

L'Aquila Food Security Initiative Meeting
December 5 - 6, 2012
Notes from the Chair

The second 2012 meeting of the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative (AFSI) took place in Maputo, Mozambique, December 5-6. Mozambique Vice Minister of Agriculture Antonio Limbau opened the meeting by emphasizing the importance of AFSI's work and its focus on country-led development. The Vice Minister announced that Mozambique just approved its Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme country investment plan and supports the effective participation of the private sector in agricultural growth, as emphasized in Grow Africa and the G8 New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition.

In the opening session, AFSI Chair Jonathan Shrier noted the progress of AFSI since 2009, highlighting the food security initiatives launched at various multilateral fora (including the G8 New Alliance, the G20 Agricultural Markets Information System and Rapid Response Forum, and the Organization of American States Cochabamba Declaration, among others) and noting the reforms in the United Nations Committee on World Food Security and research institutions like the Global Forum for Agricultural Research. He concluded that food and nutrition security remains at the forefront of the global development agenda.

Session Two highlighted engagement with the private sector and civil society. Bakir Lozane of Mozambique's Lozane Farms presented a successful model of a small business that provides opportunities for economic development and contributes to improved nutrition of the local population, in addition to turning a profit, through its work to promote the growth of orange-fleshed sweet potatoes and soybeans. Hippolito Hamela, Economic Advisor to the Confederation of Mozambican Business Associations, focused on the importance of access to finance and a strong policy-enabling environment in achieving food security, challenging governments to follow through on implementation of policy reforms. Amade Suca of ActionAid Mozambique commended AFSI's progress in meeting its non-financial commitments but noted that only a limited number of families have seen the benefits thus far. He called upon AFSI donors to meet their commitments and on civil society to produce an independent, comprehensive analysis of progress against those commitments. Group discussion emphasized the importance of gender-targeted programming in food and nutrition security and on the role of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests in the Context of National Food Security in building the policy enabling environment.

In Session 3 on partnerships, Guy Evers from the FAO Investment Center discussed the importance of sustained political commitment and leadership at the local, national, and regional levels to achieving food security goals. Ryuichi Nasu of JICA highlighted Japan's role as a co-leader in Mozambique under the New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition, and emphasized the need for the public sector to promote private sector assistance, to encourage responsible agricultural investment, and to align international programs with local initiatives. Wofsi Yuri Souza of Brazil's Cooperation Agency (ABC) discussed Brazil's trilateral work in Mozambique, emphasizing Brazil's ability to share the knowledge and experience gained in its own fight against hunger. Robert Albino, an economist from the Zambezi Valley Development Authority,

spoke about Mozambique's experience thus far with the New Alliance and the high quality of the private sector consultations. He cautioned against building high expectations for quick results, noting it will take a sustained effort to reach the New Alliance goal of helping 3.1 million Mozambicans out of poverty. Discussion in this session focused on the need for strong coordination across sectors and donors, as well as the importance of women's involvement in program planning and implementation.

In Session 4 on Research and Development (R&D), David Hegwood from the United States Agency for International Development reported on the recommendations from the Second Global Conference on Agricultural Research for Development, which called for a major study on research priorities, potential funding gaps, and key triggers for research impact and structural transformation. Earnan O'Cleirigh from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) emphasized the need for better data on funding and trends in R&D in order to better assess prioritization and targeting of research efforts. Dr. Fidelis Myaka, Director of Research and Development for the Ministry of Agriculture in Tanzania, described the challenges facing Tanzania, notably reduced funding and human resources in R&D, and highlighted Tanzania's increased focus on smallholder producers and entrepreneurs. Discussion themes included the need to focus on both short- and long-term funding and priorities, and for improved tracking of R&D investments.

In Session 5, Dr. Heike Henn of the German Ministry for Economic Development discussed the Managing for Developing Results (MfDR) analysis by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). The analysis reviewed a few case study countries to see how AFSI spending was abiding by the MfDR principles of country ownership, donor alignment, coordination and harmonization, monitoring and evaluation, and mutual accountability. Although not completed, the analysis found that, in general, food security is improving in the targeted countries, although the trend cannot be attributed solely to AFSI. The analysis also concluded that the concept of MfDR is widely accepted by governments as ideal for ensuring aid effectiveness. The MfDR Working Group will work with IFPRI to deepen the analysis and identify lessons learned.

Session 6 focused on the AFSI financial commitments, and Bill Nicol from the OECD reported some key findings: As a group, the 13 AFSI donors pledged \$22.24 billion dollars for food and nutrition security. At the end of the three years, we are well in excess of our pledge, having committed over \$23 billion dollars. Six donors (Canada, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and Russia) have fully disbursed their pledge. In addition, overseas development assistance for food and nutrition security went up 50% between 2002 and 2010, but its share of total ODA has remained stable at about 7%. Sub-Saharan Africa remains the largest recipient of this assistance. The OECD's Earnan O'Cleirigh added that mechanisms for targeting and efficiency need improvement.

In the final session, the group discussed the future of AFSI. The Chair pointed out that disbursement data would continue to come in beyond the pledge period, as more than one third of the collective pledge has yet to be disbursed, and the international community will want to remain informed about how those resources are being spent. The United Kingdom, which assumes the chairmanship AFSI in 2013 under its G8 presidency, advocated for continuing to report on disbursements, and stated that the UK intends to host meeting in the first half of 2013

to determine how best to move forward with AFSI and our commitment to the AFSI/Rome Principles. Russia, which assumes the lead in the G20 in 2013, added that food security also will remain high on the G20 agenda with an overall focus on strong, sustainable and balanced economic growth.

In closing remarks, the Chair noted that AFSI has achieved much in the three years since the pledge. AFSI has committed funds well over the pledge amount and is making good progress in disbursing those funds. Equally as important, AFSI has begun to change the way donors work with developing countries, providing detailed country-by-country information about the work going on to improve agricultural development, food security and nutrition in an accountable and transparent way. Vice Minister Limbau closed the meeting by thanking AFSI and the G8 on behalf of the beneficiary countries for the work being done and for the continued determination to fight hunger and poverty worldwide.