

Horn of Africa Consultations on Food Security

Executive Summary of Country Reports

**FOR DISCUSSION AT THE
MULTI-COUNTRY CONSULTATION**

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This report presents the results of the national level consultations. FAO and WFP facilitated this process but are not responsible for all the views expressed or the contents of the report.

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Executive Summary

The Need to Act

Over 70 million people in the Horn of Africa, around 45 percent of the total population, still live in abject poverty and face food shortages and vulnerability to recurrent shocks. In the past six years alone, four major emergencies hit the countries of the Horn of Africa that required urgent emergency assistance to millions of highly food insecure and vulnerable people each year. With this recent history – and considering the additional threats posed by global warming and climate change – the next major crisis could possibly involve more than 20 million people urgently needing assistance. Fragile ecosystems and socio-economic environments can exacerbate competition for scarce resources and further increase the vulnerability of marginal populations.

The international community, governments and NGOs have responded swiftly to such emergency needs as they arose with increasing frequency. However, emergency relief assistance provides only short-term solutions to the humanitarian needs of the vulnerable – that is, to save lives and, to the extent possible, protect livelihoods in crisis situations. To achieve recovery after survival and to establish a solid foundation for growth and enhanced resilience to future shocks requires rehabilitation of infrastructure at all levels, and sets of interventions on a significant scale in a wide range of areas that protect and support rural livelihoods. For example, these include agriculture, sustainable land and water management, drought cycle management, commercialization, education, and health. It also entails providing the associated supporting policies and capacity building (training and extension, food and cash-based programmes, decentralised planning, community development, safety nets, etc) which are needed in the short-, medium- and longer-term.

Recent years have shown that economic growth alone is not sufficient to make marginalized groups more food secure. There exist constraints that need to be addressed if sustainable solutions to enhanced food insecurity in the Horn of Africa are to be scaled up.

The Commitment to Act

The need to act to enhance food security and resilience to shocks in the Horn of Africa is increasingly matched by a commitment to act by African governments and the international community.

The first Millenium Development Goal (MDG 1) focuses on the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, and sets the target to halve by 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. Several other MDGs have direct and indirect bearing on food security including universal education (MDG 2), gender equality and the empowerment of women (MDG 3), the need to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases (MDG 6), environmental sustainability (MDG 7) and the development of a global partnership for development (MDG 8).

The African Union (AU) adopted the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in 2001, as a comprehensive framework for the development of the continent. The Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), which is a programme of the AU, was jointly prepared by NEPAD and FAO and was adopted by African Heads of State and Government at the Maputo AU Summit in 2003. The Maputo Declaration includes the commitment to improve the productivity of agriculture to attain an average annual growth rate of 6 percent and to allocate at least 10 percent of national budgetary resources to implement CAADP within five years. CAADP has been endorsed by the governments in the Horn of Africa and is part of their national agricultural development programmes.

Responding to this commitment by African governments, in their meeting on 11 June 2004 regarding the ending of the famine cycle in the Horn of Africa, G-8 leaders stated that "Famine, food insecurity, and malnutrition have many complex causes, and defeating them will require a global partnership between the governments of affected countries, donors, international institutions, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)." In 2005, the G-8 further pledged to double assistance to Africa by 2010. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness urges all development partners to channel assistance in line with national strategies and policies, using national systems to reduce transaction costs and to increase the sustainability of such assistance.

The United Nations are beginning far-reaching reforms aimed at increasing their effectiveness and efficiency in assisting member countries to achieve their development priorities and the MDGs, not least through increased partnerships and joint programming.

The Opportunities to Act

The multiple causes of food insecurity in the Horn, including drought, floods, population growth, fragile environment, conflict, inadequate access to basic services, weak physical and marketing infrastructure, and the insufficiently recognized role of women in development, are well documented and analysed¹. What is less commonly known is the richness and diversity of initiatives, often at a small scale, that have potential to greatly improve food security at household, community and national levels. These initiatives that have been undertaken by Governments, donors, NGOs, UN agencies and, not least, by communities themselves, have proven to be successful in improving food security and resilience to shocks.

Following a visit to the Horn by the UN Secretary General's Special Humanitarian Envoy to the Horn of Africa, Mr. Kjell Magne Bondevik, in 2006, FAO and WFP were tasked by the UN Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA) to jointly facilitate consultations on food security in the region. Building on existing analysis and understanding of the causes of food insecurity, national consultations set out to identify in each country the activities that could be deemed to have been successful in addressing food insecurity. The idea was that the lessons from this consultation process could be applied to the design of larger national programmes, built upon what works, thus offering the possibility of greatly increased impact on food security.

¹ Reference is made, for instance, to the report of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force to Eradicate Food Insecurity in the Horn of Africa, led by FAO, of 2001.

The consultations were country-based, and consequently offer an encouraging wide range of potentially promising interventions. They offer, in the context of country-specific development settings, good opportunities to act. In some cases, there are clear opportunities to benefit from positive experiences in one country that could be applied elsewhere. Such positive experiences are intended to serve as a platform for more in-depth discussions and prioritisation among the stakeholders at national level with a view to programming concrete action plans and strategies.

The national consultations followed a common methodology, adapted to specific country conditions. The process was facilitated by FAO and WFP, with national teams led by Governments. The work started with comprehensive desk reviews of relevant documents and included extensive interviews and focus group discussions with relevant stakeholders at national and sub-national level. Preliminary findings were discussed in Government-led national, consultative workshops, focus meetings or de-briefing sessions.

The National Consultations on Food Security yielded an inventory of some 170 different interventions that can be deemed to have been successful. The respective national reports outline these promising interventions.

Overall, a number of key principles emerge which are crucial in determining whether initiatives can have a positive impact on protecting and rebuilding the livelihoods of the food insecure and enhancing their longer-term resilience to shocks. These principles can be considered as a “package” for the way forward and may be summarized as follows:

- i) partnerships (in the design process, implementation, and M&E) that generate integration, broad coverage and enhanced quality;**
- ii) strong and genuine community participation as an essential ingredient of success – especially in those initiatives which demand a strong involvement on the part of women;**
- iii) institutional commitment and support;**
- iv) predictable resource flows (from both governments and donors);**
- v) sound environmental protection and natural resource management as core elements of livelihood reconstruction in fragile ecosystems.**

A number of interventions are presented in each country report to illustrate the variety and scope of the initiatives. There is no single best approach to achieving food security. Each intervention must be viewed not as a “blueprint” but rather as one element in an armoury of interventions that can be deployed in the battle against hunger. Each intervention succeeds as part of a set of complementary activities and policies that are country- and location-specific. The potential for scaling-up needs to be assessed on the basis of past achievements and experience and the scope for creative synergies from combining different interventions into comprehensive programmes.

Without pretending to find new solutions to food insecurity, the consultations provide a unique opportunity to obtain a broad picture of existing, often scattered initiatives, at national and at multi-country level. They also provide an opportunity for countries to learn

from each other and to generate an impetus to translate their commitments to tackling food insecurity into concrete interventions on a scale that can have a measurable impact.

The consultations have revealed the need to pursue strategies for scaling up on the basis of and with a focus on the individual countries. Continued work at national level is needed to more precisely define and agree upon an appropriate mix of interventions on a scale that is proportionate to the challenges to be addressed.

Most successful initiatives are characterised by strong partnerships, including non-traditional ones. Such partnerships should be pursued by Governments, donors, UN agencies, NGOs and not least communities to ensure relevance, acceptance, consensus and future support to programmes to be developed. An overall coordination platform concerning food security in each country should secure that potential sub-working groups or task forces maintain and deepen this sense of partnership. Buy-in of relevant stakeholders should be generated through their engagement and participation in the discussions and preparatory work for scaled-up programmes.

The Way Forward

Based on the country reports six main preliminary sets of key programmatic opportunities able to strengthen or forge partnerships for food security in the Horn of Africa countries have been identified. Some of these areas are common to all countries while others to only few. All offer opportunities for experience sharing and networking. A generalized road map (Annex 1) outlines the possible main steps required to formulate detailed programmes at country level. The time frame is only indicative. Once priority areas are identified, each country would need to create a mechanism to elaborate the details of the programming work required and associated timeframes.

Priority Area 1: Pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihoods
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Pastoral and agro-pastoral areas deserve priority attention in food security initiatives and need to be supported through broad alliances. The livelihoods of millions of transhumant pastoralists depend upon livestock which yield their daily needs and are the basis of trade. Livestock and the rangelands upon which they survive are constantly threatened by drought. Innovative approaches to the management of range, water and animals are needed, building upon market information systems and drought and pasture threat early warning systems. Other strategies are also needed that will enable specific vulnerable groups to shift to alternative livelihoods around urban centres and where new opportunities for income appear, such as irrigation schemes.

Priority Area 2: The environmental challenge

Environmental issues are central to achieving food security. They are both a cause and a target for immediate action to protect and enhance livelihoods. The possibility of reversing negative trends has been shown to exist. Scaling-up known natural resource development and management interventions is an opportunity for the countries of the region to tackle land degradation and desertification.

Priority Area 3: The role of women and girls in recovery and re-building livelihoods

Country-level consultations highlighted the role of women as a primary force for rural transformation and change. Women can spearhead food security in the Horn of Africa, playing a central role in tackling the root causes of vulnerability. For example, support to HIV/AIDS, nutrition and access to education programmes represent a triple opportunity for women and children, girls in particular. A number of existing efforts captured through the consultations can be consolidated, advocated for and scaled-up. The linkage with safety nets and livelihood protection programmes is of particular interest as a complement to labour-based programmes using cash and cash/food-based transfers, community-based initiatives targeted at women-headed households (credit schemes), and women-targeted programmes in pastoral areas.

Priority Area 4: Livelihoods diversification and income generating activities for the food insecure - opportunities to foster rural-urban linkages

The consultations highlighted a number of interventions providing additional employment and income-generating opportunities such as horticulture, agro-forestry, beekeeping, dairy development, livestock fattening, fisheries and also non-farm activities such as small-scale micro-enterprises, small cottage industries, and services. In pastoral and agro-pastoral areas, there are opportunities to promote certified livestock trade, dry and chilled or frozen meat, hides and skins, dyes, gums and medicinal products. In marginal agriculture areas, the rehabilitation of watersheds and natural resource sanctuaries opens opportunities for developing beekeeping, eco-tourism and the production of new crops through introducing water harvesting. Handicrafts and various other micro- and small-scale enterprises can also be developed.

Priority Area 5: Risk management and crisis response

Partnerships between governments, the UN, donors and NGOs are needed to fine-tune risk management and response mechanisms. A number of joint efforts are ongoing in Horn of Africa countries, particularly to strengthen assessment and response capabilities so as to tackle “major shocks”, which are likely to become increasingly frequent due to climate change and land degradation, in a timely and efficient manner. One of the instruments of building resilience to external shocks is to develop the capacity to forecast and prepare for the impact of adverse events. Support to strategic reserves, comprehensive livelihood assessment methods, rapid joint assessment mechanisms, improved capacity for flood response and “hot spot” monitoring, the Integrated Phased Classification (IPC) approach to fostering coherent and rapid responses, and several other instruments, constitute a source of national and regional mechanisms.

Priority Area 6: Institutional strengthening and community-focused capacity building

Countries in the Horn of Africa have taken important steps in modernising their institutions, decentralising responsibilities to the lowest levels of government, and building the capacities of communities and the private sector. However, much remains to be done to build their capacities to meet the challenges of eliminating hunger, reducing vulnerability and building resilience. The country reports highlight a number of key practical interventions aimed at building capacity, particularly at district and community level.

The consultations have demonstrated that there are many and varied opportunities to enhance the food security of vulnerable populations in the region, often with simple technologies and local level approaches. They have also highlighted the fact that, although many interventions have been tried and tested, they have received little attention and inadequate financing from both governments and the donor community. Whilst donors have

been quick to act and generous in their response to emergency situations, they have been less forthcoming in their support for communities that have survived emergencies but are still perilously close to renewed life-threatening disasters. Indeed, many of the interventions that have been inventoried fall into a category that might be called “transitional investments” – designed to bolster the livelihoods and resilience of people who have come out of some natural or man-made disaster. Such investments also include preparedness, that is, early warning and contingency funds for the next inevitable shock. The substantial resources for long-term investment in the sector are increasingly dedicated to locations and communities where there are clear opportunities for commercialisation of production. This trend is in line with the priority assigned by governments and the international community to stimulating growth in the economy. But this means that less attention is given to those in marginal and remote areas where commercial opportunities are scarce. The conclusion is that resources allocated to transitional investments help build a strong foundation in marginal communities for recovery and growth, so that they can benefit from longer-term development assistance.

Another key lesson is the urgent need for more coherent programmes at national level targeting food security and much closer partnerships between governments, donors, NGOs, civil society, UN agencies and communities in achieving this. Such partnerships are not easy to forge but can unlock the potential for combining technical knowledge, resources and coordination skills in pursuit of a commonly agreed goal. Such a multi-partner platform at national level would build upon national structures and existing partner groups. Coherent systems are needed to define the appropriate responses to the various stages through which communities pass from emergency to full recovery and development. For instance, the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC), which is part of the disaster risk management system, can be a powerful tool for refining development partners’ responses and support planning for concrete actions.

A platform for advocacy and coordination of concerted efforts at national level to achieve food security is the first step. However, in order to translate the potential that exists into concrete action, it is vital to secure a substantial increase in the resources devoted to this task – from governments, donors and from communities themselves. The evident difficulty in obtaining funds for transitional investments makes it imperative to explore the possibilities for innovative financing mechanisms which are acceptable to governments, donors and beneficiaries. The funding for emergencies is usually generous, although there are inevitably “forgotten” crises, whilst long-term development receives funding through well-known bilateral and financing institution channels, matched by government. The principles for a food security instrument that addresses transitional investment must include speed and simplicity of operation, transparent and accountable management, harmonization with national systems, simple appraisal criteria, results-based resource allocation, and readily verifiable indicators of success. Criteria for the selection of eligible interventions would include an assessment of the extent to which proposals address disaster risk reduction and more resilient livelihoods, cost-efficiency and effectiveness, and sustainability at the level of the target group.

This multi-country meeting offers a unique opportunity to carry forward the process initiated through national consultations into long term initiatives. The solution to the chronic problem of food insecurity in the Horn of Africa is not through quick technical fixes, but rather through the creation of a process that will ensure long term commitment by all parties and predictable funding. The United Nations, including the three Rome-based agencies – FAO, WFP and IFAD – pledge to work together in support of this renewed commitment to achieving food security and fulfil the commitment to the MDGs, and MDG 1 in particular, in the region.

Road map

The generalised roadmap outlined in Annex1 will need to be adapted to fit the priority interventions of each country. It represents a starting point for a dialogue between development partners to develop detailed proposals aimed at tackling the underlying causes of food insecurity. Three main interrelated processes are included in the road map:

- A) Main partnership actions/steps,
- B) Main proposals for investment actions/steps, and
- C) Main Capacity building actions/steps

Annex 1 Generalised road map for scaling up priority interventions (to be adapted to each country)

A) Main Partnership Actions/Steps	Output	Timeframe (tentative)
<p>1. Setting-up of a government-led mechanism comprising relevant stakeholders to discuss and develop detailed joint programmes and proposals for transitional investments. Under the auspices of Food Security Thematic Groups or related existing structures, task forces will be formed to address issues of food security and vulnerability reduction at country level. Five main task forces could be formed, based upon the following interrelated priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Pastoral livelihood protection and enhancement initiatives; ii) Sustainable land management and natural resource development initiatives targeted at marginal farmers, agro-pastoralists, pastoralists and ex-pastoralists; iii) Risk management and emergency preparedness and response iv) Safety nets, complementary income generation activities and livelihood diversification v) Women-led initiatives (mainstreamed in all of the above) 	<p>1.1 Programme formulation task forces established and including customary institutions as required (e.g. pastoral areas)</p>	Nov 07
	<p>1.2 Coordination mechanism between institutions dealing with short-term, recovery and longer-term interventions established and/or strengthened</p>	Dec 07
	<p>1.3 Consultations at regional and district level undertaken for consolidating proposals and programme design</p>	March 08
	<p>1.4 Customary institutions involved in design and planning</p>	March 08
	<p>1.5 In countries without a Sustainable Land Management (SLM) working group, multi-stakeholder working group on SLM created</p>	March 08
<p>2. Technical experience sharing on best practices and cross-border planning and implementation aspects on food security</p>	<p>2.1 Technical task forces and working groups visits undertaken and planning & implementation aspects discussed between HOA countries</p>	Nov 07-Dec 08
	<p>3.1 Proposed set of interventions for scaling-up reviewed and prioritized.</p>	Nov 07-June 08
<p>3. Programmes for scaling-up developed or strengthened, based on best practices</p>	<p>3.2 Drought cycle management used for planning adequate responses in pastoral areas</p>	Dec 07
	<p>3.3 In settled agriculture areas and degraded highlands, comprehensive plans for the implementation of integrated and participatory watershed plans developed</p>	March 08
	<p>3.4 Set of SLM programmes and activities developed for both food insecure and vulnerable areas (settled agriculture, pastoralists and agro-pastoralists)</p>	March 08
	<p>3.5 Promotion and expansion of women-led agro-processing and small cottage industries supported in all food insecure districts</p>	March 08
	<p>3.6 Safety net programmes developed and or strengthened for the chronically and vulnerable food insecure (e.g. through access to credit and skills training, to women in particular)</p>	Oct 07-Mar 08

B) Main Proposals for Investment Actions/Steps	Outputs	Timeframe
1. Development of country-based resource mobilization mechanisms	<p>1.1 Resource mobilization strategy developed (Government, UN agencies, donors)</p> <p>1.2 Start-up support provided</p> <p>1.3 TF programme development, experience sharing within and across countries, and basic capacity building</p>	<p>Oct 07</p> <p>Oct 07</p> <p>March 08</p>
2. Development of proposals and actions plans for “transitional” investments for food insecure and vulnerable areas	<p>2.1 Proposals for multiple post emergency, recovery and rehabilitation investments (transitional) prepared for drought prone & fragile/vulnerable areas</p> <p><u>Transitional investments will prioritize:</u></p> <p>i) Development of a comprehensive programme for pastoral and agro-pastoral livelihoods, including investments for ex-pastoralists and livelihoods diversification</p> <p>ii) Women-led initiatives, particularly HIV/AIDS mainstreaming, nutrition, access to basic education, and income generation measures</p> <p>iii) Expansion of best practices related to SLM, extension and related community-based participatory planning and watershed development in settled agriculture food insecure & vulnerable areas</p> <p>iv) Support to early warning systems, drought, flood and other hazards response, and rapid assistance mechanisms</p>	<p>Oct 07-June 08</p>
3. Country level workshops undertaken to present and discuss transitional investment plans for priority areas to donors and stakeholders	<p>3.1 National and external resource mobilization strategy for transitional investments prepared</p> <p>3.2 Transitional investment proposals discussed (Government, UN, donors, NGOs, etc) and support discussed and agreed with partners</p> <p>3.3 Joint programmes prioritized</p> <p>3.4 Funding for transitional investment approved</p> <p>3.5 Pre-implementation arrangements effected</p> <p>3.6 Joint interventions initiated and/or expanded</p> <p>3.7 Linkages with long-term investments promoted</p>	<p>Oct 07</p> <p>April 08</p> <p>May 08</p> <p>June-Dec 08</p> <p>July-Dec 08</p> <p>Oct 07-Dec 08</p> <p>ongoing</p>
4. Develop and implement an advocacy and communication strategy	<p>4.1 Awareness creation undertaken at all levels by stakeholder groups</p> <p>4.2 Media coverage undertaken in all food insecure districts</p> <p>4.3 Stakeholder visits to rehabilitated areas</p>	<p>Oct-Dec 07</p> <p>Oct 07-June 08</p> <p>Oct 07-Dec 08</p>

C) Main Capacity building actions/steps	Outputs	Timeframe
<p>1. Identify immediate set of capacity building requirements for district and community level planning and implementation</p>	<p>1.1 Training needs identified and prioritized (with regions and districts based on local conditions) with focus on natural resource development, water harvesting and small-scale irrigation, livestock management, and community infrastructure</p> <p>1.2 Capacity building elements identified and start-up efforts initiated</p> <p>1.3 Large-scale training in participatory and community based participatory watershed planning (when applicable) (for settled agriculture) and/or rangeland and livestock management (pastoral areas) conducted for extension staff, district officers and community level planning teams/customary institutions</p> <p>1.4 Women-led rehabilitation initiatives selected as priority interventions</p>	<p>March 08</p> <p>Oct 07-Mar 08</p> <p>Oct 07-Dec 08</p> <p>Oct 07-Mar 08</p>
<p>2. Strengthening of extension systems and community level development for SLM-type of interventions</p>	<p>2.1 Extension system incorporates SLM as a main vehicle for integration, spatial planning, and multi-disciplinary approach (as applicable)</p> <p>2.2 System for best practices collection and dissemination developed and supported</p> <p>2.3 Linkages between district level extension system, research institutions and farmers established</p>	<p>March 08</p> <p>June 08</p>
<p>3. Develop and implement a planning and management capacity for Income Generation Activities (IGAs)</p>	<p>3.1 Capacity building plan for market enterprise development for cooperatives, credit institutions, and extension system developed by Governments, FAO, IFAD and relevant stakeholders</p> <p>3.2 Training in community-based planning incorporates IGA modules</p> <p>3.3 Training on IGA and micro-enterprise development delivered to all food insecure and vulnerable districts</p> <p>3.4 Best practices promoted, documented and networked in all food insecure and vulnerable areas</p> <p>3.5 Information systems for easy access to basic market information in rural areas developed, tested and expanded</p>	<p>June 08</p> <p>March 08</p> <p>June 08 onwards</p> <p>June 08 onwards</p> <p>June 08 onwards</p>
<p>4. Regional support measures and networks strengthened in support of exports and trade</p>	<p>4.1 Technical forum between HOA countries established to share programme and technical support measures on a 6 monthly basis</p> <p>4.2 Regional institutions involved and technical processes and agreements facilitated</p>	<p>Oct 07</p> <p>Oct 07</p>

5. Strengthen capacity for improved preparedness, early warning and response to floods (assuming response to drought is ongoing)	5.1 Flood task forces created or strengthened	Oct 07
	5.2 Guidelines for multi-sectoral response to floods prepared	Dec 07
	5.3 Essential package of equipment and items (rescue, logistic items, pre-positioned relief stocks, etc) allocated	Dec 07
	5.4 Tapping into global emergency stocks and logistic hubs planned and flood crisis response units organized	Dec 07
6. Enhance decentralized livelihood and disaster monitoring systems	6.1 Livelihood and disaster monitoring systems at country level scaled-up or initiated (monitoring asset base, livelihood and coping mechanisms, scenario building, post emergency and tracking of vulnerability changes)	Oct 07 onwards
	6.2 Rapid assessment capacity scaled-up in all drought and disaster-prone areas	Oct 07
	6.3 Country-regional links on EWS, scenario building and response mechanisms strengthened and complementary	Dec 2007 onwards
7. Systems for supporting best performing staff and collection/dissemination of best practices developed in each country	7.1 Forum among institutions responsible for extension and services delivery, and support partners (donors, UN, NGOs) organized	Oct-Dec 07
	7.2 Support and incentives package developed, with specific focus on remote and hardship areas	Dec 07
	7.3 Mechanism for recognizing and awarding best practices established at all levels	Dec 07
	7.4 Promotion of excellence and support to community-based efforts provided	March-Dec 08
8. Improving the efficiency of delivering services at community level	8.1 Training for local officials about the relevance of community-based planning for SLM, safety nets, women-led initiatives, risk management, and pastoral areas undertaken	Oct 07 onwards
	8.2 Systems for improved and systematic coordination among institutions for integrated planning, implementation and M&E developed and implemented in all vulnerable areas	June 08
	8.3 Linkages with research institutions decentralized at district level, and joint extension-research support ensured	Dec 08 onwards