



Swiss Working Paper on Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition in the Post-2015 Agenda¹

1 October 2013

1. Global Trends and Analysis

Since the inception of the existing global development framework, overall progress in reducing hunger and malnutrition has slowed significantly. Despite improvements in a number of countries: the prevalence of hunger and malnutrition today remains unacceptably high. According to FAO estimates, nearly 870 million people remained undernourished in 2010-2012, the majority of them women and children. Most of them live in vulnerable ecosystems, such as semi-arid and arid land areas, and in fragile contexts. Over 70% of the undernourished depend directly or indirectly on agriculture for their living. Further, micronutrient malnutrition (“hidden hunger”) affects around 2 billion people worldwide. One in three developing country children under the age of five suffers from stunting due to chronic nutrition deficiencies.

Since 2007-2008, agriculture has returned back on the international agenda after more than twenty years of constant decline and critical underinvestment. Awareness of the vulnerability of all agri-food systems has also increased. The effects of climate change on food systems already impact negatively on vulnerable populations, mostly in developing countries, but also present challenges for developed countries. This situation will further worsen with a possible global warming of 4°C by 2050, potentially causing a lowering of 40% in yield of wheat and maize. The world’s ecosystems and biodiversity are also under pressure from current rates of overexploitation and degradation: One quarter of the world’s land is highly degraded or highly degrading. Levels of groundwater are declining in many regions as a result of over-use. In that context, the increase in the global demand for food for a rapidly growing (from 7 billion today to 9 billion in 2050) and more affluent population is a major global challenge. The need to address the structural causes of malnutrition (undernutrition as well as overweight and obesity) calls for an increased attention on nutrition issues in the new development framework. Special emphasis should be put on getting a balanced and diversified diet (in addition to dietary energy consumption) in particular for women, infants and young children.

A global post-2015 framework that continues to keep fragmented development goals is not an option. There is a need for multi-sector coordination based on a rights-based approach that can deliver transformational changes and sustainable improvements. The interconnected nature of “Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition” as a priority area for sustainable development has been recognized in the Rio+20 outcome document “The Future We Want” (§108-118)². This document reaffirms the necessity to promote, enhance and support more sustainable agri-food systems, which improve food security, eradicate hunger, and are economically viable, while conserving natural resources and enhancing resilience to climate change and natural disasters.

It also recognizes the need to maintain natural ecological processes that support agri-food systems. It therefore resolves to foster sustainable agricultural production and productivity globally by increasing public and private investment in sustainable agriculture, land management and rural development. A comprehensive approach, accommodating all three dimensions of sustainability, is to be followed. Furthermore, while food insecurity can act as a threat multiplier for conflict, improving food security can also reduce tensions and contribute to safer and more peaceful livelihoods. Finally, a significant portion of the world’s poor live in rural areas, and rural communities, especially women and young

¹ This report was prepared by FOAG and SDC with the support of an ad hoc working group composed of representatives of public and private stakeholders.

² The Future we want (§108-118) <http://www.uncsd2012.org/thefuturewewant.html>

people, play an important but too often neglected role in the economic and social development of all countries. Globally, smallholder agriculture has a central role to play in increasing agricultural production sustainably, embrace substantial resilience aspects, and in reducing poverty. Small-scale farms and enterprises, many of them run by women, produce most of the world's food and should therefore be at the center of policies aiming at reaching food and nutrition security for all.

All stakeholders (private sector, civil society and governments) should be called to use natural resources more sustainably to achieve food and nutrition security for all in full respect of the earth's carrying capacity. Sustainable land management, in particular achieving a land-degradation neutral world contributes to meet food, energy and water security needs of the rural poor, forming the basis of an inclusive economic growth and thus helping to lift people out of poverty. Sound regulatory frameworks based on transparent and mutually agreed principles enable all stakeholders to act in ways that safeguard all human rights, in particular those of the most vulnerable groups.

At the Rio+20 Conference, UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon presented the Zero Hunger Challenge (ZHC)³, which calls on all stakeholders to achieve a world where a) everyone has access to enough nutritious food all year long; b) childhood stunting is eradicated; c) sustainable food systems are in place; d) smallholder farmers, especially women, double their productivity and income; and e) food losses and waste are prevented.

The inclusive FAO/WFP-led "Post 2015" global thematic consultation on "Hunger, Food Security and Nutrition"⁴ included an informal consultation with Committee on World Food Security (CFS) stakeholders and a High-Level Consultation in Madrid. It resulted in a shared vision, whereby food security and nutrition for all could be achieved by 2025. This vision can only be realized if people are empowered to lead full, secure and dignified lives, which will require comprehensive, transformational and structural changes.

During the consultation process, key drivers were identified:

- The importance of a **comprehensive multi-sector approach** to food security and nutrition through inclusion of a stand-alone, bold and prominent goal on food security and nutrition in the Post-2015 Development agenda.
- This goal should be **relevant to all countries**. However, different countries (or groups of countries) might have different responsibilities, according to their own circumstances.
- Support for the broad thrust and ambition of the **Zero Hunger Challenge, as a basis for mobilizing action**, including a special focus on smallholder farmers and women.
- The importance of **good governance and political will** as key enablers including governance systems that promote multi-stakeholder participation and mutual accountability at all levels - the CFS was mentioned as an example of this.
- Adoption of a **rights-based approach** with specific references to the CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the context of national food security (2012), and the Voluntary Guidelines for the Progressive Realization of the Right to Food in the context of national food security (2004).

Since Spring 2013, major building blocks in the international process leading to the post-2015 development framework can be noted in this context. Firstly, a thematic session of Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals took place on "Food Security and Nutrition, Sustainable Agriculture, Drought, Desertification, Land Degradation"⁵. Secondly, the finalization and publication of various substantive inputs, among which::

- The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda "A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through

³ Zero Hunger Challenge <http://www.un.org/en/zerohunger/challenge.shtml>

⁴ The Global Thematic Consultation on Food and Nutrition Security in the post-2015 Development Agenda. Overview on the Global Consultation <http://www.worldwewant2015.org/food2015>

⁵ Open Working Group Summary May 2013 <http://post2015.iisd.org/news/owg-3-considers-sdgs-on-food-water-land-and-agriculture>

Sustainable Development”⁶: the report reviews the achievements and shortcoming of the MDGs. It articulates 12 universal goals among which “Ensure Food Security and Good Nutrition” and “Manage Natural Resource Assets Sustainably”.

- The Report to the UN Secretary General by the Leadership Council of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network “An Action Agenda for Sustainable Development”⁷: the report suggests a sustainable development framework built upon four equally important dimensions (economic, social, environmental and good governance). It proposes an innovative clustering of ten priority challenges among which “End extreme poverty including hunger”, “Achieve development within planetary boundaries”, “Improve Agricultural systems and Raise rural prosperity” , “Secure Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity, Ensure Good Management of Water and Other Natural Resources” as well as “Achieve Gender Equality, Social Inclusion, and Human Rights for All”.
- The Report to the UN Secretary General by UN Global Compact “Corporate Sustainability and the United Nations Post-2015 Development Agenda”⁸: the report suggests the outline of the post-2015 agenda as well as SDGs and targets. It proposes that priorities be set on getting an enabling environment (peace & stability, infrastructure & technology, good governance and human rights), supporting the three interrelated areas of food & agriculture, water & sanitation and energy & climate. Business reiterates the importance of promoting women smallholders and proposes the formulation of a distinct SDG on “Good nutrition for all through sustainable food and agricultural systems”.
- The Report of the UN Secretary General to the General Assembly “A life of dignity for all: accelerating progress towards the MDGs and advancing the UN development agenda beyond 2015”⁹ : the report summarizes the key elements for the development agenda beyond 2015 and it enumerates a number of transformative and mutually reinforcing actions, such as “eradicate poverty in all its forms”, “address environmental challenges”, “promote inclusive and sustainable growth and decent employment”, as well as “end hunger and malnutrition”, among others.

2. Analysis of relevant experiences at Swiss level

Switzerland’s agriculture has undergone major changes since the enactment of the new Agriculture Act (1996) based on Art. 104 of the Swiss Constitution, which refers to the essential contribution of sustainable and market oriented agricultural policies towards reliable provision of safe and quality food, conservation of natural resources as well as decentralized population settlement. While impacts on the environment have been reduced, key challenges ahead include the improvement of the quality of agro-biodiversity and landscapes, as well as the enhancement of efficiency in inputs provision and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

The main objectives of the Swiss Agricultural Policy for the period 2014-17 are to improve the competitiveness of Swiss agriculture products to access new markets, to increase the public goods provided by farmers and the efficiency in the use of resources in agricultural production and to minimize the environmental impacts of farming. Based on Art. 11 of the Agriculture Act, additional support shall be provided to programs owned by farmers themselves and initiatives at local level aiming at improving the sustainability performance of the agri-food value chain. Another major development is the implementation in Article 2 paragraph 4 of the Agricultural Act of the principle of

⁶ The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda “A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development” <http://www.post2015hlp.org/>
⁷ The Report to the UN Secretary General by the Leadership Council of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network “An Action Agenda for Sustainable Development” <http://unsdsn.org/2013/06/06/action-agenda-sustainable-development-report>

⁸ The Report to the UN Secretary General by UN Global Compact “Corporate Sustainability and the United Nations Post-2015 Development Agenda”

http://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/news_events/9.1_news_archives/2013_06_18/UNGC_Post2015_Report.pdf

⁹ http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/202

food sovereignty to take account of the consumers needs for sustainable diverse and high quality domestic food products.

Outcomes of the ad hoc working group workshop (Bern 19 February 2013)

The following strengths and weaknesses were noted regarding the contributions of Swiss agri-food policies to sustainable development as well as to food security and nutrition, in the last fifteen years:

Strengths:

- Clear constitutional mandate (Art. 104) supporting a sustainable and multifunctional agriculture
- Payments for ecosystem services for positive externalities from agriculture
- Performing system for research and extension services
- Promotion of voluntary food quality standards based on sustainability criteria
- Strong consumers' demand for sustainable products with quality standards

Weaknesses:

- Expensive system of direct payments
- Limited self-sufficiency in terms of food and production inputs
- Unequal distribution of added value along the value chain
- Insufficient attention and incentives to ensure a fair income for farmers and to attract young generations into farming (social sustainability)
- Limited incentives for innovation.

Regarding key issues around which the targets of a goal on sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition should be framed, the participants supported the adoption of a multi-sector, systemic and comprehensive approach to "sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition" in the post-2015 development agenda. The three dimensions of sustainability were covered by one or more priority issues mentioned. Above all, the transformation of current agri-food systems into sustainable systems (from productivity-driven to sufficiency/efficiency) was highlighted.

3. Post-2015/SDG on Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition

Switzerland strongly believes that the post-2015 development process and the process leading to Sustainable Development Goals should converge and eventually merge into one process ("post-2015") and one single set of goals based on the results and assessments of the MDG review, the Millennium Declaration, the Rio+20 Outcome Document, as well as on the evidence of a sound scientific basis. By merging sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition into a single overarching objective, poverty eradication (a key component of MDG 1) will be linked to the shift to sustainable production and consumption patterns as well as to the sustainable management of the resource base (a major outcome of the Rio+20 Conference). Switzerland supports the broad thrust and ambition of the Zero Hunger Challenge (ZHC) for mobilizing political will and resources, since it combines the approach and achievements of the MDGs with the transformational changes leading to sustainable development everywhere.

The draft proposal (see Annex 1) has been prepared for further reflection and discussion. It is mainly based on the ZHC vision, but it only mentions indicative targets and does not identify indicators. It is cognizant of the fact that increased investment will need to be mobilized from public and private sources. This proposal could also draw from other relevant processes such as the development (2013-2014) of "principles for responsible agricultural investment" within the Committee on World Food Security.

4. Next Steps

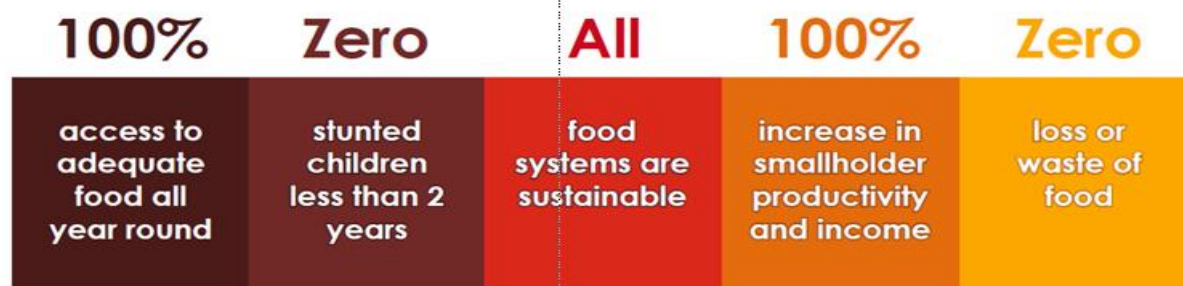
The following steps have been identified:

- Reformulate and prioritize goals and indicative targets to identify suitable indicators in key thematic areas.
- Ensure synergies and complementarities with like-minded and strategic partners to strengthen the multi-sector character of the overarching goal (“food and nutrition security for all through sustainable agri-food systems”).
- Involve the ad hoc working group in these tasks, when and where appropriate.

Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition in the post-2015 development framework

A comprehensive approach that promotes sustainable agriculture and food systems with positive economic, environmental, and social impacts is necessary: Sustainable agriculture and food systems through sustainable production and consumption along the entire value chain are at the core of reaching food and nutrition security for all. A stand-alone goal on “Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition” combines the achievements of the MDGs with transformational changes leading to sustainable development in all contexts. Therefore, “Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition” should be a top development goal, as the international community sets its priorities beyond 2015.

Annex 1: “SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION” (draft)

The Zero Hunger Challenge:Overarching goal:

Food security and nutrition for all through sustainable agri-food systems

Transversal issues:

**Good governance on food security and nutrition at all levels
Fair and transparent markets at all levels
Focus on gender and youth
Comprehensive and relevant data systems
Participatory and inclusive monitoring**

Goals

ACCESS TO ADEQUATE FOOD	DIVERSIFIED & HEALTHY NUTRITION	SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT AGRI-FOOD SYSTEMS	EMPOWER SMALLHOLDER FARMERS	FOOD LOSSES AND WASTE
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Indicative Targets

All food and nutrition policies are based on the right to food	Malnutrition is addressed in all its forms (under- and over nutrition)	Increased food production through sustainable agricultural practices (efficiency and equity)	Public and private investment in rural areas (infrastructure, health agriculture, research, education) is increased	Food safety is increased through traceability along the value chain
Everyone has access to targeted social safety nets	All agri-food systems are nutrition-sensitive	Natural resources (Water, land) and energy efficiency are enhanced in all agri-food systems	Universal access to adequate agricultural research and rural advisory services	Post-harvest losses are reduced along the value chain (from producers to consumers)
Excessive commodity price volatility is mitigated	All children have access to safe, nutritious and diversified food	Loss of agricultural biodiversity is stopped	Women, youth and marginalized groups have secure and equal access to land, natural resources and assets	All consumers base their decisions on sustainability-sensitive information
Stocks are efficiently managed in case of external shocks	Access to the right diet is ensured to all especially women, girls and young children	A land-degradation neutral world is realized	Income of smallholder farmers is increased	Food waste is reduced at all levels
Equal access to markets at all	Agri-food systems are resilient to	Sustainability standards are	Rural producers' organizations are	

levels	external shocks, including to the effects of climate change	used by all stakeholders	strengthened and empowered to service their members	
		Remuneration from positive externalities of agri-food systems is increased	Smallholders and marginalized groups have access to decent –on- and off-farm employment	
		Agri-food systems are resilient to external shocks, including to the effects of climate change	All smallholders have access to agricultural research, rural advisory services	
			Labour rights of agricultural and rural workers are respected	