besides land, the most important production factor of poor, vulnerable households should, though, not be discarded. As poorer households farm under (at best) suboptimal conditions, having no access to capital, education etc., selling labour in combination with for example petty trade, will probably remain their best economic strategy for gaining revenues.

Instead of exploring the economic potential of this stratum of households, interventions designed for them often take the nature of social safety nets. These interventions frequently disregard the economic potential of these households and ability to produce food to feed the family. A thorough understanding of the current social-economic situation of this stratum, including interrelations with other strata and economic actors, is urgently needed to identify more adequate intervention strategies. Though more evidence is required, these strategies are likely to focus on optimizing return-to-labour (as compared to return-to-land) activities in combination with nutrition-sensitive agricultural development (as compared to market-driven production).

Evelijne Bruning [July 28th, 2014](#)

Country Director the Hunger Project, The Netherlands

"Ending hunger requires a new kind of leadership: one that awakens people to their own power"

According to The Hunger Project, the world does not have a billion mouths to feed, it has a billion hard-working individuals whose creativity and productivity can be unleashed. The inherent nature of every person is creative, resourceful, self-reliant, responsible and productive. People's self-reliance is suppressed by conditions such as corruption, armed conflict, racism and the subjugation of women. Ending hunger requires a new kind of leadership: not top-down, authority-based leadership, but leadership that awakens people to their own power — leadership "with" people rather than leadership "over" people. Most countries where hunger persists have failed to invest in basic infrastructure through which people can meet their own needs. This lack of physical infrastructure often reflects a lack of the social infrastructure through which people could organize to take direct action themselves or effectively negotiate with their governments.

When communities have information (transparency, social media) and when mandatory mechanisms for social accountability are actually held (such as village assemblies), governance and public services improve. We need policies and practices that ensure every citizen is able to exercise these rights.

Key Interventions:

- Transforming mindsets of dependency into a spirit of self-reliance;
- Removing gender and other forms of discrimination (more on this in the ['what's missing' part of this consultation](#));
- Ensuring affordable access to financial services, such as savings and credit;
- Ensuring secure access to land and other productive assets;
- Vocational skills training;
- Ensuring fair payment for labor, goods and services;
- Forming cooperatives and other production and marketing collectives;
- Build partnerships between the people and local government;
- Sustainable structures for civil society engagement in policy formation within countries.

Dr Geoff Andrews [July 26th, 2014](#)

Country Director ZOA Burundi

"Multifactoral key issues; there are no easy answers"

I write this from the perspective of the Great Lakes Region. Burundi has suffered a drought since April 2014, the June 2014 harvest has been reduced or entirely lost in some districts. An already hungry country will be hungrier before the end of 2014.

The key issues to sustainably improve food security are:

1. Soil fertility management. Huge amounts of compost or manure need to be added to the soil to restore or improve soil structure and water holding capacity. The big challenge is where to find all this organic matter, how to get it to remote farms accessible only by bike or by foot and how to spread it. Although smaller quantities are required, organic fertilisers are difficult to source and transport to small holder farmers and the evidence is building that NPK is not sufficient, other micro and oligo nutrients are required too. Where is the information for subsistence farmers about nutrient cycle management? What is taken up by the plant from the soil has to be replaced.
2. Access to quality seed adapted to the growing environment. Many countries lack access to good seed so farmers buy seeds of unimproved varieties with low germination rate. This is linked with poor governance structures and failure of the market to provide good quality inputs
3. Analysis of economic sustainability. There are lots of projects which demonstrate increase in yield but many are not costed and do not include the cost of additional manual labour. Cost benefit analysis must be applied. In Europe, farmers are usually educated entrepreneurs. In the Great Lakes region, they are often illiterate subsistence farmers without the ability to calculate the marginal benefit of agricultural inputs
4. Climate change and loss of predictable seasonality. Although some think that seasons used to be predictable and certain, the history of drought, floods and famines suggest that rain fed agriculture has always presented risks. But climate seem to be increasing unpredictability. Can climate change mitigation be achieved at the same time as productivity increase?
5. Population growth threatens to undermine any productivity increase and need to be tackled at the same time as improving productivity.

Among the strategies that contribute to improved food security:

1. Infrastructure. Storage locations to reduce post harvest loss, access to markets to buy inputs and sell surplus, access to credit to invest in the coming season.
2. Education of farmers especially in basic arithmetic and business planning. Inspiring them that they can produce their way out of poverty and create a better life for their families. Many have a hopes, they don't know how to achieve them.
3. Start with the farmer, value what they know already, understand how their culture will support or oppose agricultural and economic development.
4. Competent governance. A functioning able government can support agricultural improvement. An incompetent, venal, selfish government can destroy the best efforts of farmers

Arine Valstar [July 25th, 2014](#)

Senior Nutritionist, ETC, The Netherlands

"Key recommendations for Improving Nutrition through Agriculture"

While the challenge talks about the need for "nutrition-sensitive agriculture", ETC would like to point to the Key Recommendations for Improving Nutrition through Agriculture in order to operationalise this.

Food systems provide for all people's nutritional needs, while at the same time contributing to economic growth. The food and agriculture sector has the primary role in feeding people well by increasing availability, affordability, and consumption of diverse, safe, nutritious foods and diets, aligned with dietary recommendations and environmental sustainability. Applying these principles helps strengthen resilience and contributes to sustainable development.

Agricultural programmes and investments can strengthen impact on nutrition if they:

1. Incorporate explicit nutrition objectives and indicators into their design, and track and mitigate potential harms, while seeking synergies with economic, social and environmental objectives.
2. Assess the context at the local level, to design appropriate activities to address the types and causes of malnutrition, including chronic or acute undernutrition, vitamin and mineral deficiencies, and obesity and chronic disease. Context assessment can include potential food resources, agro-ecology, seasonality of production and income, access to productive resources such as land, market opportunities and infrastructure, gender dynamics and roles, opportunities for collaboration with other sectors or programmes, and local priorities.
3. Target the vulnerable and improve equity through participation, access to resources, and decent employment. Vulnerable groups include smallholders, women, youth, the landless, urban dwellers, the unemployed.
4. Collaborate and coordinate with other sectors (health, environment, social protection, labor, water and sanitation, education, energy) and programmes, through joint strategies with common goals, to address concurrently the multiple underlying causes of malnutrition.

5. Maintain or improve the natural resource base (water, soil, air, climate, biodiversity), critical to the livelihoods and resilience of vulnerable farmers and to sustainable food and nutrition security for all. Manage water resources in particular to reduce vector-borne illness and to ensure sustainable, safe household water sources.
6. Empower women by ensuring access to productive resources, income opportunities, extension services and information, credit, labor and time-saving technologies (including energy and water services), and supporting their voice in household and farming decisions. Equitable opportunities to earn and learn should be compatible with safe pregnancy and young child feeding.
7. Facilitate production diversification, and increase production of nutrient-dense crops and small-scale livestock (for example, horticultural products, legumes, livestock and fish at a small scale, underutilized crops, and biofortified crops). Diversified production systems are important to vulnerable producers to enable resilience to climate and price shocks, more diverse food consumption, reduction of seasonal food and income fluctuations, and greater and more gender-equitable income generation.
8. Improve processing, storage and preservation to retain nutritional value, shelf-life, and food safety, to reduce seasonality of food insecurity and post-harvest losses, and to make healthy foods convenient to prepare.
9. Expand markets and market access for vulnerable groups, particularly for marketing nutritious foods or products vulnerable groups have a comparative advantage in producing. This can include innovative promotion (such as marketing based on nutrient content), value addition, access to price information, and farmer associations.
10. Incorporate nutrition promotion and education around food and sustainable food systems that builds on existing local knowledge, attitudes and practices. Nutrition knowledge can enhance the impact of production and income in rural households, especially important for women and young children, and can increase demand for nutritious foods in the general population.

These recommendations have been formulated following an extensive review of available guidance on agriculture programming for nutrition, conducted by FAO see:<http://www.fao.org/docrep/017/aq194e/aq194e00.htm>), and through consultation with a broad range of partners (CSOs, NGOs, government staff, donors, UN agencies) in particular through the Ag2Nut Community of Practice. They are also referred to as “guiding principles” by some partners.

Sidi Sanyang July 14th, 2014
Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice)

"Technological change has not been able to make the desirable breakthrough"

The challenge is many but would like to focus on: (i) institutional and organizational constraints including behaviour/attitude/mindset in governance processes (how we organize in formulating and delivering strategies and action plans for the benefit of the poor and marginalized) as well as policy formulations that are not necessarily embedded in the institutions (rules of the game, formal or informal) at the beneficiary level. Often a time, institutional change is left to 'chance' in programs/projects/initiatives, hoping that such will take care of itself; (ii) recognize that technological change on its own have not been able to make the desirable breakthrough we all want to accomplish in food and nutrition security; (iii) weak collaborative learning through learning-by-doing, as well as coaching and mentoring of beneficiaries to improve the capacity to innovate based on their own context and specificity. How do we catalyze/facilitate confidence and trust among multiple actors across multiple disciplines and scales of interest, often conflicting even if common purpose/objective.

Kahindo Suhene Marie Jeanne July 13th, 2014
Program Officer Food Security at NGO GRADEM

"Increase and development of agricultural production and transformation of markets"

Increase and development of agricultural perishable production and transformation of, conservation of and access to local and international markets is needed to guarantee 100% access to food. For this the promotion of food self-sufficiency should be promoted. This alimentation implies the availability, access and willingness to consume based on good nutrition practices. All actors are intervenient in the value chain: the peasant, the public and private investors, national and international. The peasant should be placed in the centre of attention. And Agricultural products should be protected at markets, local, national, regional... Production techniques and good nutrition habits, transformation possibilities of conservation and the consuming of products of fields within their reach should be taught to farmers. This will decrease the deficiencies due to the alternating periodicity of growing seasons.

Dutch interventions should directly focus on the peasants and avoid intermediators, who often benefit more. This will lead to less costs, and direct, palpable and immediate effects.

East DR Congo for example faces a total disproportion: Interventions of international organisations supposed for the income of farmers do in reality benefit intermediary structures, due to efficiency and effectivity ratios. Moreover besides looting and stealing of products efforts of farmers seem fruitless because of the ignorance of techniques and practices of transformation and conservation of perishable products.

Jolanda Buter [July 11th, 2014](#)

MDF Training & Consultancy

"Strongly embedded endogenous business logic and its ancient dynamics need to be valued"

I lived many years in the Sahara and Sub-Sahara area where since centuries cereals are transported and marketed according to continental customs and kin ship relations. These kin ship relations are inter-connected with governance (or politicians), remaining many years in national governance positions and includes the family network residing in the neighboring nations. These networks integrates with the power dimensions of economics, justice, social networks, property of water and land, and governance.

We recognize these integrated networks also among Asian traders; like Chinese, Indian and Lebanese and certain ancient families residing at the European continent. Similar business ratio are observable at the Asian continent or in the Latin America's.

This strongly embedded business logic and its ancient dynamics need to be valued, and present in positioning the Dutch international agenda in food security and increase of production. Doing so she will achieve through Deep Democracy, peace and so the Zero Hunger Target. Thus: I look forward to decision making connecting the formal and newly established European oriented rational structures with the endogenous African and Asian business dynamics not being part of structures, rules and regulations but existing since centuries. Link upstream with downstream dynamics in food security and contribute to the eradication of food as a weapon in the power game.

Dave Boselie [July 7th, 2014](#)

IDH the sustainable trade initiative

"International economic diplomacy should be the basis for the future of international support"

Access to adequate food combines interesting challenges of creating availability, affordability and willingness to consume on basis of good nutritional practices. Driving one single component will not do the job but instead we will need to design a balanced mix of methods that delivers the right ingredients within each context specific reality. Rather than promoting local self-sufficiencies we need to find optimal resource allocations. All components (intensification, diversification, nutritional awareness, etc) require a combination of public and private investments and efforts. Market forces will drive performance of local and international value chains if the right enabling (policy) environment is in place but it is self-evident that some of the public goods (such as health and nutritional awareness) come with essential education and regulation (think of proper regulation on fat-salt-sugar).

In the past 120 years Dutch agricultural practices and policies have shown the power of combined recipees of education, research, extension, private sector development and public policies. If global agriculture would be as productive as ours the global supply of food would increase threefold. We have one of the best agricultural universities in the world operating in a food valley which we need to continue to support. We have highly competitive medium scale enterprises in the horticultural sector (seeds, planting materials, trade and processing).

And last but not least we have decades of experience in developing high tech food production in peri-urban and urban contexts. Concepts like agri-parcs in the context of a globally urbanizing population are a high potential export product. Civil society organisations such as Solidaridad have been innovators in the public-private dialogue and development of inclusive business models.

International economic diplomacy should be the basis for the future of international support. Private sector knowledge is well embedded in Economic Affairs (including Agriculture), Foreign Affairs should mobilize its networks to influence public policy making in bilateral and multilateral platforms. Instruments that have been set up to serve the dual goal of sustainable economic development (at scale) and poverty alleviation need further support to extend the scope of their operations into new sectors and new countries.

Target 2 – Zero stunted children less than 2 years

Lalita Bhattacharjee [September 14th, 2014](#)

Nutritionist, FAO of the United Nations, Bangladesh

"Prioritizing a target of zero stunted children less than 2 years (examples from Bangladesh)"

The goal of a National Food Security Policy is to ensure dependable food security for all people of the country at all times.

In the context of Bangladesh, three indicators are used to monitor progress towards the goal: prevalence of undernourishment, child underweight and child stunting – and these are complemented by four indicators from the National Five Year Plans.

Bangladesh met the MDG target for undernourishment in the early 2000s. After flat-lining for much of the past decade, undernourishment has risen in the last three years reaching 16.3% in 2012/13. Undernourishment estimates are determined from inequality-adjusted aggregate food balance data, and the picture from direct calorie consumption using household food expenditure surveys shows that between 2000 and 2010 both severe (<1,805 calories) and moderate (<2,122 calories) calorie deficiency declined per year by -2.15% and -1.42%, respectively.

Underweight and stunting declined between 2007/08 and 2011/12. Estimates for 2012/13 show child underweight at 35.1% and child stunting at 38.7%. Overall, if the improvement recorded for stunting and underweight can be sustained it is likely that the targets for 2015 could be met. From 2000 to 2010, income poverty declined faster than calorie deficiency, child stunting and child underweight and this reverses trends from 1990 to 2000 when declines in all except moderate calorie deficiency exceeded or matched declines in income poverty.

The following strategies need to be implemented and promoted:

Community based nutrition programmes and services

- Improve facility and community based support to caregivers;
- Scale-up nutrition sensitive agriculture;
- Mainstream nutrition beyond the health sector;
- Strengthen capacities to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate nutrition interventions;
- Scale up 'one farm, one household' approach as part of integrated family farming for ensuring household food and nutrition security

Orienting food and nutrition programmes through data

- Harmonise existing food security and nutrition information systems;
- Promote use of updated food composition tables, complementary feeding guidelines and improved complementary feeding recipes and food based dietary guidelines;
- Accelerate implementation of comprehensive nutrition interventions;
- Strengthen leadership and capacity for nutrition.

Food safety and quality improvement

- Sensitise stakeholders on implementing National Food safety Acts including protecting and promoting Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative and appropriate infant and young child feeding;
- Accelerate the establishment of a suitable national food safety authority;
- Formulate food safety rules;
- Establish standards and ensure compliance;
- Put in place a national food safety emergency plan;
- Strengthen food safety laboratories;
- Control diarrhoeal prevalence (with a focus on addressing the first 1000 days of life) and improve safe water supply;
- Scale up healthy street food vending in urban areas.

Selected examples of nutrition mainstreaming in agriculture and related sectors:

Nutrition sensitive agriculture

Because agriculture is the primary source of all nutrients for humans, agricultural systems including livestock and fisheries need to be strengthened to contribute adequately and efficiently towards meeting nutritional needs of the population, notably in the 1st 1000 days of life. Agriculture/food systems must necessarily encompass activities related to production, acquisition, and utilization of food to prevent both under and over nutrition in an economically, environmentally, socially and culturally sustainable way. Narrowing the nutrition gap is the challenge ahead – the gap between what foods are grown and available and what foods are needed for better nutrition – means increasing the availability, access and actual consumption of a diverse range of foods necessary for a healthy diet. It is also important to improve young child feeding practices including exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life and appropriate complementary feeding from 6 months along with continuation of breast feeding until 2 years.

Priority areas for diet and nutrition improvement are nutrition education across nutrition relevant sectors with a focus on the first 1,000 days of life; processing, preservation and storage of foods with a view to enhancing nutrient/micronutrient content and preventing losses particularly when abundantly grown or available; food

fortification, food safety, consumer awareness and social protection through safety nets. These areas of opportunity need to be explored and promoted for strengthening the nutrition orientation of existing food systems. Particularly for children, the type of dietary protein seems to have a specific stimulating effect on weight and length gain, and dietary fat has important functions including providing energy and helping the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins. Analysis from surveys points to the low quality and diversity of diets of children above two years who share the family meal and of pregnant and lactating women (contributing to low birth weight). Milk intake is positively associated with better bone and brain development as well as linear body growth. In contrast, meat consumption has been found to affect cognition. The consumption of milk in Bangladesh for example is as low as 34 ml/capita as also is a very low aggregate consumption level of animal source protein in Asia – barely 9% of protein derived from animals since the mid-2000s compared with over 30% for countries like Pakistan and Myanmar.

Studies show that although mother's retention rate of nutrition messages was high, what they are able to practice at home was limited. Nutrition programmes often fail to enable mothers to transfer this knowledge into practice. Community centered food based nutrition education strategies need to be institutionalized and mainstreamed in agriculture and health service delivery structures to establish sustained nutrition behaviors. Additionally along with infectious diseases, faulty weaning practices that are some of the prime causes of underweight throughout the pre-school years need to be addressed.

Agricultural intervention programmes need to include explicit objectives of improving nutritional status with a focus on reducing child under nutrition. Child stunting should be addressed through building strengthened linkages between complementary feeding requirements/practices and agricultural production. The most sustainable, cost effective way to improve complementary feeding of children in poor rural households is by ensuring that nutritionally appropriate foods are available and utilized at household and community levels. Access to safe water and sanitation facilities is directly linked to the overall health of individuals and communities, including childhood under nutrition, cognitive delays and stunting. Interventions, such as nutritional supplements, combined with improved sanitation and hand washing with soap can reduce child stunting by 4.5%, compared to 0.1% decrease with nutrition interventions alone. Besides, awareness and practice of hygiene, such as hand washing and in food preparation, are critical to reduce the morbidity. Given that one of the major determinants of child stunting is poor sanitation, there is need to accelerate sanitation access by all and be on track towards reaching MDG-7.

The contribution of the agriculture sector to national food security objectives makes it a key player in the achievement of national nutrition objectives. However, to effectively address the multi causal issue of malnutrition, multiple and synergistic interventions embedded in true multi-sectoral programs need to be implemented. Addressing the challenge of malnutrition requires both short- and intermediate-term and long-term sustainable approaches. A variety of actions, including agricultural and micronutrient interventions and partnerships for improving nutrition, of safe drinking water and sanitation, education and support for better diets, special attention to gender issues and vulnerable groups such as pregnant women and young children, and quality health services along with livelihood improvement will be promoted. Investments in capacity strengthening of national agricultural/food systems to integrate nutrition outcomes in planning and policy processes will make significant contributions to the zero stunting challenges and improving nutrition on a sustainable basis.

Wim Hiemstra and Joanne Harnmeijer [September 14th, 2014](#)

Agronomist / nutritionist and medical doctor at ETC Foundation, Netherlands

"Dietary diversity in relation to diverse agriculture"

Dietary diversity in relation to diverse agriculture. Dutch food security policy has added nutrition as a new angle since 2011. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is working on a results report to parliament but indicates that it appears difficult to measure success. We propose that nutritional value in the diet as an expression of nutrition security becomes the key result indicator for the coming years. A good indicator would be the so-called 'Minimum acceptable diet': the proportion of children 6–23 months of age who receive a minimum acceptable diet.

Greet Goverde [September 14th, 2014](#)

Secr. Platform Aarde Boer Consument, Netherlands

"The major problem today is the problem of micro-nutrient deficiency"

Hunger as undernourishment (too low calorie intake) is no longer the most important problem of malnutrition. The major problem today is the problem of micronutrient deficiency. Many women and their young children are suffering from a deficit in iron, deficits in vitamins A and C, zinc, and iodine, for example, which results in growth impairments and intellectual and physical disabilities. These children are also more vulnerable to diseases.

These deficits are due to:

1. The fact that since the 60's-70's our food system has focussed on agricultural commodities to satisfy the need of the food processing industry. It is difficult to change the infrastructure and institutions that have developed. There are many regions where, for example, local food processing facilities are basically absent so that farmers are encouraged to produce maize or soy bean for the food processing industry. The investments that were made, that are now sunk investments, make a

transformation very difficult; nevertheless efforts to promote agricultures that provide a varied diet locally should start NOW.

2. Even if a lot of people may absorb enough calories per day, they do not consume enough of the essential micronutrients. We have developed food systems that have made people sick in rich countries and increasingly in emerging economies; people have become addicted to salty, fatty and sweet food. Obesity means shorter lives, it means the risk of developing type II diabetes, a greater risk of cardio vascular diseases, and a greater risk of gastro intestinal cancers.

Governments in the South should be encouraged to move towards social protection schemes including health schemes for women and children, reinvest in local agro-ecological production, redevelop local food, and reduce their dependency on international markets.

At the same time governments in the North must move away from the export-led agriculture that is making it difficult for governments in the South to make this transition. This double transformation will be difficult to achieve because of technical, economic, cultural and above all political obstacles (see target 1)

Food democracy / food sovereignty is important: we need to democratise the food system from the local level upwards, in Europe as well as in developing countries, where women should be the main actors. People need food policies that integrate food production with social protection, health and environment. (see <http://www.voedselenders.nl> for conference report and speeches)

At the international level trade regulations should be adjusted. In that area there is as yet no serious attempt to link negotiations to global food security and other concerns, such as health; on the contrary (TTIP negotiations). There are alternatives, see e.g. <http://www.alternativetrademandate.org>.

In order to achieve all this the focus of Dutch development strategies should change radically. We suggest that Dutch politicians and institutes and citizens focus on the more detailed recommendations in the documents mentioned above.

Human rights (including the right to food), women's rights, labour, environment and climate should have precedence over trade and investment regimes.

Stineke Oenema September 14th, 2014

Member of Independent Expert Group for Global Nutrition Report, Netherlands

"Stunting and more...."

It is challenging to see a nutrition indicator. At the same time nowadays it is by far insufficient to focus on one single nutrition problem, while countries are increasingly facing complex combinations of malnutrition. In the current areas of attention in both the Zero Hunger vision and the Dutch nutrition policy (development) the focus is too much on undernutrition, whereas the number of people with obesity with related NCDs is increasing. WE cannot afford to just look at stunting whereas the problem is much bigger. Several nutrition problems are found in one country, one household and even in one individual!

Focusing on just one area of malnutrition (in this case stunting) may increase problems in other nutritional areas. Tools are needed to analyze the multiple causes of malnutrition and define, prioritize and sequence actions to solve the multiple causes that are interlinked and influence each other.

Netherlands could take a leading role in tackling malnutrition to commit itself for a 10 years period to invest in improvement of nutrition (anticipating a decade for nutrition). Netherlands could also make the link with the Sustainable Development Goals and ensure Nutrition is linked to all SDG targets. The Global Nutrition Report that will be launched in November 2014 is a call for action and a call for accountability. One of the pleas in the report is about the need for accountability and lack of good data: Lack of these stifles action. Netherlands would do good if Netherlands, apart from sound nutrition policies for ODA, would also invest in making available its own data about nutrition problems in the Netherlands and ensure transparency – contact WHO how to make national data compatible with global databases- with regard to its actions and policies here. This will motivate other countries to do so and promote global accountability and global action.

About stunting: Stunting is a chronic problem that develops over time. Stunting is associated with the following other (nutrition related) problems: low birth weight, anemia of the mothers as well as stature of the mothers. To solve stunting longer-term commitment is needed at least over a period of 10 years. Evidence from Ethiopia and India- Maharashtra where stunting has declined considerably over the past years, shows that a mixture of several interventions that tackle immediate and underlying causes as well as a positive enabling environment are needed: economic growth and governance, women's status (age of mother at first pregnancy, literacy rate) both in the household and in society, spending on nutrition doubled, access to improved water sources. Furthermore antenatal visits and delivery under the supervision of a birth attendant, as well as adequate child feeding practices (among which exclusive breastfeeding. (Haddad, 2014)

Herbert Smorenburg [September 12th, 2014](#)

Senior Manager Amsterdam Initiative Against Malnutrition, GAIN

"New approaches to Behaviour Change"

There is sufficient evidence that nutrition specific interventions such as promotion of breastfeeding and improved complementary feeding (either through home fortification with micronutrient powders or improved quality complementary foods). Of course, interventions targeting women before they become pregnant and during their pregnancy are part of the intervention strategies that have been well researched (in clinical settings).

In AIM we are working with companies to develop market based approaches to make nutritious foods available, accessible and used. Some of these approaches target the whole community (e.g. local markets for locally grown fruit and vegetables), others (e.g. micronutrient powders) are specifically meant for young infants.

Both have a common bottleneck: consumer demand, which is closely linked to the awareness, understanding, and willingness to use these products as part of their diets. With other words, Behaviour Change is the critical factor.

Traditional approaches in nutrition have not proven very successful. Here is something we can learn from the private sector. Why is it possible that Unilever can successfully engage whole communities and sell a "dull" product as Lifebuoy soap? (see <http://www.unilever.com/sustainable-living-2014/our-approach-to-sustainability/embedding-sustainability/encouraging-behaviour-change/index.aspx>)

I believe we need to put much more emphasis on clever behavior change campaigns, with single minded messages. The Worldcoaches program of the KNVB might be a good vehicle to reach girls and empower them with important lifeskills.

If business such as DSM or Unilever, civil organizations including the KNVB, government and academic partners work together, we can create innovative solutions that have impact and can reach scale.

Mariska Meurs [September 12th, 2014](#)

'A Fair Bite for Food Rights' Consortium

"Protect breastfeeding and put in place effective conflict of interest mechanisms"

The first 1000 days from the moment of conception until a child's second birthday represent a critical window of opportunity for shaping the health, development and well-being of a child and to contribute to that of his/her mother. Women's empowerment and gender equality throughout the lifecycle are essential to improving infant and young child food and nutrition security. Protection, promotion and support of optimal breastfeeding practices are amongst the most effective interventions to reduce under five mortality and morbidity according to recent scientific evidence. If applied globally, optimal breastfeeding could prevent about 830.000 of under 5 deaths annually. However, violations of the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and subsequent relevant WHA resolutions (the Code) are widespread and national implementation and enforcement of the Code insufficient. Moreover, appropriate and adequate maternity protection measures for working women, critical to ensure an enabling environment for optimal breastfeeding, are absent in many countries, in particular in the global south.

Essential interventions include the protection or improvement of local breastfeeding practices; ensuring that marketing of products for infants and young children complies with local marketing laws and regulations or the Code, whichever is stronger; empowerment of women to make decisions about how to feed their children based on unbiased information and free from commercial pressures; and advocacy for adequate enforceable maternity protection for all working women. The Netherlands, being home to a large export-oriented dairy sector, can play an important role in setting an example by ensuring policy coherence with human rights standards in this area. This would require that the Netherlands fulfil their human rights extraterritorial obligations by ensuring that producers of breastmilk substitutes and other baby foods residing in the Dutch territory do not violate the Code in their – or their subsidiaries' – operations abroad. Furthermore, as a member of the SUN donor network, the Netherlands should work to guarantee that conflicts of interest mechanisms that effectively put a check on private interests' influence be established for the global SUN Movement including through the SUN's Lead Group and other networks. The Netherlands should also ensure that the SUN Movement does not bypass multilateral bodies and mechanisms or inter-governmental bodies in its actions.

Danny Wijnhoud and Barbara van Paassen [September 3rd, 2014](#)

Senior Researcher; Policy Officer - ActionAid Amsterdam - Netherlands

"Empower women, Improve Local Food Systems and Healthcare"

As for access to food, also for combatting stunting ensuring small scale food producers', particularly women's, direct access to and control over natural resources and support to local food production and local food systems is key (see targets 1 and 3).

Achieving this target among others also requires:

- Awareness creation and training on preparation of affordable nutritious food with ingredients to be easily accessed from local food systems.
- The general empowerment of women and men sharing full responsibly of child care and unpaid care tasks
- Guaranteeing sufficient access to proteins, like dairy products and other nutritious food for infants and women.

- Improve Sexual & Reproductive Healthcare (SRHC), maternity and infant healthcare, as well as general healthcare for women and men
- Invest in literacy and functional literacy and skills training for women
- In particular support to women in producing and/or sourcing food for their children, ensuring men take their responsibility to support supply for healthy food to their households and infants; support to single mothers, female headed households, orphans.
- Support community level crèches, nursery schools and child care if this would facilitate women to farm or otherwise earn an income
- Social Safety nets in particular orphans, and women living with HIV-AIDS, other illnesses or disabilities
- Avoid HIV vertical transmission and provide extra care and support to infants living with HIV-AIDS and other illnesses.

David Connolly and Agnese Macaluso [August 31st, 2014](#)

Head of the Conflict Prevention Program, The Hague Institute for Global Justice

"Stunted children and low education performance: a vicious cycle"

Evidence shows that under nutrition has a negative impact on the ability of people to learn and produce, and in turn undermines social cohesion and the ability to build relationships. This is particularly true for young children, in the early years of their life. In particular, it has been proved that starvation, especially among children under five, undermines their ability to learn and concentrate, even years later, when they go to school.

For example, studies in Ethiopia demonstrate that stunted children are more likely to repeat grades at school. Almost 16 per cent of all repetitions in primary school were associated with stunting and on average, stunted children achieved 1.1 years less in school education. This leads to additional costs, both for the families and the state, particularly for the children that have to repeat grades or need special assistance.

As the price of food increases or food become less accessible, children are more likely to drop out of school and be sent to work. Longer-term, children's weak performance in school leads to low productivity later in the workforce, with profound loss for affected individuals but society.

To address these interrelated problems, future policy and advocacy should tackle the links between stunted children and low education performance, and their combined knock-on effects on society and the state. This calls for increased awareness but also a more coordinated policy approach in terms of nutrition and education to address children stunted under 2 years and the specific needs of those above 2 years.

Edith Boekraad [August 21st, 2014](#)

Cordaid, Director Food Security

"Diversified diets and crop- and biodiversity"

If Target 1 is reached, Target 2 will be reached as well. Dutch food security policy should support a balanced approach to different groups in society – i.e. women, men, youth, babies, etc. Good food is essential for health. The quality and the availability of maternal milk is a key issue in the first 1,000 days, as is hygiene (i.e. access to water and sanitation, and healthcare for prevention and cure when required).

Cordaid believes in a Dutch food security policy that supports education and training on diversified local diets for mothers and babies, and on the importance of crop- and biodiversity.

Nico Janssen [August 21st, 2014](#)

SNV World Tanzania, Global Coordinator Nutrition Security

"The Need for Focus on Behaviour Change for Improved Nutrition"

It is all too often assumed that access to nutritious food is equal to increased consumption of nutritious food. This is unfortunately not at all the case. Improving the status of children under 2 years old, including the pregnancy period of their mothers starts with an in-depth understand of eating patterns and local beliefs. We were recently looking at these in Asian countries and came across local beliefs that pregnant women should not eat fish, this was in Lao. There exist many of these local beliefs that are passed on from generation to generation through grandmothers and mothers but also local mid-wives.

Changing what people eat needs a massive attention to behaviour change. Knowing what is good for you is not going to change what people actually do. So it is about knowledge about food, what is nutritious and what not?; how can I get access to it?; produce myself or purchase; how much do I need of it?; how to prepare it?; etc. But it is equally about women empowerment to get more control over household decision making towards nutrition. Women need to be able to control what is produced on the farm, what is consumed and what part of the family income is spent on nutritious food.

An answer is often sought in the provision of fortified food or supplements. Whereas this provides a (short term) increase in access to essential nutrients, this can also have a negative impact to local food production systems. Focus should in the first place be on increasing of local agro-biodiversity (the work of Target 1) and only where it is not possible to locally provide essential micro-nutrients should the pathway of supplements be chosen. There is good interaction needed there between agriculture extension, who need to use nutrition value of crops much

more as a guiding principle for promotion of varieties, and health workers / mid-wives who often all-too-easy promote the use of baby formula etc.

When speaking about reducing stunting in children and providing more nutritious food, it is not just about the mothers. It is also about understanding who plays what role in the feeding and up-bringing of the children. In many situations we experience that the mothers, for economic reasons, return to the farm fields after a few months and that the young children are left at the care of the grand-parents, elder children in the house or others. So nutrition education and behavioural change has to focus and include those as well.

A key success to effective behaviour change, as we have learned in our sanitation programmes, is also the role of local (village) leadership. Key people who lead by example have a positive effect on whole communities. This is also needed for nutrition. A strong combination in that is also awareness raising and simple self-measurement tools that parents can use to track on a continuous (or very regular) basis the growth of their children. National growth curve charts and simple scales to which parents have access can do miracles in monitoring of stunting and malnourishment.

The Netherlands should bring this holistic focus to reduction of stunting to the local policy debates. We have long term experience on health services (like our “groene kruis”), effective nutrition awareness through public and private communication campaigns and agricultural extension for agro-diversification. The Dutch agro-private sector, research and development organisations can work closely together on this. The Agri-Profocus type of networks should also look at the challenge of nutrition and decide on a course of action.

Emmanuel Bahati [July 31st, 2014](#)

Coordinator of Agri-Pro FOCUS DR Congo

"Nutritional education in households"

Many households feed their children without considering the nutritional quality. Extended sensitization projects prioritised by the local Ministry of Health by nutrition organisations are needed on three types of foodstuffs: construction food, protein and energy.

Mothers should be well nourished themselves to well breastfeed their babies, and family planning should be taken into consideration. Local governments need technical and financial support and formation. Educational and research institutes also play a role here.

The biggest challenges:

- Poor sensitization on the nutritional education within households, especially in rural areas of developing countries;
- The most effective intervention strategies
- Sensitization on use of 3 types of foods (building, protection and Energy)

Involved actors

- Primary, secondary schools, households responsible; Universities, Ministry of health and education within the counties, civil societies, ONG,...

Relation to strengths actors

- Helping these stakeholders to achieve their objectives.

Evelijne Bruning [July 28th, 2014](#)

Country Director the Hunger Project, The Netherlands

"Root cause of malnutrition too often ignored"

Malnutrition is at the center of a nexus of interrelated issues, all of which must be solved together. Gender discrimination is a primary root cause of malnutrition, particularly in the key “1000 Day” window from a woman’s pregnancy through her child’s second birthday. We need to empower women as the key to 1000-Day Nutrition. This is a big year for nutrition, with the ICN2 and the Zero Hunger Challenge – and yet the fundamental cause of poor 1000-Day Nutrition is too often ignored. More on this in our reaction to the [‘what’s missing’ reflection area](#). We must also keep up pressure for more rapid progress on the MDGs that are lagging – particularly in maternal and child health; and to keep up the pressure for the post 2015 goals to include strong stand-alone goals on gender, climate resilient and sustainable food and nutrition security, and transparent, participatory local governance.

Evelijne Bruning [July 28th, 2014](#)

Country Director the Hunger Project, The Netherlands

"3 more points - an afterthought"

As an afterthought – integrated strategies are also particularly important for zero stunting. So is halting open defecation, and massive social mobilization campaigns to educate people on the messages of the Essential Nutrition Actions (ENA) Framework.

Dr Geoff Andrews [July 26th, 2014](#)

Country Director ZOA Burundi

"Raising the possibility of change"

In more than one situation I have heard "it was good enough for me so it will be good enough for my children". So some adults who have suffered chronic or acute malnutrition and survived to adulthood may be of the mind that that is ok for their children too. I am not thinking of insufficient calories but of insufficient diversity in the diet. But not all children in the same society suffer stunting, there is the possibility of positive deviance. Start with the population: who knows what? Where are the examples of positive deviance? What are they accessing that others and not and why? Can it be copied or shared? What are the consequences for farming practice?

Do the parents know the consequences of chronic malnutrition for children under 2? Do they know that they can do something about it?

A grass roots education information process is needed to help parents know the risks of malnutrition, how to feed their children and confidence that they can make a difference for their children.

Claudio Schuftan [July 15th, 2014](#)

Peoples Health Movement, Vietnam

"Countries are spending money on programs in manners that do not reflect their people's needs"

I really hope The Netherlands does not endorse the SUN Initiative with all its conflicts of interest with private sector involvement and not really using a Human Rights based Approach.

People who file claims to secure their right to adequate nutrition cannot wait for a whole generation.

Moreover, despite good intentions and new investments coming from outside, overseas development assistance for nutrition has left the world's poor people's nutritional status still in a dire state. Through top-down vertical programs, the international community and the countries receiving the aid have too often squandered the historic opportunity to improve the nutrition of poor people. Quite consistently, no attention has been paid to the social determination of nutrition. There is a disconnection between donor contributions and the actual needs of the poor in recipient countries. As we know, aid is channeled in a way that often rather interferes with countries' funding mechanisms. As we also know, money alone is insufficient; changes in the global aid architecture are needed. Many development agencies simply still need to overcome the crisis-of-legitimacy they find themselves-in right now by adopting the HR-based framework to development. The HR-based framework opens totally new policy spaces.

In short, countries are spending money on programs in manners that do not reflect their people's most urgent health, nutrition and HR priorities. Countries should challenge donors on this so they allocate funds according to real needs. Instead, governments have (are) often reduced(ing) their own spending in the areas favored by donors. You know who the losers are given such a state of affairs.

Kahindo Suhene Marie Jeanne [July 13th, 2014](#)

Program Officer Food Security at NGO GRADEM

"Focus on sensitization of good eating habits and food self-sufficiency in households"

The insufficiency of sensitization of good eating habits and food self-sufficiency in households is the biggest challenge for this target.

New methods and approaches of sensitization specifically adapted to each target with sustainable and supportive measures should be designed.

Everyone has a crucial role to play: household members, civil society, churches, local organisations, health institutions, schools, universities, media, public and private technical services, nationally and internationally.

The Dutch government should focus on reaching results in time based on lessons from experiences with effective and adapted tools.

Target 3 – All food systems are sustainable

Wim Hiemstra and Joanne Harnmeijer [September 14th, 2014](#)

Agronomist / nutritionist and medical doctor at ETC Foundation, Netherlands

"Business as usual versus sense of urgency"

After participating in the expert meeting of 12 September 2014, we would like to bring the following three key points to the attention of both Ministries:

1. Business as usual versus sense of urgency. Many recent international and national policy reports and studies (such as IAASTD 2009, UNEP Green Growth report 2011, advice Verduurzaming Voedselketen Biomassa June 2014, PBL Natuurlijk kapitaal als nieuw beleidsconcept September 2014) indicate that in view of the ecological footprint of current agricultural systems, business as usual is no longer an option. We need to speed up transitions away from business as usual to high productive sustainable agriculture, based on ecological principles. We call this high productive sustainable agriculture "optimal", which is to a large extent characterized by nutrient use, ecological intensification, and short value chains. The foundation of the argument is as in Kringlooplandbouw in the Netherlands: working with innovative farmers towards increased Nutrient Use Efficiency, for the situation at hand, with an eye on future productivity. The indicator of choice here is Nutrient Use Efficiency (NUE). This indicator applies both in situations of nutrient surplus and in depleted soils. The extent to which farming systems respond to ecological principles has been defined by Pablo Tittonell as 'ecological intensification'. The new food security policy should advocate the use Nutrient Use Efficiency (NUE) and Ecological Intensification (EI) as indicators regardless of the setting.

Sources: UNEP (2013) Our Nutrient World; The challenge to produce more food and energy with less pollution; Pablo Tittonell and Ken Giller (2013) When yield gaps are poverty traps: The paradigm of ecological intensification in African smallholder agriculture. Field Crops Research, March 2013.

Oxfam Novib [September 14th, 2014](#)

Oxfam Novib, Netherlands

"Resilience of small holder farmers and large companies: different responsibilities"

For Oxfam the link between climate change and food security is clear. We witness how many farmers in developing countries have to deal with the effects of climate change such as floods, droughts, temperatures that are too high to work on the land, changing seasons, and shifting climate belts.

Agriculture – in particular industrial high input agriculture – is also one of the main sources of greenhouse gas emissions.

In relation to climate change Oxfam sees different roles and responsibilities for smallholder producers in developing countries, where the focus should be food security and adaptation, and for large-scale, high input agriculture in developed and developing countries, where the focus should be on mitigation.

Regarding smallholder farmers, it is important that both governments and the private sector provide support to help them adapt to the impacts of climate change. In a number of developing countries adaptation plans are in place, but farmer's resilience and food security have not always been integrated optimally. Developing country governments need to be supported to develop and implement national climate adaptation plans to strengthen farmer's climate resilience. It is also important that the knowledge smallholders as practitioners have of climate change adaptation needs to be acknowledged and linked to knowledge centres such as universities and to policies. Smallholders and in particular women need to be able to participate in policy and funding decisions on adaptation.

Large-scale, high input agriculture is often part of the value chain of big companies. When engaging with companies the Dutch governments should stimulate that in companies policies and practices climate resilience is addressed. Companies should identify, commit and implement climate change adaptation measures, specifically aimed at strengthening the ability of vulnerable actors in their supply chains (to include, but not be limited to smallholders, (women) workers and suppliers) to deal with the negative consequences of climate change. To this effect they should disclose climate change risks and how they will affect small-scale producers along their entire supply chain and implement programs and strategies that build their resilience. They should also develop and foster partnerships with farmers which increases their resilience instead of their vulnerabilities. Examples are fair sharing of risks (production risks due to weather, pests and other factors affecting harvests) and provision of support in adapting to climate change.

The role of the Dutch government can be to:

- Assist governments in developing countries to develop and implement national adaptation plans for agriculture on a national level and in particular for vulnerable regions, taking into account the different needs, roles and responsibilities of different sizes and types of agriculture. This can be done through bilateral support or through multilateral channels.
- Stress the different needs and responsibilities of smallholder producers and large-scale farming in its positions for the Global alliance on Climate Smart agriculture, for the Green climate fund and other forums where agriculture and climate change come together.

- In its collaboration with the “topsectors” and in public private partnerships, the Dutch government should set criteria for co-operation between big companies and small farmers and assist in accumulating and spreading knowledge how that can lead to increased resilience.

Greet Goverde September 14th, 2014

Secr. Platform Aarde Boer Consument, Netherlands

"We should remedy the damage that is caused to the soils by mono-cultures and overuse by changing over to agro-ecology"

It is estimated that agriculture is responsible for 13.5% of man-made greenhouse gas emissions, primarily due to the use of nitrogen-based fertilisers and to the methane produced by livestock. But if we also take into account the deforestation to create pastures and cultures, the energy that goes into mechanisation of food production, the production of artificial inputs, and the packaging, transport and the processing of foods, we may conclude that the current food systems probably represent 33-35% of the total of manmade greenhouse gas emissions.

Partly these impacts are due to the considerable increase of meat consumption, which requires lots of cereals, feed such as soybeans, and water. Meat consumption varies from 120 kilogrammes per year in rich countries to 5kgs in India. The average consumption is now 42 k per year, though scientists tell us that we an average meat consumption of 35 k per year would be sustainable for a population of 7 billion.

Challenges

1. The first challenge for the Dutch government, institutions and citizens is overconsumption in the north, including our own country. (Weggelaten: We consume much meat and we can drive our cars on agrofuels simply because we are much richer than the poor in the South who depend on these very same resources for there more basic needs). Agrofuels should be abolished and taxation and other government measures (including border supports) must change the consumers' behaviour and make agriculture change direction towards crops such as protein seeds, hemp etc. Proceeds from higher taxation on certain foods should be diverted to agro-ecological policies both here and for the South.
2. We should remedy the damage that is caused to the soils by monocultures and overuse by changing over to agro-ecology. Agro-ecology – working with the natural complementarities between plants, trees and animals – is still in its experimental stage, but looks promising. (For examples see e.g. <http://www.voedselenders.nl>, or <http://aardeboerconsument.nl/beeld-en-geluid>) It may require more labour initially but it improves the health of the soil, and because it saves on fossil energy and nitrogen-based fertilisers it is also cheaper. Therefore it is well-suited to the needs of small and middle-sized farms in these countries. The sophisticated agricultural technology that the Netherlands has specialised in is not the answer for these farms. For that matter: a change of course in the direction of agro-ecology would benefit the Dutch soils and its greatly decreased biodiversity as well.

We have ended up in many unfair situations because of the free market. Prices for regular food are too low, so prices for organic food (involving more labour costs) are also too low, and prices for agro-ecologically grown food will also be too low. From the climate point of view these changes are very urgent, but the politicians are looking away. We challenge them to adjust trade regulations to facilitate the transition to a more agro-ecological agriculture, in the south but also in the north. (See workshops on page 14-30-46 in the conference report, <http://www.voedselenders.nl>, and see <http://aardeboerconsument.nl/artikelen/agro-ecologie>).

In the meantime both in our country and in developing countries farmers who want to farm more agro-ecologically could organise themselves independently, e.g. form cooperatives, and look for coalitions in society, even though demand is as yet limited.

Angelica Senders September 14th, 2014

Agri-ProFocus Network facilitator gender in value chains, Netherlands

"Women key to food security; addressing access to resources and agency of women"

Gender sensitive strategies to food security have to address access to resources and agency of women. This is supported by a number of recent reports.

We all know the conclusion of the FAO's research FAO AT WORK, 2010–2011, 'Women – key to food security' that women farmers are 20-30 percent less productive than men, but not because they manage their farms less well, or work less hard. The main reason for the gap between men's and women's performance is that the former have access to resources seldom available to female farmers – including land, financing and technology, among other things. In addition, women do not share fairly in benefits such as training, information and knowledge. If women had the same access to those resources as men, they would produce 20-30 percent more food and their families would enjoy better health, nutrition and education.

The recent World Bank report (2014) 'levelling the field Improving Opportunities for Women Farmers in Africa' adds to this that closing Africa's gender gap is about more than just ensuring that women farmers have equal access to key productive resources. While differences in access to land, fertilizers and other inputs remain important, differences in how a female farmer benefits from these resources (i.e. her returns to those inputs)

often have a larger effect. On the top of key issues to be addressed is 'strengthen women's land rights', this is followed by three (!) recommendations to solve labour-related problems of women to reduce the burden of household and family chores and to increase agricultural productivity of her own labour and hired labour. The other key issues for increasing the return on the inputs of female farmers are: access to fertilizers, improved seeds, extension and information services, high value cash crops, markets and education.

Another recent World Bank report 'Voice and Agency Empowering women and girls for shared prosperity' (2014) addresses the persistent constraints and deprivations that prevent many of the world's women from achieving their potential. 'Increasing women's voice and agency are valuable ends in themselves. And both voice and agency have instrumental practical value too. Amplifying the voices of women and increasing their agency can yield broad development dividends from them, for their families, communities and societies. Conversely constraining in women's agency by limiting what jobs women can perform or subjecting them to violence, for example can create huge losses to productivity and income with broader adverse repercussions for development.'

What is Agency?

'Agency' is the ability to make decisions about one's own life and act on them to achieve a desired outcome, free of violence, retribution or fear. The ability to make those choices is often called empowerment. Agency is critical at individual level, but is also about group and collective action.

Also the Donor Committee on Economic Development (DCED) stresses the importance of agency of women in its Guidelines for Practitioners 'Measuring Women's Economic Empowerment in Private Sector Development' (2014) Economic empowerment is defined as follows: A woman is economically empowered when she has both:

3. a) access to resources: the options to advance economically; and
- b) agency: the power to make and act on economic decisions.

Guus Geurts [September 12th, 2014](#)

Author 'Wereldvoedsel - pleidooi voor een rechtvaardige en ecologische voedselvoorziening'

"Define sustainability + The Alternative Trade Mandate"

Introduction

Because you propose that a lively discussion between contributors will be established, I want first want to make some quotes of other contributors to this discussion (below).

I will first mention some quotes with which I fully agree, and will underline the most important sentences. Then I will react to some other contributions in my analysis, at target 1 I also mentioned part of this analysis. Here I will give also my alternative based on the [Alternative Trade Mandate](#).

Quotes

KAY (TNI):

'It is clear that in the face of increasing global resource scarcity, environmental degradation, and climate change, 'business as usual' is not an option. Instead of counting with a highly chemical and petro-dependent form of agriculture that depletes the resource base on which it depends, we must focus our efforts on supporting agricultural approaches, such as agro-ecology, that work to restore the ecological balance between humans and nature. (...)

This is confirmed by a growing body of evidence which shows that biologically diversified farming systems can meet global food needs sustainably and efficiently as they outperform chemically managed monocultures across a wide range of indicators. India's recent experience with the system of sustainable rice intensification (SRI) which have led to bumper rice harvests is just one such example. (...)

This was one of the conclusions of the highly successful 'Voedsel Anders/Food Otherwise' conference held at Wageningen University in February 2014 which brought together over 800 people committed to working towards a just and sustainable food system in The Netherlands and Flanders. (...)

JANSSEN (SNV):

'Climate Smart Agriculture is probably the key here. What is needed there is that the Netherlands, together with other development actors, push harder that agriculture becomes more prominent on the climate change agenda and that it gets acknowledged that agriculture is both a significant (if not the largest) contributor to climate change through emissions of livestock and cropping, but also directly impacted by the effects of climate change.'

VAN BEEK (Soil Fertility and Nutrient Management):

"More food from fertile grounds"

The biggest challenges Each year, an estimated 10 million hectares of land and 36 million kg of nutrients worth 40 billion US\$ are lost due to careless land-management. Apart from all other issues related to (environmental) sustainability, land and water conservation, or even more so: soil restoration, is key to sustainable intensification. Soil degradation typically starts with excessive removal of organic matter from the soil through cultivation. This removal initiates a trickle down process eventually resulting in infertile and unproductive lands. The Netherlands has a key role in this process, because organic matter and nutrients from around the globe accumulate in countries strong in food processing, such as the Netherlands.'

The EU and the Netherlands have a special responsibility if this loss of soil and fertile land is caused by producing products which are exported to the EU.

HIRSCH (BothENDS):

'In 2009 the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development presented the state of agricultural knowledge, science and technology and made recommendations for the way forward. Its key message was very clear: "Business as usual is no longer an option." (...)

'options for transition: (...)

- Internalise real costs of the agro-industrial approach to food and agricultural systems like the costs of:
 - Climate change and green house gas emissions through e.g. fossil fuel dependent agriculture and long-distance trade
 - Biodiversity loss through e.g. monocultures, pesticide use and deforestation
 - Land degradation through e.g. unsustainable short-term land use practices, pollution by agri-chemicals, soil erosion etc.
- Abandon subsidies and levies that push unsustainable practices, e.g. fertilizer subsidies, lowered energy tax levies for large consumers of natural gas (greenhouses) etc. (...)
- Push taxes/ levies on goods that are scarce and/or undesirable, like the unsustainable use of natural resources, pollution of soils and water, emissions of greenhouse gases, degradation of land.
- Shift taxes from labour towards polluting and energy intensive activities (high labour levies push mechanisation, technology and push mainly quantity of production and not diversification of production and in addition high labour levies push the human factor out of production).'

LAAN (Unilever) – (COMMENTS ON THIS BELOW):

'Going beyond the efforts on a local level, Dutch policy should also focus on the international level – working on sustainable international value chains. Unilever therefore aims for a global IDH programme. The Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH) is a huge success due to its approach to look to the whole value chain from production to consumption. This initiative should be upgraded on the international level. (...)

Currently there is a focus on the top ten agricultural raw materials, which account for around two thirds of our volumes. They include palm oil, paper and board, soy, sugar, tea, fruit and vegetables, sunflower oil, rapeseed oil, dairy ingredients and cocoa. Continuing to transform the market and moving more of our suppliers to sustainable agricultural practices in 2014, will enable us to purchase more of these ingredients sustainably. Unilever's palm oil now comes from or supports sustainable production.'

My own contribution reaction and quotes analysis:

The biggest problem with this target is that there is not a definition of 'sustainable' which is broadly accepted. But if we hold on to the Brundtland definition our current production and consumption shouldn't have negative effects for the basic needs of other people and future generations and biodiversity. Translated to food security, this would in my opinion mean the following goals:

- no depletion of renewable and non-renewable resources and no pollution,
- closing cycles of nutrients (like phosphate) and water;
- no dependence on fossil fuels in the food system;
- prevention of climate change (including increasing organic matter in the soil) instead of causing it;
- no direct or indirect (ILUC) destruction of nature for new agriculture;
- the right to adequate food and water should have priority above other means for agricultural and fishery products (feed, biofuels, biobased products).

The consequences of this is that we should aim for regionalised food system, where the distance between producer and consumer is as short as possible. Regions like the EU should be as self-sufficient as possible. Large scale production of soy beans, palm oil and bio fuels can never be sustainable, because they have negative effects on all mentioned goals. Trade in high value tropical products (like coffee and spices) however is still possible in a more or less sustainable way. See for an inspiring alternative: '[Small farmers can cool the planet – A way out of the mayhem caused by the industrial food system](#)', GRAIN, October 2009,

Follow up of my analysis at Target 1 & Alternative trade mandate:

Contrary to the criteria for 'real sustainability' (mentioned above), the goal of the EU trade strategy 'Trade, Growth and World Affairs' (2010) is to get access to new markets and new raw materials outside of the EU, this fully to the advantage of European transnational companies.

But this has negative effects for farmers, food security, labourers, small and medium enterprises and biodiversity in the EU and developing countries.

As an alternative a European wide coalition of civil society, NGO's, farmers organisations and trade unions developed 'The Alternative Trade Mandate', with also a chapter on food. I recommend – next to the quotes above (and in my contribution at Target 1) – to take this alternative into account in future Dutch and European Policy on food and agriculture in future. See for more

information: <http://www.alternativetrademandate.org> and <http://www.tni.org/briefing/trade-time-new-vision>

Some measures we propose: in future agricultural, trade and environmental policy the EU needs to:

- respect the right to food and to food sovereignty;
- move away from multilateral, bilateral and regional free trade rules that distort prices for farmers and lead to unequal access to natural resources;
- become more self-sufficient in products that can be produced in Europe, especially protein and oil crops as alternatives for imports of (gmo-)soybeans, palm oil and biofuels;

- eliminate imports of biofuels to the EU, abandon its biofuels directive and replace it with other measures designed to reduce demand for fossil fuels in European transport;
- bring investment in food and farmland in non-EU under new, binding investment agreements with human rights obligations;
- support sustainable farming practices in Europe and the Global South that protect biodiversity, enhance the fertility of soils, reduce the use of fossil fuels and help prevent climate change;
- improve – not abolish – the current EU supply management system;
- strengthen environmental and animal welfare standards for European farmers and ensure that European agribusiness and retail cannot buy cheap products on the world market that have lower production standards;
- respect and reward family farmers, with cost covering prices guaranteed, and internalise all environmental, social and animal welfare costs in the consumer price. (See also proposals Hirsch, BothEnds).

René van Veenhuizen [September 10th, 2014](#)

Sr. Programme Officer, RUAF Foundation, Netherlands

"City region food systems"

Sustainable food systems need to be better understood in relation to challenges raised by urbanization. Urban populations have expanded strongly and are expected to further double over the next generation. Feeding this urbanised world in ways that are sustainable, resilient, healthy and fair, has become a pressing challenge. Urbanisation often goes together with growing urban poverty and food insecurity related to unemployment, rising food prices, growing dependence on food imports, increasing dominance of supermarkets and challenges posed by climate change.

Urbanization is not just about cities growing in size. It is, more fundamentally, about new patterns of interaction among rural and urban economies and livelihoods, new ways of using space and new and sometimes competing claims on natural resources.

There is a need to reform our food systems and place food in relation to cities higher on both the urban and the food security agenda's. The relationship between urban and rural spaces, people and environments is vital, and one of the critical development issues to be addressed in the post-2015 development agenda.

Urban agriculture is increasingly recognized by city authorities and civil society organisations for its capacity to strengthen the resilience of the urban food system, enhance access of the urban poor to nutritious food, generate (self-) employment and income, and help cities to adapt to climate change and reduce its ecological foot print. But growing urban centres need productive and sustainable rural areas, including smallholders and small-scale producers. While critical urban-rural linkages go beyond food systems to include labour, migration, ecosystem services, markets etc., integrated city region food systems are a key dimension of the rural-urban nexus that needs to be better explored and developed.

Since the 2008 food crisis, there has been new focus on food and nutrition security coupled to efforts to address the needs of family farmers, food quality and reducing food losses. Nonetheless, specific challenges remain to be better addressed in the Dutch development agenda in order to meet sustainable urbanisation and food security needs. In recent years the concept of "city region food systems" has come up as a promising approach to address the range of challenges outlined above. The concept is pro-posed as a governance approach for policies related to food and agriculture at local, national and international levels, goes beyond the rural urban divide and rather puts rural urban linkages at the heart of a territorial approach to food systems.

This requires enhancing understanding of the importance of city-region food systems:

- Its contribution to food security and nutrition by diversifying the variety of channels through which consumers can access nutritious food and reducing the dependency on international food markets;
- Its potential for lowering urban ecological foot(d)-prints and protecting the agricultural land base around cities, while optimising the role of agriculture in providing ecosystem services.
- Enterprise and marketing opportunities (urban agriculture, farmers markets; local food hubs) for (poor) producers, households, women and youth.
- Its contribution to participatory local government and identity.
- Enhancing resource efficiency and the city-region's resilience to climate change.

Carol Gribnau [September 9th, 2014](#)

Head Green Entrepreneurship Programme, Hivos, Netherlands

"Sustainable diets for farmers and consumers"

With a focus on productivity in our current food system, sustainability often comes next instead of first. We are already witnessing the results of this lack of attention for soil health, water provision and rapid loss in diversity, dearly needed in times of climate change. The most vulnerable groups are hit most by reduced harvests without a fall back option.

How to bring sustainability into practice? "Sustainable diets" are protective and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystems, culturally acceptable, accessible, economically fair and affordable; nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy; while optimizing natural and human resources.

In this regard, we urge the Ministries to take responsibility as a world player in the agri-food sector and to:

- Move away from a narrow focus on increasing production through a business driven value chain approach towards supporting agro-ecological practices that build on biodiversity and farmer agency for a resilient food system that can feed the world, conserve biodiversity, decrease poverty and adapt to climate change. 'Climate smart agriculture' needs to be redefined in that sense.
- Develop steps towards a 'true price' for products that include environmental costs of unsustainable practices and make perverse subsidies history in order to stimulate the consumption of sustainable products.
- Support farmers to develop their own, locally adapted and culturally appropriate strategies for sustainable production and consumption. For example, improving access to the formal seed sector should go hand in hand with strengthening farmers' capacity to conserve, develop and use their own seed.
- Support social innovation by investing in people, skills and platforms and organisations that co-create and broker knowledge across regions, sectors and actors.
- Redirect public funding to research on agro-ecological practices and (locally available) nutritious crops that enhance sustainable production and consumption to counter balance private and public sector investment in research on industrial agriculture and high-value crops such as maize, rice and wheat.
- Safeguard and show coherence of Dutch and EU policies on trade, finance, development aid and agriculture and consider the potential negative impacts of large scale trade investments, agricultural subsidies and trade and intellectual property rights agreements, such as disturbance of local market dynamics, land grabs and undermining of informal seed systems.
- In terms of production, research and innovation to stimulate an enabling environment, both nationally as well as internationally, for sustainable production and consumption, innovation and knowledge exchange that acknowledges the role of farmers and biodiversity.

Boniface Kiome [September 9th, 2014](#)

Prog Officer Green Entrepreneurship & Sustainable Development at Hivos - East Africa, Kenya

The Dutch food security policy in Kenya aims, via a consortium of Hivos, SNV & Solidaridad, to strengthen smallholder entrepreneurial farmers in Kenya, to improve their incomes and their food security situation, as well as to contribute to improved sustainability and efficiency of the horticultural sector in Kenya.

This program shows good results: **linkages of producers and the market and the linkage with private sector (Local & international-Dutch) is strengthened and income of producers increased**. However, what is missing in the program is the connection with government policy on food and agriculture. To be really sustainable in all its senses there needs to be supportive government policy and implementation. Dutch food security policy should not only focus on practice on the ground, but also on how to enable supportive national/local government policy, preferable through local CSO's.

Nanno Kleiterp & Anton Timpers [September 9th, 2014](#)

FMO Development Bank, Netherlands

"Recognize potential of large private enterprises to create development impact"

Agribusiness, Food & Water is one of the focus sectors of FMO, the Dutch Development Bank. As a development finance institution, FMO has set for itself the goal of doubling its developmental impact and halving its footprint by 2020. In pursuit of this goal, FMO finances private companies, projects and financial institutions in developing countries that generate economic growth at scale. In addition to providing finance, FMO works with its investee companies to increase production and efficiency and manage and improve environmental and social impact. FMO is a front runner in reporting on the sustainability impact of its investments.

FMO is proof of the development potential of large private enterprises. To support sustainable development impact, Dutch policy should **centre stage private sector companies** that have a good track record in emerging markets. FMO operates with the belief that impact can best be achieved through the scaling up of a proven business model where financial sustainability is a prerequisite for achieving sustainable development at scale in the long run. Many international companies actively promote CSR standards and ODA should support companies with sustainable business models that can be scaled up.

Dutch policy should **not only focus on Dutch companies**. Food security and related issues such as the water and energy are global issues in which the Netherlands can play a role, and even benefit, via interventions through international and local companies. If the government wishes to align this agenda more closely with Dutch interests, it could focus on supply chains where Dutch companies play an active or dominant role, such as dairy, cocoa, palm oil, vegetables, animal protein, etc..

In its development support, the Dutch government should focus on the whole value chain, thereby raising sustainability standards all the way at the primary producers. Although FMO mainly focuses on larger enterprises, it pays close and regular attention to the way these companies affect the wider stakeholders, such as workers, suppliers and the larger community. For example, FMO supports private enterprises in Africa that touch and improve the life of thousands of smallholder farmers through training, certification and reliable off take of their products.

It is important that the Dutch government supports coalitions of complementary development institutions. FMO has, for instance, teamed up with IDH to support smallholder farmers through training programs and access to working capital with which to make productive investments in their land and businesses. Finally the Dutch government should play a role in **land tenure issues**. This is an important topic in sustainable development, as land tenure does not only improve security and living standards for smallholder farmers but is also an important tool in combating deforestation. To make sustainable and lasting investments in land, farmers need to be sure that the land they farm actually belongs to them. Furthermore, without proper title to the land, it is often impossible to obtain financing. The government could support developing nations in setting up cadastres, supporting land ownership and, where possible, supporting consolidation of small and unproductive smallholder plots.

Barbara van Paassen and Danny Wijnhoud [September 8th, 2014](#)

Policy Advisor; Senior Researcher - ActionAid Amsterdam - Netherlands

"Wake up, before it is too late"

["Wake up before it's too late: Make agriculture truly sustainable now for food security a changing climate"](#) was the telling title of an important report by UNCTAD in 2013. This challenge is urgent and requires political will that allows for smallholders and the poor can to be in the driving seat. Largely supported by this and other landmark reports, we see the following challenges and opportunities to achieve this target.

The need to build inclusive climate-resilient local and national food systems, whilst reversing non-sustainable global trends

The achievement of sustainable food systems worldwide can't go around acknowledgement of the complexities and political interests at stake. There are a lot of contradictions as enough food is being produced to feed the world, a third of it is spilled but an estimated about a billion people malnourished or not food secure. Many of these are smallholders and landless, in particular vulnerable women and children, in rural areas in the global south. Having faced neglect for years, the increasing interest in rural development and agriculture is an opportunity that has to be managed well. The increasing pressure on land and water is a huge challenge that risks marginalizing smallholder land users and landless even further and needs to be addressed in order to ensure space for building solutions.

There is a need for much more common ground and agreement about shortcomings of existing food systems and the need for reshaping them. There is need to understand or acknowledge how respective food systems overlap or relate and impacted on by a multitude of broader agricultural (non-food), sociocultural, economic factors, power relations and institutions (rules-of the game), and the political economy at large. And finally, there is a need to build up locally owned climate resilient local and national food systems while addressing global challenges being faced.

Characteristics of sustainable (local/national) food systems:

- Locally owned, locally and nationally established in terms of production, post-harvest practices, local/ national value addition and inclusive local, national and regional markets;
- People-centered and inclusive (gender, socially) that ensures food for deprived people first. This also requires empowering and investing first and foremost in women smallholder farmers and their access and control of land, water and their labor inputs and addressing broader gender discrimination at all levels (including at household level division of labour and decision-making).
- Establish climate resilient integrated and bio-diverse food (and income) systems (this includes agroecology and combinations of drought-resistant production, water harvesting, and small-scale irrigation food product cooperatives of (women) smallholders; raising small ruminants in particular chicken and goats)
- Satisfying household and community consumption first before serving other local and national inclusive markets. Access is key – see inputs target 1 (incl social protection).
- Risk coping mechanisms for sufficient risk mitigation; there may be some specializations within diversified systems as to achieve sufficient economy of scale
- Beyond diversified farming systems, income diversification may rely on non-farming income as well
- Minimize and mitigate risks of droughts, flooding, other natural disasters and last but not least the external pressures resulting in land and water (control) grabbing, decline in local food production, food price hikes, collapse of public support systems to smallholders, loss of (agri)biodiversity, corporate capture and dependency
- As the above are often best addressed by targeting women smallholders: innovative public support systems providing demand-driven support to empower smallholder farmers, in particular women, and (women) micro, small and medium enterprises and cooperatives.

Reducing our natural resource foot print and tackling unfair and unsustainable international pressures
There is an urgent need to reduce our global land and water foot print and the negative impacts resulting from that as related to direct investment, consumption and role in global trade. This starts with taking stock and identifying leverage points. This includes resource (land/water) efficiency, production and trading standards for global commodities, but also addressing consumption patterns and policies underlying these (whether for food, fodder, fuel, flowers). This could build on efforts of [PBL](#), as well as [civil society](#).

This also includes **addressing the risks and negative impacts of pressure on land and large scale land and agribusiness investment**. I.e. currently often not contributing to local food systems and food security, but resulting in land and water grab (widely documented, including in our recent [Land Heist](#) report, by UNCTAD, ILC, Cotula and many others), as well as issues of land, water and labour control. The latter occurs when smallholders engage in outgrower and contract farming schemes without sufficient bargaining power (often they are the most vulnerable and deprived chain actors ending up carrying most of the risks and least of the benefits) and when displacing and impacting local food production (and producers), markets, prices and food security (e.g. due to global commodity chain bias). There is also a risk of increasing gender disparities and further marginalization of women. As men tend to benefit more from cash crops and estate labor, decision-making and income are often biased towards men and women get more marginalized, whilst food requirements are under pressure. When women are involved or employed, there are still too often issues of decent work and wages, as well as overburdening. Finally, large scale investments bring particular risks of mono-cropping, land degradation, water depletion, deforestation and loss of (agro)biodiversity that increase rather than reduction of GHG emissions by global agriculture. As UNCTAD also states, there is an urgent need to moving away from conventional mono-culture, high external-input production towards more sustainable, regenerative, diverse and empowering production systems. Addressing power imbalances is essential to ensure more fair and sustainable commodity chains and investments.

Solutions include:

- Protecting the rights of women smallholder farmers and other legitimate land users through safeguards like the CFS Tenure Guidelines and FPIC; whilst empowering them to exercise these rights.
- Ensuring global policies and initiatives promote real sustainable agriculture and local food systems in line with recommendations above, UNCTAD, HLPE and others, rather than supporting initiatives that promote large-scale commercial farming without adequately addressing core reasons for food insecurity (in particular poverty and marginalisation), as well as risks and negative impacts above.
- Mapping, reducing and changing consumption, trade and related footprints. Beyond the need to change consumption and spilling habits, as well as policies underlying these (e.g. biofuels; food safety), there is a need for more regional and local sourcing of raw agricultural commodities and establish their local sustainable food systems (in particular also in OECD countries and BRICS).
- States and global fora to make food security and sustainable (local/national/regional) food systems a priority in WTO and other trade (related) negotiations and policies, particularly addressing priorities as identified by the Committee for Food Security (CFS) and addressing the interests and stakes of women smallholders.

Bert Satijn [September 7th, 2014](#)

Associate of NWP and Strategic Advisor on water and climate, Netherlands

"Synergy between food security and water contributes to a sustainable food production"

One of the biggest challenges in achieving target 3, to make all food systems sustainable, is to develop climate smart agriculture worldwide. And water is an important element to achieve this.

Food security and water are two of four priority themes for Dutch international development cooperation, building upon Dutch expertise and knowledge. So working on synergy between these two themes should fit also within the strengths of Dutch involvement. Although it is already Dutch policy to work on synergy, in practice it deserves more attention. At present the overlap between the food security and water programs of Dutch international development cooperation is not more than 10%. This synergy is more and more needed in near future due to climate change. Water worldwide is mainly used for food production. Water, food security and climate change are therefore strongly interconnected.

Climate change (or better climate roughness) is creating more and more stress on the hydrological cycle, with as consequence more frequent and unpredictable floodings and droughts. The seasonal pattern of dry and wet seasons is also changing and becoming unpredictable. For many African and other regions this means uncertainty about when to start seeding; the food production is endangered. As a consequence food prices are rising. In combination with the steadily decreasing resilience of the water-soil system due to human activities in most countries, the impact of climate change is a threat for development.

An effective intervention strategy is to work on synergy between FS and water by investments in the resilience of the soil-water system. The 5R-approach with Reduction, Reuse, Recharge, Reallocation and Rainwater Harvesting contributes to restoration of the Resilience. It starts with a water stress assessment to determine (potential) water stress in food production in intervention regions, based on historical data and food production and climate change models. Soil restoration to increase the food production can also contribute to increase the recharge capacity of the soil to replenish the groundwater resources and to decrease the vulnerability for extreme droughts. Streamlining the water programs and FS programs and the cooperation between the water and agriculture experts is needed. This has implications for the actors from government, the business community, knowledge institutes and civil society from both sectors, (water and FS), which up to now do hardly work together in Dutch international cooperation.

It does not have too much implications for the policy choices of the Dutch ministries. Because indeed it was already the policy to work on synergy. But operationalization of the policy could be promoted by setting a target. In the year 2020 about 25% of ODA budget has to be climate relevant. Working on synergy is climate relevant,

so it counts for the climate budget. It is recommended to set a target in policy for example that in 20% of the FS programs synergy between water and FS is an important element of the programs.

Daniel Knoop [September 4th, 2014](#)

Programme Coordinator Aquaculture, Solidaridad, Netherlands

“Systemic Change”

The world currently produces enough food to feed the world, but about 1 billion people can't afford to buy sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs for an active and healthy life. This makes food security mostly a poverty – or access – problem.

The issue of economic accessibility (affordability) is often complemented by lack of land and resources to grow food. Together with infrastructural and market barriers this makes food security also a physical accessibility problem. In the foreseeable future, however, food security will be an availability problem. In the face of rapid climate change and increasing resources scarcity, increasing demand due to population growth and changing consumption patterns, food security will prove even harder to achieve.

Agricultural production which fully respects ecological, social and economical sustainability will be a precondition for food security for all. If we fail to address these sustainability issues, entire food systems will be at risk. Therefore, there will be an increasing need to adapt existing food systems themselves.

Much of Solidaridad's work has focused on sustainable production through the implementation of Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) and promotion of Good Agricultural Practices in commodity supply chains. This has helped to bridge the gap between high-input agriculture of the past and more efficient agriculture that generates less externalities. But since VSS and good agricultural practices have a single-commodity focus, they don't address more complex issues on farm and landscape level.

In the future, smart agronomic practices and ecological intensification concepts will be guiding new approaches to farming. Efficiencies will increasingly need to be rooted in the ecosystem and organized on landscape level, because in many corners of the world external inputs (particularly synthetic fertilizer) will be too expensive to produce and distribute. The same is true for resilience: long-term stability and productivity of production systems in times of rapid climatic change will require functional and healthy ecosystems. A landscape approach, taking into account multiple functions and stakeholders on a level where synergies can be optimally developed and secured, can help increase agricultural resilience.

There is also an urgent need to accelerate sustainable and inclusive investments in agriculture. Criticism of investment projects tends to overlook the importance of FDI for agricultural development. Therefore, we need to build capacity of governments and CSOs to accommodate investments in a sustainable and inclusive way.

Jeske van Seters [September 1st, 2014](#)

Deputy Head of Programme Food Security, ECDPM - Netherlands

"Markets matter"

Productivity issues can unarguably have an important impact on smallholder income. However, I'd like to second some of the other contributors to this consultation who stress the importance of well-functioning markets. This implies that measures needed to increase smallholder income are not limited to investments in technology, irrigation, etc. Interventions that also merit attention are related to the functioning of markets for smallholders, such as increasing smallholders' access to credit, affordable inputs (e.g. fertiliser), reliable price information, rural infrastructure and reducing tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade.

What contributors so far have been silent about is the relevance of regional markets, i.e. trade across country borders, within a region. While one might think that only local markets matter for smallholders, many are engaged in regional value chains and there is great potential for regional market development to strengthen food security. This is recognised in the Dutch agenda for aid, trade and investment as laid down in 'A World to Gain', which emphasises that the Netherlands will opt more often for a regional approach as the best means to tackle problems such as food security. This will have to be reflected and further detailed in the Dutch food security policy.

Regional markets for food security in Africa is one of the topics that the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) works on, with financial support of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and others. This involves policy-oriented research and facilitation of dialogue, amongst other things to:

- Support Regional Economic Communities in Africa (e.g. COMESA, EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, SADC) to develop and implement their regional agricultural policy and related investment plan under the continental umbrella of the CAADP. Dutch support will need to be aligned to these African-owned policy frameworks;
- Support regional farmers' organisations representing smallholders (e.g. ROPPA in West Africa, PROPAC in Central Africa, EAFF in East Africa and SACAU in Southern Africa) to engage in regional policy processes;

- Highlight political economy issues related to the functioning of regional agricultural input and output markets and corridors, to be taken into account by African stakeholders and development partners alike, for initiatives to be successful (as also stressed by David Sogge in his contribution).

Another element I miss in the discussion so far is the role of the European Union. The Minister has indicated in 'A World to Gain' that the Netherlands will work more often in a EU context in respect of International Public Goods such as food security. In development cooperation, this implies enhancing coordination of aid with other EU member states and EU delegations. It could also include an active contribution to inform the operationalization of the recent European Commission Communication on the role of the private sector in achieving inclusive and sustainable growth in developing countries, with a specific focus on agri-businesses. Beyond development cooperation, international food security is affected by EU policies in other areas such as trade, agriculture and research. The Dutch food security policy will be incomplete without a commitment and concrete proposals to take international food security considerations into account in the Netherlands' positing in EU policy making.

Sharon Hesp August 29th, 2014

Consultant at NewForesight, Netherlands

"A transformation of the whole system, not only elements within, is the only way to a sustainable food system"

The present food system is unsustainable. Interventions to change this have not generated the desired effect. Therefore a new approach is required; A change within the present system will not do the trick, to achieve a sustainable food system a system change is the only way to go. Currently the incentives reward the wrong kind of behavior. Agricultural products are at the bottom of the value chain. The market demands a low price of these interchangeable commodities that is achieved through externalizing the costs as much as possible. Child labor is used to lower labor costs, farmers deplete rich soils to save on fertilizers and cause environmental damage with hazardous pesticides.

NewForesight is currently conducting a study commissioned by the IFC, to investigate how a sustainable market transformation within agriculture is possible. Phase I of the study has already been concluded and the findings can be read in the report "Building a roadmap to sustainability in agro-commodity production", [which can be found here](#). The study shows that what is now seen as the most important tool for achieving sustainability in the agriculture, standards and certification, is not delivering as anticipated. Instead of continuing on the same path without generating results, sector dynamics should be altered.

The system should benefit the entrepreneurial farmer. A farmer that is well informed, skilled and has the resources to invest in his/her business and generate high yields. The forces that determine the functioning of an agro-commodity sector are production characteristics, alternative livelihoods, market characteristics and an enabling environment. Altering these forces can change the way the system functions. To change these forces collaboration between key stakeholders is vital. It is due to isolation, fragmentation and a lack of transparency that actors can seek and attain short-term gains and get away with it. There is a clear reason to collaborate. NGOs, governments and multinationals have the same overarching interest. Whether the goal is to guarantee export, company sales or lifting the poor out of poverty, protecting the environment, they all require a sector that will work in the long run. Future scenarios for food products include minimum market criteria on sustainability, traceability and food safety, enforced by industry and governments.

We already see this transformation happening in various agro-commodity sectors. NewForesight has been involved in change processes in cocoa, palm oil, cotton, floriculture and sugar cane. We inspire with strategic insights and thought leadership and align the different stakeholders towards a shared vision of a sustainable sector. We bring people together, help build trust, channel information, create momentum and mobilize parties for sustainable change. More of our work on <http://www.newforesight.com>.

Rob Glastra August 29th, 2014

Senior advisor, IUCN Netherlands Committee

"Making the ecosystem connection"

Challenges and responses

The biggest challenge to global food security is that the ecological foundation of agriculture and fisheries is being undermined. This foundation includes of soil fertility, clean water supplies and other ecosystem services. Some of the causes or threats are longstanding, like over-fishing and soil erosion. Others are recent, like climate change, competition for water, competition for land between food and biofuels, negative impacts by other sectors and poor production practices.

Biodiversity plays a vital role in food security, not only in the ecosystem services on which our food systems depend, but also in the resilience and adaptive capacity of (agro and other)ecosystems to respond to shocks and change. This biodiversity includes ecosystem and species diversity at the landscape level as well as species and genetic diversity at the farm level, in crops, livestock and soil organisms. Biodiverse food systems support greater yield stability and reduce the risks from pests, diseases, unstable weather and climate change, price volatility and other market dynamics.

Building sustainable food systems is a means to secure the ecological foundation of food security. In agriculture this includes strategies like improved techniques at the farm level, the upscaling of sustainable and climate-smart agriculture. In fisheries, this includes the sustainable management of fish stocks and fishing grounds, reduction of land-based pollution and environmentally-friendly aquaculture. An enabling policy environment should accompany all these strategies.

Food security policies tend to focus on agricultural productivity, trade and macro-economic policies, while neglecting its ecological foundation. Ecosystem degradation and poor ecosystem governance weaken the effectiveness of food security policies. At the same time, inappropriate policies can damage ecosystems and their ability to support food security. Ecosystem concerns therefore need to be integrated into other sectors' policies that impact on the ecosystem services underpinning food security (cross-sectoral linkages). Policy gaps need to be filled and recommendations for enabling and effective policies disseminated and advocated (see reports by e.g. UNEP in 2012 and IUCN and WRI in 2013).

Effective food security policies also address the social aspects of the ecosystem connections by strengthening land tenure, local organizations, people's rights to food and water, access to natural resources, credit and other agricultural inputs, and recognition of traditional knowledge on crop diversity and wild crop relatives. Gender equality cuts across all these aspects, since women play a crucial role in ecosystem management and food security in particular.

A landscape approach can be useful to address area-based food security issues and test the viability of policies. It allows for multi-actor approaches that facilitate coherence, the integration of ecosystems and participatory decision making in land use, the management of resource-related conflicts, commitment to climate change action like ecosystem-based adaptation, recognition of the importance of wild food sources as safety nets to the poor and adopting the concept of natural infrastructure (i.e. the ability of ecosystems to deliver some of the same services as those provided by engineered infrastructure).

What Dutch actors can contribute to the target

All major Dutch actors have a role to play in contributing to this UN Target. In brief: government and the private sector need to adopt policies and practices that support the (socio-) ecological foundation of food security. Civil society organizations are needed as watchdogs, agenda setters, advisors, conveners and knowledge brokers, and research institutes as producers of policy-relevant knowledge.

Sylvia Kay [August 28th, 2014](#)

Transnational Institute

"True resilience depends on striking an ecological balance between humans and nature: towards an agro-ecological transition"

It is clear that in the face of increasing global resource scarcity, environmental degradation, and climate change, 'business as usual' is not an option. Instead of counting with a highly chemical and petro-dependent form of agriculture that depletes the resource base on which it depends, we must focus our efforts on supporting agricultural approaches, such as agro-ecology, that work to restore the ecological balance between humans and nature

Agro-ecology is not, as is sometimes assumed, a niche approach that is practiced by only a few farmers in remote corners of the world. On the contrary, it is a highly diverse set of practices that have been adopted by millions of farmers around the world. By respecting nature's vital cycles and optimising the interactions between agriculture and ecological systems, agro-ecology can make an enormous contribution to global food security. This is confirmed by a growing body of evidence which shows that biologically diversified farming systems can meet global food needs sustainably and efficiently as they outperform chemically managed monocultures across a wide range of indicators. India's recent experience with the system of sustainable rice intensification (SRI) which have led to bumper rice harvests is just one such example.

Despite the enormous potential of agro-ecology, it is routinely side-lined in mainstream agricultural research and development. Globally, as much as 90 to 95 percent of investment in research and the development of technology and know-how goes to conventional agriculture. The Dutch government and knowledge institutes, could mobilise The Netherlands' renowned expertise in the field of agricultural research and development, to help close this funding gap. This was one of the conclusions of the highly successful 'Voedsel Anders/Food Otherwise' conference held at Wageningen University in February 2014 which brought together over 800 people committed to working towards a just and sustainable food system in The Netherlands and Vlanders. One can differentiate between strategies for vertically 'scaling up' agro-ecology and horizontal 'scaling out' agro-ecology. Scaling up strategies involve supportive public policies and investments which help institutionalise agro-ecology and embed it in national frameworks. Scaling out strategies involve social processes such as farmer-to-farmer networks which help spread agro-ecological practices and strengthen local research and problem-solving capacities.

Cuba's agro-ecological revolution provides one of the best examples of how to make such a transition work. According to Altieri and Toledo (2011), *"No other country in the world has achieved this level of success with a*

form of agriculture that reduces food miles, energy and input use, and effectively closes local production and consumption cycles". Key success factors include the spread of farmer-to-farmer models of knowledge diffusion and exchange; the creation of farming cooperatives and the transfer of 80% of formerly state-owned farmland to cooperative and individual farmers; and a supportive state committed to the renewal of peasant farming.

Han de Groot [August 26th, 2014](#)
Executive Director of UTZ Certified

"Challenges in the sector of tropical agriculture"

Many farms are economically unviable due to poor farm management and unsustainable practices, which can result in low productivity. This is problematic, especially in the light of global population growth and increasing pressure on resources (incl. land). Many farmers are unable to make informed business decisions, meet market demand, manage risks and adapt to changes. Living- and working conditions for farmers, workers and their families can be unsafe and unhealthy and labor rights are often not adequately enforced. Additionally, farming often leads to the depletion and contamination of natural resources and affects climate change, making farming even more challenging. To make supply chains more sustainable, innovative programs have to be set-up to bring better farming to scale.

We believe training farmers and rewarding better practice through certification is a way in which business partners and consumers can be helped to play their roles: taking co-responsibility for a more sustainable supply of products. Our Theory of Change (ToC) is based on the assumption that when farmers comply with Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) such as UTZ Certified, negative social, environmental and economic impacts are mitigated and benefits are created. By providing assurance that farming practices are sustainable, a credible claim is made. This claim has a value in the market because of a demand for sustainable products from consumers and businesses.

The [infographic](#) of UTZ Certified's ToC and interventions details how implementation of the UTZ standard leads to positive economic, social and environmental outcomes on farm level. This is tested through impact assessments such as can be found in the UTZ [Impact Report](#). It shows that, on average farmers with UTZ certification adopt better farming methods, resulting in improved yields and better quality crops. UTZ farmers tend to have higher incomes resulting from better market access. The working conditions, in terms of a safe and healthy work environment, are also generally better.

Today around 22% of global coffee and 21% of cocoa supplies are certified against the UTZ standard or other VSS. Within this group UTZ has the largest global market share in coffee and cocoa. To quote the IFC/World Bank (2013) "The biggest contribution of VSS may well be their success in building consensus on the concept of sustainability in various sectors and among various types of stakeholders. In addition, they have managed to build a supply chain system linking producers to consumers with concrete changes on the ground as a result." We recognize that market-based instruments alone do not push markets towards sustainability. Public policy and regulation, both in producing and consuming countries, are crucial in creating an enabling environment for the uptake of VSS. Like the Netherlands, other governments may promote the use of VSS by including them in their public procurement policy or set targets for certified production. I therefore call on the Dutch Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Economic Affairs to continue and increase their support of the use of VSS in food systems at home as well as abroad.

Edith Boekraad [August 21st, 2014](#)
Cordaid, Director Food Security

"Each food sub-system will require a different trajectory to sustainability"

What a food system actually is, and whether and how it is delimited is an issue. It is recommended to consider the world as being one single food system which is composed of multiple geographical, socioeconomic and sociocultural sub-systems. Each system will require different approaches to adhere to the principles of agro ecology and to become sustainable.

The text rightly specifies that multiple stakeholders should be involved in standard-setting, and that policy coherence is required. Yet, note that "sustainability" shall not just be defined by a simple majority, and that "sustainable (sub-)systems" may well comprise wide inequalities between constituents.

The UN text rightly calls for responsible governance of land, fisheries and forests to achieve sustainable food systems – add water, (sub-)soils, air and livestock to this text. Specific mention should be made of UN Voluntary Principles and Guidelines.

Nico Janssen [August 21st, 2014](#)
SNV World Tanzania, Global Coordinator Nutrition Security

"Climate Smart Agriculture as part of the global climate change agenda"

Climate Smart Agriculture is probably the key here. What is needed there is that the Netherlands, together with other development actors, push harder that agriculture becomes more prominent on the climate change agenda

and that it gets acknowledged that agriculture is both a significant (if not the largest) contributor to climate change through emissions of livestock and cropping, but also directly impacted by the effects of climate change. The Dutch knowledge economy should play a leading role in developing climate smart solutions that work and the Dutch network of development actors jointly with the private sector should introduce these and bring them to scale.

Pieter Windmeijer [August 20th, 2014](#)

Project Manager, Wageningen International, Wageningen UR

“How to tackle the complexity of sustainable food systems?”

Sustainability of food systems is a very complex issue, as it covers aspects of people, planet and profit. Consequently, this contribution addresses also aspects of target 1 and target 4. In addition, addressing sustainability of food systems requires a multi-scale and a temporal approach.

Feeding the 9 billion people in 2050 is an enormous challenge. Conventional improved agricultural production system resulted in the permanent availability of cheap food in many parts of the world. However, many people still suffer from malnutrition and many urgent environmental issues are related with this dominant agricultural practice, e.g. degradation of the natural resource base, loss of biodiversity and eco-system functions, and climate change. From a sustainability point of view, there is an urgent need of increasing the food production while enhancing the natural resource base and ecosystem functions by applying a clear agro-ecological approach (which is not the same as a low-input system).

Focussing on production aspects only, however, has been not very successful in the past in enhancing sustainability and combatting hunger and poverty. Assuming that the production systems can be made sustainable, this does not mean that the livelihoods of small to medium producers will automatically increase. Many farms in Africa are small, too small to escape the poverty trap, even when the agricultural production is optimised. Farmers with sufficient production potential need access to markets, if possible after transformation of their raw materials to get a better price. Aspects of transformation are important for added value, but also to create jobs in rural areas for people who cannot live from their own sustainable agricultural production (and to reduce the rural-urban migration).

Markets are very divers. There are the international niche markets and markets from multi-nationals. With the actual economic growth in a number of African countries, the migration towards urban areas and the development of the urban middle-class, the national and regional markets in Africa provide an important opportunity for agricultural and food products, in case the value chains are developed in such a way that the food product can enter these markets.

Sustainability food systems are complex societal issues which requires interventions at different levels of scale by different actors to be successful. In research new approaches have been developed the last decades to tackle such complex issues, e.g. interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research approaches, participatory and multi-stakeholder approaches, and partnerships between research, societal and private partners.

Challenges for Dutch policy makers concerning sustainability of the food systems in Africa include:

- How to build on the actual and divers socio-economic developments and changes in Africa?
- How to integrate the various aspects of sustainable food systems in a comprehensive agenda?

Danielle Hirsch [August 19th, 2014](#)

Director of BothENDS, Netherlands

"Sustainable practices, knowledge development and cooperation"

In 2009 the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development presented the state of agricultural knowledge, science and technology and made recommendations for the way forward. Its key message was very clear: *“Business as usual is no longer an option.”*

We suggest three types of options for this transition from business as usual to sustainable food and agricultural systems, namely on sustainable practices, on knowledge development and on cooperation:

Sustainable practices

One of the big challenges to achieve sustainable agriculture and food systems is overcoming the narrow policy focus on short-term productivity increase only through a dominant focus on the agro-industrial way of producing food, as is happening in the ministry of Economic Affairs' TopSectors policy. We see 10 options for transition:

- Support small-scale and medium size farmers in the Netherlands in the transition towards agro-ecological ways of working.
- Support women farmers in exercising their right to food and support them in securing land (use) rights.
- Intensify the implementation of soft law to promote responsible governance of land tenure, like the UN Committee on World Food Security tenure guidelines, the OECD guidelines for MNEs, the IFC performance standards, dispute settlement facility of the RSPO.
- Support an innovation agenda that balances around scarcity (natural resources) and abundance (people and labour), like the agro-ecological approach to food and agricultural systems. Take this approach as a base for improvements of the TopSectors AgriFood and Horticulture.

- Strive for coherency between International Cooperation, Foreign trade and Economic Affairs.
- Internalise real costs of the agro-industrial approach to food and agricultural systems like the costs of:
 - Climate change and green house gas emissions through e.g. fossil fuel dependent agriculture and long-distance trade
 - Biodiversity loss through e.g. monocultures, pesticide use and deforestation
 - Land degradation through e.g. unsustainable short-term land use practices, pollution by agri-chemicals, soil erosion etc.
- Abandon subsidies and levies that push unsustainable practices, e.g. fertilizer subsidies, lowered energy tax levies for large consumers of natural gas (greenhouses) etc.
- Abandon financial and political support for investors that harm local sustainable food and agricultural systems.
- Push taxes/ levies on goods that are scarce and/or undesirable, like the unsustainable use of natural resources, pollution of soils and water, emissions of greenhouse gases, degradation of land.
- Shift taxes from labour towards polluting and energy intensive activities (high labour levies push mechanisation, technology and push mainly quantity of production and not diversification of production and in addition high labour levies push the human factor out of production).

Knowledge development

The commitment of the Dutch government to support the exchange and transfer of Dutch agricultural knowledge, technology and skills with others in order to come to sustainable food and agricultural systems is an important step. The big challenge is how to link this with realities of small-scale farmers. We see 4 options for transition:

- Support the cooperation between different stakeholders, like farmers, agronomists, ecologists, soil scientists, practitioners, consumers etc. for knowledge development for sustainable food and agricultural systems through Dutch public financial funds.
- Earmark public research funds to participatory inclusive knowledge development on agro-ecology all through the process, thus from the identification of the challenges, the formulation of the research question until recommendations for improvement. This includes land users like female farmers, small-scale farmers and cattle keepers and their communities, extension services, CSOs and researchers.
- Support knowledge and practice development through co-creation that collects best practices, shares results and insights of sustainable land use and farming practice.
- Support the inclusion of agro-ecology and critical thinking on barriers and opportunities for up-scaling sustainable practices in the curricula of agricultural schools and universities and farmer training facilities, in The Netherlands and in LMIC.

Building up and use of social innovation network

A report from the Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University (RSM) and Panteia / EIM (January 2014) states that the Economic Affairs policy TopSectors relies too much on technological innovation, while 77% of successful innovation comes from social innovation: investing in people's skills, expertise and capacities, pushing flexible forms of cooperation, promoting entrepreneurial leadership, and bringing together companies, research institutions and civil society organizations in order to foster co-creation.

One of the big challenges is how to push social innovation. Luckily, the Netherlands has a long history in combining the soft side, as new forms of cooperation, dialogue and networking with hardware, like technological solutions for natural resources: in the 11th century, water boards were being established to find solutions for washing water and which comprised of all water users.

We see 2 options for transition:

- Take a leading and distinctive role in social innovation and up-scaling of sustainable solutions.
- Create smart inclusive cooperation on the subject of sustainable food and agricultural systems between small-scale farmers organizations, civil society, researchers, private businesses, financial institutions and governments.

Nehemiah Gitonga August 18th, 2014

Executive Director, Tenacious Systems Kenya - Farmsoft, ICT - Farming and Food Industry

"Technology in Food Sustainability"

Rapid developments in information technology have created considerable opportunities for farmers to adapt their operational processes to changing market requirements. Information is becoming more accessible and less costly, and markets are becoming more competitive improving the competitiveness of agricultural firms. Small-scale farmers are also increasingly being exposed to new information technologies that can provide relevant information for their farming needs.

Agricultural producers in Africa are increasingly being exposed to the potential of modern information technologies as a management tool. However, despite the real and potential benefits of using information technologies (including improved flows of relevant and up-to-date information for decision making), their capabilities have not been fully exploited. Reasons include the relatively poor infrastructure in some rural areas, the time taken to obtain information from the Internet, the perceived high cost of some modern information technologies in relation to their benefits, and the lack of education in the effective use of information technologies. Modern information systems are expected to play an increasingly important role in future in

assisting agricultural producers to become more competitive on local and international markets. Producers may expect high returns to information that is pertinent to their businesses. The challenge for producers, therefore, is how to source relevant information efficiently. "Focused" publications or newsletters, specific user-groups on the Internet, specific planning software and outside advisors dealing with specific business problems are some examples of relevant information sources. Clearly, producers would have to pay for pertinent information and compare this and other (time) costs with the anticipated benefits. For small-scale farmers in Africa, further educational (extension) efforts aimed at providing relevant information are crucial.

Willem-Jan Laan [August 14th, 2014](#)

Director Global External Affairs at Unilever

"Establishing a global IDH programme"

Partnering with others to achieve greater impact

Going beyond the efforts on a local level, Dutch policy should also focus on the international level – working on sustainable international value chains. Unilever therefore aims for a global IDH programme.

The Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH) is a huge success due to its approach to look to the whole value chain from production to consumption. This initiative should be upgraded on the international level.

The importance of the IDH approach is to bring together all the relevant stakeholders to set concrete steps for making international value chains more sustainably and inclusive.

Within the programmes of IDH stakeholders can find the platform to set targets and a strategy to build sustainable international value chains. The impact when this is scaled further than Dutch level, the impact can increase significantly with the internationalisation of the IDH programme. A first step has been set by involving Switzerland in the programme.

Sustainable sourcing

Unilever buys around 12% of the world's black tea, 3% of the world's tomatoes for processing, and 3% of the palm oil produced. Half our raw materials come from farms and forests. The decisions that we make on who we source from, and how we work with them, can have profound implications on global resources and climate change. They also have a wider social impact, affecting the livelihoods of our farmers and their families, women and young people.

Sourcing sustainably will protect scarce resources. Ensuring deforestation, land use and social and community issues are managed responsibly. As well as ensuring security of supply for our business and reduce costs. There is clearly a business case for doing this.

Currently there is a focus on the top ten agricultural raw materials, which account for around two thirds of our volumes. They include palm oil, paper and board, soy, sugar, tea, fruit and vegetables, sunflower oil, rapeseed oil, dairy ingredients and cocoa. Continuing to transform the market and moving more of our suppliers to sustainable agricultural practices in 2014, will enable us to purchase more of these ingredients sustainably.

Unilever's palm oil now comes from or supports sustainable production. The next step is to source all our palm oil from certified, traceable sources. By sharing information about where products come from, we are also meeting emerging consumer needs.

In addition to our own sustainable sourcing programmes already underway, in 2013 we made progress in driving wider transformational change across working towards eliminating deforestation and in wider agricultural systems such as tea. Working closely with others will be essential in achieving broader change.

Case: Vanilla Madagascar

Impacting thousands of families. Closely collaborating with supplier Symrise and German development agency GIZ. [View a video about Vanilla sourcing in Madagascar.](#)

[Read more about Unilever's input for the policy paper in the contribution on Target 1.](#)

Emmanuel Bahati [July 31st, 2014](#)

Coordinator of Agri-Pro FOCUS DR Congo

"Establish a systemic change to improve local and regional sustainable food production capacity"

Needed are financing of local programmes on institutional feeding, value chains and feeding banks, and also the gathering of actors and reinforcement of their capacities and foreign investors. Technical and financial support of the Dutch government or other donors is welcome to support local governments that should be in charge.

The most effective intervention strategies

1. Increase food availability: Increase agricultural production by increased arable land, proper use of water, minimizing
 - a. post-harvest losses, improved access to Credit, more entrants at reasonable prices,
 - b. better extension services, ...
2. Increase food accessibility
 - a. Create job opportunities
 - b. Make food available at local markets (better infrastructure ,transport and storage facilities)

3. Increase food stability
 - a. Appropriate processing techniques e.g. to make vegetables and fruits available the whole year round
 - b. Proper storage facilities at household, village and/or district level

Evelijne Bruning [July 28th, 2014](#)

Country Director the Hunger Project, The Netherlands

"Women farmers often possess traditional wisdom for sustainable resource management"

Most hungry people work on the land. Thus, it is the hungry people of our world whose lives and livelihoods are most immediately dependent upon our natural environment and the most committed to its sustainability. They already suffer the impact of climate change, and have a right to the information that they need to adapt to it. Women farmers in particular are often the traditional caretakers of the environment, and possess the traditional wisdom for sustainable natural resource management. Those currently living in rural poverty, therefore – particularly women – must have a primary voice in environmental decision-making. All people have the right to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature.

Key interventions:

- Agroecology
- Maximize the use of local resources and minimize outside inputs
- Building grassroots movements for the environment
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Community-based Natural Resource Management
- Reforestation/Sustainable Woodlots

Dr Geoff Andrews [July 26th, 2014](#)

Country Director ZOA Burundi

"Hugely ambitious objective; firstly define sustainable"

All food systems are sustainable is a hugely ambitious objective. Firstly not some or most but all. And sustainable: we may not know some systems are sustainable until many years along the road that we thought was sustainable. And sometimes what was unsustainable becomes potentially sustainable through technological change.

All systems have some vested interests that made them develop the way they have. "Food miles" the distance food is moved before reaching the consumer is essentially the supplies and retailers cost minimisation programme and the consumers willingness to pay for goods out of season. To reduce that, increase the cost of transport and the lowest cost model will be different. But there will be resistance to increasing the cost of transport because of other unintended consequences.

The biggest challenge is to define what it means for the system to be sustainable: easy to say, perhaps easy to define at a global level, but what does it mean at producer, processor, transporter, retailer level? What are the impacts on other value chains?

A more profound vision of what is required and a road map to get there is required.

Evelijne Bruning [July 28th, 2014](#)

Country Director the Hunger Project, The Netherlands

The Hunger Project stands for ambitious, bold goals. When we set out to end hunger in 1977, we were laughed at. Nobody's laughing now. We are happy to have contributed to setting these Zero Hunger goals. But would be much more happy to actually reach them.

Much as I appreciate the need to set roadmaps, I would hesitate to call definitions 'the biggest challenge' in this domain, as you do. Unless perhaps you refer to the fact it is very difficult to achieve political consensus – though the recent OWG outcome of integrating sustainability targets and ending hunger and poverty into one set of recommended SDGs might prove you wrong...

Arine Valstar [July 25th, 2014](#)

Senior Nutritionist, ETC, The Netherlands

"Incorporate the rights angle taken by the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food"

ETC suggests to incorporate the rights angle taken by the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food – see <http://www.srfood.org/en/official-reports>. In his recent final report the rapporteur includes a sector-by-sector list of recommendations and in so doing addresses various points that are relevant for food security.

His conclusion says:

"The eradication of hunger and malnutrition is an achievable goal. Reaching it requires, however, that we move away from business as usual and improve coordination across sectors, across time and across levels of

governance. Empowering communities at the local level, in order for them to identify the obstacles that they face and the solutions that suit them best, is a first step. This must be complemented by supportive policies at the national level that ensure the right sequencing between the various policy reforms that are needed, across all relevant sectors, including agriculture, rural development, health, education and social protection. In turn, local-level and national-level policies should benefit from an enabling international environment, in which policies that affect the ability of countries to guarantee the right to food – in the areas of trade, food aid, foreign debt alleviation and development cooperation – are realigned with the imperative of achieving food security and ensuring adequate nutrition. Understood as a requirement for democracy in the food systems, which would imply the possibility for communities to choose which food systems to depend on and how to reshape those systems, food sovereignty is a condition for the full realization of the right to food. But it is the paradox of an increasingly interdependent world that this requires deepening the cooperation between States.”

Texts such as the above in our opinion rightly stress the urgency of the matter and also convincingly argue that “business as usual” will not do.

Rentia Krijnen [July 18th, 2014](#)

Founder [kenyaproject.nl](#)

"The right to food sovereignty"

The right to food sovereignty for every country should be anchored in the assumptions of Dutch agricultural policy. That means that a country's right to produce food for their own population should be secured: without the disturbance of foreign food import (or dumping) to local markets.

The Dutch government should prevent that food surpluses are dumped on African markets and herewith not disturb local markets. Amongst other factors this could prevent unemployment in these local economies. Actors such as the Dutch LTO and the government should take example from the ABC-platform that consists of multiple farmers organisations with a critical point of view from over the world.

Christy van Beek [July 18th, 2014](#)

Senior Scientists *Soil Fertility and Nutrient Management*

"More food from fertile grounds"

The biggest challenges

Each year, an estimated 10 million hectares of land and 36 million kg of nutrients worth 40 billion US\$ are lost due to careless land-management. Apart from all other issues related to (environmental) sustainability, land and water conservation, or even more so: soil restoration, is key to sustainable intensification. Soil degradation typically starts with excessive removal of organic matter from the soil through cultivation. This removal initiates a trickle down process eventually resulting in infertile and unproductive lands. The Netherlands has a key role in this process, because organic matter and nutrients from around the globe accumulate in countries strong in food processing, such as the Netherlands. To revert this trend, nutrients should be treated as valuable resources, which they are currently not, and nutrient depletion should be compensated for, like is done with other soil minerals like ores. Together with sound water conservation practices the food system will become more sustainable (with increased resource use efficiencies) in respect to expected climate changes.

The most effective intervention strategies

The value of nutrients can easily be linked to global fertilizer prices and the compensations can, and should, be used to set up local programs on i) capacity building on improved nutrient and organic matter management, and ii) local-regional re-use and re-allocation of nutrients. An elaborated approach of an improved re-use and re-allocation system for nutrients is presented by the Fertile Grounds Initiative. This initiative aims to set up local-regional stakeholder networks for mobilizing organic and mineral sources of nutrients and bringing these together in site-specific formulas for best soil-crop response to nutrients. This intervention strategy can be coupled with land use planning at farm and watershed level to increase sustainability in the long run. This is only possible through collaboration with actors ranging from farmers to policymakers.

Relation to the strengths actors

The Netherlands is respected for its competence on water, integrated approaches and effective collaboration between the ministries, business community, knowledge institutes and civil society. These strengths provide the knowledge and skills to make a change through concerted action plans in both the Netherlands and abroad.

Policy implications

The Dutch Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Economic Affairs can strengthen this process by requiring sustainable soil management strategies in their food security and water management programs. Also, impacts of programs by the ministries on soil quality can be monitored and compensation mechanisms based on the values of nutrients can be implemented. Such an approach will repay itself through increased yields and thereby also contributes to Target 4 (100% increase in smallholder productivity and income).

Peter Slood [August 7th, 2014](#)

Director Aequator Groen & Ruimte

"It's (also) the water!"

I very much agree with Christy van Beek's input above. But I would like to add the importance of soil structure and soil-water management, besides the emphasis on nutrients and organic matter. Even in the Netherlands we observe yield reductions up to 30% on fertile soils because of drought/excess water and/or soil structural deterioration. Looking into the future, we see a changing climate and a growing demand for food, making effective and efficient use of scarcely available sweet water at the local level a prerequisite for sustainable food production systems!

Kahindo Suhene Marie Jeanne [July 13th, 2014](#)

Program Officer Food Security at NGO GRADEM, DRC

"Sustainable continuous accompanying measures and applications are necessary"

In most cases systems, laws, politics, issues, are often designed and sometimes launched for their application. Habits, application measures, are respected and followed microscopically. But when sustainable accompanying measures and applications for the established system are not considered in all food systems it will be a vain effort.

Conception, planning and realisation for the achievement of results to that are applied after the execution period until the end are rare. The same goes for the necessary arousing and cultivating of effective and efficient monitoring for all involved: the beneficiaries, donors, government services.

Target 4 – 100% increase in smallholder productivity and income

Oxfam Novib [September 14th, 2014](#)

Oxfam Novib, Netherlands

"Investing in smallholders and the four pronged approach"

In order to understand how small and large farming can contribute to achieving a sustainable global food system, we should look at their specific features. It is not only scale but also different uses of labour and other inputs, and access to technologies, markets and information that characterise the players in agriculture. Betting on one model only and adopting a one-size-fits-all approach is unlikely to be appropriate, given the heterogeneity of institutions, agricultural practices, as well as farming and demographic conditions across developing countries. Oxfam Novib recommends an approach encompassing low external input (LEI) small scale and large scale farming, while avoiding high external input (HEI) methods, advancing environmental safeguards, and promoting the rights of women, smallholders and agricultural workers.

Already 500 million smallholders produce 80% of the food consumed in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. Supporting smallholder farmers provides the greatest impact in terms of income creation and food security, in particular when associated with LEI agriculture methods. Oxfam Novib recommends to:

- Support subsistence (family) farmers to cope with risks and vulnerability and to move to higher-risk/higher-return activities. Social safety nets must be guaranteed for those affected by climatic and market shocks and those who cannot engage consistently in the economy.
- Target female (subsistence) farmers. If women were provided with the same level of access to resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20–30%, in turn reducing the number of hungry people in the world by 12–17%. In all plans, policies, programs gender analysis should be done and actions should be directed towards men and women specifically.
- Promote rights and opportunities of smallholder investor farmers, by investing in their access to credits, markets, knowledge, seeds, and other inputs. It is particularly important to increase their access to local and regional markets, where these producers are competitive. It is also important to promote smallholder's agency, for instance by supporting them to organise themselves (for instance in co-operatives) and have their voice heard in public or private sector decision making affecting them.

In countries where labour supply constrains smallholder expansion, LEI large-scale industrial farming can be a successful option to promote food security (through a reduction in prices, thanks to increased productivity) and reduce poverty (through the creation of employment). However, evidence so far suggests that unless strong regulation is in place to secure property rights, labour rights, ensure land acquisition respects land rights, and ensure transparent and participatory negotiations, adverse social and environmental effects outweigh the benefits for agricultural workers and small farmers.

The Dutch government is steering its investments in agriculture in developing countries increasingly through the top-sectors and public private partnerships. Not only is it important that the government strengthens its focus on smallholders, it is also important that the government works with industry and CSOs to ensure that (public-)private investments promote the productivity, prosperity (including by ensuring fair prices and decent wages), agency, and resilience of smallholders and agricultural workers.

Greet Goverde [September 14th, 2014](#)

Secr. Platform Aarde Boer Consument, Netherlands

"Governments in the South should be encouraged to (re)invest in agro-ecological local production"

The developing countries in the '60s and '70s invested in producing commodities for export, at the behest of the international institutions. But they gradually stopped investing in the work of small farmers who were trying to feed the local communities with millet, sorghum, and sweet potato. These small farmers were not a source of public revenue for the state since they were making so little money that they could not be taxed. Consequently they had no voice in the political system. So the least developed countries are now caught in a vicious circle. They have imported more and more of the food that they consumed and as a result they were less and less able to invest in local production. The small farmers migrated in ever greater numbers to the cities, where they are fed on large amounts of heavily subsidised foods that we in the OECD countries are producing. 70% of the poor live in the rural areas, where many people survive on subsistence agriculture, and try to get a meagre income from whatever work they can find.

1. Governments in the South should be encouraged to (re)invest in agro-ecological local production, redevelop local food, and reduce their dependency on international markets.
2. At the same time governments in the North must move away from the export-led agriculture that is making it difficult for governments in the South to make this transition.

This double transformation will be difficult to achieve because of technical, economic, cultural and above all political obstacles (see target 1)

Of course financial resources are needed for measure 1. Governments of rich countries could pay up, but better labour and competition laws and regulations to curb the greed of big corporations might be more effective (and cheaper for governments).

Vandana Shiva pointed out at the 'Voedsel anders' conference: '20 companies control our vertically integrated food system (5 controlling seed, e.g. Monsanto, 5 controlling the grain trade, e.g. Cargill, 5 processors, e.g. Nestlé, 5 retailers, e.g. Walmart). They bring 1% of the consumer dollar, or euro, or rupee to the farmer. What we need is a 50% model. 50% should go to the farmer and the local economy. Then 50% of the people will be on the land, doing creative work with the soil, with the food.'

All the resources available should go into the democratisation of the food system from the local level upwards, and into the development of agro-ecological agriculture; see also target 2. And all political efforts should go into changing trade regulations and patent laws (see also <http://www.alternativetrademandate.org>.) Human rights (including the right to food), women's rights, labour, environment and climate should have precedence over trade and investment regimes.

Selim Reza Hasan September 14th, 2014

Country Manager-Bangladesh, Solidaridad

"Transformation of Smallholders into Enterprise Agriculture"

The sustainable markets and supply chains are commodity focused. The smallholders are mostly doing subsistence agriculture (try to everything that they can produce). Although, the smallholder farmers are the driving force for food and nutrition security for the global population, because of subsistence agriculture their productivity is very poor which resets their poor economic and food security status.

The smallholders, irrespective of their production system, do not know about the potentials of the standard farming also don't have access to sustainable markets for selling of their products. A big challenge is changing their mindset to enter into a settled chain of custody for the selling of their farm produces. Smallholders often have limited access to markets for both inputs and outputs, and this has a significant effect on their productivity. They have to pay the higher transaction cost due to limited access to logistics and transportation networks which lower profit margins, and lead many smallholders to pursue more subsistence-oriented production practices. Many smallholders are excluded from financial services and are unable to secure much-needed working capital, which ranges from land, farm management, technologies and high-yielding seeds, and fertilizer.

Most smallholders use simple technologies and cultivation practices are for own consumption with little surplus for the local market. The smallholders also need immediate cash from selling of their produces to pay back the credits from the local money lenders and/or the financial institutes as well as to buy livelihoods needs. Some of the smallholders also took the advance money from the supply chain actors with the condition of selling their produce at a fixed price, which lowers the profit margin. The medium and large scale commercial farmers are using modern inputs and having access to domestic and global input and output marketing chains. They are also vertically integrated with the local, national and international markets and agro-processing enterprises. Towards improving the smallholder productivity, they need to adopt enterprise agriculture. To make this transition, the smallholders need to be supported by technological adoption and logistics for wider market integration. This requires interventions for supply chain efficiency to integrate the smallholder with the large scale commercial farmers and market linkages with local and national market intermediaries as well as agro processing enterprises. A public-private institutional arrangement is also needed so that the smallholders get easy access to input and output markets.

Towards this end, the 1st step would be the development of commodity based farmer organizations and improving smallholders' business orientation and farm management skills. Secondly, the smallholders need support for service delivery to increase farm level productivity by encouraging adoption of innovative commodity and ecosystem based farming technologies. Thirdly, smallholders need to be supported by a business plan that will develop the understanding of the farmers on the benefits of entering into a sustain chain of custody for marketing of the farm produces. Fourthly, public-private and CSO coordination is needed for the vertical and horizontal market integration to meet safety, quality, and quantity standards.

In addition, the followings need to be taken into consideration for the smallholder productivity:

- Access to innovative financial services;
- Flexible arrangement for land leasing;
- Investment in logistics support in transport, communication, energy and cool chain infrastructure;
- Improve enabling business environment through introducing widely accepted code of conducts and improve legal framework for crop protection.

Guus Geurts September 12th, 2014

Author 'Wereldvoedsel - pleidooi voor een rechtvaardige en ecologische voedselvoorziening'

"Self-sufficient countries (regions) and fair prices for small holders"

Introduction

Because you propose that a lively discussion between contributors will be established, I want first want to make some quotes of other contributors to this discussion (below).

I will first mention some quotes with which I fully agree. Then I will give my own analysis and alternative.

Quotes**JAMA (Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)):**

'Improving smallholder yields and resilience From my personal perspective the Netherlands policy for food & nutrition security would include the following areas:

1. Improving smallholder yields of staple food crops. Without this, it is hard to achieve food and nutrition security. This would require improving the resource base, particularly soil fertility that has been neglected for long. This requires improving access to inputs (seeds and fertilizers), extension and advisory services, and output markets. This is the major thrust of AGRA's work. (...)
3. Enhancing resiliency to climate change and variability.

HIRSCH (BothENDS):

"Not the right question: it is not about production, but about distribution of food"

The world produces enough calories to meet the projected 9 billion in 2050. And in addition, 70% of the food is being produced by small-scale farmers. Therefore, it is not about production, it is about distribution of food between people, it is about the quality of food being produced and consumed (maize or a diverse diet), about the purpose of the food: energy, fodder for animals and it is a matter of waste.

The question should be: how can the Netherlands contribute to small-scale farmers worldwide to come to sustainable food production? We see 5 options for transition:

- Make a comparative analysis of the inputs (land, land tenure, chemicals, animal antibiotics, biological pest control, fossil fuel based fertilizers, fodder, animal manure, labour, mechanisation, agrobiodiversity, transportation) of diversified farming systems and monocultures.
- Support new indicators for measuring agricultural practices (like nutritional value per square meter, input-output ratio including externalities and offsite benefits, instead of volume per hectare).
- Intensify the support for responsible governance for tenure of land and forests.
- Support participatory inclusive knowledge and practice development for sustainable land use and up-scaling of sustainable practices.
- Support an enabling environment for removal of barriers to local and regional markets.

VAN DIJK (Bop Innovation Center):

"We look at smallholder productivity from a systemic, value chain driven approach" (...) smallholders work towards markets, where the incentives for productivity increases can be materialized. (...)

In BoP Inc's opinion one of the most underestimated themes when it comes to smallholder productivity. Dutch companies are market leaders in many agricultural technology sectors. However, their product propositions are focused on large scale agriculture. They do not (yet) see smallholder farmers as an interesting business cases. (...)

Many agricultural development projects focus on production for export markets. Even though this can fetch a price premium on the market, this is not realistic for many smallholder farmers.

KAY (Transnational Institute):

'It is clear that investing in food security means investing in smallholders: according to IFAD (2011), there are an estimated 500 million smallholder farms in the developing world, supporting almost 2 billion people who depend on them for their livelihood, and these small farms produce about 80 per cent of the food consumed in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Yet despite their enormous contribution to world food security, smallholders also belong to the most poor and vulnerable and face a number of critical investment constraints that subject them to a high level of precarity and risk. These include amongst many others limited access to land and other natural resources (especially water) often due to highly unequal land distribution patterns and tenure regimes; unfavourable market conditions and lack of access to appropriate markets, especially financial markets; marginalisation in public policy, agricultural research, and investment decision making processes; and lack of recognition or violations of their basic rights. It is vital that Dutch food security policy address some of these constraints in order to realize the full potential of smallholder agriculture.

An important recommendation for Dutch policy to consider is that offered by the High Level Panel of Experts of the UN Committee on World Food Security. In their 2013 report 'Investing in Smallholder Agriculture for Food Security', they recommend developing National Smallholder Investment Strategies (...).

It is time to put smallholder agriculture back at the heart of public policy and public investment plans. This can be done through:

- Using public policy tools to open up new markets to small-scale food producers and strengthening local and regional food systems
- Setting a progressive agenda in agricultural research
- Facilitating lending to smallholders through reforming agricultural development banks
- Providing essential rural social service and infrastructure
- Buffering against food produce shocks through the maintenance of public stocks
- Building resilience through social protection schemes
- Enacting (re)distributive land reform,

Public-private partnerships can also have a role to play but here also there is an important role for the state to play in setting in place a proper regulatory regime and supporting the voice of farmers' organisations so that the power imbalances between different actors are not abused. Such partnerships should also place the accent on development local, regional, and national markets first and foremost.

EENHOORN (World Connectors):

'Realize that fair trade sometimes means protection

In order to create a dynamic farming society it is necessary to have stable output price relations, for which (temporarily) protection from cheap imports is required and taxation on agricultural products is minimized. It is recommended that governments that want to stimulate smallholder productivity take this into account. Governments in the North and in the South and their institutions (EU, AU, OECD, WTO) should be more aware of the fact that the development of markets that also work for the poor (smallholders) are essential for the economic development of developing nations that are dependent on agriculture to feed and employ the urban and rural poor.'

My own contribution:

Not only to guarantee food security but also to guarantee a sustainable development in other economic sectors it is essential that small holders in developing countries are stimulated to produce the food for local and national markets. All successful economies (for example EU, Japan, China, South Korea) first stimulated agriculture by huge investments, guaranteeing prices to farmers and protecting agriculture with import taxes.

Starting with a strong agricultural sector, later on industrial development was stimulated, again by first protecting this with import barriers.

Many other developing countries didn't get that chance, firstly by imposing them with structural adjustment programs, later on by WTO agreements and/or other Free Trade Agreements like Economic Partnership Agreements. They were stimulated to export tropical products and import cheap subsidised food. This export led model lead to destruction of family farming. More and more farmers stopped and migrated to the cities and food security was negatively affected as shown during the food crisis in 2008 and 2011. This model looked favourable for citizens in cities because they got cheap imported food for decades, but because of many farmers moving to the cities, wages and labour conditions were very low.

In 2008 suddenly also food prices increased, and showed the complete failure of this model. Since then organisations like the World Bank started stimulating agriculture again, but still nothing is done to reverse this free trade agreements, and to make things worse export led agriculture and land grabbing are going full speed ahead.

With climate change leading to increasing disasters for food production especially in developing countries and with population rising sometimes two or three times, it's impossible to go one with this neoliberal agenda.

So, comparable to the EU, developing countries – or regional blocks – need to get the chance to get as self-sufficient as possible in basic needs like food, as soon as possible. See also <http://www.alternativetrademandate.org> (my contribution at target 3).

A proposal for this:

- Stop imposing free trade agreements on these countries and repair all damage done by Structural Adjustment Programs, by this way small holders will get fair and remunerative prices for the food they produce.
- All countries are able to raise their import taxes to make this possible, supply management systems are necessary to prevent unstable prices and dumping;
- International fair trade agreements, like commodity agreements for tropical products (to balance supply and demand) and quota systems for products in which western countries and developing countries are getting more self-sufficient. For example a quota system for soy and palm oil which the EU imports. These quotas are gradually decreased, while the EU is increasing its own vegetable protein and oil production.

The same for developing countries: an import quota system for imported rice, grain, dairy and meat which is gradually decreased while they are getting more self-sufficient by food produced by their own farmers.

This will lead to a stimulation of incomes of farmers, enhanced food security, and many more jobs in processing and informal trade of these products.

Niels Louwaars [September 10th, 2014](#)

Director Plantum, Dutch association for the plant reproduction material sector

"Development of seed sector at farm and national level"

The challenge of food and nutrition security is a multi-faceted topic and we should not have the pretention to resolve food security challenges with blueprint programmes. Integral development is needed which implies that we should support countries in their capacity to develop, taking into account the characteristics of each country and each target group. This principle is also needed at the level of the seed sector: strengthen the capacity of the local sector and take into account differences in context and diversity within the sector.

The seed sector plays an important role to increase productivity and make it more sustainable both through breeding (e.g. drought tolerance; disease resistance) as well improved seed quality, and reduce poverty (seed/planting materials production for export market with high labour input). The role of plant breeders is to look for seeds which contribute to these goals and fit the local situation. Crucial is to acknowledge the diversity of the seed sector and the added value of each segment of the system: seed production by farmers, semi-commercial farmer groups, small commercial seed companies, and multinational companies, and emergency seed systems.

To improve the use and multiplication of seed the focus may also be on strengthening extension services and/or cooperatives and as such reach smallholders which are not the primary target of commercial companies.

The Netherlands has much to offer to the development of the seed sector in emerging economies and developing countries. Integral programmes (ISSD) look at the sector as a whole: strengthen bottom-up seed production, support commercial sector without frustration of local initiatives, and improve government policies and their implementation (e.g. breeders rights, seed legislation (variety registration and seed quality control)). The business sector can play a role but such programmes need public support since 'Return on Investment' is not to be expected on the short term. Cooperation with Dutch private sector is crucial and growing.

Wageningen/KIT and the seed quality control agencies NAK/Naktuinbouw have some relevant capacity for advising at national policy level and for supporting local/informal seed systems. The Dutch private sector is strong in mapping opportunities and developing strategies where to produce seeds, which seeds, etc. A challenge for the diverse Dutch sector (300 SME's) is to approach emerging economies and developing countries in a more structural and systemised way to locate and address the opportunities. Topsector TU / TKI has a role to play.

Urbanisation will increase local horticulture and as such boost the seed sector. Dutch policy focussing on developing horticulture around cities and linking to the integral seed programmes would lead to synergy. These joint efforts of development policy and Topsector policy (Aid and Trade) should be supported by e.g. clear information for private sector on which instruments are available to support initiatives in developing countries, by linking CGIAR-budget to Dutch knowledge institutes and private sector and by supporting knowledge and capacity development.

Francis Tuncungwirwe [September 10th, 2014](#)

Value Addition Institute

"Implementation of agreed household- strategic actions and active demand for entitlements"

More than 75 percent of the world's poor are farmers. Majority are subsistence farmers who work so hard but barely even harvest enough to feed their families and later qualify to improve their income. A 97 year old subsistence farmer, who has spent most of his years trying to escape poverty and hunger, recently told us (VAI) in our farmers' voice serie visits:

"Many governemnts and partners spend much more time and resources planning to transform us (subsistence farmers), than you spend on activities that can directly transform us"

"New seed varieties have been discovered but we do not get them! Community roads have been opened but we are unreached, national budgets have increased but our income has not changed. why?? , why??, why ??"

"You spend much more money travelling to workshops and seminars to talk about how we are hungry than you spend travelling to talk to us and talking to us to end humger"

He concluded our interaction with him with powerful observation "it would be interesting for my father who died 75 years ago at the birth of new phase of global cooperation and the independence movement and later independence for us and others, to find his 97 year old son still a subsistence farmer and hungry". Like the old man observed policies have changed , programmes have changed, governments have changed but majority and majority of subsistence farmers are yet to change.

Planning and actions Gaps

Talking about issues of family farming/Small holder farming, a 70 year old woman in rural Uganda recently told a visiting planning team *"we are tired of you all! You all come and ask us same good questions every financial year but we never see you again until the next planning phase. Please to day I am busy with my work. Goooo!"* She emphasized. This is the level of despondency and discontentment among the poor farmers in rural Africa. What is the primary cause? If you ask all development actors from Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to None-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to local governments, central governments and development partners/donors you notice each one has a plan on how to get the funds, spend the funds, and account for them and in most cases account to the source of funds not to the end user of the funds. Auditors will prepare good reports for the source of funds and project managers' prepare winning full color Project Annual Reports with good pictures sometimes with photos of people that have not consented for their publication!! Donors have their country strategies, governments with their development plans, NGOs with their strategic plans all of them targeting to change households but their main target (farmer) is never helped to have a plan! For instance in Uganda, in the current planning cycle planning takes place at national (National Development Plan), district (District Development Plan), Sub County (Sub County Development Plan), and minimally at parish (Parish Development Plan). Each of these level plans are integrated and linked and have intrinsic accountability requirements and all aspiring to help families transform. But the household they are planning for has none!! In a town hall discussion regarding planning and service delivery for agriculture, one woman noted we do not need a plan like theirs (governments and NGOs) and added: *"all we need is one to help me to plan as follows? What is the best enterprise to help me increase income? What is the best technology? Who can give me the technology? What is the source of funding for their (governments and NGOs) projects? How much is planned for my community? Where can I find them? If they don't deliver whom should I tell? What should community do in case all is not well with projects?"* It is clear that inspite of the emphasis for participatory planning and inclusion of citizens in planning processes, formal planning ends in government structures and partner meetings. No one helps the poor farmer to organize itself, have plan of action know its entitlements from government and other actors in the development process. It is against this background that we propose the *Household Agriculture Transformation Plans (HATPs)* is proposed. *HATPs that we define as a Household plan of action to transform its*

household enterprise through implementation of agreed household- strategic actions and active demand for entitlements.

HATPs projected benefits

- It helps to domesticate international, national and local government policies at household level; Help households to realize and map opportunities and demand for their entitlements and feedback;
- Inspires households to realise development opportunities and exploit them; Improve on service delivery from government to households; Helps household to explore its unexploited potential for development;
- Helps families develop ambition, strategy and actions for development.
- It Improves on agricultural extension service delivery from government to households
- HATPs takes extension services to the household and links the household directly to the market
- HATPs is a model that builds strong civic engagement and accountability attitudes in people

Carol Gribnau [September 9th, 2014](#)

Head Green Entrepreneurship Programme, Hivos, Netherlands

"Rethinking the agenda for small-scale agriculture – informality is key"

Small producers are back into the spotlight, as:

- Keys to reducing rural poverty and achieving the MDGs
- Pillars of global food security
- A source of secure supply for agribusiness
- Stewards of biodiversity
- Part of the solution to climate change

These huge expectations come at a time of rapid changes in rural areas ushered in by globalization, urbanization and modernization. And the expectations continue to grow, with modern value chains, certified products, carbon markets, and payments for ecosystem services, all expected to empower the poor in the markets. Efforts to lift small producers out of poverty often follow a similar pattern, they focus on one value chain and try to connect farmers with new markets. In recent years, donors and the development community at large have embraced the idea that public private partnerships and innovative business models can deliver profits to poor producers. Their expectation is that through inclusion in markets and value chains, small-scale producers can survive and prosper in the face of major changes in agriculture and food markets. Although there have been notable successes in connecting smallholders to export markets, many of these so-called market-based initiatives are relatively small, unable to scale-up or sustain once external support is withdrawn.

Informal food markets still predominate across most of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Flexible informal channels link poor producers with poor consumers. Informal markets are growing and modern value chains are the exception. Dynamic local, national and regional markets are giving farmers increasing options beyond global supply chains. Growing demand for food — including the growth of urban markets, south-south trade, and middle-class consumer groups demanding more quality and safety — fuels increasing competition for supply. The decentralization of many developing-world governments has also directed more resources towards creating and strengthening local markets. The benefits that draw farmers to the informal economy are offset by downsides of poor food safety and traceability, corruption and criminality, poor environmental performance and inequity.

All this has reinforced one of the most basic strategies of the rural poor: multifaceted livelihoods that use diversity of economic activities to hedge risks and make the most of scarce land, cash and other resources.

We are starting to become more conscious of the links between decent job creation, the informal sector, political stability and economic democracy, without which sustainable development is at risk. There is great opportunity to support innovative agri-food policy development. Inclusive formalization could be accompanied, for instance, by investments in market infrastructure, risk insurance, market reforms to bust cartels and fight corruption, and appropriate measures to support family farms, such as government procurement programmes. In the private sector, efforts towards greater inclusiveness have helped many farmers raise their incomes, but they should also look at more traditional instruments of corporate responsibility such as decent labor standards, which may have more impact among the poorest rural households.

Boniface Kiome [September 9th, 2014](#)

Prog Officer Green Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Development at Hivos - East Africa, Kenya

Include Sustainability on farm level in food security programs by paying attention to the impact of climate change and adaptation and mitigation strategies. Pay attention to environmental aspects of how food is produced; invest in knowledge on farm level and value addition of the farmers produce.

The need for that became clear after a few years of success of a program focusing on increasing productivity of small holders. The program resulted in higher yields and more income. However, due to droughts the level of productivity and income dropped. In Uganda for example knowledge about climate change is incorporated in some Dutch funded programmes, which turns out to be useful. This should be common policy and integrated in such programmes elsewhere.

Invest in governance & leadership. At farm level but also SMEs lack knowledge on how to respond to developments and trends in food security or agricultural policy. Food security policies should support farmers and entrepreneurs to develop knowledge and take responsibility to discuss developments and policy.

Danny Wijnhoud and Barbara van Paassen [September 9th, 2014](#)

Senior Researcher; Policy Officer - ActionAid Amsterdam - Netherlands

"Support women smallholders, and transitions towards improved smallholder practices, and diversified food, income and livelihood systems"

There is a real risk focusing too much on productivity rather than ensuring access to affordable nutritious food and reducing wastes.

However, increasing food production is important for many smallholders and especially in places where there is insufficient food available locally. Smallholders, particularly women produce up to 80% of local basic foodstuffs (FAO). Unlike often thought, there is increasing evidence that small farms are often as productive as large farms and have particular high potential under appropriate conditions to produce more in a sustainable and inclusive manner (e.g. Larson 2012, as also quoted by [African Progress Panel](#)).

Policies should promote improved enabling environment for (women) smallholders – e.g. ensuring level playing field with larger farms, but also by investing in appropriate post-harvest practices and infrastructures – as well as directly support smallholders. Strong reports with strong recommendations like [IAASTD \(2008\)](#) (why sidelined?), as well as more recently from CFS HLPE and UNCTAD, provide an important base for policy change and should be taken into account.

We also recommend having a **stronger rights-based approach** to food security, building on the right to food (including recommendations of former UNSR Right to Food, De Schutter) and women's equal rights. Treating food as a human right brings coherence and accountability. It helps to close the gaps by putting food security of all citizens at the top of the decision-making hierarchy, and making these decision-making processes participatory and accountable. We would like to re-emphasize that priority is to invest in empowerment of smallholder farmers, particular women smallholders, and to strengthen and secure their access to and control over natural resources, in particular land and water.

Note that it is a misunderstanding that advocating for smallholder support (as opposed to focusing on large-scale investments) equals advocating for the perpetuation of marginal smallholder farming. We do feel however that where food security policies and strategies have not been successful to date they were not people- and particularly women-centered, which would be key for promoting rural and livelihood development. Marginal smallholders have to be supported to become productive smallholders relying on improved and more sustainable integrated food (& income) systems and subsequently if non-farming income opportunities arise part of them gradually may move out of farming and others may scale up sustainable farming practices.

Dutch policy implications include increasing more direct support to smallholders (e.g. with civil society) and supporting governments (e.g. as part of CAADP) to this more explicitly, whilst ensuring these efforts are not undermined by other policies and initiatives that might displace or compete with smallholders interest. This includes a stronger emphasis on the public window of Worldbank's GAFSP and making sure that the private window and other private sector finance take smallholder's interests as a starting point and includes them directly (e.g. by reducing the high funding thresholds, working with farmer groups, etc.). We also refer to [our recommendations for increasing investment in women smallholders](#) shared earlier this year, including references to embassy programmes, Topsectoren etc.

Additional requirements:

- Guaranteeing a level playing field and reducing negative impacts of large scale agri-business investments and production of non-food agriculture products
- Ensure smallholders prioritise food for their households, communities, local and national markets instead of cash crops for external or export markets. They may integrate cash crops, ideally also for processing by national industries, once food security and nutrition requirements are met. When production of cash crops pays off much better governments may have to intervene and take policy measures to guarantee sufficient food is being produced locally and nationally.
- Rehabilitate, step up and innovate public demand-driven support for climate resilient sustainable agriculture and agroecology as well as innovative post-harvest practices, processing off and adding value to food and agribusiness development, including entrepreneurial and business negotiation skills.
- Support to water harvesting and (small-scale) irrigation, introduction of drought resistant crops, agro-forestry and food trees, fish farming, small livestock within integrated farming and livelihood systems. This shall both raise the income but more importantly reduces the risks to become food and income insecure.
- Embark on efficient modalities for facilitating the establishment and strengthening of smallholder farmers and other producer association or autonomous cooperatives (single or multiple purpose)
- Invest in local seed banks and seed and food sovereignty
- Move into non-farming income generating activities and alternative decent work if opportunities arise but still maintain a kitchen garden or small farm if possible.
- Peri-urban and urban farming provides opportunities even for city dwellers

- In order to promote inclusive local economic development it is pertinent to invest rural infrastructure and rural growth centers. The latter for hosting local markets , agri-industries and a diversity of business and social services

See also our input for target 1 and other recommendations for investing in smallholders in the following ActionAid (and joint) publications: What works for women, [Great Land Heist, From Marginalisation to Empowerment](#) and experiences with [CRSA](#).

Panos Varangis [September 5th, 2014](#)

Head, Advisory Services, Agricultural Finance, Financial Institutions Group, IFC

"Improving farmer productivity & incomes through Value Chains"

There are three main trends in food demand. First, global demand is expected to increase by up to 70% by 2050, requiring annual investments ranging from US\$80-160 billion per year according to FAO. Second, the rising middle class in emerging markets creates larger domestic markets and a shift in dietary preference towards higher value and nutrition foods such as oilseeds and feeds, meat/dairy/fish, and fruits and vegetables. Larger international corporates are increasing their local procurement and sales of food in emerging markets. Third, the need to ensure that future growth of food comes from sustainable sourcing brings demands for standards and traceability of foods produced.

For agribusiness and food companies, whether global, regional or local, these trends increase their need to secure supplies to meet current and future business growth and provide higher visibility along their whole value chain. These agribusinesses are also increasingly focusing on small holder farmers that are part of their value chain. Strengthening value chains by integrating small holder farmers is becoming an imperative to both source more food to feed growing populations and ensure that the increased production comes from sustainable sources.

Small holder farmers, particular in poorer countries, often have very low yields compared to middle and higher income countries. For example, for most cereals, the yields of small holder farmers in many parts of Africa are less than a third of the yields for the same crops in middle and higher income countries. Lack of know-how, limited availability of quality inputs, and poor access to finance to invest in better production technologies keep small holders farmers from increasing their yields. The low yields and weak access to markets thus remain as the main contributors to low incomes.

The trend to better integrate small holder farmers into value chains can bring substantial benefits and become a win-win for all participants along these value chains. Small holder farmers along better organized value chains have better access to quality inputs, technical advice, funding and secure markets to sell their produce. They often also have access to risk management instruments like crop insurance and fixed price contracts that can reduce uncertainty to systemic risks and thus encourage them to invest more. The need to strengthen linkages between value chain participants-from lead food and agribusiness companies all the way to small holder farmers-shifts the relationship between participants from opportunistic transactions to forming longer-term relations that can transform the business. Anecdotal evidence from a number of field projects has shown small holder farmers benefiting from stronger linkages in value chains in terms of ultimately having better yields and better prices and thus better incomes overall.

The benefits accruing to small holder farmers can be significantly higher when these farmers are members of well-organized producer organizations or groups of farmers. Producer organizations can improve the bargaining power of farmers in selling their crops and purchasing inputs, and significantly lower costs in terms of providing them with services like technical assistance and financial services. Thus producer organizations offer viable aggregation models for small holder farmers. The key here is to have well organized and viable producer organizations. Capacity building on financial, operational, managerial, marketing and sustainability issues is very important here, as are systems to identify good organizations that can become critical anchors within value chains.

Lessons learned from IFC projects in value chain finance include:

- Small holder farmers are very heterogeneous requiring segmentation to understand the context where they operate, the risks they face, their linkages to markets, and their financial and non-financial needs.
- It is important to identify, align incentives and link various stakeholders such as lead buying firms, farmers/producer organizations and financial institutions along the value chain.
- Financing farmers becomes more attractive when it is linked with improvements in production (yields, quality) through high quality inputs and technical advice (agricultural extension), improved access to markets, and training in financial and managerial capabilities.

My contribution is jointly authored with *Heather Miller, Operations Officer at IFC*

Konrad Plechowski [September 3rd, 2014](#)

Economic Development' Sector Coordinator, IICD (International Institute for Communication and Development) - The Netherlands

"ICT Solutions as key enabler of strengthening Inclusive Agricultural Value Chains"

As IICD, we use our expertise to consolidate capacity of Farmer Organizations (and via them smallholder farmers), as well as other Value Chain actors, to mainstream ICT solutions. Our almost 20 years of experience in introducing ICTs for agriculture in development context shows that the use of the range of emerging ICT solutions positively affects inclusion – and therefore profitability and income – of smallholders, providing that it is supported by thorough capacity building of all the stakeholders and applied with the business logic of the Value Chain.

The use of ICTs improves the performance and profitability of agricultural activities, allows for mitigation of the inherent risks, and provides access to information and services essential for smallholder farmers and their organizations to link to vertically integrated Value Chains.

While substantial progress has been made in understanding value of ICTs and making ICTs available and accessible, challenges remain. As an input, I'd like to share some key reflections and lessons learned by IICD:

Integrated organizational capacity building

The ability of local organizations to appropriate relevant ICT tools and integrate them in their service delivery is essential. Such institutional development is only achieved when focus is on social innovation – business transformation supported by technology, and not on technology itself. Though the types of use of ICTs in agriculture keep evolving, foundational capacity is not shaped by the new technologies themselves.

From our experience, we strongly believe in the diversity of capacity building activities required for effective and sustainable ICT use over time, especially at the organizational level.

Supported programs shall include strong capacity building components which understand capacity building in broader terms. Not only as training interventions, but also coaching and mentoring, knowledge sharing, relationship building and networking with local technical providers, in-depth locally-led analysis of the local information and communication needs and mapping of existing information and communication flows, etc. It's essential to realize and support that capacity to design, develop, implement and maintain ICT solutions requires thorough long-term guidance and support through the business transformation processes that take place when ICT tools are adopted for agricultural purposes.

Trust – role of producer organisations

Our experience shows that we need to keep emphasizing the relevance and importance of rural producer organisations trusted by the farmers in integrating the use of ICTs in agricultural activities. Social dynamics within benefitting communities often mean that trust depends on the social capital of the party providing the information. Farmers indicate that they feel more at ease when they make use of an information sources and tools provided by people or organisations they know and trust.

Youth – Social dynamics of an ICT-uptake

In IICD's experience, the appropriation of ICTs by youth in support of farming activities is creating positive, though significant shifts in the social dynamics in rural farming communities. Strategies to support youth to use the ICT tools for their purposes need to be deliberate and well informed of particular opportunities and limitations within local contexts, and consequences for dynamics within the communities.

Gemma Betsema [September 2nd, 2014](#)

Coordinator of LANDac, the Netherlands Academy on Land Governance, Netherlands

"Land governance and food security"

When addressing food security, land governance – rules and practices in governing access to and use of land – cannot be ignored. The links between food security and land governance are diverse, both direct and indirect, and connect processes at different levels of society. The most direct link at a local level consists of the large number of smallholder producers who are of great importance for producing food locally, especially in poor, rural areas where food security is a major concern. Land is one of the productive resources that poor people have. More indirectly, on a global scale, foreign investors are now buying up large tracts of land in developing countries, often with motives related to food security: production of food and feed stocks in their home countries. Also other factors cause an increase in pressure on land (and with that indirectly impact on the amount of land available for food production) including the production of biofuels, urbanization, infrastructure, tourism etc. In this process, often dubbed 'land grabbing' – the large-scale acquisition of land in the global South – smallholder producers in specific are losing out. Good land governance, therefore, is essential in protecting smallholders' access to land, making investments in agriculture inclusive and sustainable and through that contributing to better food security locally and globally.

As Kaag and Zoomers (2014) show, land grabbing takes place through a multitude of actors at different levels. To address these complex links, public and private accountability is key and very often lacking. A concrete step towards greater accountability are multi-stakeholder networks such as the Netherlands-based Land Governance Multi-stakeholder Dialogue and the LANDac Land Forum. Through the LANDac Land Forum initiative a platform in Uganda is set up, where exchange of experiences takes place as a way to open up the discussion around land

investments in the country. A second track of activities within the LANDac Land Forum is to contribute to knowledge generation around benefit sharing arrangements and inclusive business models with stronger involvement of smallholders.

There is an urgent need for policies to better look at the linkages between food security and land governance. Through policies directly targeting the improvement of land governance in countries, for example by supporting local NGO's in advocating for land rights and supporting and educating communities in claiming their rights, but also through supporting governments and implementing institutions in improving land governance. A specific focus should be on issues of gender and control over land; and the way in which women are addressed in policies around land. At the same time, we need to reflect on our own policies in the Netherlands more explicitly. For example: What is the impact of stimulating Dutch enterprises in investing in agriculture in developing countries? What is the impact of their activities on smallholder producers and on local food security and land governance? And how can links between agricultural investments, inclusive sustainable development and food security be optimized?

Rohan Bennett [September 1st, 2014](#)

University of Twente, Netherlands

"A role for land consolidation?...or not?"

Land fragmentation is sometimes argued as one reason for impeded smallholder productivity. In theory, systematic land consolidation could be applied to enhance farm structures, improve delivery of service infrastructure (e.g. road and energy networks), and ultimately increase farmer productivity. These claims are backed up by the experiences of Western European countries. But, are these programs relevant to other country contexts (e.g. sub Saharan Africa)? Certainly, there are substantial social, economic, and environmental differences that are already well known. Recent work undertaken in the Amhara region of Ethiopia, conducted by ITC Faculty (University of Twente), again revealed how smallholders prefer their plots to be geographically spread: land fragmentation acts as a risk management strategy against crop failure or natural disasters. It also needs to be remembered that prior to undertaking modern systematic land consolidation activities, countries like the Netherlands already possessed both regularized tenure systems, and the land information needed to support the process. Many country contexts neither possess nor maintain complete land tenure records.

It is unclear what role, if any, land consolidation can play in the short and longer term. If there is a role, it needs to be determined whether existing approaches can be responsibly applied, or whether new context-specific thinking and tools are needed? In this regards, the expertise of the Netherlands in developing and applying innovative land consolidation techniques, coupled with the interest in responsible global agricultural investment, might play a leading role.

Wijnand Klaver [August 31st, 2014](#)

Senior Researcher Food and Nutrition Security, African Studies Centre, Leiden

"The case of vegetables"

Building on previous expert discussions

Valuable insights may be hidden in several 'troves' of information relevant to food and nutrition security.

- Since October 16 (World Food Day) 2007, the Agricultural Development Economics Division of FAO has organized more than 100 online consultations on its 'Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition' (FSNforum) ([see website](#)).
- Since mid 2011 SOCIRES has organized a number of expert meetings on the nexus of food, nutrition, water and energy. Since then there has been a series of so-called Vijverberg expert meetings on invitation, while in 2012 FoodFirst has organized seven FoodFirst-Floriade Conferences. ([see website](#)). Both websites contain a rich harvest of contributions which are relevant for all Targets of the current Expert consultation.

Smallholder agriculture

To give an example for Target 4 (smallholder agriculture), the FSNforum organized inter alia discussions on 'Supporting small-scale farmers to access value-added agribusiness and other market opportunities' (2010), 'Constraints to Smallholder Investments' (2012), 'Enabling rural cooperatives and producer organizations to thrive as sustainable business enterprises' (2012) and the 'HLPE consultation on the V0 draft of the Report: Investing in smallholder agriculture for food and nutrition security (2012)'. [The final report](#), commissioned by the Committee on World Food Security was published in June 2013. This report uses a sustainable livelihoods framework for understanding investments. Interestingly, as a result of its analysis of risks for smallholder agriculture at different levels, it does mention unfair competition from food imports and international land grabbing, but not the often mentioned competition of biofuels with food production.

- The LTO position under Target 1 is interesting in this respect (see contribution of Klaas Johan Osinga).
- As to land grabbing (which is a loaded term), voices from Africa see some scope for benefits in terms of capacity transfer. See the paper contributed to the CODESRIA Conference of 2011 '[Can 'Land Rush' Lead to Skills Transfer in Africa: Rethinking Capacity Building in African Agriculture](#)' by Justitia O Nnabuko & Chibuike U Uche.

In the forthcoming publication of the ASC (September 2014) entitled '[Digging Deeper: Inside Africa's Agricultural, Food and Nutrition Dynamics](#)', Sheu-Usman Akanbi and Akinyinka Akinyoade discuss the contributions of small- and large-scale farms and foreign and local investments to agricultural growth. Using Nigeria as a case study, the analyses show that the major engine of rural growth and livelihood improvement in Nigeria is small-scale agriculture and that large-scale farming is still in its emergent stage. Despite the ubiquity of small-scale farming, the sector faces numerous constraints due to factors such as limited technical and financial support, indifference among the youth to farming, inadequate government policies and people's reliance on other livelihood sources. This leaves the country with few alternatives and leads to the conclusion that, to promote agricultural growth in Nigeria, sustained small-scale/local participation and foreign investment are needed to alleviate the fear of food insecurity if the country's oil-driven economy begins to stutter when oil reserves dwindle.

The case of vegetables

Vegetables are the most affordable and accessible source of micronutrients. Next to animal source foods, vegetables are a principal source of vitamins and minerals, even after the necessary correction for their lesser bio-availability. Most vegetables contain more protein per 100g dry matter than staple foods and several vegetables reach the levels of legumes. A recent article gives insight in the nutritional and economic value of vegetables and proposes for tropical Africa a doubling of the present intake of about 100 g of vegetables to 200 g as a long-term realistic target.

Compared to tropical Asia, the vegetable sector in Africa is lagging behind as a result of weak research, breeding, training and extension services, an insufficient seed distribution network and low purchasing power. The article sketches the scope of increasing vegetable production for the domestic African markets both from commercial vegetable production (such as peri-urban and 'truck' farming) and from production for personal use in fields and home gardens (e.g. through intercropping). It focuses on increasing the production and consumption of a number of commonly consumed leafy and non-leafy vegetables; some indigenous and some 'exotic' (introduced in recent times from other continents). The rationale for this focus on a limited number of types of vegetables produced and consumed in large volumes is, that investment in improving the yield of these widely consumed vegetables will pay off more in the near future than promoting the wide use of rare (so-called 'orphan') vegetables. The latter deserve also support, to avoid that they are lost, but may become more important at a later stage.

Aart van den Bos [August 29th, 2014](#)

Managing Partner at Soil & More - Netherlands

"Link themes in holistic manner and help increase Soil Organic Matter"

When looking at farming we look from a holistic perspective. Link the various themes and turn waste into a high quality compost to increase Soil Organic Matter (SOM). SOM is important for an efficient farming system, as it improves the soil's structure and increases the water holding capacity. Also, it helps to sequester carbon in the soil.

The application of compost brings organic material back to the soil which is a considerable benefit, given the fact that the loss of Soil Organic Matter (SOM) is a worldwide problem. This loss is mainly caused by too intensive agricultural systems based on high chemical and mechanical inputs. A high SOM content in agricultural soils provides farmers with some important benefits which are not only of financial nature.

Below a list with the most important advantages:

- **Improvement of the soil's structure:** A higher amount of SOM leads to a better structure of the soil. Improved biological disease suppression capacity: Soils with a higher amount of SOM tend to have a more intensive biological activity. The soil's food web (which is fed with organic material) is more active. An active soil life leads to an improved biological disease suppression capacity.
- **Reduced erosion:** A higher amount of SOM enables water to infiltrate into the soil more easily. This leads to less runoff of water on the soil surface and reduces erosion in mountain areas drastically.
- **A higher efficiency of applied nutrients:** Nutrients applied to fields with a high amount of SOM tend to be used more efficiently. This is caused by an increase in the soil's Cation Exchange Capacity (CEC).
- **Possible reduction in water use:** In some areas, the amount of water used can be reduced in soils with a higher SOM content. This is induced by a higher soil water holding capacity (field capacity (FC) – wilting point (WP)). This benefit is very valuable, especially in areas that might be suffering of water scarcity in the future.
- **Better resilience against unstable and severe weather conditions:** Climate change leads to unstable weather and environmental conditions. A higher amount of SOM can help the soil to become more resilient against these new developments.
- **Mitigation of climate change:** SOM consists for a large part of carbon. By storing this carbon in soils in form of SOM, you prevent it from contributing to global warming. Often smallholder farmers can be trained to use biomass which is available on their own farm to increase soil fertility. This will result in a healthier and better product, lower costs of inputs, higher yields and a better income for the farmer.

Sharon Hesp August 29th, 2014

Consultant at NewForesight, Netherlands

"For a significant rise in smallholder productivity the system needs to facilitate and strengthen professional entrepreneurial farmers, instead of keeping them poor and unable to invest in their farms"

The agricultural system in place today is a system that sustains poverty. Farmers have little bargaining power and incomes are low as agro-commodities are undifferentiated products – goods that can be interchanged with other goods of the same type. The absence of safety nets, standards or effective legal enforcement in combination with continuous price pressure from the market means that a lot of farmers barely survive. Poverty and low productivity go hand in hand. Plantations are, in general, not taken care of very well. Farming methods are outdated and there is a lack of resources to invest in fertilizers, pesticides or in replacing ageing trees or plants past their peak productivity. Without interference productivity will only diminish instead of rise.

To up productivity we need entrepreneurial farmers with knowledge, skills and resources to invest in their farms. Thinking bottom-up we can calculate the living income farmers need to enable farm investments. It is clear that commodity prices will have to rise and yields have to go up. The paradigm for the sector should be sustainable intensification: optimizing production (in quantity and quality) relative to inputs (e.g. land, water, fertilizer, labor), improving the livelihoods of farmers, while minimizing negative externalities (e.g. pollution, deforestation, depletion of soil and water sources). NewForesight conducted a study commissioned by the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs that looked into a model to achieve sustainable intensification at scale, [the final report can be read here](#).

Sustainable intensification requires farmers to be able to implement and use better agricultural and management practices, to have access to and properly use the right inputs, and have an enabling environment that provides access to training and finance. A farmer's ability to absorb and access better practices and inputs depends to a large extent on the farmer's level of organization and professionalism. Educated, business-minded farmers are the only way to secure a sustainable cocoa supply in the future. They have the knowledge and financial resources to tend to their farms, and produce higher yields that generate enough income to feed their families, and at the same time do not harm the environment to ensure future yields.

NewForesight has expertise in farmer business modeling and service delivery evaluation in the context of different interventions, tropical commodities, and countries. The models we develop enable us to extract valuable lessons regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of different service delivery models in smallholder agriculture. Moreover, it provides strategic insight into the expected outcome of different sustainability strategies, which can be used to tailor interventions to the specific context of a particular program. More of our work on <http://www.newforesight.com>.

Bashir Jama August 26th, 2014

Soil Health Program Director at Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)

"Improving smallholder yields and resilience"

From my personal perspective the Netherlands policy for food & nutrition security would include the following areas:

- **Improving smallholder yields of staple food crops.** Without this, it is hard to achieve food and nutrition security. This would require improving the resource base, particularly soil fertility that has been neglected for long. This requires improving access to inputs (seeds and fertilizers), extension and advisory services, and output markets. This is the major thrust of AGRA's work.
- **Improving the production, marketing and utilization of vegetables.** This is also important for improving household nutrition. AGRA has developed a strategy for vegetables and is forging strong partnership on its implementation with institution in the Netherlands, including Wageningen-UR and the private sector in the vegetable industry.
- **Enhancing resiliency to climate change and variability.** Agricultural water management is an important intervention here, that is missing from the works of many organizations including AGRA. We have developed a strategy for agric water management, but we yet need to secure funding for it. Other related interventions include conservation agriculture (we are piloting some interventions; there are some successful programs in Zambia) and strengthening early warning systems.
- **Livestock production in smallholder farming systems.** A key intervention here is enhancing the integration of crop-livestock interaction. This is enhanced when the yields of crops are increased since this results in crop residues that can complement well livestock feeds.
- **Increasing capacity for R&D and for innovation in all the above.** This requires strengthening the agricultural research and training institutions in Africa. And this is where the partnership that AGRA has forged with Wageningen-UR is heading. Innovations could include the use of ICT, and its use to extend agricultural innovation to farmers and agribusinesses in different value chains, and to create jobs and attract the youth to agriculture.

Han de Groot [August 26th, 2014](#)
Executive Director of UTZ Certified

“Productivity increase essential for a world where sustainable farming is the norm”

UTZ Certified gives productivity increase a central role in its program, for smallholders and larger farms, because it is essential for achieving our mission: to create a world where sustainable farming is the norm. Current productivity gains should not be at the cost of future opportunities and therefore requires sustainable practices. This will contribute to economic viability of farms, a better life for farmers and the mitigation of global problems such as growing food demand and resource scarcity.

To adopt productivity enhancing technologies and practices, farmers need to overcome significant barriers to adoption such as:

Informational constraints: especially farmers who live in remote areas often do not know about technologies and practices that could improve their productivity. To overcome this, training on Good Agricultural Practices and management practices is a central element of the UTZ strategy, including:

- Use of good planting material and adequate varieties
- Optimal choice of fertilizers and Crop Protection products
- Soil and fertility conservation
- Pruning, weeding, rejuvenation and replanting
- Use of shade trees
- Efficient use and protection of water sources
- Integrated Pest Management
- Diversification.

Access to credit: many smallholder farmers are unable to purchase improved inputs. By strengthening groups and raising awareness on the importance of saving, diversification and other forms of professionalization of management practices, UTZ has shown to ensure better access to credit among farmers by having better administration and a more stable income. (For examples, see the [UTZ Impact Report](#).)

Availability and affordability of inputs: several inputs required for productivity increase (improved seed varieties, fertilizer, labor etc) are not available in certain locations, or only at very high costs. The UTZ program contributes to increased interaction between farmers and their cooperatives, leading to increased knowledge sharing amongst farmers. Cooperatives make larger orders and can thus reduce costs of inputs and increase profitability.

Lack of an enabling political and institutional environment: an empowering environment including good governance, macroeconomic and political stability, rural infrastructure, secure property rights, and effective market institutions, is essential for the development and adoption of new production technologies ([FAO](#) “The State of Food and Agriculture FAO (2012b)). The Dutch government should support this.

External factors: climate change and pest or disease outbreaks are factors that have an important influence on productivity. Our [UTZ position paper on climate change](#) explains how we train farmers to adapt and mitigate this issue.

For smallholders with small plots of land, prices can be so low that even a substantial productivity gain will not guarantee a living income. If productivity increases extensively, fewer farmers are needed to produce the same amount of products. If smallholders cannot make their farm economically viable, they may be forced to grow other crops – or go out of business. This requires different stakeholders, particularly national governments and the private sector, to work on alternative incomes for current smallholders and their children at sector/country level.

Edith Boekraad [August 21st, 2014](#)
Cordaid, Director Food Security

“Increasing income is the real challenge”

Knowing that many of those to benefit from the UN Zero Hunger challenge are smallholder farmers, this UN Target rightly focuses on smallholder productivity and income. Increasing income is the real challenge, as productivity increases do not automatically pay off in higher income. For their produce smallholders need a market which is not saturated, otherwise a rise in productivity will decrease the price per unit thus rapping off the benefits of the productivity increase.

Where farmers can increase their (net) income by 100% this is major progress at an individual level. Note however that their absolute income will then still be low to very low. From that perspective, a 100% income increase per 2025 or 2030 is relevant but not particularly ambitious.

Cordaid favors the promotion of agro-ecological approaches to farming as best practice for productive, sustainable and climate smart agriculture.

Interventions in smallholder production need a value chain lens: make sure that there is a market the product, create stronger market linkages, deliver quality produce, and ensure efficiency at harvest, storage, processing. Cordaid supports groups of smallholders in building their linkages to local and regional markets.

Cordaid believes that the Dutch food security policies rightly focus on value chains. However, Dutch policy attention and funding support should balance international value chains (where market parties should take the lead – both in funding and in implementation) to local and regional value chains. Where private sector and public policies are absent or fragile civil society has a particularly important role to play.

Nico Janssen [August 21st, 2014](#)

SNV World Tanzania, Global Coordinator Nutrition Security

"Youth and Agriculture"

The need for 100% increase in production is debatable. What needs to change is not just the total food production but much more the profitability of farming and the conditions under which people farm. Land and resource governance will be key in this. Farmland should be dedicated as farmland and not left for speculation or investment opportunities for rich urban people but remain at the disposal for those who wish to choose a career as farmer. Many farmers world-wide are now disillusioned and not much willing to invest in their farm-enterprise. Farming is all too often seen in the developing countries as the reason why you are poor. Making farming more attractive as a modern way of life that can provide for a good income and life will be essential to motivate the young generation to stay in agriculture.

The Dutch agro-sector has also been confronted with these issues in the past. The joint expertise in the public sector (agricultural education), financial sectors and business sectors will provide the platform from which agriculture can make the transition from a subsistence way of life into a professional career choice as a farm-entrepreneur.

Danielle Hirsch [August 19th, 2014](#)

Director of BothENDS, Netherlands

"Not the right question: it is not about production, but about distribution of food"

This is not the right question.

The world produces enough calories to meet the projected 9 billion in 2050. And in addition, 70% of the food is being produced by small-scale farmers. Therefore, it is not about production, it is about distribution of food between people, it is about the quality of food being produced and consumed (maize or a diverse diet), about the purpose of the food: energy, fodder for animals and it is a matter of waste.

The question should be: how can the Netherlands contribute to small-scale farmers worldwide to come to sustainable food production? We see 5 options for transition:

- Make a comparative analysis of the inputs (land, land tenure, chemicals, animal antibiotics, biological pest control, fossil fuel based fertilizers, fodder, animal manure, labour, mechanisation, agrobiodiversity, transportation) of diversified farming systems and monocultures.
- Support new indicators for measuring agricultural practices (like nutritional value per square meter, input-output ratio including externalities and offsite benefits, instead of volume per hectare).
- Intensify the support for responsible governance for tenure of land and forests.
- Support participatory inclusive knowledge and practice development for sustainable land use and up-scaling of sustainable practices.
- Support an enabling environment for removal of barriers to local and regional markets.

Acham Hellen Ketty Elungat [August 12th, 2014](#)

North East Chilli Producers Association, Executive Director - Uganda

"Farmer entrepreneurship for sustainable food security "

In order to improve food security there is need to enhance the farmer skills in entrepreneurial and natural resources conservation and management. This will significantly change the traditional behavior of rural farmers to adopt new farming ethnics and practices including Disaster Risk management in all planning and programming will finally lead to improved food Security and nutrition at household level while also tackling the issue of value chain development.

Emmanuel Bahati [August 7th, 2014](#)

Coordinator of Agri-Pro FOCUS DR Congo

"Weak agricultural production and productivity"

Smallholders suffer from use of small tracks of land, lack of capital, poor knowledge on practices of cultivation technics and soil infertility. Needed are access to agricultural funding of banks, the IMF and national government to purchase larger tracks of arable land and have access to agricultural inputs and also formation on cultivation

technics is important.

The local government is the main actor, and Dutch support of great importance.

Niek van Dijk [August 5th, 2014](#)

Business Developer Food Security, Bop Innovation Center

"We look at smallholder productivity from a systemic, value chain driven approach"

Interestingly, the 100% increase in smallholder productivity is exactly one of the targets we are working towards in the 2SCALE program, a value-chain based agricultural development program, BoP Inc is implementing together with its partners IFDC and ICRA in 9 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, and that is funded by the Dutch government.

What is interesting about this, is that we learn about this challenge from the field and can provide a more in-depth perspective in addition to many publications on this topics, and the many "lists" of smallholder-challenges that stem from these publications. So to keep it simple, and to bring focus in this debate, what are we learning from 2SCALE:

We look at smallholder productivity from a systemic, value chain driven approach: smallholders work towards markets, where the incentives for productivity increases can be materialized. From the CASE (Competitive Agricultural Systems and Enterprises) approach in 2SCALE, we focus on organizing four main aspects of this value chain around clusters of farmers: agro-dealers, business advisory services, processors and traders, and financial services.

With this approach, we address three key issues that we continuously see arising with the topic of smallholder productivity:

- Availability and accessibility (access to finance) of quality inputs
- Technical support in production
- Connection to private sector actors downstream in the value chain (processors, traders, etc.)

The success of this approach learns that narrowing down the various lists with smallholder challenges to a proactive approach focused on these three key issues makes most sense. Of course, many other topics are important as well, but these issues are the drivers of true change for smallholder productivity, and the current budget cuts for food security policy demand a more focused approach.

BoP Inc's aim is to further catalyze the effectiveness of the interventions on these 3 key themes by focusing on its added value:

Connection with international companies

the most important aspects of involving international companies is to see if they have an added value to the current situation in the local economy. In 2SCALE, we have involved FrieslandCampina in Nigeria in local dairy production chains. As there was virtually no market-driven smallholder dairy development, the involvement of FrieslandCampina is additional, and brings in knowledge, innovations and necessary investments in local infrastructure

Adapted agricultural technology

In BoP Inc's opinion one of the most underestimated themes when it comes to smallholder productivity. Dutch companies are market leaders in many agricultural technology sectors. However, their product propositions are focused on large scale agriculture. They do not (yet) see smallholder farmers as an interesting business cases. This needs the involvement of an intermediary, to catalyze inclusive innovation. With the company Mueller we have developed a small scale, solar-powered, dairy cooling unit.

BoP markets

Many agricultural development projects focus on production for export markets. Even though this can fetch a price premium on the market, this is not realistic for many smallholder farmers. With 2SCALE we focus on local markets. The most unmet demand in the local markets is at the base of the pyramid, consumers living on less than \$4 a day. Whereas the market potential at this consumer segment is large (estimated in 2010 to be \$ 2,89 trillion) many local companies and farmer groups don't know these consumers, and don't know how to reach them. In 2SCALE, BoP Inc supports local companies and farmer groups in developing product propositions and distribution channels for these consumers.

Evelijne Bruning [July 28th, 2014](#)

Country Director the Hunger Project, The Netherlands

"More could be said about 'resilience'"

First and foremost: increasing smallholder productivity and income depends on closing the gender gap for women small-scale farmers. This is the International year of the Family Farmer and the Africa Year of Agriculture, but most policies still fail to meet the "Boserup Test" – unless the majority of resources go to women, then the policy is making matters worse by widening the gender gap. More on this in our reaction to [the 'what's missing' reflection](#) in area number 6.

Most of the rest of this target is excellent and clear.

Perhaps something more could be said about "resilience": defined as the ability to help people withstand shocks: economic, climatic, social or political. Impoverished farmers, in particular, suffer a "Food Price" crisis every single year, as prices skyrocket in the months before the harvest, and plummet right after. Our community-managed

food banks in Africa are just one example of community initiatives that build resilience. Since the Bangladesh floods of 1990 where our Youth Ending Hunger volunteers were among the very first responders — to our work in support of community-led reconstruction in Tsunami affected villages in 2004, we've seen the profound difference it makes for communities to be mobilized, organized and confident in their ability to take immediate action even when no outside resources are able to reach them. So that natural disaster need not lead to human catastrophe.

Key Interventions:

- Participatory Local Governance, with clearly thought-out development plans, disaster preparedness and planning
- Decentralized health services, with pre-positioned supplies of items such as water purification tablets that are essential when water supplies are cut
- Community-managed food banks and warrantage systems

Sylvia Kay [July 24th, 2014](#)

Transnational Institute, The Netherlands

"Developing national smallholder investment strategies and Public-Peasant investment synergies"

It is clear that investing in food security means investing in smallholders: according to IFAD (2011), there are an estimated 500 million smallholder farms in the developing world, supporting almost 2 billion people who depend on them for their livelihood, and these small farms produce about 80 per cent of the food consumed in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Yet despite their enormous contribution to world food security, smallholders also belong to the most poor and vulnerable and face a number of critical investment constraints that subject them to a high level of precarity and risk.

These include amongst many others limited access to land and other natural resources (especially water) often due to highly unequal land distribution patterns and tenure regimes; unfavourable market conditions and lack of access to appropriate markets, especially financial markets; marginalisation in public policy, agricultural research, and investment decision making processes; and lack of recognition or violations of their basic rights. It is vital that Dutch food security policy address some of these constraints in order to realize the full potential of smallholder agriculture.

An important recommendation for Dutch policy to consider is that offered by the High Level Panel of Experts of the UN Committee on World Food Security. In their 2013 report *'Investing in Smallholder Agriculture for Food Security'*, they recommend developing National Smallholder Investment Strategies:

"Governments should design and implement medium- and long-term strategies, with the accompanying set of policies and budgets, to increase the capacity of the smallholder sector to fulfill its multifunctional roles in national development."

It is time to put smallholder agriculture back at the heart of public policy and public investment plans. This can be done through:

- Using public policy tools to open up new markets to small-scale food producers and strengthening local and regional food systems
- Setting a progressive agenda in agricultural research
- Facilitating lending to smallholders through reforming agricultural development banks
- Providing essential rural social service and infrastructure
- Buffering against food produce shocks through the maintenance of public stocks
- Building resilience through social protection schemes
- Enacting (re)distributive land reform,

Substantial evidence from case-studies all around the world indicates that it is exactly these types of 'public-peasant' investment synergies which can deliver the greatest returns in terms of food security and poverty alleviation.

Public-private partnerships can also have a role to play but here also there is an important role for the state to play in setting in place a proper regulatory regime and supporting the voice of farmers' organisations so that the power imbalances between different actors are not abused. Such partnerships should also place the accent on development local, regional, and national markets first and foremost.

Jur Schuurman [July 18th, 2014](#)

Senior management advisor Agriterro, The Netherlands

"How do we know if we succeed target 4?"

Target 4 sounds deceptively clear-cut: it will be accomplished if both smallholders' productivity and income have doubled. But I wonder if any thought has been given to the question "how do we know if this has happened?". In other words, is this target SMART? It does not look like it.

First of all, it has to be known what the present situation is with regard to smallholder productivity and income. Otherwise, it is meaningless to speak of a xxx% increase. Second, would this 'present situation' involve all

smallholders? Or a sample? Making this clear beforehand avoids interpretation differences later on. The same goes for a term as 'income'. Is this 'net income from agriculture after pertinent production costs' or just income? Again, the choice has to be clear.

In other words, what is it we are going to measure, both now and in 2030 (and hopefully at some intermediate points in time, to see how it's going), so that we know whether the goal had been achieved? Perhaps the Zero Hunger Challenge people have given thought to this issue, and then I would be glad to learn more about it. Otherwise, it would be good to:

- Define what a smallholder is
- Define productivity: is that per area unit, per person, or...?
- Measure, in a representative sample, the smallholders' income and productivity situations, following clear definitions of both terms (i.e., choosing unequivocal indicators) of 'income'.
- Repeat the measurement at regular intervals in time.

It is this kind of regular measurements that enable us to see whether we are on track with this goals (or, indeed, with any goal). A warning is in order however: even though we might see steady progress towards these goals it will be hard to attribute the achievements conclusively to any interventions. But that is another matter and, for the record, in Agriterria we are convinced that farmers who organize themselves are the key. Any rural intervention in which farmers are mere passive objects or 'aid recipients' is doomed to fail. In other words, we very much applaud the third recommendation by Hans Eenhoorn below!

Hans Eenhoorn [July 14th, 2014](#)
Member of Worldconnectors

"Technically and environmentally sound interventions will only succeed if local entrepreneurship is stimulated"

Nowhere is the failure to alleviate hunger more glaring than in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the number and proportion of hungry people are forecast to increase in many countries, due to fast increase of the population (towards 2 billion by 2050) and low agricultural productivity. Sub-Saharan Africa accounts for about 200 million of the world's undernourished. A paradigm shift has to be realised, away from the conventional macroeconomic improvements and towards an approach that concentrates on agricultural development, entrepreneurship, the application of science, capital investment, mindset change and public commitment to achieve food security for the poor and help them out of their "poverty trap". Economic growth alone is not sufficient to lift the poor and hungry out of their misery, because the poverty-reducing effects of growth largely bypass the rural poor. Given the pressing needs of Sub-Saharan Africa, where more than 30% of the population are chronically hungry and an even higher percentage malnourished, combined with the fact that 65% of the population live in rural areas, it is imperative to focus attention on the entrepreneurial development of Sub-Saharan smallholders. Fifty percent or more of the rural poor have access to farmland, but for various reasons are incapable of growing enough food to feed themselves adequately, let alone produce marketable surpluses. Supporting smallholder farmers to feed themselves and produce marketable surpluses is the quickest — and in the short-run the most efficient — way of achieving food security for at least a hundred million poor people in Africa. The World Development Report 2008, "Agriculture for development", fully supports this and takes the view that chronic hunger will only be met in poorer countries if a sharper focus on agriculture is used as an instrument for development. There are virtually no examples of mass poverty reduction that did not have their origins in sharp rises in employment and self-employment as a result of the higher productivity in small family farms.

The studies of the United Nations Taskforce on Hunger, as well as those of many other institutions, propose a range of technical and social means that can reduce hunger for most groups and in diverse contexts. Apart from the necessary policy reforms the recommendations of the UN Taskforce on Hunger focus on:

- Increasing the agricultural productivity of food-insecure farmers
- Improving nutrition for the chronically hungry and vulnerable
- Increasing rural incomes and making markets work for the poor.
- Restoring and conserving natural resources

However, such technically and environmentally sound interventions will only succeed if local entrepreneurship is stimulated. Policy changes that create an enabling context and which remove constraints to entrepreneurship are equally necessary. Increases in Official Development Assistance (ODA) for investment in agricultural development and participation of the private sector form part of these recommendations. Entrepreneurial spirit and activity to capture the opportunities that science and technology offers is essential to bring about the increases in productivity required and identify the markets to supply.

Entrepreneurship of small farmers means farmers that are capable of moving beyond subsistence farming and of planning production for defined markets with a profit objective. It can also be concluded that productivity increases through entrepreneurship that are of sufficient scale to seriously reduce hunger and poverty can only develop if the major constraints for entrepreneurial development can be removed. However, the poor smallholder faces so many constraints to improving his/her economic situation (which also differs from individual to individual and from community to community) that resolving one or two of these constraints will not be sufficient. It is therefore concluded that a holistic or integrated approach is required to identify and understand the whole set of

constraints (or at least the most important ones) in a given situation and to remove the major constraints simultaneously. The holistic view has to embrace the whole agricultural system from planning to production to market. The most important constraints in a given situation have to be properly defined and tackled simultaneously.

Understanding the mindset of smallholders will be essential for enabling effective support, and a change of mindset is essential for progress. Capital, trust and incentives can change the mindset and stimulate entrepreneurship for the majority of farmers except for the most traditional. Following analysis and conclusions, actionable recommendations are proposed.

1. Think entrepreneurial

The overriding recommendation is that new initiatives to fight poverty and hunger should develop their action plans starting from an entrepreneurial point of view. This implies the understanding that entrepreneurship is more than just producing or processing. It is also about markets, profit and fair trade. This is very much the realm of business and interlocking agro-food chains, profitable in every link of the chain. Here the established national and multi-national agro-food industries should play a major role in providing incentives for smallholders to enter the chain. "Out grower" systems for supplying the local food-processing industry, for import substitution or export operations are opportunities that have been underdeveloped so far.

2. Be very generous with capital injections for a prolonged period

Capital injections to the tune of billions of dollars for a prolonged period are necessary. Public and private donors should live up to their promises to invest in agriculture. African Governments should live up to the UA agreement to spend at least 10% of BPP on agricultural development.

3. Build efficient and effective farmer-based organizations

It is essential for smallholder farmers to organize themselves and create countervailing power on input and output markets and become respected partners in negotiations with the governments. It is recommended to dramatically increase the support for farmers to organize themselves properly. Local governments, NGOs, knowledge institutions, international donors and the private sector must give the highest priority to the facilitation of the establishment of FBOs.

4. Increase vigilance on Good Governance

Good Governance at national, regional and local level that facilitates an enabling environment and a positive business climate for smallholders is at present more of an exception than the rule. It is therefore recommended that in bilateral and multilateral discussions and negotiations, a lot of emphasis be placed on measures to provide incentives for smallholder farmers. Governments in the North, individually or through their organizations (EU, OECD) and the national and international private sector should use their influence and increase their pressure on Governments in the South to accomplish this.

5. Enable a step-change in agricultural research and knowledge transfer

Agricultural research and knowledge transfer is essential to stimulate productivity increase. It is strongly recommended that renowned knowledge institutions like WUR are enabled to make their skills and competencies available on a wide scale, for smallholder development, in close cooperation with national institutions in the South. Governments in the South, private donors, private companies and the knowledge institutions themselves should make ample funds available for agricultural research and knowledge transfer.

6. Improve rural infrastructures drastically

An adequate infrastructure is a precondition for the successful marketing of agricultural products. It is recommended to place rural infrastructure improvements very high on every development agenda. Rural infrastructure projects are usually sustainable investments with a long life span and which also provide economic impulses by employing surplus rural labour. Governments in the North and international institutions (World Bank, IMF) should become much more generous with low-interest loans and grants to stimulate infrastructural development in rural areas.

7. Take a holistic approach in order to tackle constraints simultaneously

The (new) action plans to stimulate agricultural development of the multitude of smallholders must take the constraints for entrepreneurial development in their holistic context into account; an integrated approach is a must. This is not to say that any individual support organization/donor has to solve all constraints, but that "orchestration" is required to tackle the main constraints in a cooperative way (unfortunately cooperation is not the strong point of most development-assistance actors).

8. Place women at the core of every Development Cooperation programme

In any action plan for Africa, it would be an enormous mistake to overlook the African woman, as she is the backbone of society. Fifty percent or more of Sub-Saharan smallholder farmers are women. Without empowering them, supporting them to organize themselves and obtain full democratic rights, which they can really exercise, very little progress will be made. Discrimination of women is one of the most important reasons for the perpetuity of hunger and poverty in Africa.

9. Realize that fair trade sometimes means protection

In order to create a dynamic farming society it is necessary to have stable output price relations, for which (temporarily) protection from cheap imports is required and taxation on agricultural products is minimized. It is recommended that governments that want to stimulate smallholder productivity take this into account. Governments in the North and in the South and their institutions (EU, AU, OECD, WTO) should be more aware of the fact that the development of markets that also work for the poor (smallholders) are essential for the economic development of developing nations that are dependent on agriculture to feed and employ the urban and rural poor.

Kahindo Suhene Marie Jeanne [July 13th, 2014](#)

Program Officer Food Security at NGO GRADEM

"Crop transformation for better access to markets for smallholder farmers"

Besides difficulties related to the production, small operators run against challenges of transformation and conservation of crops to get around the rotting of its products on the market. This lack of opportunities decreases or sometimes even brakes the reaching of their income. Price fixation of crops in raw state depend on consumers or buyers to the detriment of the small farmers, as they are far from being protected by economic politics and businesses of the country. This is one of the determinants of discouragement and unparalleled laziness of some operators.

Crop transformation will give added value to those food products and influence alimentary habits: the same nutritive matters consumed in another form and sometimes in different circumstances other than the necessary consuming in unprocessed state. Access to markets could rise with productivity assurance and by the growth of incomes. In this sense, the small farmer will find himself encouraged by the result of efforts and services rendered to the enviroining population. He will seek to improve its providing, since the more the demand increases, the more he will look to satisfy this demand. Methods and value chain approaches should be developed adapted to the product and the farmer and the environment. Insisted should be on large scale production and possibilities and practices of transformation with adapted means of harvested products. Also every seconded farmer should be given the chance of resistance to the fiery competitiveness of the agricultural market.

The Dutch government should be involved in national and international political and commercial agriculture advocacy, so that certain protectionist aspects and the accompanying measures in favour of small holder farmers will be taken into consideration.

Target 5 – Zero loss or waste of food

Greet Goverde [September 14th, 2014](#)

Secr. Platform Aarde Boer Consument, Netherlands

"Democratisation of the food system from the local level upwards"

Vandana Shiva: 'The centralisation of production and with that the centralisation of distribution by its very necessity means waste. There is no waste in living systems. There is no waste in ecological farming systems. There is no waste in local food systems. I grew many crops, all of them are used: some for the soil, some for the cow. I say, in India nothing gets wasted; the cows are always waiting. Or the earthworms are waiting. It only becomes waste when either it is sent a long distance or stored in centralised food systems. Agriculture today is for trucks, not human beings – 'how long can it sit on a truck?' And then it has to be the identical size. That's why they tried to develop square tomatoes'..... 'The monoculture output is measured in a yield of a single commodity per acre which leaves the farm. So the grain of wheat is measured as a yield but not the straw that should stay on the farm. So what should be recycled on the farm is treated as waste and is not allowed to return to the soil. In Punjab this package has meant that the monoculture has been harvested by combine harvesters and they leave a huge stock of straw which they then have to burn. If any of you try to come to Delhi in winter and you cannot land because of the smog, that's partly their contribution.'

Recycling at the household level partly explains why the average individual consumers' waste of edible foodstuffs is 95 kilos for the average European consumer and 9-10 kilos in SS Africa and South Asia. In the South most of the waste happens at field level. Besides the production waste such as the straw mentioned above there is the lack of transport, the quality of the roads and the lack of local processing. These are reasons why poor people are not well connected to the markets. As a result 650 million tons of commodities are wasted every year. In the North wastage occurs in the food chain (Vandana Shiva: 'agriculture for trucks'), besides at the household level. There is no denying that a lot of the wastage is connected with the centralisation of production and of distribution. So again the suggested solution is: democratisation of the food system from the local level upwards, and the development of local agro-ecological agriculture Governments in the South as well as our own ministry should reinvest in local agriculture. We need food policies, even at the local level, that integrate food production with the environment, including the reduction of waste. At the international level trade regulations should be adjusted in order to facilitate this transition (see also target 2, and see e.g. <http://www.alternativetrademandate.org>. Some of the measures proposed: allow for the regulation of imports, exports and investments in order to realise social, cultural and political human rights; contribute to people-centred regional integration; stop the privatisation and deregulation of public goods; etc.)

Anneke Sipkens & Clementine O'Connor [September 11th, 2014](#)

Director Sustainability, Deloitte - Netherlands/France

"Measuring food waste"

"The Netherlands was a forerunner in introducing landfill bans on biodegradable waste in 1995. Other EU Member States could benefit from similar policy that stimulates more efficient use of food resources. However, it is important to ensure that landfill bans do not simply shift waste management to anaerobic digestion but that accompanying measures result in effective waste prevention.

Quantification is at the heart of the issue. There has not historically been an accepted methodology for quantifying food waste in the EU, and the Netherlands has updated its approach in recent years. The [EU project FUSIONS](#), led by Wageningen University (NL) in partnership with Deloitte (FR) and others, will deliver a coherent approach to food waste quantification, to support Member States in reporting comparable data. FUSIONS are collaborating with the WRI Food Loss and Waste Protocol team, who are working to harmonise food waste measurement globally. Measurement enables supply chain actors to understand where waste is originating, as an essential first step in building reduction strategies. UK food retailer Tesco was a frontrunner in publishing its own food waste data, and we expect this trend towards transparency to gain momentum across the EU.

New Guidance developing food waste prevention programmes was published by the United Nations Environment Programme in May this year, based on the experience of UK food waste expert WRAP together with global case studies. The Guidance, aimed at countries, cities and companies, will be piloted and enriched in the coming years, and is [publicly available here](#).

One specific area which is readily actionable by governments as well as retailers actors is aesthetic standards for produce. Untold quantities of edible produce are ploughed under or discarded because they fail to meet current standards on shape, size and colour. Recent campaigns by a handful of retailers in Europe have shown that consumers are much more flexible than has been previously assumed, and are responding proactively to embrace so-called "ugly fruit". The acceptance of produce in its natural diversity could generate significant gains in food use efficiency across the global supply chain."

Lotte Sluiter & Ries Kamphof [September 11th, 2014](#)

OneWorld/FoodGuerrilla/NCDO, Netherlands

"Food waste consumers"

Within the chain of food production we as NCDO, OneWorld and FoodGuerrilla still consider reducing food waste on the level of the consumers to be one of the biggest challenges. Food waste awareness and reduction on the level of consumers only will not solve the problem of worldwide food waste and losses entirely. However, reduction combined with pressure from consumers towards retailers, industries and farmers to save food will invoke questions being asked and a shift in demand towards less food waste. In our opinion the consumer is the key, by making reducing food waste the norm in a fun and easy way. Two strategies should be implemented to achieve this goal: campaigning and nudging.

- Raising awareness by using campaigns and giving advice on how to recycle or upcycle food. e.g. replanting spring-onions, make pasta salad out of cooked pasta, make smoothie from old fruits etc. Making not-wasting the social norm.
- Since food waste is part of decision making processes that are often not conscious (food is cheap and not much effort is needed to get the food, nor to dispose the food), nudging is desired. Nudging are ways of influencing choice without limiting the amount of choices, by making alternatives appreciably more costly in terms of time, trouble, social sanctions, etc. Nudging is called for because of flaws in individual decision-making, and they work by making use of those flaws (Hausman & Welch 2010, p. 126). To count as a mere nudge, the intervention must be easy and cheap to avoid (Thaler & Sunstein, 2008, p. 6).

Some suggestions and best practices:

- Not-wasting is the social norm, the standard. In restaurants for example, taking home food is the norm, not the exception. Initiatives as the Tas Toe or the Foodie Bag focus on taking leftovers from restaurants home.
- Reduce the size of your plate can change the physical and visual norm
- Clever packaging, adding proper quantity measures, using return-bonuses (think of cartridges, glasses at festivals) or packaging to change colour overtime to visualize the expiration date
- [Using gamification and the fun theory for nudging](#)

Actors responsible for raising awareness and nudging for consumers in our opinion are: 1) the government for creating possibilities, links and money to experiment with nudging 2) the industry for taking up food waste as marketing tool that is fun and easy, 3) knowledge institutes for knowledge on nudging and food behaviour 4) the media for introducing new social norms 5) civil society and social entrepreneurs for bright ideas and thinking outside the box, and civil organisations for boosting and support processes towards zero food waste.

We recommend to target policy choices to monitoring and evaluation of nudging, by investing in research (survey and behavioural experiments) to have a clear idea on the Dutch and food waste, if necessary on a wider European and global scale. We do not recommend sanctions as this would contradict and hinder the transition to more sustainable consumption, and less food waste. Further, the industry, especially oriented towards nudging the new social norm of non-wasting can be encouraged.

Jeroen Candel [September 11th, 2014](#)

PhD Candidate Food Security Governance, Wageningen UR, Netherlands

"The relations between food wastage interventions and food security: lessons from a systematic literature review"

Together with Joris Tielens I recently performed a systematic literature review on the relation between food wastage (food waste + losses) interventions and (enhancing) food security. This study was commissioned by the Food & Business Knowledge Platform and [its report can be found here](#).

One of the most remarkable findings of this study was that although the claim that global food security could benefit from reducing wastage proved pervasive among government actors, NGOs, and private stakeholders, there is a lack of evidence and sound understanding regarding the causality between these interventions and food (in)security. This is particularly the case for possible impacts of reducing food waste in developed countries on food security in developing countries. Other findings that are relevant for this consultation were:

- Various pre- and post-harvest loss reduction actions can have a direct impact on food security. This is particularly true for interventions targeted at smallholder agriculture in developing countries, such as rodent management and metal silos.
- Another intervention that proved to have a direct impact is the donation of food residues to people in need in developed countries, for example through food banks.
- Although a reduction of food wastage has the potential of positively affecting world food prices, the extent to and ways in which this would occur needs to be determined by future research.
- Reducing wastage seems a more efficient and sustainable way of meeting increasing world food demand than a dominant focus on increasing production. It could contribute to a smaller expansion of land used for agricultural production and to reduced pressures on water and energy.
- The success of wastage interventions depends on various contextual factors, such as the economic, environmental, and food security pay-offs from investments, expertise and education, and an enabling political and institutional environment.

We further found that food wastage interventions should be part of a broader, more holistic approach, if one wants to address wastage and enhance food security effectively. Some scholars go even further by arguing that a fixation on wastage reduction is not the right way forward, because they see wastage as a symptom of underlying causes rather than a problem that stands on its own. Interventions should therefore be targeted at these underlying causes. Furthermore, food security will not be ensured by wastage interventions alone. These interventions should therefore be accompanied by further strengthening local, regional and national food systems. Hereby, the food security dimension of access should not be overseen.

Boniface Kiome [September 9th, 2014](#)

Prog Officer Green Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Development at Hivos - East Africa, Kenya

The current program in Kenya, via a consortium of Hivos, SNV & Solidaridad, is to strengthen smallholder entrepreneurial farmers in Kenya. It doesn't pay attention to food wastage linked to production and distribution. Should be part of the food security programs.

Danny Wijnhoud and Barbara van Paassen [September 9th, 2014](#)

Senior Researcher; Policy Advisor - ActionAid Amsterdam - Netherlands

"Minimizing and therefore substantially reducing loss or waste of food"

A target of zero loss or waste refers to an unrealistic ideal but the target should be to minimizing and therefore substantially reducing loss and waste of food.

Recommendations and attention points are the following:

- Generate awareness about and skills training (f/m) on food processing and conservation of nutritious foods
- Generate awareness (f/m) about edible and nutritious crop and animal products that are currently being wasted; make better use of crop residues and organic "waste" for soil fertility management like composting, ploughing back or mulching in integrated agroecological systems.
- Research, learn about and influence the gendered aspects of local food preparation and food customs; women and men to divide burden of unpaid care tasks, including food preparation.
- The promotion of short chains for local, sub-national and national food systems resulting in more local sourcing of food ingredients
- Support investment in solid traditional or non-traditional storage facilities for staple crops at household, community / cooperative and sub-national levels and for instance in "inclusive" warehouse receipt system (WRS) arrangements serving continuous household access to food and higher off-season prices for surplus production.
- Increase value addition, conservation, including traditional and non-traditional local cooling facilities, improve marketing of non-processed and processed non-staple food products including fruits, vegetables, nuts, vegetable oils, fish, dairy and other animal products.
- Invest in market and transport infrastructures for year-round inclusive local and sub-national food markets
- Support product promotion and marketing on the basis of origin and traceability of ingredients.
- Reduce food waste in global north and southern cities as to reduce the food resource foot print
- End biofuel and other targets that divert food and resources away from their human consumption
- Awareness creation with and support to urban communities as also relevant for their involvement in reducing loss and waste of food in general or when engaged in urban and peri-urban agriculture. Just to note that a large percentage of city dwellers in the global south periodically or part-time engage in crop farming or livestock production in peri-urban and rural areas.
- Manage rural-urban dimensions of loss or waste of food.

As to guarantee inclusive systems it is pertinent to invest first and foremost in human, social and political livelihood capital assets of vulnerable communities, in particular in girls and women

Edith Boekraad [August 21st, 2014](#)

Cordaid, Director Food Security

"Support smallholders to make best value out of the harvest"

Food insecurity is not as such a result of food losses and waste. We live in a world of abundance, where there is sufficiently food for all, even when and where losses and waste occur. Losses and waste are a secondary outcome of our production and food systems. The real global challenge is how to ensure that everyone effectively has adequate access to the food available (i.e. Target 1).

Development interventions down the value chain (beyond production; e.g. at harvest, in storage and in processing) are important, though, for smallholders and their organizations to make best money (value) out of the crop produced. Dutch food security policies might more specifically support education and training about best practices and appropriate technologies to optimize the processes of harvesting, on-farm processing, and storage before sale or consumption. Private sectors can be encouraged even more to innovate in smart solutions for post harvest losses benefiting small scale farmers and local entrepreneurs.

Danielle Hirsch [August 19th, 2014](#)

Director of BothENDS, Netherlands

"Focus on local and regional food systems and closing nutrient and water cycles"

The big challenges for zero loss and waste of food are 1) the focus on long value chains with many steps in between, 2) nutrient and water mining on the producing side of the chain and nutrient accumulation at the consuming side of the chain and 3) unsustainable diets that consists of too much animal proteins.

We see 3 options for transition:

- Stimulate sustainable production and consumption through shifting focus to local and regional food and agricultural systems, closing nutrient and water cycles and stimulating diversification in agricultural production and agrobiodiversity. This will result in shorter chains, less food movements/ transportation of food and therefore less waste.
- Promote environmental and people friendly diets. This includes pushing diets that are based on less animal protein. Animal husbandry is far less optimised than the production of crops, when taking into account all the inputs (land, land tenure, chemicals, animal antibiotics, biological pest control, fossil fuel based fertilizers, fodder, animal manure, labour, mechanisation, agrobiodiversity, transportation) and outputs (harvest, ecosystem services, water retention, soil health nutritional value).
- Support knowledge and practice development on closing nutrient and water cycles, optimised (short) value chains, local and regional food systems.

Nehemiah Gitonga [August 18th, 2014](#)

Executive Director, Tenacious Systems Kenya - Farmsoft, ICT - Farming and Food Industry

"Accurate Food Demand and Supply Forecasting"

Ability to meet market requirements and consumer needs accurately, efficiently and sustainably is vital. In food demand and supply forecasting, using of ICT to create the link in the supply chain – from grower to processor, through to retailer 'the traceability chain' and consumer where operational planning based on a market/customer/consumers forward sales/demand forecast – can be entered up to 2 years in advance. This 'Auto-forecast' gives immediate projected availability as soon as planting is done which help to show what is available, of what quantity across the supply chain and precise alignment of farms and produce with the demands of a particular market segment – reducing error and wastage. Comparing with demand forecast to see potential excess and shortages in supply to help making critical decision to cover the projected short in food availability.

Amos Thiongo [August 13th, 2014](#)

Country Coordinator - Agri-ProFocus Kenya

"Food waste in Export Value Chains"

Kenya is a leading exporter of fresh fruits and vegetables to The Netherlands and to other EU nations. A recent study which Agri-ProFocus Kenya supported showed massive food losses in the export value chains – mainly due to ridiculous cosmetic standards imposed on growers and exporters by the importers and retailers in Europe. This leads to massive losses of safe and good food e.g. if an avocado is too big or too small or not oval shaped, its rejected. Equally, if a bean is too long, or too thick, or curved.... its again rejected. Daily over 200 tonnes of good food is wasted. This loss is transferred to poor small scale farmers since they are not paid for the rejected produce.

The Dutch Government can play a critical role in reducing this unnecessary waste. Policies should be put in place against imposition of cosmetic standards – as long as the food is safe for consumption.

Dr Geoff Andrews [July 26th, 2014](#)

Country Director ZOA Burundi

"Not a realistic objective; but critical contribution is infrastructure"

My contribution comes from several years in senior technical management in the UK food industry and several years in humanitarian leadership.

From a manufacturing perspective, the food raw material is one cost element in the processing, the others might be energy, labour, return on investment. In some situations, recovering the final few percent of the food stuff is not costs effective. Minimising waste becomes a cost benefit analysis: the easier it is to reduce loss or the higher the value of the raw material or the greater cost of disposal and the cost benefit analysis will change. I know of a situation where it made financial sense to send to landfill hundreds of tonnes of seasonal product: disposal was cheap, the financial incentive to fulfill the market demand justified a measure of over production and disposal of the surplus.

So in an industrial setting, food raw materials must be considered just one of the elements of the cost mix. Change the financial calculation and you change the behaviour.

In a poor agricultural context, the critical contribution is infrastructure. Huge amounts of harvested materials are lost for want of drying, and secure storage away from water and humidity, infestation, fungal attack and theft. Invest in infrastructure or encourage governments to invest in infrastructure and waste will go down.

Sidi Sanyang [July 16th, 2014](#)

Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice)

"People take more than what they need in the name of civilized culture"

In general, 'waste of food' is associated with poor storage conditions and 'bad' eating habits.

Bad eating habit: much food is thrown because people always take more than what they need in the name of 'civilized culture' — eating all the food in your plate is seen as uncultured. Why do we have to take so much food when we fully know we will not eat all and yet, many remain hungry and malnourished.

Poor storage conditions: in many hot (high temperatures) regions the key challenge is not only post-harvest and add value technological solutions, but technologies and innovations should be coupled with infrastructure such as cold storage facility to sustainably reduce waste of food. Thus investments are needed in infrastructure in the energy sector and investments in such energy should be largely based on renewal energy including agricultural by-products.

Hans Eenhoorn [July 14th, 2014](#)

Member of Worldconnectors

"With adequate investment and training these losses could be drastically reduced"

It is estimated (FAO) that about one third of all food produced for human consumption never reaches the stomach. Roughly one-third of the edible parts of food produced for human consumption, gets lost or wasted globally, which is about 1.3 billion ton per year. Significant amounts of the food produced in developing countries are lost both before, during and after harvest thereby aggravating hunger. The causes of harvest losses, which could (dependant on product) range from 15 to as high as 75 percent of what is produced, are manifold. These include: harvesting at an incorrect stage of produce maturity, pests, excessive exposure to rain, drought or extremes of temperature, contamination by micro-organisms and physical damage that reduces the value of the product. Crops also lose value because of spillage, poor storage, damage from inappropriate tools, inappropriate processing, packing or transportation. With adequate investment and training these losses could be drastically reduced. In developed countries also huge amounts of food are wasted in the retail trade, in home and out-of-home (e.g. restaurants) and because of excess production. Better planning, new thinking about "the best before date" and a reorientation on quality criteria (retail mindset) and on the value of food (consumer mindset) could contribute to the reduction of waste.

The critical entry point for improvements in harvest systems is the farm but, the transition to market-driven systems and greater reliance on the private sector, necessitate that harvest-losses interventions be embedded within the context of value chains. The food supply chains in developing countries need to be strengthened by, inter alia, encouraging small farmers to organize and to diversify and upscale their production and marketing. Investments in infrastructure, storage, transportation, food processing and packaging are also required. Both the public and private sectors have a role to play in achieving this goal. Actions should not only be directed towards isolated parts of the chain, since what is done (or not done) in one part has effects in others. A holistic approach is required.

The 1-2-1 initiative's objective is to mobilize Dutch society in the broadest sense to make a relevant contribution to harvest loss reduction in the developing world and food waste reduction in The Netherlands. This includes a positive mindset change towards food waste reduction and development cooperation, aiming at poverty and hunger reduction through development of efficient agro-food value-chains.

Execution:

- Establish a multi-stakeholder cooperation between the Netherlands and one country in Sub-Saharan Africa, to reach a shared and tangible goal, e.g. 50% reduction in food losses in one or two value chains in both countries by 2020.
- Scale-up existing initiatives in The Netherlands to change the consumer mindset about food-waste and create adequate penalties and rewards to stimulate the private sector to reduce food-waste.

Limiting this initiative, in first instance, to cooperation with one country and one or two selected value-chains is necessary to be able to manage the complexity, keep control over progress and enhance the chance on success. This initiative is meant to be a demonstration-project to determine the "proof of principle", that a holistic approach of the harvest-loss and waste problem through a multi-stakeholder cooperation, can deliver positive results for all stakeholders involved. In particular the private sector must be offered the opportunity to make sustainable profits on investments necessary to reduce losses and waste.

Given the magnitude of food losses, making profitable investments in reducing these losses, could be one way of reducing the cost of food, improving availability, accessibility and utilization of food and thus contribute to food security and business development.

Jan Willem Eggink [July 28th, 2014](#)

Network Facilitator, The Netherlands

"Tough reality; attempts 1-2-1 initiative failed"

Although the idea of the 1-2-1 food losses initiative as described by Hans Eenhoorn above is attractive, it is only fair to admit that several attempts to take a 1-2-1 food losses initiative off the ground failed.

Agri-ProFocus did quite some research on what country would be interested to 'twin' with The Netherlands on food-loss reduction. We were near with Kenya, but when our sponsor in the government got another job, we were back to zero. Not to speak of the difficulties of finding the right parties in The Netherlands. The problem with the whole 1-2-1 initiative is that it requires quite some different high level parties dedicated to a specific approach which does not always feels logical for each of them. More in general I think reduction of food-losses is not one issue, but a broad array of issues adding up to a – in this case – quite easily measurable effect.

This holds true for developing countries where reduction of food-losses comes down to improved post-harvest handling all along the food-chain as in developed countries where the issue is more related to food industry marketing, over cautious food safety regulations and consumer and restaurant purchase strategies. The fact is that food losses are the sum of many small steps in the chain. The only one-haul measure which makes sense in my opinion is paying farmers better prices for their crops and thus making food-losses up the chain more expensive.

Kahindo Suhene Marie Jeanne [July 13th, 2014](#)

Program Officer Food Security at NGO GRADEM

"Markets play a key role"

Food loss or waste comes either from:

1. Insufficient crop transformation and conservation possibilities and capacities: overproduction without markets forces the small exploiter to consume everything during a certain period, causing a loss of food appetite. Products of different origins could be consumed with more appetite through curiosity and drained to markets more easily.
2. Diversification of cultivated products that are favoured by local and international markets.
3. The market: absence or difficult access to the market or inability of market resistance to competitiveness.

Needed are techniques and methods of popularization of transformation and product conservation practices in every production environment, even as the notion of economic calculation linked to profitability and proportional or large scale yields. Besides a decrease of food wastage this will increase productivity and income of small holder farmers. Also strategies should be developed to reduce limits and constraints of access to local and international markets. Also the connexion of small operators worldwide should be facilitated.

Are there elements missing in the Zero Hunger Challenge and this consultation which should be included in the Dutch Food Security policy?

Wim Hiemstra and Joanne Harnmeijer [September 14th, 2014](#)

Agronomist / nutritionist and medical doctor at ETC Foundation, Netherlands

"Gender-inclusive green agriculture business models"

Gender-inclusive green agriculture business models. There is a need for more attention and support to green agriculture business models. That is: models which enable and encourage farmers and their organisations as small and medium sized enterprises to develop businesses for:

- appropriate inputs and technologies for greening of agriculture, such as no-tillage planting machines, organic fertilisers, biological pesticides, seeds for cover crops, etcetera, and
- b. businesses to make nutritious food available in the market for rural, peri-urban and urban consumers.

The innovation agenda to support these local green business models should be based on participatory gender inclusive mechanisms in the identification of bottlenecks and solutions. The new food security policy can get inspiration from the European CAP policy and Horizon 2020 on putting farmers in the driver's seat to develop such innovation agendas, also for agricultural research and development.

Paul Engel [September 14th, 2014](#)

Director ECDPM, Netherlands

"Why a new Dutch Food and Nutrition Security Policy should invest more in improving governance"

Why a new Dutch Food and Nutrition Security Policy should invest more in improving governance

It is great to see how this consultation brings out a rich array of points of view, priorities and suggested lines of intervention to meet the targets set. It illustrates the firm commitment of national and international nongovernmental, academic and business partners of the Dutch government who take food security at heart. It also shows, as Hans Eenhoorn underlines, that perhaps it is not a lack of knowledge on how to secure food and nutrition for all that holds back global food and nutrition security. Mostly, we know what we have to do; we need to focus on getting it done. And the Netherlands with its strong track record on agriculture, trade, water, food and nutrition and on securing safe access for its people is expected to be a frontrunner. Not only because it is the right thing to do but certainly also because it is in our national political and economic interest to be at the frontline in this global effort.

But in a world where our sense of precariousness is on the rise, where global players test each other's strengths and both economic and human development growth seems to slow down, what does this mean? If it is not a lack of knowledge on what to do that is hampering global food and nutrition security, what are the reasons it proves so difficult to achieve? I agree with the various other contributors who argue for a much more profound analysis of the root causes of the global lack of food and nutrition security. Are they located in fragility, civil war, as some imply? Or in the faulty implementation of known solutions, as many others seem to underline. Are they embedded in our global financial and economic system that allows for exclusion and speculation? Or is it our limited understanding of the political economy of food production, distribution and consumption, as others argue. Or is it the lack of stability and sustainability of our global food systems? Or the lack of understanding of what food and nutrition security actually means in practice? The answer will be different from one case to the other; the causes of food and nutrition insecurity will differ from community to community, from country to country, from region to region. Clearly, a new policy needs a clear understanding of what are the dominant causes of food and nutrition security at each level and needs to provide space for in-depth analysis and adaptation to specific local, national, regional and international demands and circumstances; based on a thorough analysis of the drivers of change, that is, the political economy that drives food and nutrition security in each case.

Another reminder that stands out from the contributions is that food and nutrition security is a complex problem, crossing many sectors, disciplines and policy areas and, intrinsically linked with the big challenges our industrial and developing societies face today. It prompts many contributors to suggest a more holistic, integrated approach based on well-specified targets. Many agree that 'business as usual will not do' and call for systemic change and transformation. As a result much attention is paid to the institutions that can make or break the effectiveness or sustainability of the system: Sidi Sanyang from the Africa Rice Centre, points out that technological change alone has not led to the necessary breakthrough; Jolanda Buter underlines traditional institutions, i.e. a strongly embedded endogenous business logic and ancient trade dynamics in Africa, that needs to be valued. Clear messages include the importance of transforming land and water governance and building effective, accountable agricultural and market institutions and a supportive institutional environment for farmers and other entrepreneurs to invest in technically and environmentally sound ways of production, transport and storage; not to mention the need for water, energy and nutrient efficient (smart) farming systems. An important innovation in the approach suggested by various authors is 'nexus-thinking', to stop thinking and working in silos and to connect the dots between nutrition and food, between the city's demands and rural production potential, between agricultural, economic, environmental and social policies and practice, etc. Clearly a new Food and Nutrition policy needs to invest in the governance and the transformation of key institutions, to help create an enabling institutional environment for diverse stakeholders to be able to improve

food and nutrition security. We all know that an enabling business environment is crucial to help local small and medium businesses to flourish; the new policy should address that. We also know that lack of access to credit, knowledge and other essential inputs make it impossible for family farmers, mostly women, to modernize their farms, the new policy should be able to respond to that. And we know how excessive payments and waste of time at border posts hampers regional trade; the policy should support governments to do something about it. And the policy needs to set specific targets with regard to their joint impact on food and nutrition security to induce coherence between the policies and approaches pursued by different actors and sectors.

Many contributors also highlight the political dimensions of food and nutrition security. Clear links are made with growing inequalities and exclusion, i.e. Claudio Schuftan. Evelijne Bruning underlines the fact that the majority of the world's hungry and extremely poor are women food farmers. They structurally lack fair access to resources, mobility and voice in decision-making, which they would need to be able to transform their businesses. David Sogger cites Olivier de Schutter, the UN's Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, to call attention to the political economy of hunger and malnutrition. David Connolly and Agnese Macaluso underscore the relationship between hunger and violent conflict, pointing at the long term impact of deliberate starvation on food security and post-conflict transitions and, the lack of political will on the part of key actors to do something about it. Like the 2008 food riots in several African cities, the above observations help us understand that achieving global food and nutrition security is not just a technical, economic or environmental problem; it is certainly political problem too: almost every single recommendation contributed to this consultation requires systemic change, whether it is to include women and youth, to build sustainable value chains, to support small-holder farmers, to reduce food waste, or to change consumption patterns. And such a change touches the way our institutions, our nations, our regions and our globe are governed. In the ultimate instance, achieving global food and nutrition security depends on profound changes in our national, regional and global governance, both public and corporate.

A new Dutch policy on food and nutrition security therefore needs to propose an even more intense involvement of Dutch stakeholders in the final round of negotiations regarding the Post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals. Much has been accomplished but it's not done yet. And this energy needs to focus not just on proposed Goal 2 to "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture", but also on Goal 16 to "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all an build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels". The Netherlands, home to the "Capital of Global Justice", is in a good position but to do so, the realms of Justice, Governance and Food and Nutrition Security need to be more explicitly connected. In the meantime, Dutch stakeholders and their partners need to continue to address the political dimensions food and nutrition security and think of ways to help nudge national policymakers into adopting more inclusive and sustainable policies, at the very least in areas that affect food and nutrition security.

Let me close with some remarks on Europe. Valuable contributions have been made on the need to build support for global food and nutrition security into mainstream European policies. According to the Lisbon Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, such policies, like the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Agricultural Policy (CAP), Trade Policy, and Research and Innovation Policy, are held to contribute to the achievement of development objectives, such as poverty reduction and food and nutrition security, and to avoid working against these. But within Europe there is a long way to go before this will be fully implemented. During the latest CAP reform, despite repeated efforts, also by the Netherlands, to include it, not even the proposal to regularly monitor CAP effects on developing countries made it into the final text. So clearly, a new policy should include a continued, strong effort on the part of the Dutch government and other stakeholders to convince their European partners to implement the Lisbon Treaty to the letter in terms of food and nutrition security. But there is something else. Europe has successfully achieved its own food and nutrition security as a region. Are we drawing the lessons from that to inspire our international policies and strategies? For example, in Europe we have learned how to invest in market orientation and business innovation by family farmers and small and medium size enterprises in marginalized European areas to reinvigorate their local economies and provide job opportunities. Also, we have learned that to make agriculture more sustainable (green), even when all other dimensions for achieving food security are basically in place, is not just a need from an environmental perspective but also an opportunity for increasing the competitiveness of European agriculture. Therefore, during the last reform leading to the Common Agricultural Policy 2014-2020 it was decided to place "the joint provision of public and private goods at the core of the policy. Farmers should be rewarded for the services they deliver to the wider public, such as landscapes, farmland biodiversity, climate stability even though they have no market value. Therefore, a new policy instrument (...) (greening) is directed to the provision of environmental public goods, which constitutes a major change in the policy framework." In fact the reform of the CAP seems to echo Jose Luis Vivero's argument to treat "food as a commons". Why, if we have learned these lessons in Europe, in development policy the overriding emphasis seems yet to be on treating food as a commodity?

So my last point addresses development studies. In Latin America, since many years local development programmes have reviewed and, where possible, have learned lessons from the implementation of the European CAP, Pillar II, Rural Development Programme in order to promote culturally inspired economic and social development in Latin America. Wouldn't it be wise for development studies to invest more in the reflection and critical analysis of Europe's own experience in securing food and nutrition for all? Not to transfer such experiences "lock, stock and barrel" to developing countries, of course not, and also not without a thorough understanding of the obvious differences in resources and context between Europe and developing regions. But wouldn't it be worth trying to understand what made European national, regional and local governments, private

sector entrepreneurs, farmers' organizations, non-governmental organizations move to make this policy into a success? We have seen the importance of comparative policy analysis, may be some critical self-reflection might help as well?

Paul Engel

Director ECDPM

Chair Steering Committee Food and Business Knowledge Agenda

Oxfam Novib [September 14th, 2014](#)

Oxfam Novib, Netherlands

"Secure access to land"

Respect for land rights, and promotion of responsible land governance is vital to global food security. The ILC estimated that almost 36 million hectares of land have been acquired by foreign investors between 2000-13. The potential benefits for rural populations of these investments are dubious, since the land deals are very often intended to produce for foreign food and biofuel markets, and moreover, it has been virtually impossible to identify acquisitions which were not subject to some kind of "land grabbing", or unethical practices used in acquiring land. Rural populations (especially women and communities living under insecure tenure arrangements) are regularly losing out, often facing human rights violations in the process. As a result, they often end up losing access to the land they owned or used, which undermines their food security and livelihoods. The Dutch government has been taking a pro-active stand on the issue. It has positively contributed to the development of the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the context of National Food Security (VGGTs), and the Dutch government is already on the forefront of their implementation. It is the first and so far only OECD country to hold a multi-stakeholder dialogue on the implementation of the VGGTs.

It is very important that the food security policy reflects this active stand. We would welcome a commitment of the Dutch government to a policy of "zero tolerance for land grabbing". The VGGT's should explicitly be mentioned as an overarching framework – together with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food – and food security related interventions should only take place in a way that supports and not undermines the intention of the VGGTs. Notably, it is important that the policy recognises flexible, diverse, periodic and overlapping tenure systems, including the commons. Food-related interventions should build on and strengthen community land rights as a safety net to adverse shocks, and ensure protection of tenure rights of indigenous peoples, pastoralists, fisher folk, and those using common pool resources.

The government also plays a role to ensure the Dutch private sector (including the financial sector) does not directly or indirectly contribute to land grabbing. It is therefore important that the Dutch food security policy recognises that the private sector must be encouraged to meet the following standards:

- When investing in agriculture, ensure credible steps are taken to avoid transfer of land rights away from communities, smallholders and other marginalised groups.
- Investments should empower small-scale food producers and their organizations, particularly women's, to produce their own food, and participate in local food systems.
- Align with international best practices and standards, including ensuring that all affected communities have provided their FPIC before proceeding with any land-based investments.

Furthermore, the government should apply, as a minimum, the framework of the IFC's performance standards in its support to the Dutch private sector and see to their implementation, not only for the DGGF, but more widely, as a matter of policy coherence.

Oxfam Novib [September 14th, 2014](#)

Oxfam Novib, Netherlands

"Supporting farmers' seeds systems"

Worldwide, most smallholder farmers use their own farm-saved seeds. In Africa this is as much as 80-90%. Smallholders tend to have little access to the formal seed system comprised of public and private research and breeder companies, who largely do not cater to the needs of smallholder farmers. Smallholder farmers engage in a dynamic and flexible "informal" seed system, actively exchanging seeds with each other. However, they often face problems regarding seed purity, health and degeneration, and unstable yields. They lack the continuous access to breeding materials, good quality seeds and markets which is necessary to adapt to ever changing agro-ecological and market conditions.

The seeds developed by formal systems tend to be geared to wide-scale adaptation for mono-cropping, often requiring (costly, unavailable) inputs of fertilizers, pesticides, reliable water (e.g. irrigation), and the seeds themselves (which often cannot be saved and reused). These inputs create dependence and are associated with economic risks (unfavourable markets, crop failure) and/or environmental risks (soil, water, biodiversity, climate). A further risk is loss of farmers' varieties (genetic diversity) and associated farmers' skills and knowledge. Thus smallholder farmers find themselves between a rock and a hard place, with a choice between often inadequate farm-saved seeds, or costly, risky, and/or irrelevant commercial seeds – if there is a choice at all.

The Dutch government can help by steering (national and international) public research towards supporting farmers' seed systems, enabling farmers to access seeds, breeding materials and technologies and working towards integrated (formal/informal) seed systems whereby farmers participate in setting research agenda and implementation. For example, the formal systems should engage farmers in participatory breeding and variety selection programs to come to improved locally adapted varieties. However, funding for public breeding institutes has generally been inadequate and has decreased, and many institutes focus on commercial markets, including through partnerships with private companies.

Another challenge where the Netherlands can play an important role is in promoting the implementation of Farmers Rights. The International treaty on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (ITPGRFA) recognizes the contribution that local and indigenous communities and farmers of all regions of the world have made and will continue to make for the conservation and development of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA). It also explicitly recognizes that member governments have the responsibility of realizing farmers' rights. This includes the right to save, use, exchange and sell farm-saved seed/propagating material; the right to participate in decision making on matters related to the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA; the right to participate in the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from, the use of plant genetic resources as well as protection of traditional knowledge relevant to PGRFA. It is important that implementation of farmers' rights is not undermined by overly restrictive seed laws and plant variety protection laws, as may be the consequence of many new countries joining the international Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV).

Jacques van Nederpelt and Greet Goverde [September 14th, 2014](#)

Members of Platform Aarde Boer consument, the Netherlands

"Food sovereignty offers a system of producing food determined by local producers and users"

The concept of food sovereignty or food democracy (Olivier de Schutter) is very appealing when it comes to realizing both food security and food safety worldwide. The concept has been developed by La Via Campesina, the international peasant movement. Food sovereignty implies the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food, produced in sustainable ways, and it also implies their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce and consume food at the heart of food systems and of food policies rather than the demands of international markets and large corporations. Food sovereignty offers a system of producing food determined by local producers and users. It aims at empowerment of peasants and promotion of family farm-driven agriculture and pastoralist-led grazing, based on the principles of environmental, social and economic sustainability. Existing food systems are dominated by a relatively small number of major market actors that are very difficult to circumvent. Food sovereignty implies new social relations free of oppression and social inequality. It ensures that the rights to use and manage lands, waters, seeds, livestock and biodiversity are in the hands of those who produce food. It promotes transparent and fair trade, that guarantees just incomes to all producers as well as the rights of consumers to control their nutrition.

Food products and their components should be exempt from WTO trade regulations. Open borders as imposed by the WTO lead to volatile farm prices on the international markets that are often below the production costs. So family farms all over the world are jeopardised and consequently food security is jeopardised as well. Food sovereignty demands trade regulations that protect producers from the large corporations that now dominate the processing and distribution of food. Countries or groups of countries participating in trade agreements should be free, depending on their natural resources, to decide whether they produce certain foodstuffs themselves or import them, and to regulate imports and exports accordingly.

Export-driven agriculture policies in open markets are destructive for the food production capacity of less competitive countries. Not agribusiness and supermarket chains should determine food production policies but governments, producers and consumers. Some people call this protectionism but why shouldn't we protect what is valuable and often defenseless?

It would be highly commendable for the Netherlands to demand a paradigm-change and to support the countries (mainly the least developed countries) that struggle against the WTO and free trade rules in international negotiations.

Stineke Oenema [September 14th, 2014](#)

Unit Manager Strategy and Policy, Netherlands

"Coherency with human rights"

Apart from the earlier message about interconnectedness (and thus coherency between the pillars), I would like to add the importance of coherency of the Dutch policies with Human Rights, particularly the Right to Adequate Food. Several other already referred to De Schutter last report in his capacity as Special Rapporteur for the Right to Food. I very much agree with those. In addition I would like to underline the importance of coherency with policies that are adopted in the Committee on World Food Security, the most inclusive platform to debate food and nutrition security. Netherlands should align its own policies.

Stineke Oenema [September 14th, 2014](#)

Member of Independent Expert Group for Global Nutrition Report, Netherlands

"Interconnectedness and learning"

It is important to make sure that the five pillars are interconnected and are not addressed in isolation. The idea is that the five pillars together contribute to zero hunger and good nutrition for all. Nutrition has a multi sectoral nature. Malnutrition can hardly be a program, but rather is an "issue" that needs to be tackled through several areas of intervention supported by good policies- What kind of interventions are needed in the five pillars in order to improve nutrition: It is advisable to specify in each pillar how the proposed intervention or policy will address malnutrition (make them nutrition sensitive).

Still a lot of lessons need to be learned about how (combinations of) several interventions impact on nutrition, especially "nutrition sensitive interventions". Therefore good monitoring is essential, so it is advisable that extra budget is reserved for rigorous monitoring systems and learning.

Nelleke van der Vleuten [September 12th, 2014](#)

Project leader 'Women as Inclusive Business partners, BoP Innovation Center & ICCO Cooperation

"Build a business case for women in Private Sector programs on food security"

The positive effects of empowered women on food security, e.g. more food availability and more healthy children, get wider recognition. The World Bank rightly coined that 'gender equality is smart economics' (World Bank 2012). In their report the Bank calls upon the public sector and civil society, but also the Private Sector to contribute to gender equality. And many organizations are joining this call for action by the private sector. However, these insights are not really acted upon in private sector related programs.

I like to share some basic notes about at the nexus between 'women' and the 'private sector' and how a food security policy could take these insights in its program. Doing so could bring the desired action by the private sector closer.

While referring to 'women' and 'business', the paradigms and terms used are very different: 'Women' feature in a rights based & compliance perspective ('business should respect women's human rights as workers or community members'). In the case of 'business' we hear about 'business model, market share, FDI, job creation', etc. and all in a gender-neutral way. Reference to 'gender' or 'women' only features in labor conditions; e.g. related to equal pay and health & safety.

This may be understandable, as the main driver of business is a commercial approach in which compliance to human rights standards is but one component. The different paradigm however leads to a situation in which appeals to business to pay more attention to women's needs and interests, is often responded to by starting a 'social project'.

Food security policies would be more effective if they build on the notion that there is a potential business case for the private sector to integrate the needs and interests of women in relation to food security in their business. In other words: if these try to blend the paradigms of 'business' and a 'rights perspective'.

Some examples:

- In outgrower schemes, women are mostly unpaid family workers. As they do not own land and are thus no signatories to a contract, they are left out of training. Training them would increase quality and quantity of the produce.
- Low income women are illiterate or do not visit the market; thus not aware, let alone able to use or apply, improved products or practices that help to improve their health and wellbeing and of their children. Engaging local women as distributors and ensuring both a solid sales as well as technical expertise, can help to overcome cultural barriers.
- In the agro-sector, technology use and extension service for women farmers are very low. The same goes for finance and coaching for women entrepreneurs. Women also lack affordable products related to sexual health, hygiene or nutrition. This offers scope to explore market based innovative solutions e.g. new labor saving technology for women farmers or ICT enabled information related to health care, child nutrition, agricultural information, market-prices, financial products etc. Of course to be viable these products need to meet certain criteria, (viz. the so-called 4 A's in BoP marketing: affordable, acceptable, available and based on awareness).

Policies can and should help to build such business cases in particular by:

- Adapting PSD instruments, from trade missions to development finance, in such a way that innovative products and services can be developed for women. This includes that the parameters of eligible types of businesses or entrepreneurs to receive support, needs to be modified;
- Developing programs for SME promotion take gender differences into account and are multidimensional. Women's entrepreneurship promotion is often based on the assumption that access to finance automatically contributes to gender equality. A more comprehensive approach includes promotion of tailor-made coaching, supporting women's business associations, or promoting affordable child care so that women can better manage their work and family-life responsibilities;
- Integrating topics that are key for women workers & staff, but cannot easily be addressed at the level of a single company, into programs for a better business climate & enabling environment. E.g. the need for adequate labor

laws to include parental leave, management development or technical training for women so that they can grow to higher positions in a company or apprenticeship programs for young women.

Some prerequisites for policies to support 'building the business case for women' in Private Sector Development programs are:

- Use sex-disaggregated data; all programs should be scrutinized on their effects of possible discrimination of women.
- Apply key insights that are available on what actually works or does not work.
- Apply a gender focus, i.e. to involve and address men to ensure that a focus on women does not backfire on them, e.g. increases women's double or triple burden.

Guus Geurts [September 12th, 2014](#)

Author 'Wereldvoedsel - pleidooi voor een rechtvaardige en ecologische voedselvoorziening'

"Structural change"

We are trying to reach full food security for 9 billion people in 2050 in a world where trade in agricultural products is not too much regulated, where all citizens should be able to reach a Western consumption style, where natural resources like fossil fuels, water, fertile land and phosphate seem infinite, where we work together in PPP's with multinationals in stead of establishing binding human rights – and environmental agreements, and where there is optimism that technology can solve a lot of problems including environmental restrictions.

As the Club of Rome predicted, and as was [confirmed a few weeks ago](#), this is a fairy tale.

So I hope the Dutch government will also will recognize that business as usual is not option. However I am not optimistic, for example if I see how minister Ploumen and PvdA are supporting the current TTIP negotiations.

In my contributions at target 1, 3 and 4 I already gave some alternatives, with one goal: every enterprise, so also a small holder who produces food, needs a fair and stable price to guarantee sustainable production on the long term.

Further scarce natural resources need first to be used to for feeding the local, regional (eg the EU) and national population.

To make this possible we need structural changes of trade agreements, of World Bank and IMF policy and of European Common Agricultural Policy.

Finally I strongly agree with the following statements:

WIJNHOUD & VAN PAASSEN (ActionAid)

"Reflections on Zero Hunger Targets approach and pillars of current Dutch Food Security policy"

We judge the WFP / FAO food security pillars are useful for policy-making. In that sense it was remarkable that the current Dutch Food Security Policy (2012-2015) did not use the same pillars. Instead it downplayed some of the more social dimensions such as "Risk coping mechanism as to guarantee stability and sustainability". This is exactly the pillar that does address vulnerability and risks of food insecure and malnourished people. A pillar on 'better business climate' was introduced instead. (...) In addition, a more explicit human rights based approach (in line with FAO and UN initiatives) would strengthen Dutch food security policies and pillars in order to serve the ultimate objectives of food security and the right to food.

The following pertinent issues have not been covered or may easily be overlooked and disappear from the agenda:

- Power relations (imbalances), Political Economy & Political Analysis. The importance of political economy and politics is too much downplayed and if accepted it rarely translates into politically-informed programming (see also comment Herman Brouwer CDI-WUR)
- The roles and added value of respective segments within the private sector requires a realistic assessment (see comment Herman Brouwer, CDI-WUR) We are missing the Theory of Change as whether and how "trade for development" and "private sector development" guarantee food and nutrition security? There is a risk that many initiatives with social and environmental goals are becoming agribusiness promotion initiatives captured by large companies. Mainstream Value Chain Development and PPPs initiatives (see recent "Moral Hazard? OXFAM publication) are no Panacea for food and nutrition security.
- Avoid the "blind people and the elephant syndrome" meaning each stakeholder focusing within their niche, but without understanding the overall system complexity and therefore never being effective in transforming the (overall) system. This also exposes (foreign) investors and the private sector claiming to solve the food security and nutrition crisis without being acquainted with deprivation, local livelihood and food security challenges in a power-imbalanced globalizing world.
- The negative impacts of Structural Adjustment Policies and restrictions on investments in quality of public social and economic service delivery should not be underestimated. Also the shift to promotion of FDI and large-scale agriculture resulted in a near collapse of public agricultural research and extension systems. Moreover, corruption had and has a destructive effect on the quality of basic service delivery.

Gribnau (Hivos) "On youth and lack of representation"

There is much to learn about supporting dynamic traditional markets, and how to balance this support against modernization campaigns and high expectations from big business. What is lacking is the voice of smallholders in the debate, most of them are not formally organized, nor members of cooperatives or other formal economic organizations.

HOGENHUIS (Oikos):

"No 'zero hunger' without addressing core systemic issues"

(..) the issue of landrights that seems to be more or less lacking in the goals and the comments.

However, a more important comment would be that what seems to be missing is the embedding of this food security and zero hunger theme in a broader framework of seriously and thoroughly realizing an equitable and sustainable economy world wide. A framework that addresses structural problems that have their negative impact on other issues than food (in)security as well, like climate change, regional conflicts about resources, low standards of health care in many regions etc. Here we can think of the global obsession with (financial) economic growth, the onesided way of measuring and comparing economic success (in terms of GDP), the imbalances in the global financial system with its fast financial mega transactions, the power imbalances that are sustained on this basis, the obsession with growth of productivity (per hour worked) which time and again renders people without work and income (for buying food!), the international competition for land and resources to secure healthy (?) national economies instead of working together for a truly healthy global economy, the disturbing power of multinationals, that can work for the common good but cannot be democratically controled to do so, etc. Hunger and poverty are the signs or even outcomes of extreme inequality and marginalisation. As long as these structural issues are not tackled head on, new extreme inequalities will develop again and again, resulting in new groups suffering from hunger and poverty. Zero hunger will then remain a permanent, and therefor an illusory, goal.

HIRSCH (BothENDS)

"Some serious concerns"

We have serious concerns about the fulfilment of the ministers' commitment to talk with Olivier De Schutter (the former Special Rapporteur on the right to food) concerning the recommendations on the right to food he made during his mandate.

VIVERO POL (Universite Catholique de Louvain):

"A different narrative and ethical approach: food as a commons"

Concrete food-related proposals for the public good:

Firstly, a Universal Food Coverage could be engineered to guarantee a minimum amount of food to everybody, everywhere, everytime, similar to the Universal Health Coverage and the Universal Primary Education.

Secondly, patenting on living beings should be banned.

Thirdly, food speculation should be banned.

Another proposal is to take international food trade outside the World Trade Organization, as food cannot be considered like other commodities, due to its multiple dimensions for human beings. Along those lines, a different international Food Treaty shall be crafted, whereby countries abide by and respect some minimum standards in food production and trade. It should be a binding treaty.

Public-private partnerships (PPP) in the food sector are decision-making spaces for the private sector to influence policymakers in order to arrange a legal space which is conducive to profit-seeking. Since they are not meant to maximize the health and food security of the citizens but mainly to maximize profit-seeking, these PPPs should be restricted to operational arrangements but never to dealing with policy making or legal frameworks.

SOGGE (Independent researcher):

"Don't Overlook Political Economy and Public Politics"

A year ago, in his final report to the United Nations General Assembly, the UN's Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier De Schutter, devoted a lot of attention to "the political economy questions that play such an important part in explaining the failure to achieve durable success in tackling hunger and malnutrition." In setting forth his answers to those questions, he barely mentioned technology, science and markets. Using terms like access and entitlements he zeroed in on power and public politics, arguing that food security is achievable where "policies comply with the principles of participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment and the rule of law."

A cursory look at your food security discussion up to now indicates that issues of political economy are hardly raised. But relative to their relevance and importance, issues of power and governance have been confined to the margins of the discussion thus far. A good example would be the book 'The Global Land Grab' by Annelies Zoomers and Mayke Kaag about needs for transparent and fair rules over land access. Could 'public, democratic processes' be taken as Target 6?

Olivier De Schutter's final report is not the only one underscoring this. A report published this month in Germany by Misereor, Brot für de Welt and Global Policy Forum places large question-marks next to current approaches to African food security based on business-led 'multi-stakeholder' models of governance. Those global governance models have been expertly analysed and shown to have very serious deficiencies in respect to "participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment and the rule of law."

Mariska Meurs September 12th, 2014

"A Fair Bite for Food Rights" Consortium

"The right to food, the double burden of malnutrition and global governance"

Three elements that we believe are missing and should be included in the new food security policy, are:

- A rights-based approach, putting the most affected people at the centre and addressing power imbalances and other underlying causes of malnutrition together with the unambiguous affirmation of the right to adequate food

as the central pillar of policies and its profound interrelation with women's and children's rights and empowerment.

- Looking ahead and addressing the double burden of malnutrition; all questions are framed along the goals of the Zero Hunger Challenge. Now already, and more so in the near future, low income groups globally and particularly in LMLICs are suffering from diet-related illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease and certain types of cancers. International regulatory frameworks can help to reduce the availability of unhealthy foods.
- Ensure that focus is placed on tackling underlying causes of food/nutrition insecurity by improving global governance mechanisms and changing (governance and regulatory) structures by way of more attention for well-known Conflicts of Interests. The Dutch government can support the creation of enabling environments and assist national LMLICs governments to ensure that public policy space for nutrition is respected.

Danny Wijnhoud & Barbara van Paassen [September 12th, 2014](#)

Senior Researcher; Policy Advisor, ActionAid Amsterdam, Netherlands

"Reflections on Zero Hunger Targets approach and pillars of current Dutch Food Security policy"

We have been wondering as why feedback and input is being collected per Zero Hunger Target and not per food security pillar instead. For instance targets 1 and 3 are very much overarching and appear to be pillars as such whereas target 2 is very specific. We judge the WFP / FAO food security pillars are useful for policy-making. In that sense it was remarkable that the current Dutch Food Security Policy (2012-2015) did not use the same pillars. Instead it downplayed some of the more social dimensions such as "Risk coping mechanism as to guarantee stability and sustainability". This is exactly the pillar that does address vulnerability and risks of food insecure and malnourished people. A pillar on 'better business climate' was introduced instead. It was supposed to create synergy but also created confusion about the convergence of (and tension between) private sector development and food security objectives. We would propose to stick to existing FAO definitions and where business climate is addressed to ensure this favors (women) smallholders and micro and small businesses first. In addition, a more explicit human rights based approach (in line with FAO and UN initiatives) would strengthen Dutch food security policies and pillars in order to serve the ultimate objectives of food security and the right to food.

Additional pertinent issues

The following pertinent issues have not been covered or may easily be overlooked and disappear from the agenda:

- Human rights perspective; right to food ([UN resolution 68 /177](#)) and women's rights. It is essential to implement UN resolutions and CFS guidelines on the Right to Food and to integrate recommendations of former [UNSR Right to food](#). Treating food as a human right brings coherence and accountability. It helps to close the gaps by putting food security of all citizens at the top of the decision-making hierarchy, and making these decision-making processes participatory and accountable.
- Risk coping mechanisms and investments in resilience of vulnerable communities, women in particular.
- Existing policies and initiatives are insufficiently engendered, let alone focused on empowerment of women. There is much to be gained by strengthening policy coherence and integrating more strongly women's rights and food security (right to food) policies. Each and every policy should be screened on their impact on women's rights, food & nutrition security and the right to food. [See for instance most recent policy analysis and recommendations for Dutch policies.](#)
- As related, solutions should be people-centered and the voices of food insecure and malnourished people are rarely heard, let alone they are represented and consulted as equals and in fact prime stakeholders when dealing with their food and nutrition security (see also comment Carol Gribnao of HIVOS).
- [Power relations \(imbalances\), Political Economy & Political Analysis](#). The importance of political economy and politics is too much downplayed and if accepted it rarely translates into politically-informed programming (see also comment Herman Brouwer CDI-WUR)
- The roles and added value of respective segments within the private sector requires a realistic assessment (see comment Herman Brouwer, CDI-WUR) We are missing the Theory of Change as whether and how "trade for development" and "private sector development" guarantee food and nutrition security? Would this be through inclusion, participation of and ownership by vulnerable women and men? How to avoid dependency, IPR hurdles? There is a risk that many initiatives with social and environmental goals are becoming agribusiness promotion initiatives captured by large companies. Mainstream Value Chain Development and PPPs initiatives ([see recent "Moral Hazard? OXFAM publication"](#)) are no Panacea for food and nutrition security. Business models involving smallholders or micro enterprises largely address concerns and risks of the most powerful players rather than covering engendered micro-economic and risk analysis at intra-household, household and community levels assessing opportunity costs and establishing risk coping mechanisms guaranteeing resilience.
- Avoid the "blind people and the elephant syndrome" meaning each stakeholder focusing within their niche, but without understanding the overall system complexity and therefore never being effective in transforming the (overall) system. This also exposes (foreign) investors and the private sector claiming to solve the food security and nutrition crisis without being acquainted with deprivation, local livelihood and food security challenges in a power-imbalanced globalizing world.
- Policy recommendations also should guide institutional development and elaborate roles and responsibilities of respective stakeholders and combat stagnation and decline due to vested interest, unclear or overlapping mandates and avoid competition like between donors, NGOs or often public institutions within one and the

same government system. For instance, a lot of thinking and capacity development should go into establishing or rehabilitating and transforming demand driven public support systems for supporting (women) smallholders and micro and small enterprises rural-urban and livelihood transitions.

- The negative impacts of Structural Adjustment Policies and restrictions on investments in quality of public social and economic service delivery should not be underestimated. Also the shift to promotion of FDI and large-scale agriculture resulted in a near collapse of public agricultural research and extension systems. Moreover, corruption had and has a destructive effect on the quality of basic service delivery.
- In many developing countries basic social and economic service delivery is poor. More and better investments in health, literacy, education, vocational and skills training for income generation, gender and political awareness of the poor, in particular women, in combination with sincere attention for combatting corruption and improving governance would give a major boost to food security.
- Instability, conflict and/or war beyond destroying the business environment are causing a large number of crises, including refugee crises, resulting in large groups being affected by malnourishment, hunger, disease and famines. This means that food and nutrition security shall not be achieved if not addressing the root causes of conflict, like land and water grabbing and broader land & water conflicts, extreme poverty, extreme inequality and exclusion, which also may result in radicalization in turn feeding terrorism and conflict.

Carol Gribnau [September 9th, 2014](#)

Head Green Entrepreneurship Programme, Hivos, Netherlands

"On youth and lack of representation"

Youth

Globally, there is a large cohort of rural youth who often aspire to leave agriculture. The next generation is likely to see fewer farmers, and many fewer full-time farmers, as rural youth pass a demographic peak in most regions (with sub-saharan Africa an important exception) and seek jobs off the farm. Among rural laborers aged 16-24, about half worked full-time off-farm jobs. Remaining farmers in the country are renting and consolidating land left unused by urban migrants, combining very small holdings to obtain a sustainable livelihood. In other countries (i.e. South India), youth migration is already driving labor shortages and rising wages, adding pressures on small-scale farms.

Observations on demographic change and trends on rural transformation must inform a rethink in public policy to minimize the risk and take advantage of opportunities. Therefore, rural youth have to be put high on the policy agenda. Governments and development partners have a key role to play in focusing on rural youth through rural and agricultural policy and investment. National employment and and labour policies, including those for youth, should be revisited to give explicit focus to agriculture and the associated agri-food market chains and service industries as a major sector upon which to strengthen opportunities for securing and expanding decent employment.

Lack of representation

There is much to learn about supporting dynamic traditional markets, and how to balance this support against modernization campaigns and high expectations from big business. What is lacking is the voice of smallholders in the debate, most of them are not formally organized, nor members of cooperatives or other formal economic organizations. Without formal representation they lack influence in designing policies, which would appreciate the benefits of informal trade systems and at the same time mitigate the dark sides of informality. To design more appropriate policies and interventions, we need to perceive the complexity of markets of the poor — the ways that informality and formality coexist, interact and sometimes clash — and understand how small producer agency negotiates the mix in global, national and local markets.

Boniface Kiome [September 9th, 2014](#)

Prog Officer Green Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Development at Hivos - East Africa, Kenya

In Dutch policy on food security and agriculture much attention is being paid to the role of the private sector. The presence of Dutch private sector is positive by showing and giving inputs in innovation & technology. Their knowledge is useful and need to be linked to local companies. Much more can be done in increasing support in the form of technology and knowledge though B2B with local SMEs in similar sectors. **The cooperation of Dutch private sector with local SMEs should be strengthened more.**

Herman Brouwer [September 3rd, 2014](#)

Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen UR, Netherlands

"Ladders for picking high-hanging fruits"

I have had the privilege to work with Dutch embassies over the last 5 years to support their food security programmes, together with my team at CDI, Wageningen UR. Let me contribute some thoughts from this experience.

The apples were ripening before my eyes, in my garden. My tree was ready for harvesting and what a pleasure it was to pick them. Of course I started at the bottom. I couldn't get to the apples at the top, but I resolved to bring a ladder a next day. However, all those apples from the lower branches added up to a huge pile already. I ended

up spending the next week dealing with these apples. I had no time left for the bigger, juicier apples from the high branches. The birds got the better of it.

Low-hanging fruits are the bread and butter of food security interventions. We want quick impact and high return on investment. This often translates in applying off-the-shelf approaches in low-risk countries and sectors. Approaches that are 'tried and tested' and that, we tell ourselves, can be upscaled easily. The truth is that many of these interventions can and do harvest low-hanging fruits, but are unable to collect the higher-hanging ones. In other words, we are able to deliver some results but haven't found the mechanisms to affect systemic change in the complex food systems we intervene in. Without ladders to pick high-hanging fruits, it just will not happen. Are we satisfied with that?

Many embassies struggle in their implementation because 'the enabling environment is not conducive'. This has been analysed in extenso. It is usually because of a cocktail of stagnant bureaucratic institutions, corruption, lack of incentives to perform, low capacity to implement, and absence of checks and balances. Hard to tackle, but critical. A typical high-hanging fruit.

There is no silver bullet for this. I am suggesting investments in contextualized approaches to improve the enabling environment in which Dutch food security programmes thrive and deliver results. Here are three ingredients to start with:

- **Political savviness:** understanding the local context, and continuously adapt strategies. These tactical actions are where embassies naturally excel in.
- **Realism about the role of Dutch private sector:** even in transition countries Dutch companies are often considering the investment risks too high. This calls for customized private sector instruments, and parallel policies stimulating public- or civil society-led efforts.
- **More recognition of the role of power dynamics in programme implementation.** Just having a PPP with farmers' organisations does not mean that farmers gain or are empowered. Managing partnership dynamics is a skill that needs nurturing.

Eventually, the impact of Dutch interventions depends on the ability to help our partners remove crippling impediments that prevent societies to take charge of their own food security. It is a tall order, with no guarantees. But wouldn't it be a great if the Netherlands were known for its ladders, that enable us to get those apples at the top of the tree?

Helena Pachon [August 31st, 2014](#)

Senior Nutrition Scientist, Food Fortification Initiative - USA

"Nutrition security must also be considered"

'Food security' cannot be discussed in isolation from 'nutrition'. FAO recognized this years ago and changed their terminology from 'food security' to 'food and nutrition security'. Beyond terminology this is a fundamental shift in seeing the role of food as not only to provide energy (quantity) but also to nourish (quality). The Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), drivers of the green revolution, also recognized this and for years have been promoting biofortification: the breeding of staple crops (that, by definition, are important sources of energy) with higher nutritional value. At the Food Fortification Initiative, for a decade we have worked with partners to add vitamins and mineral to wheat flour: to essentially turn an 'energy-filled' food into an 'energy- and nutrient-filled' food. In the process, there have been demonstrable reductions in neural tube defects in all countries that have evaluated the impact of adding folic acid to flour through fortification. In a world with a growing obesity problem, we cannot focus on food security and energy alone. We must ensure that the food we provide meets nutritional requirements, as well. Therefore, we propose to add a Target 6: *Ensuring that food is providing nutrition security, for example, by being fortified with essential vitamins and minerals.*

Wijnand Klaver [August 31st, 2014](#)

Senior Researcher Food and Nutrition Security, African Studies Centre, Leiden

"Awareness and alertness"

Monitoring

As a complement to the expert opinions on the subject domains of the different SUN Targets 1-5, I propose that the food and nutrition security policy also contains an element at meta-level, i.e. the question how the attainment of the targets will be monitored and assessed, the results of which will be useful to feed back into the integrated stakeholder processes, be they at international, national or landscape level. This can include the role of information along the food supply chain (see Nehemiah Gitonga's contribution under Target 1). Targets 1-5 call for measurement of (1) 100% access to adequate food all year round, (2) zero stunted children, (3) all food systems sustainable, (4) 100% increase in smallholder productivity and income and (5) zero loss or waste of food.

FAO proposes a "suite" of indicators to monitor and assess food (and nutrition) security ([see website](#)). A number of indicators are derived from Food Balance Sheets, while data on nutritional status are borrowed from the World Health Organization (inter alia drawn from the DHS Demographic and Health Surveys). Wider issues such as the fulfillment of human rights or the use of child labour and environmental damage are not yet included. Yet, the "suite" is a start that can be used to portray the current state of affairs and the trends since the early 1960's. See

a forthcoming publication of the African Studies Centre (September 2014) entitled "[Digging Deeper: Inside Africa's Agricultural, Food and Nutrition Dynamics](#)". The book includes an analysis of the trends of the prevalence of undernourishment (PoU) and those of stunting, wasting and underweight for four countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. A strong disparity is seen between on the one hand the improving food availability and dietary diversification statistics and on the other hand the stagnating and alarming undernourishment statistics. When it comes to the trends in the time series, data from Kenya can be interpreted to show a time lag between the PoU and young child stunting: as stunting among underfives is a cumulative indicator reflecting experiences in the past 0-5 years, its fluctuations may mirror fluctuations in the food base that occurred several years earlier. Apart from historical study, the use of scenario studies for the coming decades is important. The Netherlands has a very strong capacity here (Center for World Food Studies SOW-VU, Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency PBL, and LEI Wageningen UR).

A target at information system(s) level?

This missing element may give rise to a target of its own, which would express the effective use of the information for decision making at all relevant levels.

Christiaan Hogenhuis [August 29th, 2014](#)

Sr. researcher and program leader transition towards sustainability - Oikos, Netherlands

"No 'zero hunger' without addressing core systemic issues"

The number of expert contributions on the different targets is overwhelming already. I could not imagine to be able to contribute anything new on a specialist level. Only one more or less specialist issue came to my mind and that is the issue of landrights that seems to be more or less lacking in the goals and the comments. My – non-expert – opinion is that securing of landrights is crucial for the goals 1, 2 and 4.

However, a more important comment would be that what seems to be missing is the embedding of this food security and zero hunger theme in a broader framework of seriously and thoroughly realizing an equitable and sustainable economy world wide. A framework that addresses structural problems that have their negative impact on other issues than food (in)security as well, like climate change, regional conflicts about resources, low standards of health care in many regions etc. Here we can think of the global obsession with (financial) economic growth, the onesided way of measuring and comparing economic success (in terms of GDP), the imbalances in the global financial system with its fast financial mega transactions, the power imbalances that are sustained on this basis, the obsession with growth of productivity (per hour worked) which time and again renders people without work and income (for buying food!), the international competition for land and resources to secure healthy (?) national economies instead of working together for a truly healthy global economy, the disturbing power of multinationals, that can work for the common good but cannot be democratically controlled to do so, etc. Hunger and poverty are the signs or even outcomes of extreme inequality and marginalisation. As long as these structural issues are not tackled head on, new extreme inequalities will develop again and again, resulting in new groups suffering from hunger and poverty. Zero hunger will then remain a permanent, and therefore an illusory, goal.

An approach like this obviously has to be global, international. The Netherlands can be a serious and dedicated stimulus in that process and approach. We would recommend that a Food Security program clearly states that it will be embedded in such a broader structural approach and that the Dutch government will be dedicated to making this work. This relates, as will be clear, to the issue of developing new global (sustainable) development goals post 2015. But on top of or as a complement to sustainable development goals and targets we also need a well grounded framework of actions and strategies – not only nationally but also internationally – that address these structural issues in order to be able to reach these goals and targets.

This is not meant to move away from 'zero hunger' or food security as goals, but as a contribution to a strategy to effectively deliver these goals. And some other as well.

Nico Janssen [August 21st, 2014](#)

SNV World Tanzania, Global Coordinator Nutrition Security

"All 5 targets together"

Not so much missing elements, but rather an avoidance that the 5 targets become separate pillars. What is much more needed is a holistic, integrated, multi-sector approach to achieve the 5 targets simultaneously.

The Dutch strength has always been in the multi-stakeholder approach to solving complex issues where public sector, private sector, civil society and research interact to find innovative solutions that can work at scale.

Ton Dietz [August 19th, 2014](#)

Director African Studies Centre, Netherlands

"Expanding demand from Africa's cities, and particularly its rising metropolises"

Because of the expanding demand from Africa's cities, and particularly its rising metropolises (a result of demographic growth, urbanization, concentrated wealth in cities, and growing prosperity) there has been a rapid growth in agricultural production in many African countries. The large majority of Africa's agricultural production feeds African consumers; only a limited part of Africa's agricultural land and labor is devoted to exports.

In Africa's cities there is a wide gap between rich-end consumers (for which the expanding supermarkets and specialized shops cater) and the mass of poor consumers (who get their agro-products mostly through informal channels and open markets). However, the food web in cities should not be seen as compartmentalized, as there are many linkages between the agencies active in the food industry. Innovations (e.g. standardization; better quality control), which are a result in one segment or in one product, do have their repercussions in other segments and in the food chain as a whole.

Danielle Hirsch [August 19th, 2014](#)

Director of BothENDS, Netherlands

"Some serious concerns"

We have serious concerns about the fulfilment of the ministers' commitment to talk with Olivier De Schutter (the former Special Rapporteur on the right to food) concerning the recommendations on the right to food he made during his mandate.

We have a procedural question: How does this consultation which is based on the Zero Hunger Challenge relate to the Sustainable Development Goals as proposed by the UN Open Working Group for the UN General Assembly in September 2014?

Willem-Jan Laan [August 14th, 2014](#)

Director Global External Affairs at Unilever

"Investing in knowledge for better national food security programmes"

Combining SUN & WEF: New vision for Agriculture Transformation

Strong examples of partnership with local presence such as the *WEF: New vision for Agriculture Transformation*. The New vision for Agriculture Transformation is led by 33 global partner companies of the World Economic Forum who provide strategic leadership and championship of the initiative. The collaborative approach and commitment of both public and private of organisations.

Additionally the 'Scaling Up Nutrition' initiative, where countries are stimulated to build a collaborative approach and actively supporting national programmes, has a significant potential impact.

Ideally an approach combining the approach of both the WEF & SUN initiatives will result in long term national programmes, as continuous support is essential to ensure knowledge on the ground is improved and impact and the ability to report on progress is embedded.

Investing in knowledge and expertise through the Dutch government and partner countries will increase the level expertise and effectively implement national food security programmes. In case there is a lack of knowledge and expertise among local stakeholders, the Netherlands can offer this with expertise from the private sector, knowledge institutes and civil society.

[More details on Scaling Up Nutrition](#)

[More background info the WEF – New Vision for Agriculture Transformation](#)

[Read more about Unilever's input for the policy paper in the contribution on Target 1.](#)

Jose Luis Vivero Pol [August 7th, 2014](#)

PhD Research Fellow, Universite Catholique de Louvain

"A different narrative and ethical approach: food as a commons"

What would the world look like if we were to treat food as a commons and not merely a commodity? So far, each and every solution proposed by international conferences, donors, UN institutions and most knowledgeable scholar is based on food, an essential resource for human beings, as a fully privatized good, in most cases treated as a pure commodity. I defend a different idea of considering food as a commons, essential for every human on this planet. Therefore, the purchasing power could not be the only means to get access to such natural and man-made resource. We should transit towards a different food system that values food based on its multiple and essential dimensions to humans and not just as a priced commodity. This transition will be steered by a tricentric governance of food as a commons compounded of state-driven initiatives, policies and regulations; market-driven allocations based on supply-demand and self-regulated collective actions for food producers and consumers with different forms of food sharing finding a place in a more sustainable and fairer food system. The industrial food system only considers one dimension of food, seeing its tradable dimension and viewing it as a commodity. The main goal of agri-business corporations is not to sustainably produce healthy food for everyone but to earn more money. We are fed by a 'low cost' food system where price is the main driver of food production, processing and consumption, rather than aiming at delivering nutritious food for all. If we want to achieve a food-secure world we need to have more space for self-regulated collective actions for food and to reclaim more space for state-led initiatives, whose primary goal is their citizens' wellbeing. Because food security is within the mandate of every state but surely not within the mandate of every food and agriculture company.

Concrete food-related proposals for the public good

Firstly, a Universal Food Coverage could be engineered to guarantee a minimum amount of food to everybody, everywhere, everytime, similar to the Universal Health Coverage and the Universal Primary Education. Why what we see acceptable for health and education is so unthinkable for food? Is education more important to human

development than eating? For instance, the state could guarantee tortillas, bread, maize or rice to everybody, every day.

Secondly, patenting on living beings should be banned. We can patent computers, iPods, cars, and other human-made technologies but we cannot patent living organisms such as seeds, bacteria or genetic codes. That should be an ethical minimum standard and a fundamental part of our new moral economy of sustainability.

Thirdly, food speculation should be banned, because it does not contribute to improve the food system, neither food production, nor consumption, and it has many damaging collateral effects. Food can be traded, insured and exchanged, but not speculated on.

Another proposal is to take international food trade outside the World Trade Organization, as food cannot be considered like other commodities, due to its multiple dimensions for human beings. Along those lines, a different international Food Treaty shall be crafted, whereby countries abide by and respect some minimum standards in food production and trade. It should be a binding treaty.

Firstly, Public-private partnerships (PPP) in the food sector are decision-making spaces for the private sector to influence policymakers in order to arrange a legal space which is conducive to profit-seeking. Since they are not meant to maximize the health and food security of the citizens but mainly to maximize profit-seeking, these PPPs should be restricted to operational arrangements but never to dealing with policy making or legal frameworks.

Further reading:

[Vivero Pol, J.L. \(2014\). The Food Commons transition. Collective actions for food security. The Broker Magazine. Proposal on Universal Food Coverage in Ecuador.](#)

[Vivero Pol, J.L \(2013\). A binding food treaty to end hunger: anathema or post-2015 solution?](#)

David Sogge [August 6th, 2014](#)

Independent researcher

"Don't Overlook Political Economy and Public Politics"

A year ago, in his [final report to the United Nations General Assembly](#), the UN's Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier De Schutter, devoted a lot of attention to "*the political economy questions that play such an important part in explaining the failure to achieve durable success in tackling hunger and malnutrition.*" In setting forth his answers to those questions, he barely mentioned technology, science and markets. Using terms like *access* and *entitlements* he zeroed in on power and public politics, arguing that food security is achievable where "*policies comply with the principles of participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment and the rule of law.*"

A cursory look at your food security discussion up to now indicates that issues of political economy are hardly raised. Claudio Schuftan does point to the needs to confront the politics of exclusion. But relative to their relevance and importance, issues of power and governance have been confined to the margins of the discussion thus far. A good example would be the book '[The Global Land Grab](#)' by [Annelies Zoomers and Mayke Kaag](#) about needs for transparent and fair rules over land access. Could 'public, democratic processes' be taken as Target 6?

Olivier De Schutter's final report is not the only one underscoring this. A [report published this month in Germany by Misereor, Brot für die Welt and Global Policy Forum](#) places large question-marks next to current approaches to African food security based on business-led 'multi-stakeholder' models of governance. Those [global governance models have been expertly analysed](#) and shown to have very serious deficiencies in respect to "*participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment and the rule of law.*"

In short, there are lively and important debates about the political economy and politics of food security. These matters are hugely relevant to your discussion. Why not put them in the foreground?

Evelijne Bruning [July 28th, 2014](#)

Country Director the Hunger Project, The Netherlands

"On women and integrated approaches"

Given that The Hunger Project as a key member of the Zero Hunger coalition actually co-authored its targets, it would be somewhat odd to disagree with them. However, it would also seem crucial to add two strong emphases in our recommendations to the Dutch policy authors: on women, and on integrated approaches.

Gender is the fundamental root cause of most of the remaining hunger in our world. The majority of the world's hungry and extremely poor are women food farmers. They are the largest marginalized group in the world. They must never be considered "weak" – they are doing most of the work to meet the needs of their families. Deeply entrenched patriarchal social, legal, political and economic structures give rise to hunger and extreme poverty. In most societies where hunger persists, women bear most of the responsibility for meeting family needs, yet lack the resources, education, information and freedom of action to fulfill those responsibilities. Yet lack fair access to the resources, mobility and voice in decision-making which they need to thrive. This therefore deserves ample attention in the Dutch policy framework.

Key interventions:

- Gender analysis
- Rights awareness and engagement by both women and men
- Strengthening women's organizations
- Political empowerment and voice: ensuring equal leadership, and empowering women's leadership
- Economic empowerment
- Targeting women small-scale farmers with greater access to training and inputs,
- Female adult literacy
- Subsidies to keep girls in school
- Halting Gender-based violence including child marriage and ending impunity to perpetrators
- Ensuring women's secure rights to productive assets
- Gender-disaggregated data informs program design

Multisectoral, integrated approach

Women rarely escape extreme poverty through single, one-off interventions; they must have access to a comprehensive package of services (one example is described here below).

Dutch policies should therefore (continue to) create funding windows for integrated rural development. Most donors are now starting to get the message that co-location of basic services and multisectoral, holistic approaches make huge sense. Yet nearly all funding focuses on single sectors. Now is the time to change this. The new Dutch policy could lead the way.

The Hunger Project empowers women to take charge of their lives by:

- Organization: Women in poverty must unit to stand together to gain voice in male-dominated societies, and to take collective action
- Rights awareness: Women and their family members need to know women's legal and reproductive rights
- Financial services: At our epicenters in Africa, all committees have gender-equal leadership except the rural banks, which are entirely run by women
- Reduced Drudgery: Grain mills, sustainable woodlots, nearby wells, and – increasingly – husbands willing to help with chores, address women's extreme "time poverty."
- Day care: pre-schools are not only critical for child development, but also for freeing women for income generating activities
- Health care: Women need reliable access to reproductive health, pre- and post-natal care. In addition, access to primary health care for the whole family relieves them of the primary burden of dealing with the sick and dying
- Clean water and sanitation: For men, latrines are typically a low priority. For women, they are a matter of safety and basic human dignity, and a key protection for public health
- Literacy: Rapid and conveniently timed literacy and numeracy classes not only provide a skill – they represent a complete transformation in how women perceive themselves in the world
- Legal protection: Impunity to gender-based violence must be stopped, and women's property rights must be protected.

Hans Eenhoorn [July 15th, 2014](#)

Member of Worldconnectors

"We know pretty well what should be done to achieve food security"

Food security for 10 billion people (approx. world population by 2050) is too important to leave that to politicians. The initiative for a sector wide consultation in order to come forward on a Dutch contribution to food security is therefore welcome. However, asking for contributions from the Dutch society requires beaurocracy and a time consuming exercise to shift through the posted recommendations and observations and easily leads to conclusions that the wheel is reinvented.

I therefore strongly recommend to have a close look at 3 major reports on food security from the past:

1. The United Nations Hunger Taskforce report from 2005: *'Halving Hunger it can be done'*
2. The report from the InterAcademy Council from 2004: *'Realizing the promise and potential of African Agriculture'*
3. The world development report from 2008: *'Agriculture for development'*

Furthermore the Worldconnectors prepared a report for the Government in 2012 with clear recommendations for the Government based on a solid analysis and solid consultancy with international food security experts. Lastly I humbly recommend to have a look at the recommendations in the publications I produced during my tenure at Wageningen University; Food security and Entrepreneurship in 2007 and Constrain Constraints from 2009.

We know pretty well what should be done to achieve food security. The USAID programme "Feed the Future" is successfully implementing what is recommended in the studies under 1, 2, and 3 above. Many other organisations and institutions (e.g. AGRA, IFDC) are doing the same. The Dutch initiative Agri Pro-focus is supporting agricultural development quite successfully. Let us look very carefully at what is available on sensible recommendations and avoid that we must conclude after the consultation the we have "reinvented the wheel again".

Claudio Schuftan July 10th, 2014

Peoples Health Movement

"The right to nutrition means confronting the politics of exclusion and the economics of inequality"

I definitely think a 6th theme is indispensable. One that decisively centers the policy on the right to food framework and parameters. People who file claims to secure their right to adequate nutrition cannot wait for a whole generation. The disturbing news is that we have evidence of widening gaps in health and nutrition worldwide (in terms of numbers of those affected by many types of preventable ill-health and malnutrition). This, most likely because health and nutrition are more about power imbalances than about morbidity and mortality; they are more about control over the basic determinants of ill-health and malnutrition than about the treatment of diseases and the rehabilitation of the malnourished. We need to view and act upon both in a way that addresses power relationships and related rights issues.

It is not enough for human rights activists to make information on these risks available to public authorities. It is organized claim holders who have to ensure these risks are indeed recognized-and-acted-upon. Western approaches, like the Dutch approach, to fight malnutrition are at the individual level rather than promoting community nutrition from a holistic, human rights-based perspective. More efforts have been devoted to denouncing this fact than to do something to mitigate its effects.

The respect of the right to nutrition is a reflection of a society's commitment to equity and justice. The Human Rights Framework does not demand a 'right to be well nourished'; it does not ask governments to commit resources they do not have to the provision of good nutrition. But it does call for the right to the enjoyment of and access to a variety of facilities, services and conditions that are necessary for good nutrition.

A Right to nutrition approach means that the necessary resources are given to those who have the greatest needs. It exposes situations where public funds are being used for interventions in large cities, where benefits accrue not to the most needy in rural populations who are denied even the minimum standards of health care. A human rights approach to nutrition poses specific challenges for health and nutrition professionals as well; they usually have access to information about the conduct of public authorities. And, if these professionals have evidence of practices that violate the right to nutrition, for example evidence of discrimination against women or against minorities, this information should be documented and reported to the appropriate authorities and to human rights (HR) activist organizations.

But, most of all, be reminded that good nutrition can only be achieved if the affected people participate in the design and delivery of interventions. So, concrete steps are needed to make this happen, i.e., claim holders have to organize and demand this right of theirs. Never forget that social movements are such, as long as there are people who actually 'move' them.

The bottom line is that nutrition interventions will promote health equity and justice only when their design and management specifically considers:

- The circumstances and needs of the socially disadvantaged and marginalized populations in the country, including women, the poor and groups who currently experience stigma and discrimination,
- Mechanisms to enable social action by these groups themselves together with the civil society organizations supporting them,
- Ways in which nutrition interventions can generate preferential benefits for the socially disadvantaged and marginalized groups,
- Providing financing and the necessary arrangements to provide universal coverage and to offer extra benefits for socially disadvantaged and marginalized groups (specifically: improved access to health care; better protection against the impoverishing costs of illness; and the redistribution of resources towards poorer groups with greater nutrition needs),
- Restraining and more effectively controlling the private sector and enhancing the public and the community-based sectors, and finally,
- Revitalizing the comprehensive primary health care approach as a strategy that enforces and integrates all other Alma-Ata-health-equity-promoting-features crucial to a HR-based approach to nutrition.

Furthermore the resolutely standing for the right to nutrition means confronting the politics of exclusion and the economics of inequality.

Perhaps the major challenge in translating the many local successes of nutrition activism into concrete health systems change is to increase the awareness and active involvement of those who stand to benefit the most from such changes, i.e., the most marginalized people.

Effective delivery systems without explicit human rights protections (for example, legislative guarantees or easier access to working redress mechanisms) will fail to deliver to those most marginalized. The point to be made here is that it is not the task of the private sector –whether for-profit or not-for-profit– to guarantee access to good nutrition for the marginalized. It is the task of the latter themselves.

Food & Business Knowledge Platform

Bezuidenhoutseweg 2

2594 AV The Hague

The Netherlands

T: +31 (0)70 3043 754

E: info@knowledge4food.net

W: www.knowledge4food.net

Tw: [@foodplatform](https://twitter.com/foodplatform)

