

# International Development Committee inquiry on *global food security*

## UK Food Group submission



- 1 The UK Food Group welcomes the opportunity to make the following submission to the International Development Commons Select Committee's (IDC) enquiry on 'global food security'. The UK Food Group is the main network of NGOs in the UK working on global food, agriculture and hunger issues, including development, environment, farmer, consumer and academic groups.
  - 2 This submission is structured according to the outline of issues given by the IDC, except that the specific topics listed in the final bullet are addressed as they arise within the other issues, rather than separately.
  - 3 Key points we wish to highlight are:
    - The world already produces enough food to be able to feed everybody. However large amounts of agricultural production are not currently used to feed people, but instead are either used for animal feed, agrofuels or are wasted. The focus for development needs to be improving access to food, in a sustainable manner that restores the environment.
    - Small-scale agroecological production, developed in a framework of social equity and justice, has the best potential for achieving global food security.
    - The UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS) is the central, legitimate and democratic centre for global governance of the world's food system. It has been agreed that it should guide the work of other international bodies on food security and it is important that other initiatives do not undermine or run counter to its work.
- 1) *The success or otherwise of the global food system in guaranteeing food security and eliminating under-nutrition with particular reference to women, children and other vulnerable groups*
- 4 There are currently around 870 million people in the world living with constant hunger<sup>1</sup> – this is a measure of chronic under-nourishment, and does not include short term emergency situations or cyclical seasonal hunger. At the same time over 1.4 billion adults are overweight.<sup>2</sup> The number of chronically hungry people has been decreasing overall, although this has stalled recently and regionally the number of chronically hungry people has been increasing in Africa for decades. Despite the success of the overall decrease, this is not a food system that is working in delivering the right to food.

<sup>1</sup> FAO, *The state of food insecurity in the world 2012*. Rome: FAO, 2012, p8. [www.fao.org/docrep/016/i3027e/i3027e00.htm](http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i3027e/i3027e00.htm)

<sup>2</sup> WHO, *Obesity and overweight*. Fact sheet no. 311. Geneva: WHO, 2012. [www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs311/en/](http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs311/en/)

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**ACORD, Action Against Hunger, ActionAid, Agricultural Christian Fellowship, Baby Milk Action, Banana Link, CAFOD, Centre for Food Policy, Christian Aid, Compassion in World Farming, Concern, Consumers International, EcoNexus, Excellent Development, Find Your Feet, Friends of the Earth, Gaia Foundation, Garden Africa, Garden Organic, IIED, ISEC, MRDF, nef, Oxfam GB, Panos Institute, Permaculture Association, Pesticide Action Network UK, Pig Business, Practical Action, Progressio, Save the Children, Scottish Crofting Federation, Self Help Africa, Send a Cow, Slow Food UK, Soil Association, Susila Dharma, Tearfund, Tree Aid, War on Want, WDM, Women's Environmental Network, World Family, WWF-UK**  
observers: **Food Ethics Council, Greenpeace, ODI, RSPB, Sustain**

UK Food Group is an independent network within  
*Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming* (Charity No. 1018643; Company Reg. No. 02673194, England)

- 5 This failure is not due to any overall shortage of food. It is over a decade since the then UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Jean Ziegler, noted that the world already produced enough food to feed 12 billion people,<sup>3</sup> and food production has increased since then.<sup>4</sup> The problem is access to food and the means for its production, as a result of structural failures of the food system, which cause and are caused by poverty, marginalisation and injustice.
- 6 We currently have a dual food system in the world. On the one hand, a system of internationally traded, industrialised commodity production, controlled by a few major agribusinesses, that trades grain from the global North and high value products such as year-round fresh fruit and vegetables from the global South. This system feeds the world's affluent population, largely in the global North. On the other hand is the food system that still feeds the majority of the world's people,<sup>5</sup> through a plethora of webs of local, small-scale food production. This system is often marginalised as backward, something that can become a self-fulfilling prophecy when policies neglect local food systems as a result. Since the World Development Report of 2008,<sup>6</sup> support for small-scale farmers has become an orthodoxy, however there is still division as to whether the aim is to expand the industrial, global system to incorporate small-scale farmers, or to strengthen local food systems in their own right. For the UK Food Group, it is clear that it is the second that needs to be supported.
- 7 Increasing production will not alter levels of hunger, if those living in hunger continue to be unable to afford food. Reducing poverty is the most effective way to reduce hunger and, because many of the world's poorest people are themselves small-scale farmers and other food producers, investing in agriculture is one of the best ways to do this. But as the current UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier de Schutter notes:
- 8 "some types of investments are more effective than others in achieving that objective. The multiplier effects are significantly higher when growth is triggered by higher incomes for smallholders, stimulating demand for goods and services from local sellers and service-providers. When large estates increase their revenue, most of it is spent on imported inputs and machinery, and much less trickles down to local traders. Only by supporting small producers can we help break the vicious cycle that leads from rural poverty to the expansion of urban slums, in which poverty breeds more poverty."<sup>7</sup>
- 9 Agriculture faces many environmental problems – soil degradation and erosion, water pollution and excess demand, loss of biodiversity, loss of jobs and livelihoods and undermining of local and traditional knowledge of ecosystems. Industrial, largescale agriculture has contributed to these problems. In response to the environmental challenges, the groundbreaking International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) recommended that:
- 10 "An increase and strengthening of AKST [agricultural knowledge, science and technology] towards agroecological sciences will contribute to addressing environmental issues while maintaining and increasing productivity"<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Commission on Human Rights, *The right to food: report by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Mr. Jean Ziegler*. E/CN.4/2001/53. Geneva: UN, 2001, p2.

[www.unhcr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/0/f45ea4df67ecca98c1256a0300340453/\\$FILE/G0111035.pdf](http://www.unhcr.ch/Huridocda/Huridoca.nsf/0/f45ea4df67ecca98c1256a0300340453/$FILE/G0111035.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> FAO, *The state of food and agriculture 2010-11*. Rome: FAO, p73. [www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> ETC Group (2009), *Who will feed us? Questions for the food and climate crises*. Ottawa: ETC Group, p4-5 [www.etcgroup.org/upload/publication/pdf\\_file/ETC\\_Who\\_Will\\_Feed\\_Us.pdf](http://www.etcgroup.org/upload/publication/pdf_file/ETC_Who_Will_Feed_Us.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> World Bank, *World development report 2008: agriculture for development*. Washington DC: World Bank, 2007. [siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2008/Resources/WDR\\_00\\_book.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2008/Resources/WDR_00_book.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Human Rights Council, *Report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier De Schutter*. A/HRC/16/49. Geneva: UN, 2010, p5. [www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20110308\\_a-hrc-16-49\\_agroecology\\_en.pdf](http://www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20110308_a-hrc-16-49_agroecology_en.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> IAASTD, *Global Summary for Decision Makers*, Washington DC: Island Press, 2009, p6. [www.aqassessment.org/reports/IAASTD/EN/Agriculture\\_at\\_a\\_Crossroads\\_Global\\_Summary\\_for\\_Decision\\_Makers\\_\(English\).pdf](http://www.aqassessment.org/reports/IAASTD/EN/Agriculture_at_a_Crossroads_Global_Summary_for_Decision_Makers_(English).pdf)

- 11 Agroecology is explained by de Schutter as follows:
- 12 “Agroecology is both a science and a set of practices. It was created by the convergence of two scientific disciplines: agronomy and ecology. As a science, agroecology is the “application of ecological science to the study, design and management of sustainable agroecosystems.” As a set of agricultural practices, agroecology seeks ways to enhance agricultural systems by mimicking natural processes, thus creating beneficial biological interactions and synergies among the components of the agroecosystem. It provides the most favourable soil conditions for plant growth, particularly by managing organic matter and by raising soil biotic activity. The core principles of agroecology include recycling nutrients and energy on the farm, rather than introducing external inputs; integrating crops and livestock; diversifying species and genetic resources in agroecosystems over time and space; and focusing on interactions and productivity across the agricultural system, rather than focusing on individual species. Agroecology is highly knowledge-intensive, based on techniques that are not delivered top-down but developed on the basis of farmers’ knowledge and experimentation.”<sup>9</sup>
- 13 Investment and support in strengthening agroecological farming by small-scale food producers has the most potential for supporting livelihoods and rural communities, reducing poverty, enabling people to have a healthy diet and restoring the environment. The UK Food Group does not see GM technologies as forming any part of the solution for a sustainable and equitable food system.
- 14 A key part a successful agroecological approach is formed by policies and practices that will sustain agricultural biodiversity: the diversity of seeds, plants, livestock breeds and fish used for food and of the associated pollinators, pest predators and soil organisms. Agricultural biodiversity is the component of biodiversity that has been developed by and has co-evolved with people, and it underpins the food system and the wider economy, human health, the security of food supplies, and the viability of the biosphere. It is therefore essential to regulate, transform or prohibit any systems, methods, processes or technologies, which might damage agricultural biodiversity and related ecosystem functions or restrict access to them. In order to develop agricultural biodiversity priority should be given to on-farm conservation and development of domesticated species by small-scale food producers.<sup>10</sup>
- 15 In order to achieve a sustainable and equitable food system, policies need to be shaped by, and respond to, the needs of small-scale food producers and vulnerable consumers themselves. Their rights need to be recognised and their organisations need to have a decisive involvement in governance.
- 16 Global networks<sup>11</sup> and social movements of small-scale food producers, including farmers, pastoralists, fisherfolk and indigenous people, have defined their own vision for the food system through the framework of food sovereignty:
- 17 “Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations.”<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Human Rights Council, *Report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier De Schutter*. A/HRC/16/49. Geneva: UN, 2010, p6. [www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20110308\\_a-hrc-16-49\\_agroecology\\_en.pdf](http://www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20110308_a-hrc-16-49_agroecology_en.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> For more on this see: UK Food Group, *Securing future food: towards ecological food provision*. London: UK Food Group, 2010. [www.ukfg.org.uk/pdfs/Securing\\_future\\_food.pdf](http://www.ukfg.org.uk/pdfs/Securing_future_food.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> La Via Campesina, the international movement of peasants, small and medium scale farmers, has 150 member organizations in 70 countries from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas, and altogether represents about 200 million farmers.

<sup>12</sup> *Declaration of Nyéléni*, Sélingué, Mali, February 2007. [www.nyeleni.org/IMG/pdf/DeclNyeleni-en.pdf](http://www.nyeleni.org/IMG/pdf/DeclNyeleni-en.pdf)

- 18 A series of guiding questions to help determine whether an agricultural system, small-scale or large-scale, contributes to sustainable livelihoods has been outlined by some leading academic thinkers, and is included as an appendix to this submission.

## 1.1) Women

- 19 Women make up an average of 43% of the agricultural labour force in developing countries but they have less access than men to productive resources and opportunities, such as land, livestock, education, extension services, financial services and technologies such as machines and tools. FAO considers that closing the gender gap in agriculture could increase yields and in turn reduce the number of hungry people in the world by 12–17%.<sup>13</sup>
- 20 In all countries, women still carry the main burden of household work and caring responsibilities for children and the sick. This creates a dual burden, on top of women's work as food producers, that is not faced by men.
- 21 In some countries, particularly in Asia, entrenched gender discrimination is such that women and girl children are more vulnerable to hunger and malnutrition than men and boys, due to the way food is shared within the household.
- 22 There are sound economic rationales for improving the situation of women in order to improve food security, as the FAO report cited above indicates. However fundamentally it is an imperative of justice and equality.

## 2) *The implications of demographic trends, rising income and climate change on the global food system and on key indicators of food security and good nutrition*

### 2.1) Demography and income

- 23 The apparent contradiction between the calculation, quoted above, that the world already produces enough to feed 12 billion people, and the oft cited prediction that we need to increase food production by 60% by 2050<sup>14</sup> is firstly that large amounts of agricultural production are not currently used to feed people, but instead are either used for animal feed, agrofuels or are wasted. Nearly half of global cereal production is currently used for animal feed, and even accounting for the energy value of the meat produced, the loss of calories that result from feeding cereals to animals instead of using cereals directly as human food represents the annual calorie need for more than 3.5 billion people.<sup>15</sup> Estimates for food waste, including losses in the field, post-harvest losses, retail losses and consumer waste vary, but could be as much as a third.<sup>16</sup> Losses in the field and post-harvest losses tend to be higher in developing countries, while retail and consumer waste are higher in developed countries.
- 24 Secondly this prediction assumes that current demand curves are fixed and cannot be changed – the original prediction was simply a modelling of what would happen with a 'business as usual' approach, and was not intended to be normative.<sup>17</sup> There are strong

<sup>13</sup> FAO, *The state of food and agriculture 2010-11*. Rome: FAO, 2011, pp5, 36. [www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> OECD & FAO, *OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2012-2021*. [www.oecd.org/site/oecd-faoagriculturaloutlook/](http://www.oecd.org/site/oecd-faoagriculturaloutlook/) The prediction was originally for a 70% increase, but this has since been revised – see [www.fao.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/FAODG/docs/2012-02-08-DG\\_Economist\\_Conference-FINAL.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/FAODG/docs/2012-02-08-DG_Economist_Conference-FINAL.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> UNEP, *The environmental food crisis*. 2009, p. 27. [www.grida.no/files/publications/FoodCrisis\\_lores.pdf](http://www.grida.no/files/publications/FoodCrisis_lores.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Tristram Stuart, *Waste*. London: Penguin, 2009, pp190-191.

<sup>17</sup> For more on this see: Tomlinson, "Doubling food production to feed the 9 billion: A critical perspective on a key discourse of food security in the UK" *Journal of Rural Studies*. 2011, [www.fcrrn.org.uk/sites/default/files/tomlinson...pdf.pdf](http://www.fcrrn.org.uk/sites/default/files/tomlinson...pdf.pdf)

health reasons for developed countries to be seeking to change the current dominant diet, high in meat and dairy, and the proposed decrease by developed countries would more than compensate for an increase in meat and dairy consumption in developing countries to healthy levels.

## 2.2) Climate

- 25 Agriculture, along with land use change, enjoys the double distinction of being both a driver and a victim of climate change. On one hand, the carbon emissions related to each stage of the industrial food system,<sup>18</sup> from seed to plate, contribute to climate change, while on the other hand, the negative impacts of climate change are predicted to lead to crop damage, land degradation, and food insecurity. Broadly, there is need for changes in conventional, industrial agriculture in the global North to contribute to mitigation, but the most urgent food security issue, particularly in the global South is adaptation measures.
- 26 Climate change will increase the pressure on land and, even more critically, water. In this context it is inappropriate to increase intensive agriculture, with its high demand for water and degradation of soil quality.
- 27 Options for adaptation to climate change include:<sup>19</sup>
- adjusting to changes in long-term trends and weather patterns, by changing the prevalent crops grown and livestock breeds reared in a locality to suit the new conditions, including using more robust native varieties and breeds
  - adjusting to increased weather variability, diversifying the varieties and crops used at any one time to hedge against the risk of failure of any one variety or crop
  - changing irrigation to adapt to reduced availability of water – improving water conservation and making more use of rainwater
  - reducing water loss from the ground through techniques such as cover crops, reduced tillage and incorporation of manures and composts
  - preparing for more extreme weather events
  - adapting pest, weed and disease strategies as the pests etc themselves react to climate change, and similarly anticipating disruption of pollinators
- 28 All of these options are suited to agroecological approaches, and do not need to be addressed through a high tech, high external input approach. Methodologies for adaptation need to be suited to the needs and resources of small-scale food producers.<sup>20</sup>
- 29 Agroecology contributes to climate change mitigation by delinking agricultural production from reliance on fossil fuels, both by reducing energy use and by changing practices away from use of pesticides, herbicides and artificial fertilisers derived from fossil fuels.
- 30 The World Bank's proposal for 'Climate-Smart Agriculture' is problematic in particular because of its potential for promoting GM crops containing 'climate-ready' genes and the inclusion of soil carbon markets. Soil carbon markets do not exist at present and are not the most appealing to investors because soil carbon sequestration can easily be reversed and the costs of running such schemes is high. The idea also has the flaw of all offset

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<sup>18</sup> See High Level Panel of Experts, *Food security and climate change*. Rome: CFS, 2012, pp67-69. [www.fao.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/hlpe/hlpe\\_documents/HLPE\\_Reports/HLPE-Report-3-Food\\_security\\_and\\_climate\\_change-June\\_2012.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/hlpe/hlpe_documents/HLPE_Reports/HLPE-Report-3-Food_security_and_climate_change-June_2012.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> High Level Panel of Experts, *op cit*, pp55-56. [www.fao.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/hlpe/hlpe\\_documents/HLPE\\_Reports/HLPE-Report-3-Food\\_security\\_and\\_climate\\_change-June\\_2012.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/hlpe/hlpe_documents/HLPE_Reports/HLPE-Report-3-Food_security_and_climate_change-June_2012.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Practical Action, *Biodiverse action for a changing climate*. Rugby: Practical Action, 2009. [www.practicalaction.org/advocacy/docs/advocacy/biodiverse-agriculture-for-a-changing-climate-full.pdf](http://www.practicalaction.org/advocacy/docs/advocacy/biodiverse-agriculture-for-a-changing-climate-full.pdf)

approaches to climate change mitigation: that they depend upon continued emissions to be offset, and as such undermine the fundamental obligations of rich countries to reduce emissions. If soil carbon markets were implemented, small-scale farmers would be unlikely to receive any financial benefit, partly because investors are likely to be attracted instead to larger, high quality land, and because revenues from the scheme would mainly be swallowed by the high running costs.

### 2.3) Agrofuels

- 31 Agrofuels, or industrial biofuels, were originally proposed as a major option for climate change mitigation. However the climate benefits have now been found to be doubtful,<sup>21</sup> while the use of land and crops for energy damages food security.
- 32 Agrofuels have an impact on food prices because crops and land, including prime arable land, are diverted into agrofuel production and because they strengthen the link between food and oil prices. The extent of the impact has been hotly debated, but a consensus is gradually emerging that the effect is damaging food security. Last year FAO, IFAD, IMF, OECD, UNCTAD, WFP, the World Bank, the WTO, IFPRI and the UN HLTf recommended to the G20 that countries should remove policies that subsidise or mandate agrofuel production, because of the impact on food prices.<sup>22</sup> As a result of the EU's biofuels policies, by 2020 oilseed prices may increase by up to 20%, vegetable oil prices by as much as 36%, maize prices by up to 22% and wheat prices by as much as 13%.<sup>23</sup>
- 33 Agrofuels have also been a driver of the global land grab, in three ways:<sup>24</sup>
- land in developing countries has been acquired for agrofuel production
  - land in developed countries that previously was used for food production has been switched to agrofuel production, meaning that more land elsewhere is needed to replace the food production
  - land prices have been inflated by this, drawing interest from speculators in acquiring land as an investment

### 3) *The impact of global and local food shocks and how different countries and/or regions cope with food crises and the role of democracy in increasing food security*

#### 3.1) Speculation

- 34 In recent years, financial markets have come to affect food prices. The agricultural futures markets were originally set up to enable farmers and commercial purchasers of agricultural produce to protect themselves from adverse fluctuations in the prices, but developments in recent years have seen more complex derivative contracts developed. Prices in the commodity derivative markets affect food prices through:

<sup>21</sup> See for example: European Environment Agency Scientific Committee, *Opinion of the EEA Scientific Committee on greenhouse gas accounting in relation to bioenergy*. 2011, [www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/governance/scientific-committee/sc-opinions/opinions-on-scientific-issues/sc-opinion-on-greenhouse-gas/view](http://www.eea.europa.eu/about-us/governance/scientific-committee/sc-opinions/opinions-on-scientific-issues/sc-opinion-on-greenhouse-gas/view) and David Laborde (IFPRI), *Assessing the land use change consequences of European biofuel policies*. EU, 2011. [www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/biofuelsreportec2011.pdf](http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/biofuelsreportec2011.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> FAO, IFAD, IMF, OECD, UNCTAD, WFP, the World Bank, the WTO, IFPRI and the UN HLTf, *Price volatility in food and agricultural markets: policy responses*. 2011, pp 26-27. [www.oecd.org/tad/agriculturaltrade/48152638.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/tad/agriculturaltrade/48152638.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> ActionAid, *Biofuelling the global food crisis*. p2. London: ActionAid, 2012 [www.actionaid.org.uk/doc\\_lib/biofuelling\\_the\\_global\\_food\\_crisis.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org.uk/doc_lib/biofuelling_the_global_food_crisis.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> EuropAfrica, *(Bio)fuelling injustice*. Rome: Terra Nuova, 2011, pp 5-6. [www.europafrika.info/file\\_download/13/europafrika\\_2011\\_report.pdf](http://www.europafrika.info/file_download/13/europafrika_2011_report.pdf)

- influencing the expectations of buyers and sellers in the physical food markets;
- incorporation of derivative prices directly into food contracts;
- traders taking advantages of differences in price between the futures and physical markets.<sup>25</sup>

35 Strong evidence now shows that speculation can and does exacerbate food price volatility and spikes, rather than smoothing them out as originally intended, and distorting prices away from those that would be expected based on supply and demand conditions. For example, the UN and OECD's Agricultural Outlook 2011-2020, while recognising the role played by fundamental factors, acknowledges

36 "Almost all researchers agree that non-commercial participation in futures markets may amplify price movements in the short term, even if they differ in their conclusions about other possible impacts."<sup>26</sup>

37 It is worth noting the spillover effects of price changes between commodities: in the 2007-08 spike, speculation-fuelled increases in wheat prices contributed to an increase in rice prices, even though rice itself is not subject to speculation. Similarly, the price of oil (itself subject of speculation) can have a knock-on impact on food prices.<sup>27</sup>

38 When such artificial price inflation occurs and global prices changes are translated to local markets, this can undermine the food security of poor consumers, including small scale food producers who in many cases are net purchasers of food. Even if price changes are in a favourable direction, middlemen often capture much of the additional value with producers seeing little benefit, while increased volatility makes it more difficult for them to plan their production.<sup>28</sup>

39 These problems have emerged since deregulation in the 1990s up until 2000. Reregulation, including limits on financial participation in the commodity derivative markets, is currently being discussed in both the US and EU. We are disappointed that, to date, the UK government has championed ineffective self-regulatory position management approaches to the oversight of these markets, rather than an independently overseen system incorporating position limits on speculative transactions.

### 3.2) Trade

40 Abrupt and inequitable trade liberalisation in agriculture contributes to vulnerability to hunger. Liberalised markets are exposed to the much greater price volatility of the international commodity markets, without having the capacity to protect domestic producers and consumers from shocks.

41 Import surges and dumping of agricultural products at less than the cost of production drives local producers out of business. Import surges have been a frequent occurrence; a survey covering 102 developing countries over the period 1980-2003 documented 12,000 cases.<sup>29</sup> The provisions in the WTO Agreement on Agriculture for responding to import surges are insufficient to allow countries to react in most cases and they are also

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<sup>25</sup> Worthy, M., Broken markets: How financial market regulation can help prevent another global food crisis, 2011 [www.wdm.org.uk/stop-bankers-betting-food/broken-markets-how-financial-regulation-can-prevent-food-crisis](http://www.wdm.org.uk/stop-bankers-betting-food/broken-markets-how-financial-regulation-can-prevent-food-crisis)

<sup>26</sup> UN and OECD, Agricultural Outlook 2011-2020, 2011

<sup>27</sup> Jones, T., The great hunger lottery: How banking speculation causes food crises, 2010, [www.wdm.org.uk/food-speculation/great-hunger-lottery](http://www.wdm.org.uk/food-speculation/great-hunger-lottery)

<sup>28</sup> Jones, T., The great hunger lottery: How banking speculation causes food crises, 2010, [www.wdm.org.uk/food-speculation/great-hunger-lottery](http://www.wdm.org.uk/food-speculation/great-hunger-lottery)

<sup>29</sup> FAO, Import surges: what is their frequency and which are the countries and commodities most affected? FAO Briefs on import surges – issues, no. 2. [ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/009/j8675e/j8675e00.pdf](http://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/009/j8675e/j8675e00.pdf)

particularly inappropriate for agricultural products, because they only allow reaction after the case rather than prevention.

- 42 When international prices increase, developing countries that have come to depend upon imports for their food security face balance of payments problems.

### 3.3) Land grabs and agricultural investment

- 43 Land grabs or 'large-scale land acquisitions' reflect a grab for control of natural resources – land, water,<sup>30</sup> minerals, forests, energy sources and biodiversity. Land grabbing emerged as a phenomenon following the 2008 food price shock, and has also been encouraged by policies supporting agrofuels (see above). Once it got underway, the effect on land value has also attracted purely speculative investment. Far too often the land grabs have displaced people, without genuine prior informed consent, through forced evictions and without adequate compensation.<sup>31</sup>

- 44 Land grabs are justified by their supporters as providing investment in agriculture that is needed. The World Bank led a process to propose set of guidelines<sup>32</sup> to try and define how large-scale investment in land could be done in a way that was 'responsible'. However large-scale external investment is not the most crucial, particularly compared to the investment of farmers themselves. The recent FAO *State of Food & Agriculture* report points out:

- 45 “..farmers in low- and middle-income countries invest more than four times as much in capital stock on their own farms each year as their governments invest in the agriculture sector. What’s more, farmers’ investment dwarfs expenditures on agriculture by international donors and private foreign investors. The overwhelming dominance of farmers’ own investment means that they must be central to any strategy aimed at increasing the quantity and effectiveness of agricultural investment.”<sup>33</sup>

- 46 A inclusive consultation on developing principles on responsible agricultural investment is now underway at the CFS, building upon the *Voluntary Guidelines* on land tenure.<sup>34</sup>

- 47 Bilateral investment treaties (BITs) and investment chapters in trade agreements often greatly restrict the scope for placing any social or environmental conditions on foreign investment in land.

### 3.4) Democratic control of food systems

- 48 One of the pillars of the food sovereignty framework, proposed by Southern networks small-scale food producers, is local and democratic control of food systems:

- 49 “Food sovereignty places control over territory, land, grazing, water, seeds, livestock and fish populations on local food providers and respects their rights. They can use and share them in socially and environmentally sustainable ways which

<sup>30</sup> See: GRAIN, *Squeezing Africa Dry: Behind every land grab is a water grab*. Barcelona: GRAIN, 2012. [www.grain.org/article/entries/4516-squeezing-africa-dry-behind-every-land-grab-is-a-water-grab.pdf](http://www.grain.org/article/entries/4516-squeezing-africa-dry-behind-every-land-grab-is-a-water-grab.pdf)

<sup>31</sup> For example see: Aprove, *Stolen land stolen future*. Brussels, Aprove, 2011, [www.aprodev.eu/files/Trade/landgrab\\_aprodev.pdf](http://www.aprodev.eu/files/Trade/landgrab_aprodev.pdf); Oxfam International, *Our land, our lives*. Oxfam, 2012, [www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/bn-land-lives-freeze-041012-en\\_1.pdf](http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/bn-land-lives-freeze-041012-en_1.pdf); GRAIN, *Brazilian megaproject in Mozambique set to displace millions of peasants*. GRAIN, 2012, [www.grain.org/e/4626](http://www.grain.org/e/4626)

<sup>32</sup> FAO, IFAD, UNCTAD and World Bank, *Principles for responsible agricultural investment that respects rights, livelihoods and resources*. 2010. [http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTARD/214574-1111138388661/22453321/Principles\\_Extended.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTARD/214574-1111138388661/22453321/Principles_Extended.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> FAO, *The state of food and agriculture 2012*. Rome: FAO, 2012, p xi. [www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3028e/i3028e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/017/i3028e/i3028e.pdf)

<sup>34</sup> CFS, *Voluntary guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security*. Rome: CFS, 2012, [www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs1112/VG/VG\\_Final\\_EN\\_May\\_2012.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs1112/VG/VG_Final_EN_May_2012.pdf)



conserve diversity; it recognizes that local territories often cross geopolitical borders and ensures the right of local communities to inhabit and use their territories; it promotes positive interaction between food providers in different regions and territories and from different sectors that helps resolve internal conflicts or conflicts with local and national authorities; and rejects the privatisation of natural resources through laws, commercial contracts and intellectual property rights regimes.”<sup>35</sup>

- 50 Corporate control of the industrial food system threatens democratic control. For instance:<sup>36</sup>
- four seed companies control over half the world’s commercial seed market
  - ten pesticide corporations control 82% of the world pesticides market
  - ten food processing corporations control 28% of the global food processing market
  - fifteen supermarket companies account for over 30% of global food sales
- 51 DfID has long championed a model of agriculture based on corporate owned technology and greater private sector control over the production and distribution of food. Accordingly, much of DfID’s aid to agriculture has the effect of extending the power of agribusiness over the global food system.<sup>37</sup> Instead we recommend that DfID should redirect its aid to support agroecological models and partner with networks of small-scale food producers.
- 4) *The role of the international system, including food and agriculture organisations and the G8 and G20, and ways in which collaboration could be improved*
- 52 The UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS) is the central body for international governance of food security. The CFS was renewed in 2009 at the initiative of governments following the 2008 food price shock in order to become the:
- 53 “foremost inclusive international and intergovernmental platform for a broad range of committed stakeholders to work together in a coordinated manner and in support of country-led processes towards the elimination of hunger and ensuring food security and nutrition for all human beings”<sup>38</sup>
- 54 The roles of CFS are:<sup>39</sup>
- coordination at global level initially and over time also at national and regional levels
  - policy convergence
  - support and advice to countries and regions
  - over time to increasingly also promote accountability and share best practices at all levels by developing mechanisms to monitor progress toward objectives
- 55 This year the CFS has agreed a *Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition*.<sup>40</sup> Its purpose is to improve coordination and guide synchronized action by a wide

<sup>35</sup> Nyéléni 2007 – *Forum for Food Sovereignty: synthesis report*. Sélingué, Mali, February 2007. [www.nyeleni.org/IMG/pdf/31Mar2007NyeleniSynthesisReport-en.pdf](http://www.nyeleni.org/IMG/pdf/31Mar2007NyeleniSynthesisReport-en.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> UNEP, *Towards a green economy*. Nairobi: UNEP, p53. [www.unep.org/greeneconomy/Portals/88/documents/ger/ger\\_final\\_dec\\_2011/Green%20EconomyReport\\_Final\\_Dec2011.pdf](http://www.unep.org/greeneconomy/Portals/88/documents/ger/ger_final_dec_2011/Green%20EconomyReport_Final_Dec2011.pdf). See also Sophia Murphy, *Concentrated market power and agricultural trade*. EcoFair Trade Dialogue, 2006. [www.iatp.org/files/451\\_2\\_89014.pdf](http://www.iatp.org/files/451_2_89014.pdf)

<sup>37</sup> For more on this, see: War on Want, *The hunger games*. London: War on Want, 2012, [www.waronwant.org/attachments/The%20Hunger%20Games%202012.pdf](http://www.waronwant.org/attachments/The%20Hunger%20Games%202012.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> Committee on World Food Security, *Reform of the Committee on World Food Security*. CFS:2009/2 Rev.2. Rome: FAO, 2009, p2. [www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs0910/ReformDoc/CFS\\_2009\\_2\\_Rev\\_2\\_E\\_K7197.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs0910/ReformDoc/CFS_2009_2_Rev_2_E_K7197.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> Committee on World Food Security, *op cit*, pp2-3. [www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs0910/ReformDoc/CFS\\_2009\\_2\\_Rev\\_2\\_E\\_K7197.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs0910/ReformDoc/CFS_2009_2_Rev_2_E_K7197.pdf)

range of stakeholders by providing an overarching framework and a single reference document with practical guidance on core recommendations. It is intended to be a living document that will be adapted in future to respond to emerging issues.

- 56 The CFS recognises that in policy discussions on food security it is particularly important that the voices of those most affected by food insecurity are part of the discussion,<sup>41</sup> and thus it also has formal participation for civil society, as well as for the private sector and private philanthropic foundations. The CFS is supported by a High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) and its existing reports may be of interest to the IDC: [www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-hlpe/en/](http://www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-hlpe/en/)
- 57 The CFS is the central, legitimate and democratic centre for global governance of the world's food system. It is inclusive of a range of stakeholders and is supported by independent expert advice. The political decisions and guidance of the CFS should guide the work of other international bodies on food security. It is important that initiatives of other bodies and groupings, particularly those made up mainly of countries that do not experience significant levels of hunger, do not undermine or run counter to the work of the CFS. Unfortunately currently too many initiatives do exactly that. The 'New Alliance' of the G8 is particularly worrying. It perpetuates the imposition of policies and conditions on African governments, is not in line with CFS guidance and opens the door to corporate control by global agribusiness rather than supporting the priorities and investments of small-scale food producers.<sup>42</sup>
- 5) *The best strategies for reducing risk from short term shocks and long term structural factors and for building resilience among the most vulnerable*

- 58 Agroecological approaches are the most comprehensive way of building environmental resilience to climate shocks. For instance:
- 59 "Following Hurricane Mitch in 1998, a large-scale study on 180 communities of smallholders from southern to northern Nicaragua demonstrated that farming plots cropped with simple agroecological methods (including rock bunds or dikes, green manure, crop rotation and the incorporation of stubble, ditches, terraces, barriers, mulch, legumes, trees, plowing parallel to the slope, no-burn, live fences, and zero-tillage) had on average 40 per cent more topsoil, higher field moisture, less erosion and lower economic losses than control plots on conventional farms. On average, agroecological plots lost 18 per cent less arable land to landslides than conventional plots and had 69 per cent less gully erosion compared to conventional farms."<sup>43</sup>
- 60 Agroecology also contributes to drought resistance and to maintaining biodiversity. The more diverse range of foods grown as part of agroecological farming improve nutrition.<sup>44</sup>
- 61 Strengthening networks of small-scale food producers, and promoting their meaningful engagement in policy and decision-making is a central component of resilience to all kinds of shocks. One aspect of this is investing in knowledge through a bottom-up approach to agricultural research for development that is driven by networks of food producers own priorities and needs.

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<sup>40</sup> Committee on World Food Security, *Global strategic framework for food security and nutrition*. CFS 2012/39/5 Add.1. Rome: CFS, 2012. [www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/026/ME498E.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/026/ME498E.pdf)

<sup>41</sup> Committee on World Food Security, *Reform of the Committee on World Food Security*. CFS:2009/2 Rev.2. Rome: FAO, 2009, p2. [www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs0910/ReformDoc/CFS\\_2009\\_2\\_Rev\\_2\\_E\\_K7197.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/cfs/Docs0910/ReformDoc/CFS_2009_2_Rev_2_E_K7197.pdf)

<sup>42</sup> Civil society intervention on 'Global and regional coordination and linkages with CFS', CFS 39 Session, Oct 2012.

<sup>43</sup> Eric Holt-Giménez, "Measuring Farmers' Agroecological Resistance After Hurricane Mitch in Nicaragua" *Agriculture, Ecosystems and the Environment*, 93:1-2, 2002, pp. 87-105, cited by Human Rights Council, *Report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier De Schutter*. A/HRC/16/49. Geneva: UN, 2010, p13. [www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20110308\\_a-hrc-16-49\\_agroecology\\_en.pdf](http://www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20110308_a-hrc-16-49_agroecology_en.pdf)

<sup>44</sup> Human Rights Council, *loc cit*. [www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20110308\\_a-hrc-16-49\\_agroecology\\_en.pdf](http://www.srfood.org/images/stories/pdf/officialreports/20110308_a-hrc-16-49_agroecology_en.pdf)

- 62 In the face of shocks, social protection instruments can provide an effective safety net. These may include social assistance, social insurance and efforts at social inclusion. There can be controversy over social protection due to bad experiences of weak schemes, but well designed social protection schemes can be good for growth and improve food security. The Brazilian ‘Zero hunger’ and ‘Bolsa Familia’ programmes, including conditional cash transfers are a well-known example that has helped to reduce the prevalence of undernourishment in Brazil from 9% to 6%, although challenges still remain.<sup>45</sup> Social protection is a human right.
- 63 The CFS High Level Panel of Experts recently studied social protection for food security and recommended that all countries should strive to put in place comprehensive social protection systems contributing to food security, using a twin-track approach of providing essential assistance in the short-term and supporting livelihoods in the long-term. These systems should be underpinned by a human rights approach, including accountability mechanisms. They noted a need for better design of social protection programmes in terms of able to react quickly to shocks such as droughts, floods and food price spikes, and also highlighted that because a large proportion of the people most vulnerable to hunger make their living in agriculture, social protection programmes should support agricultural livelihoods directly.<sup>46</sup>
- 64 The UN Special Rapporteurs on the Right to Food and on Extreme Poverty & Human Rights recently proposed establishing a ‘Global Fund for Social Protection’.<sup>47</sup> This would:
- close the funding shortfall for putting in place a social protection floor in least developed countries (LDCs)
  - help underwrite these schemes against the risks of excess demand triggered by major shocks by
    - advising LDCs on suitable private reinsurance options
    - subsidising premiums where necessary
    - acting as the reinsurer of last resort in cases where private schemes are not extensive or affordable enough
- 65 To address the recent high levels of food price volatility governments in both the North and South have recognised and strengthened the role of food reserves in providing vital relief in food emergencies. However, there is a growing recognition that food reserves can move beyond emergency response and play a vital role in reducing excessive volatility in agricultural commodity markets. Through predictable, accountable and coordinated management of stocks food reserves at the national and regional level can ease price volatility and pre-empt price spikes.<sup>48</sup> At the same time food reserves can have significant developmental impacts by providing stable and more remunerative prices for producers, provide a market for small-scale farmers produce, and create supplies for food-based social protection schemes.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>45</sup> High Level Panel of Experts, *Social protection for food security*. Rome: CFS: 2012, pp 53-55. [www.fao.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/hlpe/hlpe\\_documents/HLPE\\_Reports/HLPE-Report-3-Food\\_security\\_and\\_climate\\_change-June\\_2012.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/hlpe/hlpe_documents/HLPE_Reports/HLPE-Report-3-Food_security_and_climate_change-June_2012.pdf)

<sup>46</sup> High Level Panel of Experts, *op cit*, pp16-17. [www.fao.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/hlpe/hlpe\\_documents/HLPE\\_Reports/HLPE-Report-3-Food\\_security\\_and\\_climate\\_change-June\\_2012.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/hlpe/hlpe_documents/HLPE_Reports/HLPE-Report-3-Food_security_and_climate_change-June_2012.pdf)

<sup>47</sup> Olivier de Schutter and Magdalena Sepúlveda, *Underwrite the poor like we underwrote the banks” – UN experts propose Global Fund for Social Protection*. 9 Oct 2012. [www.srfood.org/index.php/en/component/content/article/1-latest-news/2513-underwrite-the-poor-like-we-underwrote-the-banks-un-experts-propose-global-fund-for-social-protection](http://www.srfood.org/index.php/en/component/content/article/1-latest-news/2513-underwrite-the-poor-like-we-underwrote-the-banks-un-experts-propose-global-fund-for-social-protection)

<sup>48</sup> IATP, *Grain reserves and the food price crisis*. Minneapolis: IATP, 2012. [www.iatp.org/files/2012\\_07\\_13\\_IATP\\_GrainReservesReader.pdf](http://www.iatp.org/files/2012_07_13_IATP_GrainReservesReader.pdf)

<sup>49</sup> ActionAid International, *No more food crises: the indispensable role of food reserves*. Johannesburg: ActionAid International, 2009. [www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/polcy\\_briefing\\_-\\_the\\_role\\_of\\_food\\_reserves.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/polcy_briefing_-_the_role_of_food_reserves.pdf)

6) *Appendix*

From Koohafkan et al, 2011 “Green agriculture: Foundations for biodiverse, resilient and productive agricultural systems”<sup>50</sup>

***A set of guiding questions to assess if proposed agricultural systems are contributing to sustainable livelihoods***

1. Are they reducing poverty?
2. Are they based on rights and social equity?
3. Do they reduce social exclusion, particularly for women, minorities and indigenous people?
4. Do they protect access and rights to land, water and other natural resources?
5. Do they favour the redistribution (rather than the concentration) of productive resources?
6. Do they substantially increase food production and contribute to household food security and improved nutrition?
7. Do they enhance families’ water access and availability?
8. Do they regenerate and conserve soil, and increase (maintain) soil fertility?
9. Do they reduce soil loss/degradation and enhance soil regeneration and conservation?
10. Do practices maintain or enhance organic matter and the biological life and biodiversity of the soil?
11. Do they prevent pest and disease outbreaks?
12. Do they conserve and encourage agrobiodiversity?
13. Do they reduce greenhouse gas emissions?
14. Do they increase income opportunities and employment?
15. Do they reduce variation in agricultural production under climatic stress conditions?
16. Do they enhance farm diversification and resilience?
17. Do they reduce investment costs and farmers dependence on external inputs?
18. Do they increase the degree and effectiveness of farmer organizations?
19. Do they increase human capital formation?
20. Do they contribute to local/regional food sovereignty?

<sup>50</sup> P Koohafkan, MA Altieri and EH Gimenez, “Green agriculture: Foundations for biodiverse, resilient and productive agricultural systems.” *International Journal of Agricultural Sustainability* 10 (1) 2012, pp61-75.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14735903.2011.610206>