

ROSA Newsletter

Views on current news:

Food security in the G20 under French Presidency

This year France assumes the Presidency of the G20 centred on six priority subjects, including excessive commodity price volatility, and development. Price volatility is addressed in the finance, development and agriculture sectors. The finance sector is working on regulating the financial market of commodity derivatives, including agricultural commodities. The G20 working group on development¹ has been asked to implement the long-term action plan for development² based on 9 pillars including food security. One innovation of the French Presidency is the Agriculture Ministers' meeting to be held on 22-23 June³.

In this article, Sujiro Seam, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Food Security and Economic Development, French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, and co-facilitator for the G20 work on food security as part of the working group on development, presents the steps for preparing the Summit, the main points of consensus and divergence between member states, and makes a first analysis of the discussions to date.

What is the state of play of G20 preparations on food security?

In March there were no less than three meetings on food security: the first meeting of food security experts from the development sector on 19-20 March, the G20 working group on development on 21-22 March and the second meeting of "Agriculture" deputies on 23-24 March.

On food security, the Seoul action plan invited international organisations⁴ to present reports on six themes: i) research, ii) accountability, iii) policy coherence, iv) price volatility, v) nutrition, and vi) responsible agricultural investments. The reports were presented and examined during the 19-20 March meeting, and the G20 working group on development took the conclusions on board at their meeting on 21-22 March.

The report on price volatility was also discussed by the Agriculture deputies, as they prepared the Agriculture Ministers' meeting. The discussions explored the four subjects proposed by the French G20 presidency – transparency, coordination, risk management and world agricultural productivity. An action plan has to be prepared for early May before the 3rd meeting of Agriculture deputies on 11-12 May.

What points of convergence and divergence emerge from the discussions?

One of the notable major advances is the consensus among all G20 members to make food security a priority, by sending strong political messages and working on practical tools for eliminating hunger.

For example, there was general enthusiasm for the proposal by the French G20 Presidency to hold a meeting on 12-13 September in Montpellier for agricultural research organisations of G20 countries. It was also agreed to continue to select possible pilot schemes for the "Agricultural pull mechanism" (innovative funding mechanisms to attract the private sector into innovative agriculture).

On the question of accountability, AFSI was asked to coordinate the work, thus stepping up its role as a platform working for the various global food security initiatives. AFSI is also helping to prepare the G8 report on accountability, which should be adopted at the Deauville Summit on 26-27 May.

Concerning policy coherence, the G20 recognises and supports the work of the CFS, particularly in drawing up a world strategy framework on land and responsible agricultural investment, and on price volatility.

¹ Created during the G20 Summit in Toronto (26-27 June 2010).

² Adopted during the G20 Summit in Seoul (11-12 November 2010).

³ The G20 Summit is to be held in Cannes on 3-4 November 2011.

⁴ The organisations in charge of the reports are: research (WB, FAO), accountability (AFSI), policy coherence (CFS), price volatility (inter-organisation report prepared by the WB, UNCTAD, FAO, IFAD, IMF, HLTf, IFPRI, OECD, WTO and WFP, coordinated by the OECD and the FAO), nutrition (WB/HLTF), and responsible agricultural investments (WB, UNCTAD, FAO and IFAD).



In terms of price volatility, consensus was reached on setting up a “Joint organisations data initiative (JODI)” to improve the transparency of market data on cereals (wheat, maize, rice) and soya. More work is needed on this, particularly on coordination aspects. The countries agree on the need to not create new structures. However, the form a CFS market experts’ forum could take has not yet been decided. On another subject, some G20 members are militating for trade questions to be dealt with within the G20, particularly for export restrictions, while others consider that the WTO is the best place to deal with these issues.

On the issue of protecting the most vulnerable from price volatility, further studies are needed on the feasibility of a system of emergency reserves, with a focus on the regional approach, optimising existing instrument. The question of exempting food aid from export restrictions will also be dealt with in this framework. The French Presidency of the G20 is trying to extend the exemption to net importing LDCs. Concerning nutrition, the G20 supports a combined short and long term approach, and supports mobilising all the sectorial policies that have an impact on nutrition.

In terms of responsible agricultural investment, the G20 supports the consultation on the subject, under the auspices of the CFS, and, in parallel, supports starting pilot projects to test the principles of responsible agricultural investment, since feedback from these will help the consultation.

What is your first analysis of the G20 discussions?

First we need to salute the fact that international organisations have managed to reach a common stance and present a united position, with options that G20 members can develop. There is remarkable mobilisation on the question of the volatility of agricultural prices, and discussions are dynamic and interesting. It is also interesting to note that, in meetings on agriculture, there is unanimity on the food security/development angle. So this seems to be a good starting point for ensuring that no country blocks discussions.

For more details:



NOUVEAU MONDE NOUVELLES IDÉES The site for the French Presidency of the G20/G8: <http://www.g20-g8.com/g8-g20/g20/francais/accueil.1.html>

Agenda

Past events

- **International 2020 Conference “Leveraging agriculture for improving nutrition and health”** (10-12 February 2011, New Delhi): How can the potential of agriculture be unleashed to reduce malnutrition and ill health? This question was at the centre of discussions in a high-level event organised by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). This conference aimed to inform, influence, and catalyze action to better use investments in agriculture to achieve nutrition security and good health for the poor people. The conference brought together over 1.000 participants from 65 countries. Main stakeholders were represented: administrations, international organisations, development banks, research institutes, foundations, private companies and civil society. To foster linkages between nutrition, health and agriculture, the conference gathered together experts and political representatives from various backgrounds and sectors. >>>

Forthcoming events

- **20 April:** International workshop on climate change, price volatility and food security : Perspectives from Southeast Asia - Jakarta (Indonesia)
- **21-22 April:** Restrictive meeting of the Food Crises Prevention Network (RPCA) - Paris (France) >>>
- **12-13 May:** Workshop on "Measuring the effects of agri-health interventions" - London (UK)
- **26-27 May:** G8 Summit – Deauville (France)
- **7 June:** EC agriculture and rural development (ARD) seminar on “Sector approaches in natural resources” – Brussels (Belgium) >>>
- **22-23 June:** Ministerial meeting - G20 on « Agriculture » (France)
- **29 June:** European Commission ARD seminar on “Hot issues in ARD” – Brussels (Belgium) >>>
- **4 July:** European Commission ARD seminar on “Value chain in ARD” – Brussels (Belgium) >>>
- **18-22 October:** 37th session of the FAO Committee on World Food Security (CFS) - Rome (Italy)
- **3-4 November:** G20 Summit (France)
- **28 November-9 December:** The 17th United Nations Conference on Climate Change (COP 17) - Durban (South Africa)

For further information: [Upcoming events](#)

EC's latest news

➤ **Third European forum on rural development** (29 March-1 April 2011, Palencia): About 400 delegates took part in the 3rd European Forum. During a series of special in-depth sessions, practitioners from throughout the world presented their success stories of reducing malnutrition and poverty. The last day, participants drew recommendations on several key issues relating to food security. >>>

➤ **Forthcoming EC seminars and training sessions on agriculture and rural development (ARD)**

Sector approaches in natural resources - 7 June (Brussels): This seminar will address methodological and operational issues, notably: creating policy and strategic frameworks, assessing institutions and capacities, linking policy to resources, setting-up functioning systems for

monitoring, and establishing good donor co-ordination. Presentations of case studies will serve a base for discussion and learning through shared experiences. Practical exercises in small working groups will take place. >>>

Hot issues in ARD - 29 June (Brussels): Structured in 6 modules (3 days), this seminar will first set the scene, and then address four "hot" topics:

- Evolution of commodity prices ;
- Risk management ;
- Farmers' organisations (FOs) ;
- Decentralisation and ARD/territorial development. >>>

Value chain in ARD - 4 July (Brussels): This seminar will be structured in 4 modules (3 days) dealing with: value chain promotion and pro-poor growth; analysing value chains; Value chain upgrading strategy. >>>

ROSA News

New online documents

➤ **Food and nutrition situation**

The 2010-11 World food and nutrition situation. Women in agriculture. Closing the gender gap for development, FAO - 2011

This year, the FAO's major flagship publication addresses gender issues. It first provides a survey of the roles of women in agriculture and rural areas, and shows the constraints facing women in this sector. Then it surveys the economic evidence on the productivity of male and female farmers and estimates the gains that could be achieved by closing the gender gap in agricultural input use. The report advances specific policies and programmes that can help close the gender gap in agriculture and rural employment. Enhancing women's access to land, cattle, education, financial services, technologies and the labour market would induce improvement in productivity, food production, food security, growth and social well-being. However, there is no blueprint for closing the gender gap. >>>

➤ **Social transfers and access to food**

North-South knowledge sharing on incentive-based conditional cash transfer programs, L. Aber, L.B. Rawlings, The World Bank - January 2011

Conditional Cash Transfer Programmes (CCTs) have been closely studied and well evaluated, creating both a strong evidence base from which to inform policy

decisions and an active global community of practice. This paper first reviews the emergence of CCTs in the context of a key theme in welfare reform, notably using incentives to promote human capital development, going beyond the traditional focus on income support. The paper then examines what has been learned to date from the experience with CCTs in the South and raises a series of questions concerning the relevance and replicability of these lessons in other contexts. Then it turns to the North to look at how lessons from the South have influenced the introduction of CCT programs in the North. The paper concludes with a call for further knowledge sharing in two areas: between the North and the South as the experience expands, and between behavioral science and welfare policy. >>>

Cash transfers. Evidence paper, DFID - April 2011

This DFID evidence paper updates the previous DFID review of evidence published in 2005. It draws on new research and evidence which has accumulated as social protection policies and programmes have expanded in developing countries. This paper provides a synthesis of the global evidence on the impact of cash transfers in developing countries, and on what works in different contexts and for different development objectives. It aims to inform decision-making, mainly by DFID and its development partners. The primary purpose of cash transfers is to reduce poverty and vulnerability directly. However, the evidence shows that they have a proven potential to contribute directly or indirectly to a much wider range of development outcomes, including

human development (health, nutrition and education), gender equality and women's empowerment, and economic inclusion and growth. Reflecting a more limited research base, there is more limited evidence that cash transfer programmes can contribute to other outcomes (such as strengthening the 'contract' between citizens and the state, or supporting climate change adaptation). >>>

➤ **Right to food**

The fight for the right to food. Lessons learned, J. Ziegler, C. Golay, C. Mahon, S.-A. Way - February 2011

This book documents the work of Jean Ziegler, the UN's first Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food from 2000 to 2008, giving important insights into the work of a "Special Rapporteur" and his team. It advances the understanding of the right to food in theory and in practice, offering essential conceptual and legal developments. It also offers an operational understanding of the right to food by documenting experiences in 11 countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America. It offers insights into the obstacles to the realization of the right to food, sets out key challenges for the future, and pushes forward the frontiers of international human rights law to address the persistence of undernutrition in the face of globalization. >>>

New challenges to the right to food, M.A. Martín López, J.L. Vivero Pol (eds.) - 2011

This book argues that the recent world food crisis has revealed the right to food's inability to address and prevent such situations. According to the authors, it is high time to move from voluntary guidelines to binding laws. The authors indicate some areas and subjects that will have great impact in coming years on the implementation of the right to food and food security and which are either not or barely regulated. These include climate change, biotechnologies and intellectual property. The book also notes that the right to food cannot take a neutral stance on the way food is produced. Therefore, it encourages the deployment of sustainable agriculture. >>>

➤ **Others themes**

Agriculture, food security and climate change. Outlook for knowledge, tools and actions, CCAFS – November 2010

This background paper was prepared for the 2010 Hague Conference on agriculture, food security and climate change on behalf of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). The review brings together current knowledge of the impacts of climate change on farming and food systems, as well as approaches for managing climate variability and risk now and over the long term. It also assesses knowledge regarding changes in farming practices that can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and regarding how these changes can be achieved without compromising farmers' food security and livelihood. >>>

Food security and global environmental change, J. Ingram, P. Ericksen and D. Liverman (eds.) - October 2010

The book provides a synthesis of the current state of knowledge and thinking on the relationships between global environmental change (GEC) and food security. GEC represents an immediate and unprecedented threat to food security, especially of people who depend on small-scale agriculture for their livelihoods. However, agriculture and related activities also contribute to GEC. Measures taken to increase food security may exacerbate GEC, just as responses aimed at adapting to GEC may have negative consequences for food security. The authors show that the complex and dynamic relationship between GEC and food security is influenced by a wide range of factors; food systems are heavily influenced by socioeconomic conditions, which in turn are affected by multiple processes. The article stresses the need for actions at a regional, rather than just an international or local, level. It reviews new thinking which has emerged over the last decade, analyses research methods for stakeholder engagement and for undertaking studies at the regional level. It also reviews a number of emerging 'hot topics' in the food security-GEC debate which help set new agendas for the research community at large. >>>

*This bulletin was written by the GRET team in charge of animating ROSA. The network is an initiative of EuropeAid (Unit E6 – Natural Resources in collaboration with Unit G4 – Training and Knowledge Management).
The points expressed do not reflect the official position of the European Commission.*