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Thematic Session 1

Improving food availability: from production to marketing, what support should regions/local authorities provide?

18 January 2010 – 14.30-18.30

SUMMARY

Chair: Mr Alain Yvergniaux, Regional Councillor, Brittany Region, France

Coordinator: Mr Christian Taupiac, General Council of the French Ministry for Agriculture and Fisheries

Rapporteur: Mr Mamadou Diallo, Director of Agriculture, Senegal

In the wider context of “food security”, which encapsulates the issues of accessibility to foodstuffs (dealt with by Workshop 3) and nutritional quality (Workshop 2), the improvement of food availability in the South, the specific objective of Workshop 1 was to identify the specific characteristics of the “regions” as stakeholders in partnerships between/with the international, national and local levels, and also between/with central and/or decentralised development aid systems, whether governmental or non-governmental, or public or private. It sought to identify how the regions work to encourage farm production in accordance with territorial requirements. What are the many constraints they face? How can regional, national and local action on these matters be coordinated? Should other systems be developed in order to improve the availability of foodstuffs?

The following summary outlines the various contributions by experts and regional and local representatives, the key points made during the debates and the recommendations made by the session’s participants on how to increase the number of regional initiatives aimed at countering food insecurity.

A. Issues addressed and regional experiences presented:¹

The thematic session organised its work so as to address five issues in an open manner:

- The territorial dimension of food security management,
- Information on food resources and needs,
- Direct action on the direct development of availability,
- Action on structural constraints affecting availability,
- Strategies for preventing and managing food crises and other catastrophes: early warning systems, reserve stocks, networking areas with shortages with areas with surpluses.

Eight presentations were made, with a group discussion between each one, which made it possible to keep a record of the debates:

¹ The full presentations made by the various speakers are available on the Background Documents section of the summit website: <http://www.regionsfoodsummit.org/>

EN PARTENARIAT AVEC



Theme: Food security and territories, information

Presentation 1: *“Agriculture, access to food and nutrition: the regions in action to tackle the food crisis”*, Mr **Hubert Henri Rakotondrazaka**, former leader of Itasy Region, **Madagascar**;

Presentation 2: *“Cross-border cooperation on food security through trade in cereals and cattle”*, Mr **Ahmed Ibrahim Yakasai**, Kano State Commissioner for Commerce, Industry, Cooperatives and Tourism, Federal Republic of **Nigeria**;

Presentation 3: *“Cross-border cooperation in the SKB area: the Hauts Bassins and Cascades regions in Burkina Faso and Sikasso Mali in Sikasso”* Mr **Edmond Sougue**, Project Officer responsible for territorial development support policies and strategies, Partnership for Municipal Development, Cotonou, **Benin**;

Theme: The role of the regions in improving food availability

Presentation 4: *“Synergies between actors from civil society and local and regional authorities: a guarantee for sustainable and equitable agricultural development to give everyone access to sufficient, healthy food”*, Ms **Clotilde Tascon Mennetrier**, Vice President of Ille et Vilaine General Council, France, and representative of **Cités Unies France (CUF)**;

Presentation 5: *“Improving food availability, from production to market: what support should the regions and local authorities provide?”*, Mr **Crispim Moreira**, National Secretary of the Food Security Secretariat (SESAN) at the Ministry of Social Development and the Fight against Hunger, **Brazil**;

Theme: The regions and crisis management

Presentation 6: *“The role of regional authorities in prevention and management strategies regarding food crises and other disasters*, Mr **Amadou Moctar Konaté**, Food security expert, Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel, Bamako (**Mali**);

Presentation 7: *“Innovative multi-stakeholder partnerships in food crop production”*, Mr **Alain Yvergniaux**, Regional Councillor, Brittany, focusing on the example of a cooperative venture between a French region (Brittany) and a major African regional supranational international organisation (**WAEMU**);

Presentation 8: *“Management and prevention of food crises: the role of different stakeholders intervening in the management of the 2005 food crisis in Niger”*, Prof. **Alpha Gado Boureima**, Director of the Natural Disaster Management and Prevention Laboratory, Abdou Moumouni University, Niamey, Niger

B. Summary of the debates and recommendations

Discussions and conclusions

These presentations drew attention to some possible areas for action:

- the **territorial** dimension of the issue and the solutions,
- how regions from the **South** and the **North** can work together to tackle the food security issue,
- the role of **local** stakeholders and initiatives,
- the partnership between **cross-border** farming **cooperatives**,
- the **limits** of regional and local structures,
- the role of **sub-state** authorities.

At the end of these presentations, there was a debate and the floor was given to each of the 13 speakers in turn, who emphasised, among other things, the need for partnership and a systemic approach, the need to recognise particular regional circumstances, coordination between different levels of planning, spatial planning, and the issue of the region’s competences and expertise etc.

Content of the debates and conclusions

The debates, which had an audience of about a hundred people, identified the following concerns:

- the need to take into account the **territorial** dimension of the issue and the solutions, which alone justifies the role the regions need to play in designing and delivering food security policies,
- the importance of cooperation between regions from the **South** and the **North**,
- the role of **local** stakeholders and initiatives,
- the partnership between **cross-border** farming **cooperatives**,
- the **limits** of regional and local authorities mandates’ and capacities.

At the end of the session, the Chair submitted the summary of the debates and following **four recommendations** for the summit's approval:

- The workshop felt that the region is the relevant level for combining territorial and sectoral approaches that cut across different fields.
- Thus the regions must be involved, given responsibility and even put in charge of prevention and strategies aimed at ensuring food security. They must be at the heart of efforts to coordinate action and stakeholders. This coordination will capitalise on the recognised expertise of all social, economic and political stakeholders and optimise regional strategies and action plans.
- This strategic coordination function must also ensure the development of efficient links between areas with high levels of production and areas with shortages, in the framework of a monitoring and information system.
- As far as facilities are concerned, the workshop stressed the crucial role of the regions in identifying ways and means of storing food produced in different agricultural areas in the short and medium-term and in encouraging local and regional authorities to forge partnerships in the framework of decentralised cooperation.
- To make the transfer of powers to local and regional authorities effective by providing the financial and human resources required for the design and delivery of appropriate food security policies.

Regrettably, due to lack of time and size of this workshop's audience, **it was not possible to fully tackle the issue of information (who collects, manages and distributes information on markets, stock levels, harvest and needs forecasts and the identification of weaknesses?)**.

However, experience shows that many crises have occurred due to insufficient circulation of information ...