



## **Proceedings**

# **POLICY DIALOGUE ON FOOD SECURITY INFORMATION NEEDS IN KENYA**

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## **List of Abbreviations**

AS	Agriculture Secretary
ASAL	Arid and Semi-Arid Lands
ASCU	Agricultural Sector Coordination Unit
ASDS	Agriculture Sector Development Strategy
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DP	Development Practitioner
GoK	Government of Kenya
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
KARI	Kenya Agricultural Research Institute
KFSSG	Kenya Food Security Steering Group
KIPPRA	Kenya Institute of Public Policy and Research Analysis
KMD	Kenya Meteorology Department
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoLD	Ministry of Livestock Development
MoWID	Ministry of Water and Irrigation Development
NAAIAP	National Accelerated Agricultural Input Access Programme
NFSNP	National Food and Nutrition Policy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NMK	Njaa Marufuku Kenya
SHDP	Smallholder Horticultural Development Project
SHMP	Smallholder Horticultural Marketing Project
UN	United Nations

## Introduction

The combination of different crises — fuel, food, and financial — together with long and medium term effects of climate change undoubtedly will continue to increase price volatility and as a result continue to push more people into food insecurity and malnutrition. Policy makers rely heavily on information to respond to food security challenges. Many national leaders require tools to assess and design the impact of the global food crisis on their country, economy, and vulnerable population groups. Furthermore, leaders need tools to implement national policies and programmes to address the risks and opportunities presented by the significant increase in price volatility.

Consequently, an assessment of the organization and management of food security relevant information and minimum indicators that are needed at the country level is part of a larger effort to strengthen capacity to develop long-term food security strategies to improve food and nutrition security for the poor in developing countries. To this end, the Kenya Institute of Public Policy and Research Analysis (KIPPRA) and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) organized a policy dialogue to discuss the food security information flows and management in Kenya. This synthesis highlights some of the key issues discussed in the meeting.

## Part 1: Welcome and Keynote Address



### 1.1 Welcome Address by Dr. Moses Ikiara, Executive Director, KIPPRA

The Executive Director of KIPPRA presented the theme of the workshop as 'Policy Dialogue on Food Security Information Systems.' He indicated that many workshops on this theme have been organized and as a result, people may be developing fatigue

regarding food security policy dialogues. Therefore, there was a need for this workshop to offer something different, thus avoiding duplication of rhetoric. During the course of the dialogue, the participants were asked to reflect on the following concerns and questions:

- Whether we have a coherent work plan on food security
- Who is involved in what, and if everybody performing their role(s)
- What are the sanctions or retribution for those not performing their roles

Dr. Ikiara further indicated that a clear way forward was needed and that it is the intention of KIPPRA to give food security a priority and to engage in consistent follow-up activities, possibly on an annual basis.

## **1.2 Keynote Address by Dr. Wilson Songa, Agriculture Secretary, MoA**



The Agriculture Secretary (AS) informed the participants that food security continues to be a challenge in Kenya. He noted that the country seems to be gaining ground in some areas but losing ground in other aspects. However, one strength he noted from his past field visits in Gatundu South, Kakamega, and Kitale was the positive enthusiasm of the farmers. He challenged those at the top to match this enthusiasm and make greater headway on food security for all as change can be brought about by a few individuals.

Outlined in both the Vision 2030 (V-2030) and the Agricultural Sector Development Strategy (ASDS), the government has put in place a good policy framework. Highlighting the progress made by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) towards food security issues, the AS noted the following achievements:

- i) Gradual increase in the grain reserve from 3 million bags, or its monetary equivalent, to the current 8 million, or monetary its equivalent. Initially, little attention was given to monitoring of food security issues.
- ii) Sustained follow-up on monthly food situation analysis to address information on national food balance (unfortunately skewed towards maize)
- iii) Seasonal food assessments, done with other stakeholders under the Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG). The group provides information on:
  - Areas of food deficit
  - Number of people affected to help in planning
- iv) Inclusion and use of information from the Kenya Meteorology Department (KMD). For example, the Sept/Oct 2010 drought forecast informed the distribution of drought resistant planting materials to farmers in good time.
- v) Embracing the Sector-Wide approach to address food security: an important outcome is the National Food and Nutrition Policy (NFSNP), a joint initiative of different Ministries (MoA, MoH, MoLD, MoWID) and development partners. The new developments in the country such as the

new constitution necessitate a readjustment to the policy framework. The AS highlighted that the NFSNP made policy recommendations on safety nets to the vulnerable groups and how to target them. The policy also emphasizes diversifying our eating habits, i.e. from wheat to milk/meat. However, of concern is that Irish potato is ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in consumption yet it lacked clear policy guidelines.

- vi) Adoption of the Value Chain Approach to address challenges in the sector, from the previous production-only approach.
- vii) Embracing environmental conservation measure to ensure food production is sustainable, including:
  - Conservation Agriculture
  - 10 percent farm forest agriculture rules
  - Proper water harvesting
  - Crop diversification, i.e. traditional vegetables

Dr. Songa re-emphasized that given the policy framework the challenge lays with the policy implementers. Areas that had not done well included:

- i) Overreliance on rain-fed agriculture: while there is emphasis on irrigation agriculture, more structures need to be put in place to ensure the schemes do not collapse as they had in the past. Dr. Songa referenced the micro-dams the MoA is setting up with farmers and the former University farm in Kibwezi. However, the question remains: what policies do we put in place to sustain these initiatives?
- ii) Food distribution: in a recent case all the National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB) stores were full of maize in surplus areas and empty in food deficit areas. He challenged all of us to do our part to fight food insecurity.
- iii) Other notable successful project stories that require policies to up-scale include: Njaa Marufuku Kenya (NMK) and the National Accelerated Agricultural Input Access Programme (NAAIAP), which have made significant impact to a number of farmers despite initial reluctance from some donor agencies to support it.
- iv) Dr. Songa also noted the need to put in place a competitive and conducive environment to attract the private sector, i.e. the Smallholder Horticultural Development Project (SHDP) and the Smallholder Horticultural Marketing Project (SHMP).
- v) In closing, the AS reminded the participants that the country has what it needs to move forward - development plans, enthusiastic farmers, and a well-developed human capital.

### 1.3 Discussion

Following the conclusion of this presentation, workshop participants raised three main issues.

- i) The first issue concerned an apparent lack of investment in targeted training as well as an over reliance on the donor community. Participants noted that NCPB needs to be more decentralized to facilitate a move toward greater food storage of food deficit as opposed to food surplus areas and questioned whether any policy exists in the Ministry of Agriculture regarding the provision of training services in this special area. Dr. Songa responded to this concern by stating first that there is indeed a need to prioritize activities and that while there is sufficient human capacity in the labor market there remains a need for training in specialized areas. However, in regards to decentralization of NCPB, Dr. Songa claimed that the concern is not whether there is enough capacity in food deficit areas, but how to ensure that these areas are not left empty.
- ii) With much land under production and a loss of agriculture land to real estate, agriculture biofuels, and education centers, participants noted there are many landless people (internally displaced persons, squatters) and land holdings diminishing below 1. Nevertheless, there is a desire to maximize farm output. Dr. Songa responded by stating since land issues may require a larger forum with more stakeholder engagement, the MoA has come up with extension packages to fit the declining land sizes.
- iii) The final issue addressed the 80 percent of arid and semi-arid land (ASAL) in Kenya. Participants questioned what policies countries with similar dry areas have in place to utilize their dry lands. Dr. Songa noted that there has been goodwill by development partners who have come up with a code of a conduct for a common basket, but the government needs to come up with priority areas.

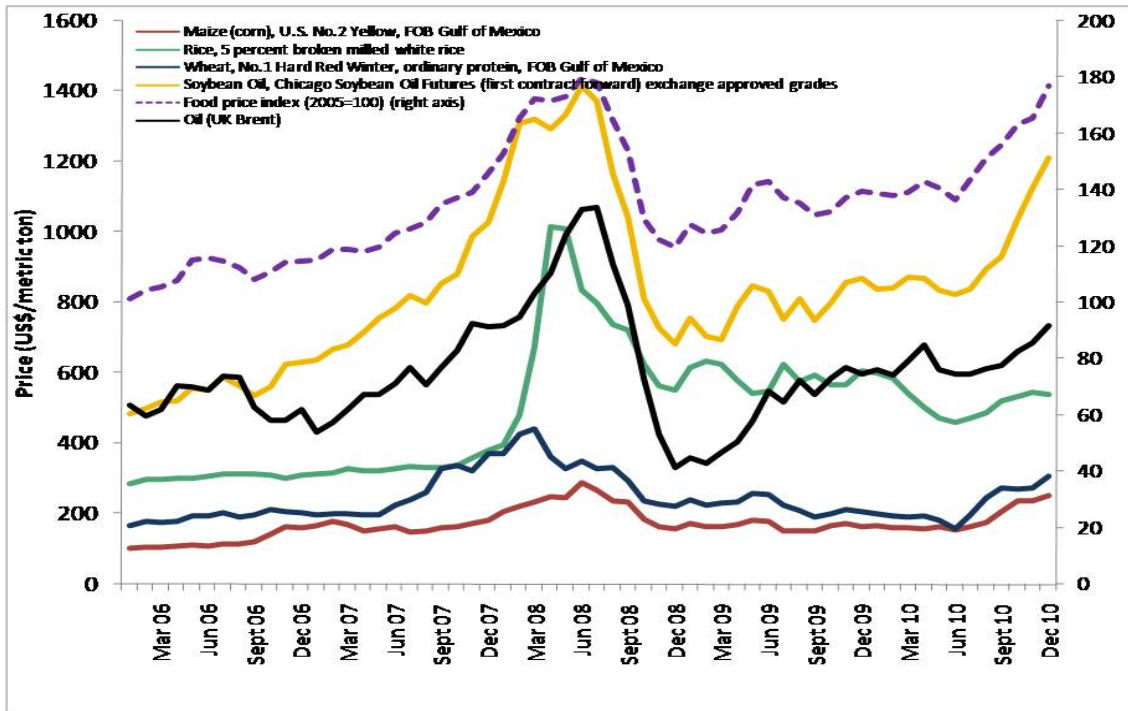


## Part II: Presentations

### 2.1 The Role of Information in Making Food Policy in Sub-Saharan Africa

In his presentation, Dr. Nicholas Minot, a senior research fellow at IFPRI, explored the role of information when making food policies in sub-Saharan Africa. Dr. Minot observed that the last three years has seen a consistent rise in average food prices. The rise is anticipated to increase further in 2011 (see Graph 1). He clarified food security as “when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”

Graph 1. Rising Food Prices in International Markets

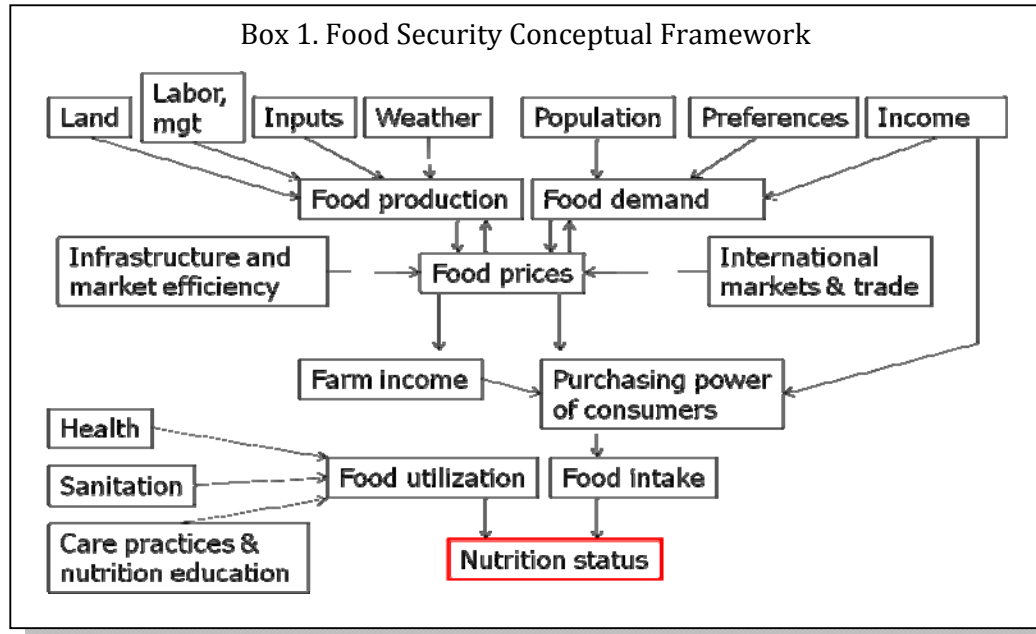


The conceptual framework of food security was highlighted citing the factors that affect food security, including: food prices, weather, farm incomes, infrastructure, market stability, international food markets, and trade as well as personal preferences (see Box 1). This conceptual framework is useful in the determination of information needs for food policy formulation.

Policy instruments relating to food security were also enumerated alongside other related policies, such as: health and sanitation policy; education policy; food safety bills; food security and nutrition policy; research and extension policy; land policy; and family planning policy.

Two major sources of instability in food security were singled out as weather related supply shocks and price shocks from the world market. The information required to monitor and control food security issues includes the following: monitoring of food security indicators; analysis and interpretation of food security indicators; relationships among food security indicators; and the impact of food and nutrition policies and programmes. These indicators are monitored based on set a set frequency, commodity range, selected locations, and levels of accuracy sought as a trade off of cost and accuracy. These decisions are based on the importance of the indicator as a measure of food security and the cost of data collection.





## 2.2 Kenya's Response to Food Crisis

This paper was presented by Dr. J.G. Mureithi, Deputy Director, Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI). The aim was to focus on Kenya's response to food crises.

The dimensions of food insecurity were highlighted as not only the availability of quality food but also the access to food through purchase or bartering, safe utilization of the food, and stability of the availability. The food security situation in the country was analyzed as follows:

- 10 million Kenyans suffer from chronic food and nutrition insecurity: 1.3 million people in rural areas and 3.5 – 4.0 million in urban areas are food insecure.
- 2 to 4 million Kenyans require emergency food assistance at any time and approximately 30 percent of Kenyan children are classified as undernourished.
- Farm productivity is low due to dwindling water supply on account of land degradation; low rate of adoption of technologies; low soil fertility; livestock; crop pests; and diseases.
- He noted the challenges to food security as poverty; dependency on rain-fed agriculture; vagaries of climate change; inadequate access to knowledge, information, and technologies; market dysfunctions; poor infrastructure; gender disparities; population growth; lack of value addition; high transport costs; and minimal diversification.

- He highlighted the modes of interventions, such as: agricultural technology development and transfer through KARI centers; value chain approach to research; drought tolerant varieties; post harvest management; water harvesting; irrigation; conservation agriculture; and fortification of traditional foods. The Government has a commitment to food security as enshrined in the Vision 2030, the ASDS, and the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP).

### 2.3 Strategic Grain Reserve in Africa

This presentation was done by Dr. Minot on behalf of Dr. Shahidur Rashid of IFPRI. The presenter outlined the need for grain reserves and grain price policies to provide market interventions and ensure efficient resource allocation. Doing so would provide safety nets for vulnerable groups.

Operations of buffer stocks to stabilize prices were discussed and demonstrated. Various challenges were highlighted. These include: the existence of multiple objectives and stakeholders in the grain sector; too many institutions; difficulties in predicting prices; high costs of warehouses; procurement; and storage losses. The reserve would also involve very large public subsidies.

Food security policies were observed to vary for different types of households (see Chart 1). For instance the rural poor may need different policies from the large-scale surplus farmers. Strategic reserves, however, would play an important role in mitigating the vicious cycle of low farm incomes, low nutrition, and low farm productivity that is often brought about by changing weather patterns.

Chart 1: Agricultural Development and Food Policies

Household / income groups	Key features	Policy focus
<b>A. Rural poor (bottom 40%)</b>	Below poverty line; food insecure; undernourished; cannot afford school	Provide <i>sustained</i> and effective safety net
<b>B. Normally self-sufficient, but vulnerable to shocks (middle 40%)</b>	Not poor enough to qualify for safety nets and not rich enough to support themselves in case of shocks	Livelihood protection supports to cope against shocks;
<b>C. Surplus farmers (top 20%)</b>	This group contributes the largest share of marketed surplus; can afford various market based instruments	Putting them on the path towards commercialization. If available, insurance, credit, etc. will be commercially viable for this group.

The elements of a successful strategic grain reserve were discussed and differences were made between grain reserve and buffer stock. A successful case of the Ethiopian strategic reserve was described where the reserve is governed by a board consisting of Ministers of Finance, Agriculture, Trade, Internal Affairs, with the head of the reserve agency at the first level and a technical committee at a second level.

Dr. Minot concluded that a strategic reserve needs to be defined differently from generalized buffer stock policies because a strategic reserve does not involve price setting, purchases, or sales by the Government or government agencies. Rather, a strategic reserve absorbs shocks and facilitates emergency and safety nets operations (see Chart 2).

Chart 2: Distinguishing Strategic Grain Reserve from Buffer Stock

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Buffer stock</b>	<b>Strategic food security</b>
Objective	Price stabilization	Safety net/emergency
Gov/ agency involved in buying and selling	YES	NO
Gov/ agency involved setting minimum price	YES	NO
Gov / agency involved in setting ceiling prices	YES	NO
Gov / agency involved in transport and handling	YES	NO
Requires large public subsidies	YES	NO

## **2.4 Information for Chronic Food Security Needs in Rural Areas in Kenya**

This presentation was done by Dr. John Omiti, KIPPRA. He highlighted the situation of hunger in the world, making reference to the Global hunger index and noting a high index for Kenya at 19.4. This is set to increase due to climate changes and Kenya's reliance on rain-fed agriculture. This can be alleviated through pro-poor economic growth policies and improved agricultural production from scaled-up investments.

He observed that there exists a cyclical food insecurity problem especially in the ASAL areas due to recurrent droughts every four to five years in the country. This affects more than 80 percent of the population. The problem slows down development as development funds are channeled to relief food imports.

A livelihoods approach to social protection was discussed. The government has a role to protect the vulnerable groups through agriculture and non-agriculture means as enshrined in Kenya's constitution. Social Protection Policy (2009) seeks to enhance the capacity of poor and vulnerable persons by assisting them to manage socio-economic risks, such as unemployment, sickness, disability, and old age. He clarified three main forms of social protection: social protection from agriculture, for agricultural growth, and through agriculture. Other policy instruments directed at social protection include the water policy, land policy, promotion of export agriculture, and rural development to curb rural-urban migration.

The main challenges to overcome in this process emanate from the high and rising population (40 million Kenyans); climate changes (the increasing frequency of adverse weather conditions); high and volatile food prices due to poor harvests as a result of climate changes; and shrinking landholdings resulting from population pressure as well as weak markets, institutions, and policies.

Dr. Omiti presented several means to alleviate the situation such as water harvesting; irrigation; development of rural infrastructure; promotion of export-oriented agriculture mainly focusing on regional markets; and, among others, land reforms.



## **2.5 Harmonization of Food Security Efforts: The Government Perspective**

This presentation was done by Mr. Laititi, Agricultural Sector Coordination Unit (ASCU). He said that given the high population growth rate, it is estimated that the number of hungry people in Kenya will reach 30 million by 2030, up from the current 10 million.

Micronutrient deficiencies are highly prevalent in Kenya, particularly at crucial stages of the life cycle when needs for specific minerals and vitamins are high.

The Government of Kenya is strongly committed to reducing hunger and malnutrition. The Government developed the National Food Security and Nutrition Policy in close collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders in a highly consultative and participatory process for this purpose. The broad objectives of the national FSNP are:

- To achieve good nutrition for optimum health of all Kenyans.
- To increase the quantity and quality of food available, and its accessibility and affordability to all Kenyans at all times.
- To protect vulnerable populations using innovative and cost-effective safety nets linked to long-term development.

Food policy issues were enumerated as food availability and access; food safety and quality control; nutrition improvement; school nutrition and nutrition awareness; food security and nutrition information; early warning and emergency management; institutional and legal framework financing; and strategic approaches for policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

## **2.6 Donor Harmonization of Food Security Efforts**

This was presented by Dr. Augusta Abate, FAO. She described the joint program noting that the technical responsibility for food and nutrition security lay with various actors (GoK, UN agencies, DPs, NGOs, CSOs, individuals, etc.). These actors must be coordinated through well organized institutions for them to be effective. In this process, information and knowledge dissemination plays a key role.

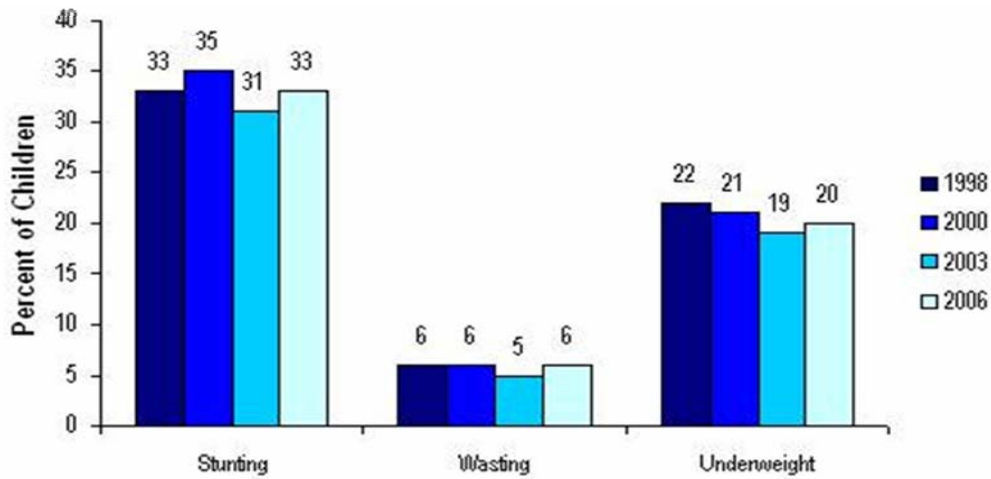
She observed that the food and nutrition status in the country had not improved in the last three years despite various efforts and described the program's three key areas of focus, which are: nutrition for young children; food availability and access; and coordination, preparedness, and response to food insecurity (for more information on nutrition status in Kenya, see Box 2).

She noted that the joint program had made achievements in the above areas, evident by the various outcomes from its projects, i.e. improved infant and child nutrition; food availability and access improved in certain target areas; and food security and nutrition coordination has been strengthened as well as information management.

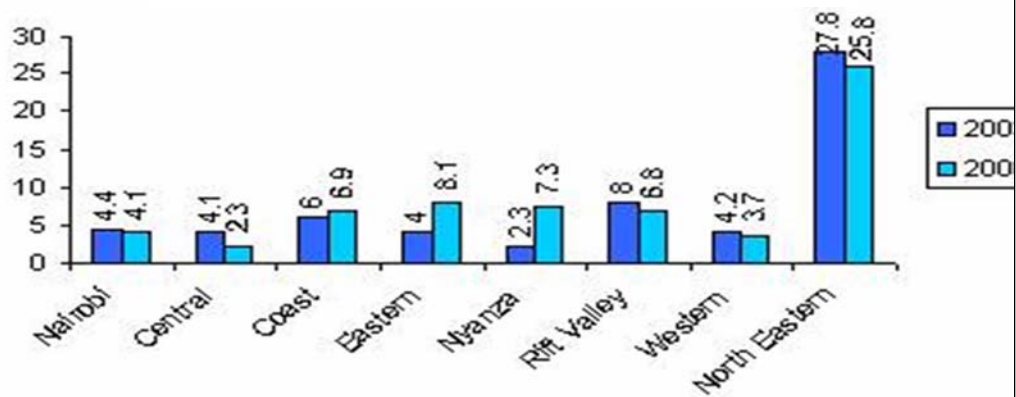
The program is however facing certain challenges including: limited use of past lessons and best practices; unpredictable and inadequate resources (human and financial); impact assessments of rising food prices on household food security; focused on emergencies rather than long-term initiatives; poor planning (late responses to crises/too many 'emergencies'); the increasing number of urban poor; and limited public-private partnerships.

### Box 2. Nutritional Status Indicators for Kenya

Graph 2. Stunting, Wasting and Underweight in Children in Kenya, 1998-2006



Graph 3. Wasting by Provinces for 2003 and 2006



For this reason, there is need for different initiatives to tackle chronic and transitory food insecurity. In addition to structural interventions, IGAs and input distribution, ecological zones must be mapped and their potential should be exploited accordingly. Linkages between research and extension need to be strengthened. Agricultural and livestock productivity should increase. The promotion and securing of markets are also critical to avoid glut periods. Furthermore, private sector investment in agriculture should be promoted.

## 2.7 Discussion

Throughout the workshop, participants raised a number of issues for discussion based on the presentations described above. These thematically grouped discussion points are described below.

### *Food Security*

Given the apparent worldwide surplus in production, participants questioned the cause of the 2006-2008 food price increase. In reference to his and others' work on the subject, Dr. Minot offered four possible causes of the 2006-2008 food price increase: an increase in fuel prices; a decline in food stocks, especially in China; increasing demand of biofuels; and export bans, specifically those imposed by India, China, and Azerbaijan.

Questions also arose regarding the impact of conflict on food security. Discussions led by Dr. Minot pointed to three crucial ways in which conflict has an impact on food security. Among other factors, conflicts affect the efficiency of input distributions, food distributions, and income in the affected areas.

Workshop participants went on to discuss the role of information gathering, sharing, and utilization in ensuring food security for an entire nation. The main question to come out of this discussion concerned how much of the information gathered is actually utilized in planning. While unable to arrive at a clear consensus, it was agreed that there needs to be willingness from policymakers and parliaments to use available information to inform their policies, plans, and programs. A clear policy message is better than multiple presentations of technical research findings.

Although some countries have programs to diversify from overreliance on maize, participants noted that the Food Security Conceptual Framework presented had no policy that influenced consumers' preferences. Dr. Minot stated that policies on preferences mainly hinge on the 'convenience' of food, citing the example of bread versus sweet potatoes. Panel data analysis from Tegemeo Institute of Agricultural Policy and Development confirms that 40-60 percent of households are buying more maize than they sell. In all, food security has different impacts on different households; i.e. rural households sell more compared to their urban counterparts, hence urban dwellers are most affected.

### *Kenya's Response to Food Crises*

Participants expressed the need to isolate how much is spent on emergency responses compared to longer-term development in Kenya. Dam construction for water harvesting was given as a relevant example. It was suggested that instead of farmers receiving tractors for dam construction from the MoA, there should be bids from different players, especially from the private sector, to introduce competition. Though Kenya seems to be leading in many aspects and has served as a reference point for a number of neighboring countries, thorough assessments of current government activities is imperative as Kenya continues to move forward.

Participants went on to note that there is no shortage of big plans concerning food security in Kenya; however, these plans are not being implemented. Drawing on other countries' experiences, the discussion turned to India. India

illustrates how countries can become food secure even with many challenges since agriculture requires significant organization of both farmers and the private sector. Dr. Mureithi acknowledged that there is a need to restructure research packages to suit the small-scale needs of farmers as farms reduce in size.

A final point that was raised in relation to Kenya's response to food crisis is the issue of compensation for contract farmers. Participants agreed that contract farmers who help disseminate research findings should be compensated for their work. Dr. Mureithi shared that KARI considers farmers as strong stakeholders in the process of food security and went on to state that public-private partnerships should be supported given their unique perspective and capacity to set clear priorities.

### *Strategic Grain Reserves*

Participants discussed the situation that unfolded in India where though the government had a programme to intervene in the case of grain shortages, the country instead discouraged farmers to produce and had to resort to the international grain market to restock. Dr. Minot responded to these remarks by adding that government intervention in grain markets can at times result in conflict, which calls for establishing a clear balance among different competing desires.

Discussions of grain reserves and buffer stocks also led to the suggestion that it may not be the role of the NCBP to distribute maize in the country. It was acknowledged though that the NCBP already currently plays a number of different roles in grain markets.

## **Part III: Concluding Remarks**

### **3.1 Summary of the Workshop by Steve Wathome, EU, Kenya Office**

Mr. Wathome presented the following highlights from the workshop.

- A value chain approach is needed in addressing food security.
- There is a need for programmes, clear action plans, and their prioritization.
- Various challenges persist, i.e. land and disease.
- Far greater uptake is needed concerning the policy information generated by KIPPRA and IFPRI.
- A lot of research information has been generated, but what next?

### **3.2 Concluding Remarks by Dr. Moses Ikiara, Executive Director, KIPPRA**



Dr. Ikiara thanked all the participants for their patience and valuable contribution to the dialogue and concluded the workshop with the following comments and inquiries that merit further consideration.

- Opportunities do exist, i.e. Government commitments written into the constitution as well as Draft Food and Nutritional policy.
- Do we have adequate food security information? From the food security outlook, is the information adequate or does it require updating? Are the food security indicators adequate to ensure uniformity in reporting?
- How can we enhance the use of collected data in planning?
- How can policy implementation be enhanced?
- In terms of sectoral coordination, who is the leader? What weaknesses are there? Are the roles clear? What are the institutional and individual targets?
- Could the lessons (on role clarity and clear targets) learnt from the National Security Steering Committee be used to improve the current food security structure?
- Suppose we calculate how much money could have been spent over the last ten years by donors and the Government in emergency operations, does it give an indication of what we need to invest today to avert the future crisis? Could upfront investment been useful in addressing the food security challenges?
- How can the roles of the private sector be sustained and enhanced? What needs to be done to deepen their participation in food security? Are there incentives needed?

Dr. Ikiara closed by indicating the willingness by KIPPRA to take the lead role in coordination. He appreciated the recognition by IFPRI in considering KIPPRA to organize and coordinate the Policy Dialogue on Food Security Information Needs in Kenya.

## Annex

### List of Participants

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