Southern Regional Model United Nations, Atlanta 2012
From Crisis to Opportunity: Chartering a Path Forward for Global Self-Sustainability
November 15-17, 2012 - Atlanta, GA
Email: fao_atlanta@srmun.org

Dear Delegates,

It is my distinct honor to welcome you to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the 23rd Southern Regional Model United Nations (SRMUN). My name is Brian Ruscher and along with my Assistant Directors Victoria Vaught and Dominic Hoak, we hope that you will find this Background Guide informative and useful in your preparations. Over the summer, the three of us worked long hours to ensure you the best quality Model United Nations Background Guide to provide a clear and concise introduction to the important topics we will be discussing.

As you will read more in depth on in the History section , the FAO is an organization as old as the United Nations whose aim is to provide information in numerous ways to Member States on food and agriculture practices in an effort to build capacity in developing areas throughout the globe. This committee will work to ensure that mandate through the topics before it, namely:

I. Developing and Examining Local, Regional, and Global Strategies to Reduce Food Price Volatility;
II. Advancing Capacity Development in Information Systems: Increasing Accessibility to Food and Nutrition Data; and
III. Examining and Addressing the Impact of Food Insecurity on Gender Relations.

With this agenda in mind, it is vital to understand the importance of the FAO and similar organizations in fighting famine and advancing policy on food and agriculture issues. The FAO deals directly with Member States to provide insight into best practices for capacity development. The importance of the leadership of this committee makes it important that you begin your research with the sources found in this background guide and at the FAO's website, and from there expand your research into other areas as you see fit.

Every delegation must submit a position paper addressing each of the topics listed above and only those listed above. These papers should adhere to SRMUN guidelines on position paper format and style. The position paper objective is to provide insight into your countries position, history, and statement of goals for the topic. Finally, each position paper should also take into consideration how the committee should address the issue as a whole.

Because your position paper should do everything listed above, it is an excellent opportunity to give the committee's dias leadership an idea of what you expect to do at conference. The leadership expects well-written position papers that will serve as a foundation for an excellent conference and fully developed debate. While your Member State's position is what you represent, please remember that you may also want to research the opposing side of contentious issues and address them in your position paper as this proves positive knowledge for the committee. If you have questions about the details of the position papers, please visit the SRMUN website (www.srmun.org) or email your director and assistant directors at the address listed below. **Please note that all position papers MUST be submitted by October 26th, 2012 at 11:59pm EST via the on-line submission system at http://www.srmun.org.**

Dominic, Victoria, and myself are thrilled to serve as your staff this year. With the Millennium Development Goals reaching their deadline, and the recent international developments involving food and agriculture, we expect every delegate to come in with an open mind, and ready to engage with your co-delegates. We are both looking forward to meeting each and every one of you, and ask that if you have any issues, questions, comments, or concerns about this year, to please contact us and we will be thrilled to answer your inquiries.

Best of luck in your preparation and welcome to the Food and Agriculture Organization!

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Committee History of the Food and Agriculture Organization

"Every child, woman and man has a right to enough nutritious food for an active and healthy life. We need to break the links between poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition. This requires the full engagement of many sectors and actors. It means: pursuing comprehensive approaches; responding to the needs of the most vulnerable; listening to the concerns of rural women; working for resilient and sustainable food systems; ensuring strong political commitment, predictable finance and a focus on results."[1]

-Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

In 1943, 44 governments met in Virginia to commit themselves to improving the lives of their peoples through better nutrition, and more efficient agriculture. Two years later, the first plenary session of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was held.[2] The FAO is an intergovernmental organization composed of 191 Member States, and three associate members: the European Union, Tokelau, and the Faroe Islands.[3] This plenary body meets biennially to discuss the work of the organization, carried out by the seven departments of the FAO.[4] At this meeting, the organization establishes its budget, elects a council, and, when necessary, elects a Director-General.[5]

The FAO has four main goals: information sharing, sharing policy expertise, providing a forum for nations, and bringing knowledge to the field.[6] Information sharing is specifically related to the sharing of and access to necessary information for Member States and its citizens to know about food policy, best practices, and other important information. Sharing policy expertise and establishing a meeting place for Member States go hand in hand in the development of best practices and regional strategies, while taking into consideration biological differences and cultural sensitivities.[7] Finally, the overarching goal of these four priorities is bringing information to the field, linking farmers, government officials, and technicians. The FAO works diligently to ensure that all stakeholders across the globe in Food and Agriculture are collaborating in their respective areas.[8]

While these four goals are inclusive of the work the FAO is currently carrying out, the work of the organization has been rather diverse and shared with by other organizations on multiple fronts. This includes the work of the FAO and the World Health Organization in developing the Codex Alimentarius. The Codex Alimentarius is a commission that establishes international food safety standards, with goals of protecting health, fair trade, and best practices between governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).[9] The Codex is an excellent example of bilateral intergovernmental organizational capacity, where the two organizations work in collaboration to accomplish the mandate of the commission.[10]

In keeping with the mandate of the FAO, the organization has also increased the technical capacity of Member States and its citizens through technological development and information sharing. In 1976, the FAO launched the Technical Cooperation Program, with the intent of sharing national policy coordination programs and implementing field activities of the organization.[11] Additionally, the FAO launched the "world's most comprehensive" source of information on food and agriculture in the world, Agrostat (later renamed FAOSTAT).[12]

Since 1994, the work of the organization has become increasingly focused on food crises around the world such as addressing diseases infecting sources of foods and the lack of access to foods across the world. In that same year, the FAO introduced the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS), with the intent of improving access to food,

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[1] Ki-moon, Ban. *Secretary-General's message to Committee on World Food.* 17 October 2011. http://www.un.org/sg/statements/?nid=5613
[2] United Nations. Food and Agriculture Organization. "About". February 1st, 2012.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.
[9] FAO/WHO Food Safety Standards. Codex Alimentarius. 2011. http://www.codexalimentarius.net/web/index_en.jsp#
[10] Ibid.
[11] UN. FAO. "Technical Cooperation Department". 2012. http://www.fao.org/tc/about_en.asp
[12] UN. FAO. FAOStat. 2011. http://faostat.fao.org/site/291/default.aspx

the safety of that food, and information sharing in food related industries.[13] This program works increasingly to advance the goals of the organization through available technology such as mapping programs and developing research methods.[14]

In addition to the SPSF program, the FAO implemented the Emergency Prevention System Transboundary Animal and Plant Pest and Diseases (EMPRES) to coordinate responses to food and agriculture crises.[15] The EMPRES system also works to eradicate diseases from food systems throughout the world by organizing meetings, developing programs, and promoting international policies that support healthy systems.[16] The work of the FAO has been very effective in bringing many Member States closer to their goals of alleviating hunger through promoting best practices and understanding differences between developed nations and other actors; however, much work still needs to be accomplished through organizational and field work.

The FAO publishes an annual report outlining the year in review, the food situation of the world, the future of the organization, and highlighting a driving theme. The report of the 2010-2011 year is entitled *Women – Key to Food Security* and highlights the importance placed on gender especially with regard to the goal of achieving food security.[17] The report cites that women have the technical know-how to improve infrastructure, inform decision makers, and improve education for all in the work of the organization.[18]

All Member States are represented within FAO.

[13] UN. FAO. Supporting Programs for Food Security. 2010. http://www.fao.org/spfs/en/
[14] Ibid.
[15] UN. FAO. EMPRES. 2012. http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/programmes/en/empres/about.html
[16] Ibid.
[17] UN. FAO. "FAO at Work: Women – Key to Food Security". pp. 5-6 http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/am719e/am719e00.pdf
[18] Ibid.

I: Developing and Examining Local, Regional, and Global Strategies to Reduce Food Price Volatility

"To put it simply, trade plays or can play a better role in addressing the rise in food prices and tackling food insecurity. Trade is part of the solution, and not part of the problem."
- Pascal Lamy, Director-General of the World Trade Organization

Introduction

The General Assembly of the United Nations invited all international organizations, with specific interest on the Food and Agriculture Organization, to participate in debate and encourage research on the issue of Price Volatility.[19] United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/66/188 requests Member States, and those organizations willing to acknowledge the issue and bring it to debate, to undertake steps to combat food price volatility while working individually and in larger groups to see what solutions can be found.[20] The year 1975 saw the creation of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), which has served to "…identify and analyze alternative national and international strategies and policies for meeting food needs of the developing world on a sustainable basis."[21] The institute has a focus on low-income countries and works towards the completion of Millennium Development Goal (MDG) One, ending a certain amount of poverty and hunger throughout the world.[22] Their other focus revolves around meeting nutrition needs for those in their affected areas, which comes full center to the problem of food price volatility and the associated problems from the inability to purchase/eat food.[23] Different organizations and sectors of organizations have been working since the 1940s in order to combat food price volatility. Despite these efforts, the successful completion of the MDGs may be in jeopardy partly due to global population growth as well as the inability to properly feed and nourish those already effected by volatile price markets.[24]

Beginning in 2006, and leading up to the global economic crisis, food prices started to rise rapidly and continued this trend until mid-2008 as prices dropped in unprecedented fashion. The 2008 price increases caused the food market to experience record highs and shifts that the markets of many developing Member States were not prepared for. Food prices retreated from their record high levels, but they remained above their previous average price point.[25] Volatility is defined with a formula from The World Bank that was developed with assistance from multiple international organizations. The formula states that during the change in price from time period one to time period two the further away from zero the new price is, the larger the volatility is. Whether that price fluctuation is positive or negative is indicated by whether the number is greater than or less than zero. Volatility is measured over a short amount of time, while keeping in mind that the basic principle of a price system is that when the availability of product A is low, the price will be high and when the availability of product B is high the price will be low.[26] Ultimately, food price volatility refers to the economic changes that drastically alter the price of goods. Food prices have steadily increased over decades, but during recent years, instability in prices has caused consequences for the rest of the world.

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[19] A/RES/66/188. *Addressing excessive price volatility in food and related financial and commodity markets.* United Nations General Assembly. 14 February 2012 http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/res/66/188&Lang=E

[20] Ibid.

[21] Headley, Derek; and Fan, Shenggen. "Reflections on the Global Food Crisis: How did it happen? How was it Hurt? And How can we prevent the next one?" International Food Policy Research Institute. 2010. Washington D.C. http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/rr165.pdf

[22] Ibid.; United Nations (2012). Millennium Development Goals. http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/

[23] Headley, Derek; and Fan, Shenggen. "Reflections on the Global Food Crisis: How did it happen? How was it Hurt? And How can we prevent the next one?" International Food Policy Research Institute. 2010. Washington D.C. http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/rr165.pdf

[24] Woods, Robert G (1981). "Future Dimensions of World Food and Population". Westview Press.

[25] Gilbert, C.L.; and Morgan, C.W (2010). "Food Price Volatility". Philospophical Translations of the Royal Society. Pp. 3023-3034. http://rstb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/365/1554/3023.full

[26] Food Price Volatility and Food Security: A report by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition. July 2011. Committee on World Food Security. http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/hlpe/hlpe_documents/HLPE-price-volatility-and-food-security-report-July-2011.pdf

The small variable change in price for goods over a certain amount of time is not worrisome to the economic market as a whole; however, when large scale price differentiation takes place within a short time frame, there is potential for a situation to arise that is detrimental to all involved in trade of a commodity.[27] For clarification, the rise and fall of product prices that can be predicted, such as those dependent on a certain season or those that follow a particular pattern are not considered volatile.[28] The data collected in reference to the 2008 price spike states that typically prices will eventually lower and steady after a period of instability, however the prices since the start of the new millennium changed, and in more recent years, have been more volatile than in previous similar episodes in the 70s and 80s, and also remained above the price point before the spike.

There is little agreement on the root causes of food price volatility. The possible governmental bias from developing countries, political preference against low food prices, the inefficiency of the market to meet demand while avoiding surplus, or the large numbers of people living in poverty coupled with income inequality are some of the reasons put forward as to why food prices have risen drastically.[29] Despite the varying factors that elevate or decrease food prices, it is well understood that "food supply was simply not keeping up with demand."[30] Elevated prices have become expected over the years with the world food bill topping one trillion dollars in food imports for three of the past four years.[31] The increase in the food bill from 2010 to 2011 represents a 21% rise in amount spent based in large part to the greater price of grains.[32] Theories of the origin of food price volatility vary, with different and overlapping central themes such as rapid economic growth, low food supply or food scarcity, crop failure, and use of food crops for means other than consumption.[33] In addition to reasons already listed, the distance of food from its source compared to its target destination and the prices of oil in different regions aid in the increase of food price volatility.[34]

Local and Regional Effects of Food price Volatility

Food price volatility deals with the inconsistent changes in price, not that of elevated price; furthermore, as prices of goods change it is imperative to note that food markets are typically inelastic, meaning that consumers will pay an elevated price in order to attain the product in the short run.[35] Each Member State presents an interesting case for the examination of statistics as it emphasizes the inelasticity of food on the commodity market. As an example, government spending is likely to affect markets: in Tanzania an average of 70%, in Pakistan an average of 45%, and in the United States an average of 10% of each of these country's expenses is for food.[36] According to a World Bank press release in November 2011, "volatility, which is higher in low income countries, is expected to persist in the medium term due to multiple global and domestic factors. Structural factors contributing to the volatility include

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[27] Kharas, Homi. *Making Sense of Food Price Volatility.* 3 March 2011. The Brookings Institute http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0303_food_prices_kharas.aspx

[28] "Price Volatility in Food and Agricultural Markets: Policy Responses." FAO. June 2011. http://www.worldbank.org/foodcrisis/pdf/Interagency_Report_to_the_G20_on_Food_Price_Volatility.pdf

[29] Kharas, Homi. *Making Sense of Food Price Volatility.* 3 March 2011. The Brookings Institute http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0303_food_prices_kharas.aspx

[30] Headley, Derek; and Fan, Shenggen. "Reflections on the Global Food Crisis: How did it happen? How was it Hurt? And How can we prevent the next one?" International Food Policy Research Institute. 2010. Washington D.C. http://www.ifpri.org/sites/default/files/publications/rr165.pdf

[31] "One trillion food import bill as prices rise". FAO. 17 November 2010. Rome http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/47733/icode/

[32] "Food Outlook: Global Market Analysis." FAO. November 2011. http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/al981e/al981e00.pdf

[33] Gilbert, C.L.; and Morgan, C.W (2010). "Food Price Volatility". Philospophical Translations of the Royal Society. Pp. 3023-3034. http://rstb.royalsocietypublishing.org/content/365/1554/3023.full

[34] "FOOD: Predicting food price volatility." IRIN. http://www.irinnews.org/Report/93163/FOOD-Predicting-food-price-volatility

[35] Kharas, Homi. *Making Sense of Food Price Volatility.* 3 March 2011. The Brookings Institute http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0303_food_prices_kharas.aspx

[36] Food Price Volatility and Food Security: A report by the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition. July 2011. Committee on World Food Security. http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/hlpe/hlpe_documents/HLPE-price-volatility-and-food-security-report-July-2011.pdf

rising populations and changing diets, increasingly intertwined relations between food and energy prices, and increasing production of biofuels."[37]

Food price volatility affects countries and individuals throughout the world, however while developed countries notice a rise in prices, lesser-developed areas are affected by the price change in more significant ways, and during times of elevated prices an even larger portion of their already limited income must be allocated to food expenses.[38] As the United Nations works towards the fulfillment of the MDGs by 2015, the first goal itself may be threatened in part due to food price volatility[39]

Rapid economic growth, especially in Asia, has led toward the consideration of economic development as a cause of food price volatility. The United Nations General Assembly along with the Economic and Social Council held a conference in April 2012 titled "Addressing Excessive Price Volatility in Food and Related Financial and Commodity Markets."[40] In an address at the assembly on behalf of the G-77 and China, the Abderrahman Hamidaoui of the Algerian Permanent Mission to the United Nations stated "Growing population and urbanization as well as the rise of incomes in developing countries will add significantly to the global demand for food in the coming decades."[41] As the issue is recognized on an international level, the growing world population and their governments must bear in mind ways to acquire proper food and nutrition, without suffering further price fluctuation. During times of population growth, economies must adjust for more food consumption and the possibility that economic growth could result in the need to dip into overflow stocks.[42] Usage of these emergency stocks are intended to help states, however fluctuation in food production accompanied with price volatility can lead to poor nutrition statistics for the region and high mortality rates.[43]

Fluctuating and low food supplies often lead to food scarcity and are recognized as a factor of food price volatility that affects regions unable to cope with the drastic price changes, not only financially, but also physically.[44] The FAO compiled the "The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2011" report that brings to light the food crisis of 2006-2008.[45] The report notes countries that had to battle between domestic and international restrictions in order to buy and sell crops, and calls attention to the battle of price versus undernourishment in certain Asian and African Member States.[46] It also provides information as to food insecurity in the short term that will only be followed by periods of similar insecurities, and how the previous crops harvest greatly affects future world food supplies.[47]

In the face of growing industrial and green economies, the risk of the use of petroleum products on the environment is apparent, but alternatives such as renewable energies and particularly biofuels can sometimes have consequences

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[37] "Global Food Prices Remain High and Volatile Affecting Poorest Countries the Most". The World Bank. http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,print:Y~isCURL:Y~contentMDK:23036667~pagePK:64257043~piPK:437376~theSitePK:4607,00.html

[38] Aspergis, Nicholas and Anthony Rezitis. "Food Price Volatility and Macroeconomic Factors: Evidence from GARCH and GARCH-X Estimates." *Journal of Applied Economics*. February 2011. http://ageconsearch.umn.edu/bitstream/100650/2/jaae363.pdf

[39] Ibid.

[40] "UN debate on excessive food and commodity price volatility; call for regulating price speculation in the futures market". The Third World Network. 17 April 2012. http://www.twnside.org.sg/title2/wto.info/2012/twninfo120411.htm

[41] "Statement On Behalf Of The Group Of 77 And China By Minister Abderrahman Hamidaoui, Permanent Mission Of Algeria To The United Nations, At The High-Level Thematic Debate Of The Un General Assembly On "Adressing Excessive Price Volatility In Food And Related Financial And Commodity Markets". The G77. 11 April 2012. http://www.g77.org/statement/getstatement.php?id=120411

[42] Brown, Lester (27 November 1981). *World Population Growth, Soil Erosion, and Food Security".* Science Magazine. Pp. 995-1002. http://www.sciencemag.org/content/suppl/2003/11/19/302.5649.1356.DC1/214-4524-995.pdf

[43] Pinstrup-Anderson, Per. *Food Systems and Human Nutrition: Relationships and Policy Interventions.* No Date. http://dyson.cornell.edu/faculty_sites/pinstrup/pdfs/FAOpaperwithFigures.pdf

[44] Ibid.

[45] "The State of Food Insecurity in the World." FAO. 2011. http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/i2330e/i2330e00.htm

[46] "Undernourishment around the world: impact of the 2006–08 price shock: The crises hit the poor and the weak." FAO. 2011. http://www.fao.org/docrep/014/i2330e/i2330e02.pdf

[47] Ibid.

unintended to the environment, people, and food supplies around the world.[48] The use of renewable fuels has been a target for Member States such as Brazil, The United States, and many of the Member States of the European Union.[49] With the increase of agricultural products used to fuel vehicles, where those crops come from must be taken into account in terms of their role in food price volatility.[50] At the FAO Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in October 2011, the correlation between biofuel usage in fuels and food price volatility was emphasized.[51] The CFS advised that governments should be aware of the social, environmental, and economical situations that could occur from a switch to biofuel use. The use of these biofuels to power cars is supported and approved by many; however the use of crops in order to benefit an environmental society means that the food is not able to serve its original purpose to nourish the people.[52] While these innovative measures to reduce global pollution by converting to more natural/green energies have produced lower carbon dioxide emissions, it may be that the transition has put a greater emphasis on the environment than on the people that live in it.[53]

Food price volatility affects the citizens of different Member States differently according to their various situations. While some question, what they should have for dinner, others wonder what they can have for dinner. Regionally there is a social inequality in the matter of food consumption that is illuminated by high food price volatility.[54] *The Omnivore's Dilemma* by Michael Pollan delves into the origins of food for North Americans and how, over time, they have changed from to being less expensive while sacrificing the nutrients of naturally grown food free from pesticides and artificial ingredients. The examination that Pollan does is informational and makes the strong argument that the population of North America, while they are eating more than most of the people in the world, need to focus on eating a healthier diet. It is apparent that this book is aimed at a certain audience, one that is able to sustain itself entirely.[55]

Country Profiles and Low Income Food Deficit Countries

The FAO Country Profiles were created as a way to share information gleaned from FAO data, varying UN organizations, and the World Bank. The goal is for this information to be easily accessible and up to date while providing different statistics and views on figures in order to benefit the seeker.[56] Country profiles provide information and data pertinent to each individual country and their varying circumstances in the hopes of pinpointing what practices work for that particular area and / or region.[57] In 1970, the UNFAO began a list of States known as Low Income Food Deficit Countries (LIFDC) as a way to classify countries endangered by food price volatility, and this information was included in the country profiles in order to better classify states.[58] Typically a LIFDC is a country that meets three criteria. It must have a per capita gross national income (GNI) below the "historical" ceiling used by the World Bank in order to establish if the country is available for assistance from the International Development Association. LIFDC countries must have their import position, measured by a calorie basis, and meet certain designations from the statistics provided based on data from the previous three years.

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[48] "The Effects of Oil on Wildlife". Australian Government: Australian Maritime Safety Authority. No Date. http://www.amsa.gov.au/marine_environment_protection/educational_resources_and_information/teachers/the_effects_of_oil_on_wildlife.asp; "Biofuels" The New York Times: Energy and Environment. 17 June 2011. http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/business/energy-environment/biofuels/index.html

[49] Josling, Tim; Blanford, David; and Earley, Jane (September 2010). *Biofuel and Biomass Subsidies in the U.S., EU and Brazil: Towards a Transparent System of Notification*. International Agriculture and Trade Policy Council. http://www.agritrade.org/documents/Biofuels_Subs_Web_Final.pdf

[50] "Biofuels: Fueling Hunger?" Action Aid. 2012. http://actionaidusa.org/what/food_rights/Fueling_Hunger.pdf

[51] "CFS moves on important food security issues". FAO. 26 October 2011. http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/93401/icode/

[52] "Ethanol". US Department of Energy (27 July 2012). http://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/ethanol.shtml; Joyner, James (2008). *Biofuels Biofuels Starving World's Poor.* 11 April 2008. http://www.outsidethebeltway.com/biofuels_starving_worlds_poor/

[53] "The Benefits of Biofuel." Energy Future Coalition (2007). http://www.energyfuturecoalition.org/biofuels/benefits_env_public_health.htm

[54] Pollan, Michael (2006). *The Omnivores Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals".* Penguin Press. New York. http://michaelpollan.com/books/the-omnivores-dilemma/

[55] Cowen, Tyler (2006). "Can You Really Save the Planet at the Dinner Table? An economist's critique of The Omnivore's Dilemma". 1 November 2006. http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/books/2006/11/can_you_really_save_the_planet_at_the_dinner_table.html

[56] "FAO Country Profiles". FAO. 2012. http://www.fao.org/docrep/015/i2538e/i2538e00.pdf

[57] "Country Profiles". FAO: About. 2012. http://www.fao.org/countryprofiles/overview/en/

[58] "Low-income food-deficit countries". FAO. No date. http://www.fao.org/FOCUS/E/SpeclPr/LIFDCs.htm

Furthermore, self-exclusion criterion is permitted when countries that meets the above two criteria request that the FAO exclude them from the LIFDC category.[59] A further stipulation to the LIFDC list is that a country cannot simply be removed from the list once it no longer meets the criteria to be considered a LIFDC. As noted, with food price volatility short shocks to the market can propel or decline a state's position, therefore in order to be removed from the list a country must maintain its position for three years before it is no longer considered a LIFDC.[60] Since the creation of the list, several countries have been added and removed from it. Following LIFDC reevaluation in 2012, four Member States have been removed: Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu.[61]

Steps to Actions

The 2008 price shock brought attention to shifting prices in food across the world. Similar occurrences of price spikes of up to 40% between June and November 2010 brought alarm of a possible return of unstable prices.[62] CFS has announced the need for action to be taken on food security and nutrition, and claims food price volatility as one of the sources of concern.[63] The World Bank reports that global food prices rose 8% between December 2011 and March 2012 citing high oil prices, weather, and a growing market for food imports in Asian countries as reasons for such hikes.[64] In attempts to help combat food price volatility, The World Bank Group (WBG) has taken steps such as donating money throughout Africa to avoid an economic crash, taking preemptive measures to combat the effects of drought in the region, supporting programs such as the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program, promoting the "High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis", and supporting other non-governmental organizations in an effort to prevent volatile food prices.[65]

Individual institutions such as the Hellen Keller Institute (HKI) have been taking steps to help combat malnutrition, specifically in children, and the organization has promised to give "malnutrition the absolute priority it deserves and to support early childhood malnutrition interventions that result in real and measureable impacts that are sustainable."[66] Working in 22 countries throughout the world, HKI works specifically in Burkina Faso to aid children that are not able to get the minimum nutrition that they need due to food price volatility and its effects.[67] HKI works within schools because they recognize that there are many more schooling centers than health facilities, and that by working with the already established schools they are able to reach more people, and in turn heal more. Their programs to provide authoritative nutritional information and plant trees promote their long-term goal of people being able to access the right kind of food for their nutrition. While much of HKI's work happens in the provinces of Burkina Faso, they are attempting to adapt their successful practices to be suitable for other regions as well.[68]

Other organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), are also working throughout the world to to address nutritional issues. Obesity and Health Inequalities is a group established by Portugal and supported by eight European Member States attempting to establish different ways to address the inequalities and socioeconomic gaps directly related to food security and physical activity.[69] In the European region the standard level of health has risen on over the decades however there are still inequalities due to the varying range in income of countries in the

[59] "Low-income food-deficit countries". FAO. No date. http://www.fao.org/FOCUS/E/SpeclPr/LIFDCs.htm
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.
[62] "International Food Price Volatility: Regulating the (Super) Market." Ergo. November 2011. http://www.ergo.net/International-Food-Price-Volatility.pdf
[63] "Global Food Prices Remain High and Volatile Affecting Poorest Countries the Most." FAO. 17 November 2010. Rome http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/46665/icode/
[64] "Global Food Prices Remain High and Volatile Affecting Poorest Countries the Most". The World Bank. http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,print:Y~isCURL:Y~contentMDK:23036667~pagePK:64257043~piPK:437376~theSitePK:4607,00.html
[65] Ibid.
[66] "Reducing Malnutrition". The Hellen Keller Institute (2012). http://www.hki.org/reducing-malnutrition/
[67] "Burkina Faso". The Hellen Keller Institute (2012). http://www.hki.org/working-worldwide/africa/burkina-faso/
[68] Ibid.
[69] "Obesity and Health Inequalities". The WHO (2012). http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-do/health-topics/disease-prevention/nutrition/policy/member-states-action-networks/obesity-and-health-inequalities

region.[70] In WHO reports poverty is cited as a key factor in the poorer levels of health throughout those countries and the organization is working in order to ensure that price volatility does not further harm the people.[71]

Conclusion

Food price volatility has been a significant issue for decades, yet the price spikes of the last ten years may be the turning point for the future. Since the 2008 price spike, numbers have continually fluctuated while still rising upwards.[72] At this time the world has more information than ever on the amount of food needed for survival, and the ability to predict what will be available in the future. With the world's population expected to reach 9.1 billion in 2050, it will be the responsibility of the world to produce the estimated 70% increase in food stocks needed to feed these people.[73] Although there are less than 40 years until that date, the determinants of food price volatility today may or may not be the driving determinants at that time. It is possible that the distance from food production to consumption, low food supply, crop failures, and the amount of biofuels produced from viable crops will remain some of the causes of food price volatility, or the determinants could change as technology develops and areas mature. The resolution of food price volatility depends on institutions such as the United Nations to develop comprehensive strategies which address the tremendous breadth of causes and effects.

Committee Directive

Meeting nutritional needs of a growing global population is an ever increasing challenge facing the international community. Increasing prices have led to widespread hunger and the FAO is tasked with the challenge of investigating and producing innovative plans that will solve the issues related to this topic. Delegates should come prepared to speak on their respective Member State's needs, specifically if they are a LIFDC or have utilized the resources that FAO provides in a technological fashion. Is access to technology one of the initial issues facing your Member State? If so, what has to be done to improve the availability of technology and data sharing for your region of the globe? This topic is a challenge and requires unique and innovative thought to address an issue that has plagued the globe for many years. With so many advances in technology and data available, why are we still forced to discuss food volatility and access to such a basic need of every person on earth?

II. Advancing Capacity Development in Information Systems: Increasing Accessibility to Food and Nutrition Data

Modern Technological Development

Since the beginning of the industrial revolution, technology and its uses have played an important role in the development of nation-states. From electricity to the Internet, the development of technology has had an incredible impact on the states that possess it, and a disproportionate effect on those who do not.[74] Unfortunately, the development of technology has been not been widely distributed and disproportionately left developing areas with a gap that must be dealt with to build capacity.[75] History shows that, like the use of technology, the use of data can be excessively powerful for good, however tragically evil in other ways. Examples can be found in the collection of names and addresses from WWII of Jewish populations, who were subsequently nearly exterminated in many areas

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[70] "Social Determinants". The WHO (2012). http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-do/health-topics/health-determinants/social-determinants

[71] "European Banks Fuelling Food Price Volatility and Hunger". The Friends of Earth Europe (2012). http://www.foeeurope.org/European-banks-hunger-120112

[72] "Commodity Food Price Index Monthly Price - Index Number". Oindex Mundi (2012). http://www.indexmundi.com/commodities/?commodity=food-price-index

[73] "How to feed the world in 2050." FAO. No Date. http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/wsfs/docs/expert_paper/How_to_Feed_the_World_in_2050.pdf

[74] Jauhari, V., & Kondo, K.K. "Technology and Poverty – Some Insights from India". October 2003. Pg. 1 http://www.ias.unu.edu/resource_centre/UNU-IAS%20Working%20Paper%20No.103.pdf

[75] WHO REPORT 2008 "GLOBAL ECONOMIC PROSPECTS". http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTGEP2008/Resources/complete-report.pdf

of the world. This case presents an excessively unfortunate case of the abuse of information. On the other hand, the United Nations (UN) has used information, more specifically country and sub-region level data from all areas of the world to assist in making important political decisions since the beginning of the institution; namely when its plenary body passed a resolution to supply said regions with foodstuffs to aid starving populations.[76]

The use of information has spread exponentially over the past few decades, while encouraging unprecedented development across the globe when accompanied with technology such as the computer.[77] The computer and programming was the beginning of a technological and scientific revolution in industry that spurred the development of new technologies in business, government, and in society. With the development of technology and information services emergency information to be transmitted and business be conducted quicker. For example, the invention of fax machines allowed the transfer of contracts and other business forms from one location to another, within a matter of seconds across the globe, and theoretically eliminated the need to mail hard copies. Another development was the invention of the Internet, which exponentially accelerated the spread of information and created opportunities for capacity development by networking people together throughout the world. The Internet is used daily by billions of people to perform various tasks, such as email information, purchase products, communicate with loved ones via programs, and most notably of the 21st century, communicate via social media.

The computer is a technological invention that has brought forth advancements in most of the fields listed above. It has led to the invention of cell phones, systems for space travel, different data processing mechanisms, and numerous other advancements. Computers have become portable and, where technology is pervasive, they are now used as entertainment devices as much if not more than as they were once for professional purposes. Cell phones are also becoming more useful as new technology advances mobile device capabilities into new frontiers including broadband (Internet) access to users throughout certain parts of the globe.[78] Furthermore, some cellular phones currently available have more computing power than those that were at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in the United States in the 1960s and 70s. Mobile phones are essentially becoming mobile computers, allowing for global positioning technology to be utilized, emails to be sent, and communication via social media to occur much quicker, and often in real time.

Nevertheless, technological development has been concentrated in more developed areas where capitol or access to credit is more accessible, typically not arriving in the developing world due to a number of reasons. The first reason that technological development has not occurred in developing areas is that research in modern science and technology did not originate in these areas, taking away from the ability of technological infrastructural to also develop in these areas. This "digital divide" often can be described as "the divide between those included and excluded from the digital age" and bridging this divide does not mean giving all humans a cell phone or laptop, but ensuring access to information resources so that people have the tools they need to be educated and up to date in the information age.[79]

The digital divide is arguably an illustrator of much broader social inequalities.[80] It illustrates how technology has developed over time in limited areas, and how social determinants such as income inequality, language barriers, and lack of education have disproportionately affected people even in developed Member States.[81] Many impoverished and rural areas in the United States and other developed countries lack access to the Internet and other basic information hubs such as libraries, government resources, and technologically advanced educational institutions that would connect them to information needed to build capacity.[82]

Introduction to Databases

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[76] A/RES/45(I). *World shortage of cereals and other foodstuffs*. UN General Assembly. 25 June 2012.

[77] Chinn, Menzie D., & Fairlie, Robert W. "The Determinants of the Global Digital Divide: A Cross-Country Analysis of Computer and Internet Penetration". March 2004. http://www.econ.yale.edu/growth_pdf/cdp881.pdf

[78] Hilbert, Martin. "When is cheap, cheap enough to bridge the digital divide? Modeling Income Related Structural Challenges of Technology Diffusion in Latin America." 2010. Pg. 11. http://martinhilbert.net/CheapEnoughWD_Hilbert_pre-print.pdf

[79] Ibid, p. 4 & 11.

[80] The Economist. "The Real Digital Divide". No date. http://www.economist.com/node/3742817?story_id=3742817

[81] Chinn, Menzie D., & Fairlie, Robert W. "The Determinants of the Global Digital Divide: A Cross-Country Analysis of Computer and Internet Penetration". March 2004. Page 5

[82] Norris, Pippa. *Digital Divide: Civic Engagement, Information Poverty, and the Internet Worldwide.* 2002. Pp 26-33.

A database is "a collection of logical data belonging together and a description of the same data, designed to meet the information requirements in an organization."[83] Databases were developed to organize information clearly so that viewers can collect, view, correct, and disseminate information quick and in an orderly manner. Information organized in a database allows the data to be analyzed or processed using programs such as Microsoft Excel, which allows the end user to easily find relationships and calculate the probability of causation or correlation based on the information in the table using statistical calculations.

The FAO utilizes a number of different databases to organize information for end users.[84] These databases range from agricultural land uses to fishery and aquaculture statistics to soil types, and serve a number of different purposes.[85] For example, CountrySTAT allows policy makers to analyze data across themes of a statistical information system for food and agriculture; by doing this users are able to analyze production, consumption, and trade for the purposes of understanding relationships and processes of food systems.[86]

Access to information and databases is a solution to bridging the digital divide because the people who can benefit the most from this data often do not have electricity, a connection to the Internet, or computers powerful enough to analyze the relationships found in the FAO Databases. This disparity is exacerbated by the fact that science and technology continues to advance in developed areas, yet research in these subject areas typically is not the focus in developing areas. In the developing world, much of the technological development that has occurred within areas of mobile phone technology has been in an attempt to give rural areas access to communication via wireless technology. Access to technology is becoming more relevant to people in the developing world by the day, as the ability to transfer money wirelessly or make a phone call can allow communities to have information on market prices and allow them to sell their products to potential wholesalers more easily. Furthermore, it allows them to communicate with organizations in times of emergencies when food diseases are present, or order supplies for farming and food production. Preceding the entry of cell phones into the developing world were laptops and computers that provided basic programs, tools, and tutorials to teach children how to operate and program: computers such as the XO. The XO laptop was designed as a rugged, energy efficient, low cost, and connectable laptop that would teach children the basic use of a computer, as well as provide them with a means of bridging the digital divide, an important step in the modernization of food accessibility and safety.[87]

Food and Nutrition Data

The FAO has worked with various organizations to create a number of databases aimed at improving food and agricultural accessibility and information.[88] While the FAO utilizes multiple databases with considerable variables within each catalogue, each database has its own strength associated with it. For example, FAOSTAT-Agriculture provides statistics on livestock, irrigation, land use, and other useful pieces of information.[89] On the other hand, The Global Livestock Production and Health Atlas (GLiPHA) provide information on animal production and how to maintain livestock health. Also important to the accessibility of foods and nutrition is emergency foodstuffs, and to deal with this issue, the World Food Program has put into place a Food Aid Information System (FAIS) aimed at dealing with food shortages globally.[90] The FAIS has become the most reliable and comprehensive database on food aid flows. It is a source of information for all emergency action stakeholders, and is utilized to assist in the eradication of hunger and malnutrition.[91] To illustrate trends in food patters, the WFP FAIS also publishes reports that illustrate how trends in food delivery have changed in various ways, as illustrated on the Quantity Reporting measures being listed on the FAO Website.[92]

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[83] Hansen, Kjell T. "Databases: Introduction to Databases". Distance learning from NVU-AITeL. 1 October 2002. http://www.aitel.hist.no/fag/dbs-e/lek01/lesson01.pdf
[84] Food and Agriculture Organization. Statistics. http://www.fao.org/corp/statistics/en/
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid.
[87] "About the project: mission." One Laptop Per Child. http://one.laptop.org/about/mission
[88] FAO. Statistics. 2012. http://www.fao.org/corp/statistics/en/
[89] World Food Program. Food Aid Information System (FAIS). 2009. http://www.wfp.org/fais/
[90] Ibid.
[91] Ibid.
[92] WFP. FAIS. 2009. http://www.wfp.org/fais/reports/quantities-delivered-two-dimensional-report/chart/year/All/cat/All/recipient/All/donor/All/code/All/mode/All/basis/0/order/0

Studies on capacity development in food and nutrition include more than formal training, going as far as "human resource development, and organizational, and institutional and legal framework development with the aim of enhancing knowledge and skills".[93] This has been the aim of the European Food Information Resource Network of Excellence (EUROFIR), who has conducted studies on the capacity and lack thereof in developing areas on Food Composition Databases (FCDBs). FCDBs provide nutritional information to users on various foods through various means of receiving information.[94] Originally, this information was presented in a paper form within books to people who desired the information.[95] Now this information is provided to most users electronically across the globe, with some differences in databases ranging from country to country. Socio-cultural differences are significant to each FCDB due to Member States varying food standards and dietary limitations.[96] There are a number of ways that FCDBs are compiled, namely: chemical analysis of food samples, a rather costly measure for developing countries to carry out; estimating nutrition of yields using nutrition factors; borrowing values from another FCDB; and adopting values from literature and already branded foods, and placing the results of these methods into a data collection program.[97] The results of a study involving food composition databases in the Middle East and North Africa and Central and Eastern Europe resulted in the discovery that a number of countries had no FCDB, and capacity in this area was extremely nascent throughout these regions.[98]

However, there are programs that work to develop capacity in the international community such as the International Network of Food data Systems (INFOODS). INFOODS was established in 1984 by an ad hoc working group convened at the United Nations University; and since 1990 has had an active role in a number of nutritional and food services.[99] The goal of INFOODS is to "stimulate and coordinate efforts to improve the quality and worldwide availability of food analysis data and to ensure that anyone anywhere would be able to obtain adequate and reliable food composition data."[100] Additionally, INFOODS provides leadership and administrative frameworks for development standards and guidelines on collection, compilation and reporting of data.[101] INFOODS also has worked to build the necessary programs for the electronic storage of food composition data that allows for interchanges among databases. INFOODS and the WHO have worked collaboratively with the FAO to compile data on wild and underutilized foods aspiring to bring these commodities into mainstreamed food sources.[102]

The Convention on Biological Diversity Cross-cutting Initiative on Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition was established for a number of reasons. First, an oversimplification of diets through densely caloric and low nutritional foods have led to a number of chronic diseases in all areas of the world; with diseases being exacerbated by the declining use of local food stocks.[103] Secondly, viewing biodiversity as part of the solution to reverse this unhealthy trend and towards the accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals.[104] INFOODS has also put forth numerous resources that are highly usable by those in developing areas, listing how to manage food databases using basic programs such as Microsoft Excel.[105]

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[93] M. Gurinovic et al. "Capacity Development in food consumption database management and nutritional research and education in Central and Eastern European, Middle Eastern, and North African Countries. *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition.* 2010. S134-S138.
[94] EUROFIR. Food Composition Databases: The content of Food Composition Databases. 2011. http://www.eurofir.net/eurofir_knowledge/food_composition_databases
[95] Ibid.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.
[99] FAO: Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department: Background to INFOODS. 2012. http://www.fao.org/infoods/index_en.stm
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] FAO: Agriculture and Consumer Protection Department: Publications. 2012. http://www.fao.org/infoods/publications_en.stm

Databases and Data Collection for Capacity building – Case Studies

Data collection occurs every second of every day in various ways. Whether it is Internet services collecting personal information on users to provide targeted advertising, or surveys being conducted on a target population to analyze health issues, data and subsequent analysis of data is the way that scientists statistically prove correlations between events to ensure their hypotheses are correct. Local governments also collect data on their populations, with some governments utilizing censuses to collect larger amounts of more detailed information. However, local governments sometimes lack the capacity to build a database of information, especially one focused on food systems and nutritional information, due to a lack of capacity or access to technology that would enable them to do so. In some instances, Member States work with organizations and institutions to conduct analyses of nutritional and thematic deficiencies in specified areas.

A study from Taiwan analyzing proper nutrition intake from elementary school children was conducted to analyze learning behavior and its association with proper nutrition.[106] The studies by Ming-Ling Fu et al. analyzed over 2,000 elementary school students using data on demographics, diet, lifestyle, and anthropometrics. The study concluded that students who did not have proper nutritional intake were over 7% more likely to have poor learning performance habits.[107] This study illustrates how data collection, and the information that comes out of it, can target programs that will increase nutritional value, and by extension, learning habits of elementary school children. Increasing the health and wellness of children will also decrease their likelihood of poor eating habits later into their lifetimes and the possibility of become obese.[108]

An ongoing study by the World Health Organization (WHO) analyzes nutrition, food safety, and security in Tajikistan. The World Food Program and the WHO Regional Office in Europe work together to collect quarterly data on variables from areas within this Member State.[109] The program works with the Tajik Ministry of Health and various centers to develop prevention and mitigation strategies for health, focusing on surgery and nutrition for pediatric development. The project has identified major iron deficiency anemia, which causes growth defects in infants and children are a major problem in the area, and recommended various projects to curb health issues. These results led to feeding programs that trained mothers on properly breastfeeding appropriate aged children and training health workers in the promotion of monitoring dietary intake statuses of both children and mothers and the use of concentrated foods.[110] Data collection and the outcome of the capacity building with the government in Tajikistan have illustrated the importance of data collection and working with governments to find programs that target nutritional data and access to food.

In the European Union, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) works to harmonize data collection efforts on food safety, security, and nutrition.[111] Recommendations from the EFSA included systemized efforts for data collection and subsequent analysis that provides indications on programmatic themes and other ways of analyzing food data for program development.[112] Nevertheless, successful programs do come with restrictions, as some Member States have limitations on how they collect and share data. The first example of data limitations is that time restrictions for grants and other research projects may not allow sufficient time to retrieve approval from appropriate boards or consent from parents for nutritional information on youth.[113] A second issue arises with not being able to retrieve consent for studying youth nutrition data, as some parents may feel uncomfortable with consenting to their

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[106] Ming-Ling Fu, et al. *Association between Unhealthful Eating Patterns and Unfavorable Overall School Performance in Children.* American Dietetic Association. 2007. http://download.journals.elsevierhealth.com/pdfs/journals/0002-8223/PIIS0002822307016203.pdf

[107] Ibid.

[108] Safe Routes to School: Health Risk. http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/introduction/health_risks.cfm

[109] World Health Organization: Europe. Nutrition, Food Safety, and Security. 2012. http://www.euro.who.int/en/where-we-work/member-states/tajikistan/areas-of-work/nutrition,-food-safety-and-food-security

[110] Ibid.

[111] European Food Safety Authority. *General principles for the collection of national food consumption data in the view of a pan-European dietary survey.* Journal of the European Food Safety Authority. 2009 http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1435.htm

[112] Ibid.

[113] The use of epidemiological tools in conflict-affected populations: open-access educational resources for policy-makers: Limitations of Epidemiology. 2009. London School of Hygene and Tropical Medicine. http://conflict.lshtm.ac.uk/page_10.htm

child's health information being shared in studies.[114] While these issues are persistent, they are by no means insurmountable, as there are a number of programs around the world such as the FAO, WFP, and WHO, all who support data collection on food systems and nutritional information to formulate policies.

Conclusion

Amartya Sen, a leading economist and modern philosopher, noted at a forum hosted by Harvard University that while he has no doubt that freedoms and choices are likely to be increased because of access to technology through mobile phones in the developing world, ethical challenges will arise.[115] Sen noted the disparities between ethnic groups and how programs have been implemented in various ways have had varying outcomes for groups in positive and negative ways.[116] Capacity between Member States varies greatly and with each country reporting data to the UN and other development organizations such as the World Bank on variables such as poverty, malnutrition and others, the quality of data is not likely to be standard from report to report. With excessive expenses necessary to first bridge the digital divide, then build the capacity for data collection and monitoring on food access, nutrition, and safety being quite high, sustainable programs can be, yet are difficult to initiate throughout the world. Nevertheless, using sound examples of development in each respective area will work to benefit Member States such as those found in Taiwan, the European Union, and other areas can act as best practices for thematic deficiencies in Member States' policies and food areas.

Committee Directive

This highly difficult topic requires an understanding of basic computer use and knowledge of how information is collected. Does the nation you represent do intensive data collection on FCDBs or nutritional deficiencies in populations that would serve as examples in committee to help illustrate the importance and gaps in policies regarding food and nutritional information? Programs involving food data typically also involve intensive technology to analyze trends and deficiencies, is the digital divide seen as a hurdle for your Member State to overcome as it tries to build FCDBs or other types of information sources for people to use regarding food and nutritional data? Is your Member State involved in regional or organizational activities that focus on food and nutritional data collection and dissemination? What organizational capacity does your Member State, sub region, or region suffer from and are there situations similar to these deficiencies in other areas of the world? What programs have worked to make technology more available to developing areas across regions and Member States as the digital divide persist in a post-modern world?

III. Impact of Food Insecurity on Gender Relations

Introduction

The Food and Agricultural Organization's mandate is to "raise levels of nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of rural populations and contribute to the growth of the world economy." With the agricultural labor and production community make up nearly evenly split between men and women, women play an integral role in the formulation of the FAO development plans.[117] On the front lines of addressing issues related to gender equity in terms of access and availability of food, FAO is one of the United Nations leading agencies in addressing the gender inequality in terms of food security.[118] The 2010-2011 State of Food and Agriculture report from the FAO focused heavily upon women and the ever-increasing "gender gap" in agricultural pursuits. While FAO focuses on all areas associated with food and nutrition, much of the focus regarding women is centered on their vital role in agricultural pursuits.

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[114] Ibid.
[115] Center for Ethics and Technology. Amartya Sen on ICTs and human freedom. 27 October 2009. http://www.ethicsandtechnology.eu/blog/post/amartya_sen_on_icts_and_human_freedom/
[116] Ibid.
[117] *2010-11 The State of Food and Agriculture: Women in Agriculture Closing the gender gap for development.* Food and Agriculture Organization. Rome, Italy: Food and Agriculture Organization. 2011. http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf
[118] "FAO Program: Gender equity" Food and Agriculture Organization. http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-programme/gender-equity/en/

Despite their presence in the agricultural community, women are still routinely discriminated against and face difficulties in reaching their full potential in agricultural production.[119] When compared to their male counterparts, women have a more difficult time reaching markets, securing land rights, and access to equipment for farming or fishing.[120] Men most often "control the contracts," while women complete the majority- if not all- of the work on the land in family held plots.[121] Despite their roles in agricultural production, women are still at a disadvantage in terms of their access to land, seeds, production resources, and markets when compared with males. Closing the gender gap would result in a positive and lasting impact on the current state of food; crop yields would increase by 20-30 %each year, which would result in a total increase of 2.5-4% agricultural output each year.[122]

Culturally prescribed gender roles, those roles assigned to males and females, are a deeply seated ideal resulting in women being relegated to the margins of society and routinely thought of as the unpaid labor force.[123] "In developing countries, rural women and men play different roles in guaranteeing food security for their households and communities."[124] While the men are engaged in larger scale field crop growth, women are responsible for "growing and preparing most of the food consumed in the home and raising small livestock" for their families.[125] Rural women are more often engaged in small scale production for their families and "more likely to spend their incomes on food and children's needs."[126] Studies show when mothers control household budgets the survival chances of a child are increased by 20%.[127] Strictly defined gender roles only perpetuate inequalities for women and result in fewer employment and educational opportunities for women; both have negative impacts upon their families. In Africa, studies show women with access to at least a primary level of education improve the survival rate of their children by 40 %.[128] Ensuring gender equity is incorporated into their actions; the FAO is taking steps to ensure their activities in agriculture include gender sensitive foundations for Member States.

Defining Food Security

Defining food security has evolved over the course of 38 years. The first definition of food security emerged in 1974 following the World Food Conference and centered on ensuring the availability of food on international and national levels. At this time, there was little attention paid to the individual responsibility in terms of securing basic food needs for their families. The definition was instead centered entirely on adequate food secured through price and production controls.[129] The 1974 definition stood until 1984, when the FAO increased their focus from only availability to food supplies and the individual or household level of food supplies. The new definition of food security encompassed both the previous focus on the economic side of food security while also incorporating the new direction towards the individual food security needs.[130] Food security remained a priority of the international community throughout the remainder of the 1980s and into the 1990s. In 1996 the international community joined together again for the World Food Summit, where the definition of food security underwent crucial reforms aimed at

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[119] *2010-11 The State of Food and Agriculture: Women in Agriculture Closing the gender gap for development.* Food and Agriculture Organization. Rome, Italy: Food and Agriculture Organization. 2011. http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf

[120] Ibid.

[121] Ibid.

[122] *2010-11 The State of Food and Agriculture: Women in Agriculture Closing the gender gap for development Executive Summary.* Food and Agriculture Organization. Rome, Italy. 2011. http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2082e00.pdf

[123] *2010-11 The State of Food and Agriculture: Women in Agriculture Closing the gender gap for development.* Food and Agriculture Organization. Rome, Italy: Food and Agriculture Organization. 2011. http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf

[124] "FAO Program: Food security" Food and Agriculture Organization http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-programme/gender-food/en/

[125] Ibid.

[126] Ibid.

[127] Ibid.

[128] "FAO Program: Food security" Food and Agriculture Organization http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-programme/gender-food/en/

[129] "Policy Brief: Food Security." Food and Agriculture Organization. June, 2006. ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esa/policybriefs/pb_02.pdf

[130] Ibid.

increasing awareness of the evolution of food security, access, availability and security.[131] The new definition of food security was a more holistic definition, incorporating the economical and physical aspects of food security while also brining into light the need for ensuring that food supplies were meeting the nutritional needs for individuals.[132] With this definition in mind, the FAO moved forward with their mandate "for fighting hunger" through "sustainable agriculture and rural development with targets programs for enhancing direct access to food for the most needy."[133]

Evolution of Gender in the FAO Plan

Gender mainstreaming, the current platform utilized by the FAO in regards to gender and food security, resulted in the combination of Gender and Development (GAD) and Women in Development (WID). WID was organized at the 1975 First World Conference on Women in Mexico City and highlighted the role of women in development finding that women's work played an essential role in development.[134] Despite calling attention to women, WID kept women separate from the larger economic and social context and failed at realizing the importance of gender interactions in development.[135]

WID was phased out in favor of GAD, a more inclusive approach for defining women's roles. GAD continued addressing women in development but recognized that development did not occur in a vacuum. Instead, GAD "focuses on analyzing the roles and responsibilities that are socially assigned to women and men, the social relations and interactions between women and men, and the opportunities offered to one another."[136] GAD moved away from women-only projects in favor of establishing a framework for political, social, and economic change. Ultimately, GAD developed into gender mainstreaming, the current focus of the FAO. Gender mainstreaming is defined as "a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality."[137]

The Food and Agricultural Organization placed the role of women in food security in the forefront in the 2002-2007 Gender and Development Plan of Action.[138] The 2002-2007 plan specifically highlighted and addressed the means of addressing women's roles in the global food market. The plan encompassed the FAO's shift towards gender mainstreaming and raising gender equality awareness on both the government and economic level where women were still sorely underrepresented.

The Right to Food

One of the major food security issues recently discussed is the concept of Right to Food. As part of the FAO's Strategic Framework 2000-2015, the right to food was instituted as one of the nine priorities for the FAO[139]. Seeing the right to food as a basic human right, the FAO drafted the Right to Food guidelines for countries to develop and implement right to food programs.[140] The Right to Food first emerged in 1996 following the World Food Summit in Rome.[141] First mentioned in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the WFS in 1996 conceptualized the right to food.[142] The resulting initiative by the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was an expansion of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which embraced General

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[131] Ibid.
[132] Ibid.
[133] Ibid.
[134] *Gender: Key to Sustainability and Food Security: Plan of Action Gender and Development. Food and Agriculture Organization. Rome, Italy. 2003.* http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/005/Y3969E/y3969e02.htm#a
[135] "FAO Gender and Development Plan of Action (2002-2007)." Food and Agriculture Organization. May 2003. http://www.fao.org/sd/2002/PE0103_en.htm
[136] Ibid.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid.
[139] "Who we are." The Right to Food. http://www.fao.org/righttofood/about_en.htm
[140] Ibid.
[141] "The Right to Food." The Right to Food. http://www.srfood.org/index.php/en/right-to-food
[142] Ibid.

Comment No. 12 regarding the right to food.[143] While the general comments are not legally binding, they are part of the larger ICESCR framework which is legally binding on those who are party to the treaty.[144]

By establishing a group of various individuals, the Right to Food Team focuses their efforts on application of the right to food at all levels.[145] The Right to Food Team follows the Voluntary Guidelines established to ensure that all individuals, male and female, have access to food sources, whether grown themselves or purchased at a market.[146] This team set five main implementation goals: strong voices, right targets, accessible justice, effective action and durable impact.[147] Collectively, the five goals work together to ensure that all have access to food sources through the transmission of information, capacity building, transparency in laws, education, and monitoring of crisis situations.[148]

The Right to Food Team's efforts are guided by the *Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security*, which was established by the FAO Council in November 2004.[149] The guidelines serve as a guide for Member States in order to implement programs or measures aimed directly at providing adequate food sources for their citizens. The guidelines take into consideration the goals of the World Food Summit Plan of Action as well as the Millennium Development Goals and are the first steps taken to ensure the availability of food on an economic, social and cultural level.[150] The guidelines are broken into two sections: the first focuses on the "environment, assistance and accountability", and the second focuses on "international measures, actions, and commitments."[151]

In 2000, following the mandate of the Commission on Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on the Right To Food was approved. Professor Jean Ziegler was appointed the first Special Rapporteur, followed by Professor Olivier De Schutter in 2008. As Special Rapporteur, Olivier De Schutter stated "The right to food is a human right recognized under international law which protects right of all human beings to feed themselves in dignity, either by producing their food or by purchasing it."[152] Special Rapporteur De Schutter further added that the right to food is more than a right to vital nutrition, but is the right to unfettered access to food either by purchase or individual produced that is keeping in line with their cultural traditions.[153] The Special Rapporteur reiterated the commitment to the right to food following the Rio +20 summit in June 2012 stating, "The right to food has more than just symbolic value. It works because it is operationalized into laws and policies."[154]

According to the Special Rapporteur, the right to food is comprised of three key components: Availability, Accessibility, and Adequacy.[155] Availability is a two-fold concept, which incorporates not only the availability of food for purchase but also the availability of necessary resources for individual cultivation or access to natural resources for food sources. Availability also includes having access to vital resources for the purpose of fishing, hunting, gathering, and animal husbandry.[156] Accessibility is critical for ensuring the prices of food are not outside of the monetary reach of men and women. There must be a system in place ensuring food costs are within reach and do not prevent individuals from foregoing basic necessities such a shelter and education in order to purchase food.

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[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid.
[145] "Strategy." The Right to food. http://www.fao.org/righttofood/strategy_en.htm
[146] Ibid.
[147] "Goals." The Right to Food. http://www.fao.org/righttofood/goals_en.htm
[148] Ibid.
[149] *Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security. Food and Agriculture Organization. Rome, Italy. 2005.* http://www.fao.org/righttofood/publi_01_en.htm
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid.
[152] "Right to Food." Right to Food. http://www.srfood.org/index.php/en/right-to-food
[153] Ibid
[154] "A buffer against more than just hunger: Special Rapporteur on Rio +20." United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food. June 20, 2012 http://www.srfood.org/index.php/en/component/content/article/1-latest-news/2323-a-buffer-against-more-than-just-hunger
[155] "Right to Food." Right to Food. http://www.srfood.org/index.php/en/right-to-food
[156] Ibid.

Accessibility also means that those with physical or mental impairments - including the elderly and young children- have adequate access to food sources.[157] Adequate food sources must take into consideration the dietary needs of individuals and be in accordance with their cultural traditions.[158] Ultimately, the "right to food can only be fully realized where both 'national' and 'international' obligations are complied with."[159]

Women and Resource Allocation

The impact of barriers to needed equipment and training is felt more in rural areas where agricultural is more predominate. In conjunction with the Huairou Commission and Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture & Natural Resource Management (WOCAN), the FAO united women from around the world to discuss their experiences.[160] Tackling a wide variety of subjects that included high food and fuel costs, climate change, and lack of fiscal capitol for sustainable growth, this group addressed both their immediate needs and their long term goals for tackling the root issues related to food insecurity.[161] High food prices, the rising costs of agricultural materials, and high export costs put rural women at a disadvantage in competing with other producers. Women from Latin America, Africa, and Asia voiced their concerns regarding the disadvantages small producers face when bargaining for high purchase prices.[162]

On 18 December 2009, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution declaring 2012 as the International Year of Co-operatives.[163] For 2012, the UN efforts are focused on building sustainable relationships between the public, businesses and national governments and are focused on fulfilling a need rather than continuing greed.[164] In July 2012, the FAO noted a general need for improvement in agricultural production in order to meet the ever increasing global food need.[165] The FAO has placed a great emphasis on the building of such co-operatives, particularly in rural areas where the majority of women are engaged in small scale food production.[166] Demand will only increase as world development continues and urbanization expands.[167] Only by strengthening rural networks available to both men and women can the rising demand can be met.

According to the *Good Practices in Building Innovative Rural Institutions to Increase Food Security* guide from the FAO, one benefit of building rural networking is the increased access to natural resources and improved resource management systems.[168] Small scale producers,of which a number are women, are the hardest hit during food crises. Compounded by the population growth and climate change these small scale producers are competing for resources which are already in large demand. Often farming staple crops, the smaller producers face difficulties gaining consistent access to land and water.[169] Food security in the rural areas is dependent upon access to land and water for farming needs. This access is vital to their continued survival, and rural networking is critical in fulfilling this need. In the Gambia, a connection was made between the government and local communities concerning forest preservation techniques. The Gambia relies heavily upon forest-based products which include honey, palm oil, and wood crafts from palm wood. With much of their economy built around forestry cooperation in sustainable

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[157] Ibid.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Ibid.
[160] "Rural women speak out about food insecurity." Food and Agriculture Organization. http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-insight/gender-insightdet/en/?dyna_fef[uid]=122838
[161] "Our Partners." Huairou Commission. http://www.huairou.org/our-partners
[162] "Rural women speak out about food insecurity." Food and Agriculture Organization. http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-insight/gender-insightdet/en/?dyna_fef[uid]=122838

[163] "What is the UN International Year?" ICA for the United Nations International Year of Co-operatives. http://2012.coop/en/un-international-year
[164] Ibid.
[165] Ajay Jha, "Farm production must be ramped up: FAO." *Indian Cooperative.* July 15, 2012.
[166] *Good Practices in Building Innovative Rural Institution to Increase Food Security Executive Summary*. Food and Agriculture Organization. Rome, Italy. 2012 http://typo3.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/gender/docs/IB_Executive_Summary_ENFinal.pdf
[167] Ibid.
[168] Ibid.
[169] *Good Practices in Building Innovative Rural Institution to Increase Food Security*. Food and Agriculture Organization. Rome, Italy. 2012 http://www.fao.org/docrep/015/i2258e/i2258e00.pdf

development was a necessity. In an effort to create a greater vested interest in forest preservation amongst residents, the government transferred ownership rights of forests from the government to local villagers and introduced "participatory forest-management."[170] This endeavor resulted with seventy-two development plans and a further twenty community enterprises following.[171] The government's efforts resulted in a greater vested interest in forestry preservation.[172]

Rural women themselves are becoming agents for change in terms of their access to land and water rights; in the Gujarat State, India, women are reclaiming the semi-arid region ravaged by soil erosion caused by sandy soil. By creating the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), they organized themselves into the Sabarkantha Women Farmers' Association.[173] The association began utilizing watershed techniques such as building stone bunds and vegetative barriers aimed at controlling soil erosion. Their efforts resulted in over "3,000 hectares of ravine lands in 73 villages" being reclaimed for farming.[174] Their fields are now producing crop yields two to three times per year, rather than one yearly yield; in many cases this increased the average income of women from "5,000 rupees to as much as 15,000 rupees a year."[175] They are also providing greater access to seeds, markets, and technical training for participants. In Ghana a Water User Association (WUA) was established to help improve access to water. The local governments, called District Assemblies, negotiated the initial contracts and created a partnership with the WUA who maintained the water resources and extended land rights to households on 50 year renewable contracts.[176] The majority of the plots are farmed by women cultivating vegetables for either their families' consumption or sale on the market.[177] Women are also embracing traditional farming methods by using "manure as fertilizer and . . . ash as seed preservatives."[178]

Financing for Development

Financing opportunities for women are limited when compared with their male counterparts. Women find themselves in the position of lacking necessary assets that are usually used as collateral for securing loans.[179] "Legal barriers and cultural norms can bar women from holding bank accounts or entering into financial contracts in their own right."[180] Not all women face difficulties in obtaining financial assistance, but when they are able to gain the funding, they are traditionally given loans for a smaller amount than their male counterparts who are engaged in the same activities.[181] Women's production capabilities are limited without the needed funding for growth.[182] In an effort to increase their capabilities, women are increasingly relying upon micro-financing opportunities.

Following the Women's Conference held in Mexico in 1975, the Women's World Banking network (WWB) was established as one of the premier lending sources focused entirely upon women.[183] Micro-finance, a "practice of providing financial services to low-income clients who are typically excluded from the formal banking sector" typically provide small loans. Some loans can be as little as $100. These loans are traditionally targeted for those who are looking to start their own business.[184] In the beginning, micro-financing was gender neutral, enabling both men and women who were viewed as unsafe for lenders.[185] It rapidly became a resource female entrepreneurs began

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[170] Ibid.
[171] Ibid.
[172] Ibid.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Ibid.
[175] Ibid.
[176] Ibid.
[177] Ibid.
[178] "Rural women speak out about food insecurity." Food and Agriculture Organization. http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-insight/gender-insightdet/en/?dyna_fef[uid]=122838
[179] "Men and women in agriculture: closing the gap. Themes: Financial Services." Food and Agriculture Organization. http://www.fao.org/sofa/gender/themes/financial-services/en/
[180] Ibid.
[181] Ibid.
[182] Ibid.
[183] "About Women's World Banking." Women's World Banking http://www.swwb.org/about/about-wwb
[184] "About Women's World Banking." Women's World Banking Fact Sheet. http://www.swwb.org/sites/default/files/pubs/en/WWB-Factsheet-2011-FINAL.pdf
[185] Ibid.

utilizing as a means of financing their business ventures and providing for their families.[186] "WWB's research confirms that the key economic priorities for poor women- to a far greater extent than for men – continue to be healthcare, the education of their children and housing."[187] In the case of the WWB, they view micro-finance beyond an extension of credit and more about enabling women.[188]

Though the WWB is worldwide in their efforts, they are not the only service available to women. In India, the Swashray Mahila Sewa Bank is a cooperative effort of women shareholders working in India.[189] India's "unorganized sector" accounts for nearly 92% of all workers and an astounding 96% of women are considered part of the unorganized sector. Despite their involvement in the unorganized sector of India's economy, women are still active participants in the economy but are largely prohibited from access to financial resources.[190] The SEWA Bank is fulfilling lending needs for the women through a variety of different methods. The SEWA bank was established in 1974 by 4,000 members who contributed a nominal amount as shared capital. In their thirty-eight years, they have grown to over 93,000 active members in India. SEWA offers women the opportunity of ending the poverty cycle through their capitalization mechanism. This method is the "process of capital towards sustainability and growth, to the level of the individual as well as at the level of the household."[191] SEWA offers women the opportunity to end the debt cycle with the formal banking system. They can then enter into a mutually beneficial relationship with the SEWA bank that focuses both on the spending habits of the household and setting measures for the repayment of loans.[192]

Case Study: Land Rights in in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan

Access to and ownership of land has historically been a major stumbling block for women. As noted by the 2010-2011 State of Food and Agriculture report, while women farm the land they are often barred from holding the contract to the land.[193] In rural communities, access to land and ownership of arable farming land is critical in providing basic food crops upon which families heavily rely. This is seen especially in areas like Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, two of the poorest countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States.[194] Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan rely heavily upon the agricultural industry; 35.6 % of the agriculture comprising Kyrgyzstan's GDP and 67.5 % of the total population of Tajikistan employed in agriculture.[195] In both countries, feminized poverty was an increasingly growing issue. In Kyrgyzstan alone, over 75 % of those living below the poverty line live in rural areas, and women make up a large portion of this population typically earning a monthly wage of $45 USD.[196] Recognizing the need for change and improvement, UN Women and FAO worked with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan officials in order to incorporate women's rights in land laws and a gender sensitive perspective in national and local legal reformation.[197]

One of the major reforms undertaken in Kyrgyzstan was a review and complete change in property laws. Following the initial review of their legal code, 12 instances of gender biased language were identified that prevented women from land ownership. According to the Law on Agricultural Land Management passed in 1999, a house hold was defined as a legal unit. Each legal unit was given a certificate of ownership over a plot of land described in the document. Provisions in the law prevented the land from being divided, which made division of land in the event of

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[186] Ibid.
[187] Ibid.
[188] Ibid.
[189] "SEWA Services: SEWA Bank." SEWA Self Employed Women's Association. http://www.sewa.org/Services_Bank.asp
[190] "About Us- Sewa Bank's Approach to Banking." SEWA Bank http://www.sewabank.com/aboutus-approach.htm
[191] Ibid.
[192] Ibid.
[193] *2010-11 The State of Food and Agriculture: Women in Agriculture Closing the gender gap for development.* Food and Agriculture Organization. Rome, Italy: Food and Agriculture Organization. 2011. http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf
[194] *Promoting rural women's rights to land: UN Women programme experience in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.* United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Geneva, Switzerland. 2012. http://www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/EP-Promoting-rural-women%E2%80%99s-rights-to-land-UN-Women-programme-experience-in-Kyrgyzstan-and-Tajikistan.pdf
[195] Ibid.
[196] Ibid.
[197] Ibid.

a divorce or death impossible. A divorced or abandoned woman would be forced off her husband's land if she chose to return to her parents.[198] In the event of death, the property could only be given to one heir, and Kyrgyzstan culture recognizes only males as heirs. The widow and any female children were then without legal protections for maintaining their property.[199] In 2006, the legal code was amended and allowed for all family members the legal right to "sell, exchange or donate" their property rights.[200]

Similar legal reviews were undertaken in Tajikistan which resulted in an overhaul of national property rights for women. In 2003, the first review of Tajikistan's laws noted a number of instances which prevented women from obtaining any land for farming; the Land Code only allowed for those with farming and management experience to hold land, a provision local governments manipulated in order to deny women land who were perceived as being either inexperienced in farming or incapable of effective management.[201] In 2004, 11 revisions to the Land Code were put before the Parliament, and seven were approved.[202] Between 2009-2010 following the previous amendments further gender sensitive reforms were suggested.[203] Collectively, the newly accepted amendments comprise the Special Chapter on Women's Rights to Land in the State Program on Main Directions of the State Policy on Providing Equal Rights and Opportunities for Men and Women in the Republic of Tajikistan in 2001-2010.[204]

Initiatives were also undertaken at the community level which focused on fostering gender responsiveness amongst the local residents. In both Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, legal assistance was provided for women in regards to land ownership. In Kyrgystan, 8,000 residents, 85 % of which were women, received legal advice regarding property rights.[205] In Tajikistan, District Task Forces (DTF) provided similar legal advice for over 16,230 people. 86 % were women. Through the program, women were also given needed training to improve their family farms as well as were advised regarding small businesses and shared farming cooperatives.[206] Though the program is still relatively young, they have greatly improved farming conditions for women and provide both a feedback mechanism and reliable network for women.[207]

Conclusion

Women today still facing difficulties in gaining full access to food and agricultural production due to ingrained gender roles that both men and women unknowingly perpetuate; women themselves do not always see themselves as "economic agents," but rather view themselves as being on the margin of economic activity.[208] Women typically focus their agricultural efforts as secondary to that of their husbands and a woman's contributions are viewed as carrying out her wifely and motherly duties.

"Gender roles, gender relations, gender discrimination, gender equality, gender equity, gender analysis, gender balance and gender mainstreaming – over the past decade all of those terms have been accepted into declarations, plan of action , polices, programs and projects for agriculture and rural development."[209] Despite these words resonating throughout the UN, closing the gender gap still proves a difficult task, especially in terms of agricultural pursuits. Globally, rural women are still facing difficulties in accessing the same labor markets and technological resources readily available to their male counterparts. The Food and Agricultural Organization is implementing new

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[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid.
[200] Ibid.
[201] Ibid.
[202] Ibid.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Ibid.
[206] Ibid.
[207] "Improved Food Security and Enhanced Livelihoods through Institutional and Gender-sensitive Land Reform: lessons from Tajikistan." Food and Agriculture Organization. http://www.fao.org/Participation/Lessons-Tajikistan.html
[208] "Women's Empowerment." United Nations Development Program. http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/womenempowerment/overview.html
[209] "Gender: Why Gender?" Food and Agriculture Organization. http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-why/why-gender/en/

strategies aimed not only at closing the gap, but also of increasing awareness of a woman's role in securing food for her families. The task before the committee is to take the efforts and not only raise awareness but to become agents of change and bring the responsiveness out of the documents and into practice. Effective solutions must address not only the needs of women, but also the needs of men as well. Solutions must work in a harmonious nature as elevating one without the other only creates further problems.

Committee Directive

When delegates are researching this topic, it is a good idea to get a feel for gender relations within each Member States' borders. Are there issues already before adding food security and volatility to the discussion? In what ways are women utilized as a best practice that can be shared with the rest of the international community? The FAO has worked on the mainstreaming of women into modern society for a while now with an investigation of the interactions between men and women in society and the opportunities and limits instilled in our everyday social interactions. What improvements could be made? How could the gender gap be closed and what impact could this have on the security of food for the global community? Every aspect of food security comes with questions; do the women in your Member State have access to resources? What about finances for the security of food? Delegates are required to have a working knowledge of the biases that women face around this difficult topic and come prepared with innovative and interesting ideas to share with the committee.

Technical Appendix Guide (TAG)

Topic I: Developing and Examining Local, Regional, and Global Strategies to Reduce Food Price Volatility

FAO, IFAD, IMF,OECD, UNCTAD, WFP, the World Bank, the WTO, IFPRI and the UN HLTF (2 June 2011). Price Volatility in Food and Agricultural Markets: Policy Responses.
http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/est/Volatility/Interagency_Report_to_the_G20_on_Food_Price_Volatility.pdf

This report compiled by multiple agencies provides an in depth look into Food price volatility, including an introduction, definitions, history, and the importance of Food price volatility in today's market. By reading and understanding this report the beginning layers that make up the issue of Food price volatility will begin to unravel and make way for further discussion and debate to build off the information.

FAO. Food price volatility and the Right to Food (2012). .
http://www.fao.org/righttofood/publi11/issuesbrief_PRICEvolatility_EN.pdf

This report written by the UNFAO provides history on the topic of Food price volatility and delves into the causes of the issue. One of the subsections on biofuel usage establishes a very basic understanding of one of the causes of Food price volatility and is a starting point for beginning to understand the topic.

FAO. World Food Situation: Food Price Index (2012).
http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/wfs-home/foodpricesindex/en/

The topic of Food price volatility must be differentiated from elevated food prices. In the graphs provided by the UNFAO it demonstrates the dramatic fluctuations that food markets have been experiencing over the last decade and how prices have been affected by the 2008 price spike.

IRIN: Humanitarian News and Analysis (17 October 2011). FOOD: Price volatility - causes and consequences.
http://www.irinnews.org/Report/93978/FOOD-Price-volatility-causes-and-consequences

This article provided by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs looks into the specific issues of Food price volatility in countries and how the causes are affecting daily life. With a focus on environment this

article looks at biofuels, and weather and how these subtopics of food price volatility are changing the world in regard to eliminating extreme poverty and hunger, along with achieving proper nutrition for citizens.

FAO (2002). Reducing Poverty And Hunger: The Critical Role Of Financing For Food, Agriculture And Rural Development. International Conference on Financing for Development: Economic and Social Development Department. http://www.fao.org/docrep/003/Y6265E/Y6265E00.HTM

This document provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization, the Economic and Social Development Department in order to provide data for helping to complete Millennium Development Goal 1. It provides information and graphs depicting the situation and movement throughout the decades and the progression of price fluctuations.

Clapp, Jennifer; and Cohen, Marc J (2009). The Global Food Crisis: Governance Challenges and Opportunities. Wilfred Laurier University Press.

This book demonstrates some of the Food price volatility that the market experienced during the 1970s and during the 2008 food price spike. The selected sections from the book illuminates some of the history of Food price volatility. There is also extensive information on biofuels and their effect on the environment, people, and poverty.

Topic II: Advancing Capacity Development in Information Systems: Increasing Accessibility to Food and Nutrition Data

Center for Science in the Public Interest. "Global and Local Food Safety Around the World". June 2005. Washington D.C. Center for Science in the Public Interest. http://www.cspinet.org/new/pdf/global.pdf

This concise manual for food safety and security presents a number of different variables for each region of the world. While this guide does not necessarily talk about food and nutrition data, it does highlight the disparities from region to region when it comes to emergency situations. This informative resource allows delegates to understand what would be needed in terms of information in the case of an emergency and should be studied alongside other food management resources.

Food and Agriculture Organization: INFOODS Publications. 2012.
http://www.fao.org/infoods/publications_en.stm

The FAO INFOODS Publications page provides numerous background resources on the compilation, composition, and dissemination of FCDBs. The INFOODs Publications page provides different learning resources that would be necessary for those who are not well versed in information technology. This webpage also provides a directory to a number of other resources such as conferences, papers, and best practices in the field.

Food and Agriculture Organization: Publications. 2012. http://www.fao.org/publications

This FAO Webpage provides numerous documents that are essential to understanding food across the globe. The resources available at this website are unparalleled for this committee, providing documents on agriculture, forestry, agricultural commodity markets, land and water resources, and food insecurity. This webpage also provides users with a number of different libraries to expand knowledge on food and the status of populations across the world.

Jauhari, Vinnie; and Kondo, Edson Kenji. "Technology and Poverty – Some Insights from India." October 200323. United Nations University.

The working paper from Jauhari and Kondo present an interesting case for technological development as a case study from India. This paper discusses the different aspects that affect development, such as access to food, water, shelter, and healthcare as a result of technological development. It is a vital piece cited numerous times in this background guide as a source for the importance of technology and analyzing development.

Norris, Pippa. (2002). "Digital Divide: Civic Engagement, Information Poverty, and the Internet Worldwide." Cambridge University Press. http://jft-newspaper.aub.edu.lb/reserve/data/f05322/f05322.pdf

This book provides a detailed section (multiple chapters) on the background of the digital divide with the United States and how countries in the developing world have become socially stratified. Norris also discusses how political atmospheres around the world have changed due to the nature of the Internet and how fast information is spread due to its ability to expand upon social capital. Finally, this book discusses the social inequalities globally, presenting data on the accessibility of the Internet.

Topic III: Impact of Food Insecurity on Gender Relations

2010-11 The State of Food and Agriculture: Women in Agriculture Closing the gender gap for development. Food and Agriculture Organization. Rome, Italy: Food and Agriculture Organization. 2011. http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i2050e/i2050e.pdf

The 2010-11 SOFA report is helpful in beginning research regarding the topic. The FAO has outlined a number of different facets not covered in the background guide that are key elements of food security and gender roles. There are a number of different initiatives mentioned in the SOFA report that have helped alleviate some of the issues women face in areas not associated with agriculture including fisheries, animal husbandry and forestry.

Annual Report 2010-2011. UN Women. New York: United Nations. 2011http://www.unwomen.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/UNwomen_AnnualReport_2010-2011_en.pdf

The UNIFEM annual report is an interesting report giving some greater background to other issues relating to gender relations. The report outlines other economic endeavors women undertake and the role those endeavors play in the relationship between men and women. The report is short, but can provide a look at some of the other challenges women face that while not being related to food, do play a role in the gender gap.

Bridging the Gap: Financing Gender Equality. United Nations Development Fund for Women. New York: United Nations. 2008 http://www.unifem.org/attachments/products/Bridging_the_Gap.pdf

This report is an overarching report that looks at all facets of the gender gap. UNIFEM, now UN Woman, is on the front lines of dealing with the gender gap and this report is helpful in giving greater context to the issues facing women. While it is almost five years old, the information is still pertinent in that the situation has not changed drastically for women in the intervening years.

Financing Gender Equality is Financing Development. United Nations Development Fund for Women. New York: United Nations. 2008. http://www.unifem.org/attachments/products/FinancingGenderEqualityIsFinancingDevelopment_en_1.pdf

Financing and a gender responsive nature of budgets by Member States is a critical issue in regards to food security. This report looks at the level of funding women's programs receive and the impact that funding has on their programming. The report gives an overview of what gender responsive budgeting is and how an increase in spending can greatly impact a woman's capacity.

Gender and Land Rights Database. Food and Agriculture Organization. http://www.fao.org/gender/landrights/en/

The Gender and Land Rights Database is a relatively new program for FAO. The database contains information regarding nearly every Member State's land laws and how they apply in terms of gender equity. The database is an important tool in seeing the comparison between countries in a region and can give information on how Member States are responding to growing pressure to change laws to comply with UN resolutions.

Gender Equality for Development Effectiveness. : National Development Planning in the Commonwealth of Independent States. United Nations Development Fund for Women. New York: United Nations. 2008. http://www.unifem.org/attachments/products/AidEffectiveness_CEECIS_eng.pdf

Following the changes in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, the programs have expanded outward into other areas in the CIS region. The report looks at the outward effect the legal reforms had in the region and how effective those reforms were in the long run. There are also other recommendations for changed mentioned in the plan that can help bring about greater gender responsiveness in aid.

Ilahi, Nadeem. "The Intra-household Allocation of Time and Tasks: What Have We Learnt from the Empirical Literature?" The World Bank. 2000. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTGENDER/Resources/wp13.pdf

Being a participant in the economy for women is a balancing act between their role as a wife and mother and as a producer. The article reviews a number of different studies that looked at how women balance between the two and how those studies can help women today in their balancing act. The study shows some of cultural impacts on the choices women make and how those different choices impact their families.

Maltseva, Irna. "Gender Equality in the Sphere of Employment." United Nations Development Fund for Women. . 2007. http://www.unifem.org/attachments/products/tajikistan_employment_2007_en.pdf

This report looks at the increasing role women play in Tajikistan. The report is broken down into different subtopics such as economic activity and employment. It is only one part of a five part series conducted on Tajikistan by UN Women, but addresses some of the limitations women face when finding employment outside of their homes.

Voluntary Guideline on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security. Food and Agriculture Organization. Rome, Italy. 2012. http://www.fao.org/docrep/016/i2801e/i2801e.pdf

The guidelines are an important facet of the right to food movement. They outline the plans of the Right to Food Team and provide a framework for Member States. They provide information regarding the rights and responsibilities of individual Member States in accordance with a sustainable development scheme.

World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development. The World Bank. Washington D.C. 2008. http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTWDR2008/Resources/WDR_00_book.pdf

The report from The World Bank looks at the critical role agriculture has upon development. The report breaks agriculture down into different categories and the impact those have upon agricultural practice. More importantly it also looks beyond the traditional ideal of agriculture for rural populations and the importance of sustainability in farming for those populations. The report also addresses food sustainability and vulnerability.