

## Description of workshop themes

### Global Food Situation: Challenges for Humanitarian Assistance

Venue: The 1001 Hall, Islands Brygge 89, Copenhagen S

**11 November 2008**

#### Workshop 1: New victims of the food crisis

Chair: Ms. **Valerie Guarnieri**, WFP  
Co-chair: Ms. **Susanne Jaspers**, ODI

Global food prices have risen dramatically over the last few years. The impact is felt by different populations all over the world, in different ways. According to recent estimates, well over a hundred million additional people will require some form of food or nutritional assistance in the coming years. Who are these people? Are they the traditional sub-Saharan subsistence farmers, always balancing on the edge of survival, or are they urban populations in other continents, perhaps in countries where the problem is not of supply but only of access, and who perhaps until recently did not consider food insecurity to be an issue to them at all. And what does this mean for humanitarian food assistance? Can we reach these new beneficiaries with the traditional instruments? How do we select the most vulnerable people in urban settings? This workshop will discuss the above issues and come up with some basic questions to be discussed in the panel meetings.

#### Workshop 2: Linking humanitarian access and actors

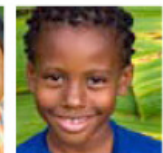
Chair: Ms. **Christina Bennett**, OCHA  
Co-chair: Mr. **Nils Carstensen**, DCA

Humanitarian action, notably in complex emergencies, has become more politicised. At the same time, high levels of violence, including increased number of targeted attacks on humanitarian workers, have led to severely constrained access for humanitarian organisations thereby hampering delivery of essential services, such as food. Due to highly volatile environments (e.g. Somalia, Iraq, Chechnya, etc.), humanitarian organisations are in some cases forced to operate on remote control from secure areas. A range of political actors (both state and non-state) have consequently become involved in the delivery of these basic services, including armed groups and private companies blurring the distinction between humanitarian and non-humanitarian actors and compromising principled humanitarian action. How do we ensure humanitarian space and access? Who can and should we collaborate with on delivery of services without jeopardising humanitarian principles?

#### Workshop 3: Humanitarian Assistance and Chronic Hunger Situations

Chair: Mr. **Chris Leather**, OXFAM  
Co-chair: Ms. **Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen**, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Relatively few of those dying from hunger are victims of acute food crisis or famine. Most die out of sight of the world's media and the global public. They die of chronic malnutrition – a consequence of not eating enough food over months and years. More than 24,000 people die of hunger related causes every day. That is almost 9 million people per year. The global food price crisis has increased the number of chronically hungry people dramatically. It has made the livelihoods of millions of others highly vulnerable. International humanitarian assistance is vital to assist people to survive and cope with short term crises until they are able to recover livelihoods and become self-sufficient. However, short term humanitarian assistance is an inadequate response to a long term problem. There is a need for national governments, supported by the international community, to invest in and deliver long term programmes to boost smallholder agricultural production, disaster risk reduction and social protection. But what is the role of international humanitarian agencies in relation to these instruments? How do we ensure complementarity between international humanitarian and development assistance? How do humanitarian actors support national government, private sector and civil society capacities?



## **Workshop 4: The impact of the food crisis on chronic refugee and IDP situations**

Chair: Ms. **Sara Pantuliano**, ODI  
Co-chairs: Mr. **Håkan Falkell**, WFP  
Ms. **Sally Thompson**, TBBC

The number of refugees under UNHCR's responsibility rose from 9.9 to 11.4 million by the end of 2007. According to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, the global number of people affected by conflict-induced internal displacement increased from 24.4 million to 26 million. As we enter the 'post food surplus era,' more and more food will be purchased instead of donated from Western food surpluses, and many agencies will be shifting local procurement as much as possible. But how should implementing agencies and donors cope with the skyrocketing cost of feeding refugees and IDPs? How can agencies react responsibly according to basic SPHERE standards when the cost of food suddenly doubles relative to its budget? How can a donor respond when the cost of feeding chronic IDPs and refugees compromises its ability to fund other lifesaving sectors such as shelter, watsan, and health?

## **Workshop 5: New approaches to food aid: are the current approaches sufficient to deal with the effects of the food crisis?**

Chair: Ms. **Hermann Spitz**, ECHO  
Co-chairs: Ms. **Erika Jørgensen**, WFP  
Mr. **Erik Johnson**, DCA

Food Aid has developed significantly over the last decades. Today, a variety of instruments is available to address particular problems; from Food for Assets to School Feeding to Therapeutic Feeding to Safety Net Programmes. More tools are being developed constantly. The 2007 Berlin Conference discussed the need for a paradigm shift from instrument-driven approaches to solutions-driven approaches; if a situation requires cash injections rather than food aid, then cash distributions could be the answer. The World Food Programme, through its new Purchase for Progress programmes, aims to stimulate local agricultural production by working with local farmers and purchasing their produce, rather than bringing in commodities from outside the country. How will these new approaches fit into the current global food crisis response, and are they enough? What are some of the pros and cons of these new approaches? And who should be implementing them?

## **Workshop 6: Rights-based approach to food aid**

Chair: Mr. **Michael Windfuhr**, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfen  
Co-chair: Ms. **Nanna Skau**, Food Policy Expert

The right to food is a human right and is a binding obligation well-established under international law. States have recognised the right to food in the World Food Summit Declarations and more than 150 states are parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The right to food means that governments must not take actions that result in increasing levels of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition (limits on state power). It also means that governments must protect people from the actions of others that might violate the right to food (regulate conduct of non-state actors). Governments must also, to the maximum of available resources, invest in eradicating hunger (create an enabling environment). In light of the present global food crisis the right to food should thus guide the responses of states, individually and collectively, to the new situation created by the soaring prices of food. Yet, there seems to remain much to be done in promoting and protecting the right to adequate food. Is the rights-based approach effective when applied to food crisis situations? Can an increasing promotion of the rights-based approach help to ensure that everyone has access to adequate food as a matter of right? How can it be ensured that corresponding obligations be imposed on public and private actors who may have an impact on the enjoyment of that right? Can a rights-based approach to food security solutions help ensure real participation from rights-holders, including the most vulnerable? How to translate the right to food into policies and implementation?