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# **INFORMATION NOTES**



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## **SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS AND FOOD SECURITY: WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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1. This note is to inform the Executive Board of a joint initiative of WFP and the Society for International Development (SID) to explore the relationship between sustainable livelihoods and food security, and to share these insights with national decision-makers. This project, called *Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods: Local innovations against hunger*, will contribute to the realization of WFP's strategic objective of moving the problems of hunger and poverty to the centre of national and international agendas.<sup>1</sup>
2. WFP's partner organization, SID, is a unique global network of individuals and institutions concerned with development. SID has over 6,000 members in 115 countries and 75 local chapters. It works with more than 200 associations, networks and institutions involving academics, parliamentarians, students, political leaders and development experts.
3. In recent years, SID has devoted considerable attention to the question of sustainable livelihoods, starting from the premise that community engagement and collective action are fundamental to sustainable development. The WFP/SID collaboration will build on SID's previous activities in the field of participatory development and sustainable livelihoods.
4. With support from WFP, SID will use its extensive network of interested individuals and organizations to:
  - document local-level initiatives that show the potential of community action to contribute to food security;
  - share information among a variety of groups and organizations on these successful local efforts;
  - bring these experiences and innovations, and also the constraints communities face in achieving food security, to the attention of decision-makers; and
  - raise the profile of hunger and food security issues on national and international political agendas.
5. The *Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods: Local innovations against hunger* initiative comprises four elements:

## I. Research Reports

6. Ten reports have been prepared on local initiatives to strengthen food security, in some cases supported by WFP food aid. These reports, prepared by SID partners in the countries concerned, are:
  - Food Aid and Sustainable Livelihoods: BRAC's innovations against hunger (Bangladesh)<sup>2</sup>
  - *Une Pédagogie d'Accompagnement: L'expérience de la communauté de Tchi-Ahomadégbé* (Benin)

<sup>1</sup> Strategic and Financial Plan (2000-2003), WFP/EB.A/99/5-A/1.

<sup>2</sup> BRAC—Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee.



- *Alimento por trabajo: La historia de la construcción de un puente por la comunidad, Cacopera, Morazán, El Salvador* (El Salvador)
- Impact of Food Aid Programmes and Moving Towards Sustainable Livelihoods: A Kenyan community experience (Kenya)
- Comparing Levels of Self-reliance among Communities from Orissa (India)
- Women's Leadership in Community Mobilization for Enhanced Food Security, West Bengal (India)
- Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods: The bio-intensive farming innovation against hunger (Nepal)
- *Recherche sur les Stratégies Communitaires pour la Sécurité Alimentaire: Cas du projet intégré Keita* (Niger)
- Appropriate Technology and Participatory School Feeding Programmes (South Africa)
- Achieving Food Security in the Urban Context through Urban Agriculture: An example from Tanzania (Tanzania)

## II. National Workshops

7. The research reports will be used as the basis for national workshops in at least 30 countries. The workshops, organized by SID chapters or partner organizations, will deal with 'Food Security, Social Mobilization and Community Empowerment'.
8. The first day of each workshop will bring together representatives from communities facing chronic hunger with various organizations and citizens' groups. The focus will be on food security innovations based on social mobilization and collective empowerment; changes in gender roles; coping strategies; and participatory development. On the second day, there will be a public meeting at which the community groups will present their perspective to national decision-makers, the media and representatives of the international community in the country.
9. By the end of January 2000, workshops had been held in Bangladesh, Benin, Cameroon, El Salvador, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Tanzania, Yemen and Zimbabwe. The workshops have attracted media coverage as well as the participation of decision-makers, thus raising the profile of hunger and food security issues.
10. In February, national workshops will be held in Bolivia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Peru, and Uganda. It is planned to hold workshops in Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, India, Mali, Pakistan and South Africa in March, in Haiti, Mozambique, Senegal and Tunisia in April, and in Chad, Malawi, Nicaragua, Zambia, and perhaps Syria, in May.
11. The Government of Switzerland has provided financial support for these workshops.



### III. Publications

12. Articles based on the research studies and national workshops will appear in issues of SID's *Development Journal* during the year 2000, thus highlighting hunger issues during the year of the Global Dialogue (see below). At a later stage, further dissemination of the research results and workshop conclusions may be considered.

### IV. Global Dialogue: Hanover, EXPO 2000

13. The Global Dialogue is a new feature of the World Exposition in Hanover. To complement the usual country stands and display of technological achievements, EXPO 2000 will present some local innovations for sustainable development from around the world. One feature of this will be a series of ten three-day conferences, called 'Global Dialogues'.
14. Each Global Dialogue will offer scientists, project organizers and leading figures from politics and international business a platform for communicating the knowledge and expertise they have acquired in their work. The point is to develop realistic scenarios for a sustainable future. The general public will be involved through world-wide media coverage and multi-media output.
15. With EXPO 2000, SID is the main organizer of the 2nd Global Dialogue in the series, to be held from 1–3 July 2000 under the theme of 'Responsible Governance in a Global Society'. Responsible governance is defined as a form of governance which promotes and respects global human security, sustainable livelihoods, gender justice, and local and national democratic spaces. Building on the SID/WFP *Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods: Local innovations against hunger* project, food security will be one of the main cross-cutting themes of this Global Dialogue and will be highlighted in three public afternoon sessions.

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## CONCLUSION

16. The project will give greater prominence to the issue of food security and to the steps that communities can take to help themselves overcome hunger, sometimes with WFP food aid. By working in partnership with SID and its vast network of individuals and groups, WFP is ensuring that these messages reach thousands of people beyond the normal scope of its advocacy efforts.