



Position paper

Committee on World Food Security:

CARE issues for the CFS 40

OVERVIEW This document explains CARE's role and position at the 40th annual meeting of the Committee on World Food Security. It is intended as information for CARE's partners and interested parties, on a focal area of CARE's international advocacy work on food and nutrition security (FNS).

For further information please contact: Karl Deering: deering@careinternational.org in the UK and Larissa Pelham: pelham@careinternational.org who will be available throughout the CFS.

1. Smallholder agriculture and CARE International

1.1 WHY IS SMALLHOLDER AGRICULTURE INVESTMENT IMPORTANT RIGHT NOW?

WHAT? There are 842 million food insecure people in the world, the majority living in developing countries. In those countries, 80% of the food supply is produced by smallholder farmers and up to 80% of that supply is produced by women. There are an estimated half a billion smallholder farms cultivating plots of less than two hectares. Gender is a direct barrier to access to agricultural resources. There is a direct connection between smallholder farming, food production and gender to ensure food and nutrition security in the world.

WHO? The term 'smallholder farmer' encompasses a wide range of rural small scale producers, it can include fisheries

and pastoralist livelihoods but in this context is taken to mean predominantly rain-fed arable farming working small plots of land (up to a maximum of two hectares), for both household consumption and sales of any surplus. The term also includes the rural landless who provide agricultural labour to others. Smallholder farmers are not just subsistence farmers, they likely purchase from markets and raise small ruminants to provide a portion of their food.

WHY NOW? With 842 million food insecure people, the current world food system fails to meet everyone's right to sufficient nutritious food. We still need to address the persisting underlying factors of food insecurity such as poverty, unequal access to and distribution of resources, wasteful production and consumption, environmental degradation, poor governance, and price fluctuations from a variety of sources.

Plus there are growing challenges: (i) the growing population will require more effective food production and distribution systems for the future. (ii) Direct and indirect impacts of climate change on agricultural systems adds to the complexity of an already urgent challenge. Erratic rainfall patterns and climate extremes directly threaten the productivity and stability of rural agricultural livelihoods and contribute to eroding the basis on which rural food systems are built. These challenges point to further vulnerability to shocks and increased risks for agricultural smallholders.

Smallholders provide the bulk of food supply in developing countries, yet despite facing many constraints, they receive little support and investment. Investment in agriculture has decreased since the 1980s, and larger scale agro-business has been favoured to the neglect of the smallholder sector.

For CARE, this is about both needs and rights.

1.2 CARE'S APPROACH TO SMALLHOLDER AGRICULTURE FOR FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

CARE's approach is to foster smallholder agriculture that is:

Productive: Increase the productivity of land and labour through better land management, improved agricultural techniques, access to agricultural inputs, particularly targeted at women. Increase income through post-harvest activities that reduce losses and enhance value added.

Equitable: Women and men in smallholder farming must have equity of access to resources and opportunities to improve their livelihoods and access to food. Interventions must be sensitive to gender differences and continue to redress gender imbalances in social and economic power.

Resilient: In the context of climate change, it is imperative to build farmers' adaptive capacity - to build their ability to cope with shocks and stresses to protect and improve their livelihoods, with both on- and off-farm opportunities.

Sustainable: Smallholder farming must be sustainable environmentally (an agro-ecology approach, albeit with the possible use of appropriate external inputs); institutionally (eg through extension services and community based organisations); and financially (access to saving and credit).

Smallholder agriculture must be

Productive: increase productivity of land and labour

Equitable: Equity of access to resources and opportunities for women and men

Resilient: ensure adaptive capacity and improve livelihoods with on- and off-farm opportunities

Sustainable: environmentally, institutionally, financially

To achieve this, the following is critical in our work:

The focus of CARE's work on agriculture and food security is on the poorest and most vulnerable people, particularly women, who depend on smallholder farming for consumption and/or income.

Smallholder agriculture, particularly under rain-fed conditions, is inherently risky, and the increased likelihood and severity of disaster events exacerbates these risks.

To adapt to the changing climate, women and men must build physical, productive and social assets to rely on, as well as adopt appropriate agricultural practices and innovative livelihood strategies.

Key areas in our programming to improve FNS.

Gender, Climate change, community-based development, access to financial services, social protection, market engagement and linkages, local institution-building, national policy influence.

Mitigation co-benefits are not always advantageous for smallholder farmers. While the agriculture sector contributes to GHGs, the main responsibility for mitigation lies with the major historical emitters.

Smallholders must be supported with the tools to manage and reduce risk as much as possible, through the practices of climate change adaptation, agro-ecology and sustainable agriculture.

This will require considered technological innovation. This is about the use of technologies that: promote equitable outcomes; respect the moral, customary and legal rights of local communities; are within the existing or potential capacity of local institutions; do not lock farmers into monopolistic or dependent relationships; do not call into question the ownership of or sovereignty over local genetic resources; and enhance healthy ecosystems.



2. The CFS and investing in smallholder agriculture: CARE's response

In 2011, the CFS put investment in smallholder agriculture on the agenda for discussion at CFS40, in 2013. The main technical input to this is the HLPE report, which is the basis for the CFS draft policy, discussed at the roundtable, which recommends both CFS action and policy convergence.

2.1 THE CFS DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

There currently three overarching CFS draft recommendations for investing in smallholder agriculture:

- A. Enable national policies, agricultural governance and their evidence base
- B. Promote access to assets, public goods, social services, research and extension and technology
- C. Enable investment, access to markets, productive services, financial services and resources and income beyond the farm

The HLPE report highlights a number of factors setting the right context for policy recommendations, which we'd like to see reflected in the final CFS recommendations.

Endorsing the right to food and food sovereignty. This must be at the heart of all FNS policy.

The contribution of smallholder farming to world food security and household food security. It is also an important safety net and is a basis for community and sector solidarity and support.

The contribution of smallholder farming to economic growth, employment generation and poverty reduction, if adequately supported by policy and public investment.

The family is a combined social unit of production and consumption providing both income and reciprocal ties important for production networks, collective action and mutual assistance.

Smallholder farming can be economically, socially and environmentally effective, but sustainable use of natural resources in smallholder farming is essential.

Global attention must also be paid to the increasing scarcity of fossil fuels, water, soil fertility and biomass, to ensure global food security.

Smallholder farmers are undergoing an immense transformation, due to urbanization and market globalization, at a magnitude significant to the national interest, but often against their interests.

Smallholders are agents of their own change. However, the negative transformation for smallholders and their food security has been the outcome of political choice.

It is governments' responsibility to secure smallholders' wellbeing through access to public goods and services; to

regulation, in order to ensure smallholder's competitiveness.

Supporting government services: linkages and service and sectoral integration; ensuring governance, including institutional set up, collective action and voice for smallholder farmers.

Emphasise the importance that investments are directed at addressing the underlying causes of vulnerability including access to resources, markets, institutions and voice.

Major corporations and private sector companies have failed to provide the appropriate services and technical knowledge to help smallholders upgrade their standards to access the market.

THE HLPE report and the draft CFS recommendations are weak in certain areas which CARE believes are important for investment in smallholder agriculture.

Investment in smallholder agriculture that supports women farmers in particular, is critical to strengthen smallholders' capacity and contribute to a sustainable world food supply.

Agricultural investment to tackle the specific challenges of climate change, beyond research, to include adaptive capacity and access to information for smallholder farmers.

Additional to investment and service access, a range of social protection measures is needed for households to recover in the face of shocks and to mitigate and respond to emergencies.

Emphasis on the goal of adequate nutrition for food security in investment policies is silent. Nutrition must be incorporated into the recommendations for agricultural policy, research, technology, capacity building, regulation and investment principles.

Clearer guidance on the role – and risks - of the private sector. This is weak in the report, focusing on government intervention and the agency of smallholder farmers instead. Smallholders often engage in terms of trade that are discriminatory, unethical and exploitative.

Investment vehicles and funding mechanisms must be flexible, responsive and stable.

Ensure a supporting role for regional bodies as well as local government and social institutions in integrating food security into government investment plans.

A consultative process on investment planning, implementation and monitoring is critical, from community level up to ensure the inclusion of local knowledge and needs.

The recommendations must emphasise engagement with existing regional development strategies such as CAADP, and existing funding mechanisms such as GAFSP which can be important existing policy and funding platforms for implementing agricultural policy.

Endorsement for a single set of coherent and effective principles for responsible agricultural investment should be recommended. The CFS should take the global lead for this process.

3. What CARE's evidence tells us about investing in smallholder agriculture for FNS

Nutrition is a critical lens to see solutions to food

insecurity: Our evidence from Bangladesh demonstrates that indirect interventions combined with direct livelihoods interventions achieves better nutrition outcomes. SHOUHARDO started as a \$126 million project designed to tackle malnutrition in rural Bangladesh and improve the lives of more than 2 million of the country's poorest people. In under four years, the programme saw stunting drop by 28% - quite contrary to national rates. This was achieved through an integrated approach, a community approach and in particular a focus on women – both their access to markets, resources, voice and education. http://www.care.org/getinvolved/iwd/images/CARE_IWD_2012.pdf

Invest in women: Recent work from the UK Hunger Alliance highlighted the capacity for smallholder farming to be environmentally sustainable and contribute to improving nutrition alongside increased output and productivity, if there is investment in women. Analysis of decades of findings from programmes in Bangladesh, Ghana, Tanzania, Zambia and India, found that hunger and malnutrition could be substantially reduced if more women had the agricultural training and equipment they needed to successfully grow food on small plots in and around their homes and were offered complementary support in nutrition, sanitation and health. Its other core findings were: Promote home gardens and small-scale livestock and fish rearing and complement agricultural programmes with education and nutrition communication, health services, clean water and sanitation. <http://www.careinternational.org.uk/news-and-press/latest-news-features/2339-small-scale-big-impact-unlock-the-potential-of-smallholders-and-we-can-achieve-zero-hunger>

The importance of adaptive capacity: Recent evidence published by CARE from research in agro-pastoral communities in east Africa, demonstrates that investing in community-based adaptation makes strong economic sense, even in volatile environments. Thus adaptation methods are critical. CARE research from the New Economics Foundation found that investing \$1 in adaptation generates between \$1.45 and \$3.03 of wealth for communities. And the costs of intervention were 2.6 times lower on average than the costs of not addressing climate change and extreme weather events. <http://insights.careinternational.org.uk/publications/why-community-based-adaptation-makes-economic-sense>

The value of combining local knowledge with scientific knowledge: To support farmers' yields, CARE has found that it is essential to harness community knowledge with enabling access to climate information. This helps farmers gauge when to sow and harvest and which seeds to plant during a particular season. Using evidence from a five year, cross border programme in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia, CARE research shows evidence of approaches that work in building community resilience to shocks and stresses. Key lessons for more effective natural resource management include, linking traditional knowledge with science and innovation, fostering inclusive local planning processes and improving access to markets to diversify livelihoods. <http://insights.careinternational.org.uk/publications/building-resilience-in-a-complex-environment>

Forthcoming programming from CARE

Smallholder Agriculture in a Changing Climate is a new programme for smallholder farmers aiming to create agriculture and food systems that are productive, equitable, resilient and sustainable. It has five components:

1. Climate resilient agricultural practices
2. Adaptive capacity of farmers, including access to climate information
3. Gender equality and the empowerment of women
4. Enabling institutions and policies, through capacity building and advocacy
5. Representative organisations that give farmers voice and influence over policies and markets

Forthcoming research from CARE:

Adaptive capacity and VSLAs

Food and nutrition security and VSLAs

The contribution of social protection to climate change adaptation

Integrated programming and food and nutrition security: the potential for scaling up

Targeting food security programmes in pastoral contexts:

Lessons learned

Where to find more on CARE programmes:

<http://insights.careinternational.org.uk/>

<http://www.careinternational.org.uk/>

<http://www.careclimatechange.org/>

CARE fights poverty and injustice in 87 countries around the world to help the world's poorest people find routes out of poverty. CARE also delivers emergency aid to survivors of war and natural disasters, and helps people rebuild their lives in the aftermath.

CARE International UK contacts

Karl Deering, Team Leader for Climate Change and Food Security

Larissa Pelham, Food Security Adviser

T: +44 (0) 207 091 6000

F: +44 (0) 20 7582 0728

Email addresses : see front of brief

CARE International UK

9th Floor,

89, Albert Embankment

London, SE1 7TP

United Kingdom

