SYMPOSIUM ON: FOOD SECURITY - RECIPE FOR SURVIVAL

18 - 20 MARCH, 1997
PRETORIA, REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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INTRODUCTION

1. The symposium on Food Security - Recipe for Survival was held in Pretoria, Republic of South Africa, from 18-20 March, 1997. It was convened in accordance with the Programme of Work and Priorities of the Lusaka-based MULPOC for the 1994-1995 biennium as approved by the Twenty-Eighth Session of the Commission/Nineteenth Meeting of the Economic Commission (ECA) Conference of Ministers in May, 1993. The broad objective of the symposium was to provide a forum for the main stakeholders, to address the critical issue of food security in the Eastern and Southern African subregion and formulate strategies and policies to address the perennial problem of food insecurity.

2. Specifically, the symposium was designed to address the following areas:

   (i) alleviation of poverty through food production and increased agricultural productivity;

   (ii) upgrading of women's skills in food production through the development of their entrepreneurial capacities in food processing, preservation, storage and marketing;

   (iii) improvement in the management of the agricultural resource base through application of sound environmental practices;

   (iv) promotion of exchange of information and experiences on techniques and best practices in the subregion;

   (v) adoption of food security as a development priority within the planning menus of the member States;

   (vi) promotion in the increased utilization of research results in food production within the subregion; and

   (vii) development of income generating activities in the rural areas.
ATTENDANCE

3. The symposium was attended by the following member States of the Lusaka-based MULPOC: Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia.

4. The symposium was also attended by the following organizations: Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA); International Red Locust Control Organization for Central and Southern Africa (IRLCO-CSA); Southern African Centre for Co-operation in Agricultural and Natural Resources Research and Training (SACCAR); the University of Pretoria and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). A full list of participants is shown in Annex I.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SYMPOSIUM

Opening of the Symposium (Agenda Item 1)

5. Mr. Siphiwe F. Mkhize, Assistant Director in the Department of Agriculture of South Africa presided over the opening ceremony. He welcomed all participants to South Africa and to the symposium. He noted that the objectives of the symposium presented a formidable challenge. In this regard, he was hopeful that the participants would address the challenges posed by food insecurity in the subregion. Mr. Mkhize then invited Mr. Ochola to make a statement.

6. The Acting Director of the Lusaka-based MULPOC, Mr. Samuel A. Ochola thanked the Government and the people of South Africa for accepting to host the Symposium in Pretoria. He noted that South Africa, as the hub of economic and industrial activity in the Eastern and Southern African subregion, had a major role to play in ensuring food security. He further underscored the commitment which the Government of South Africa had shown in the fight against the injustices of poverty.

7. Mr. Ochola stated that issues of famine, hunger and malnutrition were still very prevalent in Africa. The continent
faced an ever increasing number of malnourished people, continued decline in per capita food production, a worsening food situation and an increasing dependence on food aid and other alms. The paradox was that Africa had an abundance of fertile soils and generally good climate. It was therefore disheartening that its agrarian economies were fast loosing the ability to feed the people.

8. He expressed hope that since the majority of people in Africa had the ability, the will and foresight to improve food production, it was possible to bring Africa to the levels of other continents and to be self-reliant in food supply. In this regard, he underscored the need to increase agricultural production through efficient use of resources on the basis of technological innovation; effective control of environmental degradation and sustainable management of the resource base; and alleviation of poverty through employment creation. He pointed out that Africa had just to feed itself in the next millennium. He therefore urged the delegates to address the issues of food insecurity in a frank manner in order to be able to formulate policies that would lead to the improvement of food production in the subregion.

9. In his address, Dr. C. Blignaut, Deputy Director-General in the Department of Agriculture, Republic of South Africa, welcomed all participants to the symposium and underscored the need to tackle the phenomena of hunger and poverty. He cautioned the delegates not to become professional symposium goers who did not implement the outcomes of symposia. He expressed the hope that delegates would use the opportunity accorded by the symposium to formulate strategies that would assist the people of the subregion.

10. Dr. Blignaut added that food insecurity was multi-dimensional. He singled out the need to examine inter-linkages among population, land use and environment whose effective management was the key to a productive agricultural sector.

11. In the context of South Africa, Dr. Blignaut stated that the three areas of concern were: natural resources, food distribution and production. He underscored the important role that trade played in food security. He however, observed that the rate of growth of population, currently estimated at 2.8%, tended to exceed that of agricultural output leading to food deficits.
12. Finally, he cautioned that although food aid was useful, it had to be used with care in order not to depress domestic agricultural productivity. He stressed that any solutions to issues of food security had to be home-based. He then declared the symposium open.

**Election of the Bureau** (Agenda Item 2)

13. The following people were elected to the bureau:

Chairperson: Mr. Siphiwe F. Mkhize, South Africa
1st Vice Chairperson: Mr. Ephantus M. Waruinge, Kenya
2nd Vice Chairperson: Mr. Misheck Mwanza, Zambia
Rapporteur: Mrs. A.M. Soroses-Awases, Namibia

**Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Programme of Work** (Agenda Item 3)

14. The symposium adopted the following agenda and work programme:

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Election of the bureau:
   (i) Chairperson
   (ii) 1st Vice-Chairperson
   (iii) 2nd Vice-Chairperson
   (iv) Rapporteur
3. Adoption of the Provisional Agenda and Programme of Work
4. Consideration of Technical and Country Papers

Sub-Themes considered were:

(i) Trends and Prospects Towards Food Security in the Subregion

(ii) Food Security - Inter-Linkages Between Population, Land Use and Environment

(iii) The Role of Gender in Food Security in the Eastern and Southern Africa Subregion

(iv) Critical Capacities - Pre-requisites for Achieving Sustainable Food Security in the Subregion

5. Any other business

6. Adoption of the Report

7. Closure of the symposium

15. The above sub-themes were considered in the plenary sessions, and in four working groups whose group reports were also presented to the plenary session for final discussion and adoption.

Consideration of Technical and Country Papers (Agenda Item 4)

(i) TRENDS AND PROSPECTS TOWARDS FOOD SECURITY IN THE SUBREGION
(Agenda Item 4(i))

Agricultural Production in Eastern and Southern Africa: An Assessment of Factors That Affect Production (COMESA)

16. The symposium considered the COMESA report ECA/MULPOC/LUS/S/PSESA/97/4(i)(a) which examined the various regional and subregional agreements aimed at increasing agricultural production in Africa. The report noted that despite
17. The report identified a number of factors which affected agricultural production in the region. These included: inappropriate land tenure systems, lack of price incentives, poor infrastructural development especially in the rural areas, and lack of credit availability to small holder farmers. Other factors highlighted related to inadequate marketing, research, extension services, human resources, irrigation development and poor soil fertility, including the unfavourable terms of trade facing the commodities produced in the region. The inadequacies in these areas were examined and recommendations on ways of resolving them were proposed.

18. The symposium expressed concern that the report had not examined the question of post-harvest food losses, efficient management of pests, and disease control, despite their significant impact on agricultural production and access to food.

19. The symposium underscored the critical role that the non-conventional food resources historically had played in supplementing households diets. It finally underlined the critical role that research, technological capacity development and appropriate policy orientation could play in reversing environmental degradation.

Food Storage and Reduction of Post-Harvest Food Losses: The SADC Experience (SADC)

20. The symposium considered the SADC report ECA/MULPOC/LUS/S/FSESA/97/4(i)(b) which underscored the importance of good management of food stocks and reduction of food losses in increasing food availability in the member States of SADC.

21. The report pointed out that against the backdrop of high population growth rates and generally low levels of economic growth and development, the challenge for SADC countries was to ensure food security for all citizens of the subregion. In this connection, it was important to increase food availability and
enhance food security particularly at the household level through the reduction of post-harvest food losses, improved food handling, preservation and processing, and greater efficiency in marketing.

22. The report further stressed that improvements in food security should be targeted at women who played an important role in the production, processing and marketing of food. It was therefore important to ensure that technologies and projects introduced at the household level did not result in increased workload for rural women, but in alleviating their burden.

23. The symposium noted the report's conclusions that with the adoption of Structural Adjustment Programmes by member States, and the move away from central planning, the role of regional institutions in promoting research, training, information sharing, regional trade, and preventive mechanisms against food crises would be greater than ever. Co-operation in these areas was therefore likely to bring considerable benefits. The symposium resolved that the move towards regional integration through the strengthening of regional institutional structures was critical to increased food security.

**Diversification of Food Based Sectors: Potential Contribution of Non-Conventional Food Resources (ECA)**

24. The symposium reviewed the ECA report which pointed out that due to poverty and other reasons, millions of people in SSA including the Eastern and Southern African subregion did not have enough income or assets to purchase or produce sufficient food for themselves and their families. Either from habit but mainly as a strategy to cope with food insecurity, most rural households in the subregion were trying to broaden their food base by consuming wild plants and animals.

25. The non-conventional food resources (NCFRs) had been found to contain proteins, vitamins, minerals and lipids essential for ensuring a dietary balance and thus preventing malnutrition and other nutritional deficiencies. Despite this, the current policies and strategies adopted by African member States to diversify the food-based sectors had not paid much attention to the development
of these food resources. The paper contended that issues such as environmental sustainability and biodiversity, production and productivity, gender roles in production and utilization and demand and supply of edible wild plants and animals could explain why policymakers in the subregion had given relatively little consideration to the promotion of NCFRs.

26. The symposium debated whether NCFRs should be incorporated into the main stream of food and agricultural development policies in the subregion. It was appreciated that the non-conventional food resources had historically played a critical role in supplementing household diets especially by women. The challenge for research, technological capacity creation and policy orientation was how to accommodate the issues raised in the report in the light of environmental degradation and drought. The symposium, however, resolved that most of the issues raised had policy implications and therefore needed further research.

Agricultural Production in Malawi: An Assessment of Factors that Affect Food Production (MALAWI)

27. The symposium observed that in Malawi, the economy was dominated by agriculture which was the main source of employment and income for the majority of the 85% of the population residing in rural areas and which contributed 35% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

28. The agriculture sector consisted of two subsectors namely: the estate and smallholder schemes, with the former being characterized primarily by land held under lease-hold tenure, while the latter was characterized by land held under customary law. The subsistence agriculture sector contributed 85% to domestic food production, while the balance came from the estate subsector. The estate subsector was primarily focussed on by the production of export crops with tobacco being predominant, while the smallholder subsector was mainly associated with subsistence production of food crops.

29. The major constraints which affected smallholder agricultural production included lack of access to land, limited access to and the nature of agricultural extension services, limited access to
credit and poor rural feeder roads. The lack of access to land was exemplified by the fact that 85% of smallholder farmers held less than 1.15 ha while the rest had less than 0.67 ha each.

30. In conclusion, the report highlighted measures which the Government had put in place to address the problems which caused food insecurity. The most important ones included land reform and utilization, agricultural technology development and its transfer to farmers and ensuring improved access to rural finance.

31. The symposium expressed concern with several strategies that were proposed, notably technology, use of cattle versus donkeys, and small scale irrigation schemes. It observed that the problem with technology was its adaptability and affordability, while labour appeared to be erratic. The symposium cautioned against the use of price bands which could result in sending wrong signals.

**Development of Food Processing Projects to Promote Women Entrepreneurship in Eastern and Southern Africa (ECA/MULPOC)**

32. The symposium considered document ECA/MULPOC/LUS/S/FSESA/97/4(iii)(c) which pointed out that women in the Eastern and Southern Africa subregion constituted 50% of the population, provided 60-80% of the food supply, headed an estimated 35% of households, spent long hours on household chores, had limited access to wage employment and were victims of abject poverty. This had resulted in a high incidence of malnutrition in children and high infant mortality. The report added that a similar situation obtained in urban and peri-urban areas where a large number of rural women had migrated to in search of better opportunities.

33. The document further pointed out that in order to ameliorate women’s conditions there was need to develop projects that would enhance entrepreneurial skills to enable them improve their income earning capacity.

34. The constraints to the development of food processing projects by women were listed as lack of both long term and medium term capital, lack of training programmes, inadequate support in marketing, prevalence of policies that were biased against women,
lack of credit facilities, lack of foreign exchange and prohibitive family responsibilities. The paper suggested that a feasibility study to establish appropriate projects for women should be undertaken.

35. The symposium questioned the wisdom of a feasibility study and sustainability of the project in the light of dwindling donor funding. It was, however, agreed that sustainability of the proposed project would be one of the subjects to be covered by the feasibility study. In order not to lock women in their traditional roles, the symposium recommended that women entrepreneurship should not be treated as an isolated domestic activity, but that its role needed to be seen within the wider context of the national economy. Women’s need for assistance should be viewed within the overall development framework.

(ii) FOOD SECURITY - INTER-LINKAGES BETWEEN POPULATION, LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENT (Agenda Item 4(ii) )

Food Insecurity, Rapid Population Growth and Environmental Degradation in Eastern and Southern Africa: Some Critical Issues (ECA)

36. The symposium reviewed the ECA document which examined the inter-linkages between food insecurity, rapid population growth and environmental degradation in Eastern and Southern Africa. The problem of calorie-protein, under-nutrition and malnutrition was increasing rapidly while environmental degradation was growing at very high rates in many countries. Water shortages, exacerbated by drought, were occurring with increasing frequency in many countries with attendant desertification. The report underscored the important role of gender in all the trends outlined above.

37. The paper argued that the food insecurity problems of the Eastern and Southern Africa subregion were intimately related to the unfolding demographic and environmental degradation trends in the region. Yet, most food and agricultural development activities failed to take this important factor into consideration.
38. The paper concluded that past efforts to tackle the food insecurity problem of the region rightly focused on increasing agricultural productivity, and rural incomes and welfare. However, they were often targeted separately and independently of each other and so failed to make an impact on the food insecurity problems of the region. The paper therefore, called for a new regional strategy on food security and sustainable development which was driven by the imperative to break the strong synergies and causality linking food insecurity, rapid population growth, and increasing levels of land degradation. The paper recommended that such a strategy should start by building upon existing food security and sustainable development strategies, programmes and projects of the region. A number of key issues which the new strategy should address were discussed including: using new technologies to accelerate agricultural growth, reducing population growth rates, making the environment count in decision-making, strengthening policy research and analysis, and creating the right partnerships between the state and markets.

39. The symposium observed that agricultural production alone could not be the answer to food insecurity as the latter had multidimensional problems. The need to establish linkages between population, environment degradation and food security was therefore emphasized.

40. The symposium further pointed out that although population growth was a matter of concern, the question was one of making more productive use of available human resources. In this regard, it was strongly recommended that there should be policies aimed at increasing opportunities for income generation and in formulating a more comprehensive policy on social development rather than focussing on family planning or area expansion of land for food production.

Impact of Land Use Policies and Tenure Systems on Food Security in Eastern and Southern Africa (ECA/MULPOC)

41. The symposium reviewed document ECA/MULPOC/LUS/S/FSESA/97/4(ii)(b) and noted that in sub-Saharan Africa 70% of rural populations were smallholder farmers out of which 12% were landless or were unable to create a livelihood on
the land available to them. The report further noted that land as a factor of production had assumed an important role in the development process and therefore raising its productivity was a prerequisite to economic development.

42. Various land strategies and policies pursued by various governments in the subregion were reviewed. It was observed that there was need to expedite the process of land reforms and adjust policies used in tenure systems with a view to modernizing them and making them more productive so that the poor in rural areas could benefit from such reforms. The report underlined the direct relationship between decreasing agricultural production and land use policies on the one hand, and land policies, rural and urban poverty on the other. In this respect, the report underscored the need to alleviate poverty through the provision of land to many rural peasants, particularly women whose increasing role in maintaining households was a major force in agriculture.

43. The symposium debated the question of marketing land. It was observed that individualization of land had entailed removal of land, both rural and urban, from the customary domain thereby compounding its shortage among rural people. It was also observed that the argument that land as a marketable commodity could be used as collateral in attracting investment in agriculture had not necessarily held true particularly among small scale farmers. The discussion also addressed the issue of under-utilized land as well as rationalizing the classification of crops into food and cash crops, on the one hand, and export and non-export crops, on the other.

(iii) THE ROLE OF GENDER IN FOOD SECURITY IN THE EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA SUBREGION (Agenda Item 4(iii)

Enhancing the Role of Women in Food Security in Eastern and Southern Africa (ZAMBIA)

44. The symposium observed that the report suggested that food security intervention which was both efficient and sufficient was one which accelerated the rate of human capital formation and economic growth. In this respect, governments in the subregion had
a role to enhance women's capacities in food security. Although women constituted 60-75% of the total labour force in agricultural production in Eastern and Southern Africa and participated in all farming processes starting from production to consumption stage, they had nonetheless been excluded from benefiting from most of the national and regional agricultural development programmes.

45. A number of factors were cited as influencing food security in the subregion. These included both internal and external factors such as drought, limited access to productive resources, lack of appropriate technology and training, labour scarcity, family composition, low education and socio-cultural factors. Other factors included, lack of improved and well adopted technology, poor rural infrastructure, limited credit facilities, limited access to markets, poor processing facilities for commercial and traditional crops, poor extension and research services and inhibiting macro-economic policy environments. In general terms, the subregion was divided into five groups of food insecurity as follows: resource poor rural households; households in marginal areas, war affected people, urban poor and refugees. Food insecurity had been a result of the interplay of many factors which were internal and external to individual households.

46. In order to improve women's contribution to national development, governments would have to institute appropriate macro-economic policies that addressed the critical areas such as women's access to productive resources and services, and to establish institutional frameworks that would enhance the role of women in overall socio-economic development.

47. Delegates expressed concern that discussion on gender issues had tended to put more emphasis on women. Although women still lagged behind in a number of areas, men's roles in national developmental efforts should also be considered as important.

48. Delegates also felt that classifying women into group lending and group liability could help women access credit. In terms of extension services, organizing women's groups and developing traditional female extension personnel would make extension services available to more producers in the subregion.

49. The importance of gender disaggregated data was also underscored. It was noted that it was not enough just to put
emphasis on national economic growth through physical capital formation such as Gross Domestic Product and inflation rates. These national indicators should capture the contribution of women. Economic development should be a process of expanding the capacities and capabilities of human resources.

The Role of Gender in Food Security: The Namibian Case Study (NAMIBIA)

50. The symposium was informed on the two reasons for writing the report. The first was to solicit interaction on the role of gender in food security given the prevalence of female headed households which to-date had not been reached by extension services. The second was to solicit ideas on how the report could be enriched in order to facilitate the preparation of a Gender and Food Security Programme at the University of Namibia under the auspices of the SADC Regional Training Programme on Food Security.

51. The paper defined the concepts of gender, the use of a gender analysis framework, and food security, besides providing a brief case study on the role of gender in agriculture development.

52. Further, the paper reviewed the research/extension systems as an approach focussing on resource poor clients for technology development based on four distinct stages namely: diagnosis, planning, experimentation and evaluation where the use of gender analysis goals could be strengthened. The paper raised concern on the assumption taken by this approach, which maintained that, the head of the household was a male. This assumption would definitely lead to the mistargeting of technological innovations and other support services.

53. In addition, the paper reviewed the food security situation in Namibia, and elucidated on the Food Security and Nutrition Policy Action Plan which were pilot activities. The paper further spelt out how the role of Gender in Food Security Policy Formulation could be strengthened, through data collection, policy formulation and monitoring and evaluation.

54. In conclusion, the paper challenged the Agricultural Extension Staff to review existing strategies and to base their interventions on gender disaggregated data to promote sustainability, effectiveness and equality. In this regard, the paper referred to
the provisions made in the National Agricultural Policy for Socio-
economic Advancement of Rural Women, and stressed the need to avoid
the gap between policy and action.

55. The symposium noted the comprehensive nature of the report on
gender issues in Namibia. The delegates endorsed the need to
strengthen the role of Gender in Food Security Policy Formulation,
Programme Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation. To this end,
they made the following recommendations to the effect that:

(a) Rural women should be enabled to articulate their own
    problems in their own way and be part and parcel of the
decision-making process;

(b) The role of women in contributing to the empowerment of
    women be given due emphasis and that men should be
    strongly urged to concretise their commitment to this
    issue;

(c) There was need to assess what measures needed to be
    undertaken to integrate gender perspectives more
    effectively;

(d) There was need to examine the role of national
    machineries in promoting gender integration in food
    security, and the need to orient and explain the question
    of how rural women perceived gender equality.

56. Finally, the symposium debated the question of gender issues
in the commercial sector. It was explained that the key issue was
the plight of the farm workers/labourers, as they historically did
not have the institutional and legal framework to challenge the
status quo. Namibia had now put in place the Labour Act and the
Institutional Framework existed (i.e. the Namibia National Farmers
Union) to address this gender issue.

The Role of Women in Agriculture in the Eastern and Southern
African Subregion with the Experience of Zambia (ZAMBIA)

57. The symposium reviewed the report which pointed out that
Zambia’s economic development had been dominated by the copper
mining sector which had developed at the expense of agriculture. Within the agricultural sector, lack of sustainable development had partly been attributed to non-effective participation of the women farmers. The women farmers constituted more than 56% of subsistence farmers who were in the majority of Zambia's agricultural sector.

58. The report argued that lack of effective women participation in agriculture had been due to non or poor integration of gender factors in the overall agriculture policy and strategies. The gender insensitivity of the country's policies and strategies had the effect of constraining women in accessing and owning land, accessing credit and having adequate labour for their farming activities. Furthermore, Zambian women lacked access to appropriate research and extension services.

59. As an attempt to improve the existing status of women in agriculture, the report made the following policy and strategy suggestions:

(a) re-examination of the overall agricultural policy;
(b) specific policy and institutional reforms in such areas as credit and land;
(c) the examination of the roles of the public and private sectors in enhancing the role of women in agriculture;
(d) infrastructural development to compliment other services given to women farmers and integrating them into the market economies; and
(e) gender awareness at the grassroot levels and in particular at the household levels.

60. The delegates sought clarification as to why women's involvement in agriculture had dropped from 21% during 1981-1988 to 12% in 1989-1991. It was explained that with liberalization, private institutions were requesting for collateral which women did not possess. The other reason was the failure of the market system to adjust to the realities of the target client.
61. It was also suggested that labour shortages as a result of rural-urban migration could be addressed through the strategy of graduation of small scale farmers to commercial farmers. This could address food insecurity.

62. The symposium wondered how the effective integration of women's views in project design within the context of the Agricultural Sector Investment Programme (ASIP) would be achieved. It was explained that the decentralized institutional framework of ASIP was there to facilitate this process, since the programme was demand-driven. The symposium underscored the need to allocate adequate resources to boost the low agricultural productivity and expand the productive resource base of the sector.

(iv) CRITICAL CAPACITIES - PREREQUISITES FOR ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY IN THE SUBREGION (Agenda Item 4(iv)

The Role of Research in Food Security (SACCAR)

63. The symposium considered document ECA/MULPOC/LUS/S/FSESA/97/4(iv) (b) which outlined the role of research in food security and the reasons for agricultural decline in the subregion. The need for research and development was stressed as key to stimulating agriculture through the generation of technologies for farmers. It was further pointed out that investment in agricultural research could yield high rates of return ranging from 12-13%, through improved varieties and breeds, improved production systems and amelioration of diseases and pests.

64. The report further pointed out that research in agriculture could lead to diversification of the food base including the non-conventional food resources. Research should equally aim at solving the food security problem in the areas of policy, improvement of natural resource management, storage and processing, technology transfer, poverty alleviation, income generation, and impact of technology on women's income and use of their time. It was stated that impact assessment of new technology provided invaluable information to planners.
65. The symposium noted that SACCAR’s research was within the SADC Food Security Programme. It was also pointed out that the Centre needed to extend its research to non-conventional foods. The meeting pointed out that research needed to take account of the role of energy in food security. Furthermore, there was need to emphasize the linkages between research and food production strategies and how to strengthen them.

The Challenge of Achieving Food Security in South Africa (SOUTH AFRICA)

66. The symposium reviewed the above report which highlighted the food security problem in South Africa as one of ensuring that all people had access to adequate, safe, and nutritious food at all times. The goal in the past had been one of achieving food self-sufficiency which was done during the 1980s. The agricultural sector was currently undergoing restructuring.

67. With respect to nutritional food security, the negative impact of food insecurity at household and individual levels had been well documented. There was, however, a growing recognition internationally that in early life and during pregnancy malnutrition had serious consequences for a country’s development.

68. On the question of nutritional status in South Africa, it was acknowledged that although this category of data had become readily available during the past five years, there were gaps. The need to include data on nutrition in regular surveys was stressed. The surveys should highlight statistics of stunting rates in various parts of South Africa which were higher in poorer areas compared to richer ones. The paper discussed other areas of nutrition including dietary intake, household food security and characteristics of food insecure households. The paper further examined the question of how poor people made their living in terms of access to resources and social services.

69. The paper concluded by examining possible strategies that could be implemented in order to achieve food security. These included improving access to formal employment and higher wages; creation of an effective safety net; ensuring access to appropriate health, education and other social services.
70. The symposium acknowledged the fact that food may be available nationally, but the critical question was who had access to it. It was noted that food insecurity was most prevalent in some areas and not in others as a result of historical legacies such as educational opportunities, and access to inputs. It was further observed that the rate of growth in the commercial sector was achieved through heavy subsidies by the State.

71. The meeting emphasized the need to make serious efforts towards a new strategy that would address food insecurity. The meeting was informed that a restructuring process being undertaken would consider issues related to trade policy, greater efficiency in poverty alleviation, support to small scale farmers and the issue of subsidies. The Namibian National Agricultural Policy was referred to as an example of how best to achieve productivity in agriculture.

72. Finally, the meeting highlighted the role the Farmers Unions in the commercial sector, could play in terms of the plight of farm workers, and land redistribution to ensure household food security.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda Item 5)

73. The representative of FAO, Dr. Ndiaye, thanked the organizers for convening the symposium and for inviting his organization to attend. He pointed out that the objectives of the symposium were consistent with the Seven Commitments of the recent World Food Summit and reiterated FAO's availability to assist countries formulate and implement concrete projects on Food Security, Nutrition and Food Quality Control. The Commitments were listed verbatim as follows:

1. We will ensure an enabling political, social, and economic environment designed to create the best conditions for the eradication of poverty and for durable peace, based on full and equal participation of women and men, which is most conducive to achieving sustainable food security for all.
2. We will implement policies aimed at eradicating poverty and inequality and improving physical and economic access by all, at all times, to sufficient, nutritionally adequate and safe food and its effective utilization.

3. We will pursue participatory and sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development policies and practices in high and low potential areas, which are essential to adequate and reliable food supplies at the household, national, regional and global levels, and combat pests, drought and desertification, considering the multifunctional character of agriculture.

4. We will strive to ensure that food, agricultural trade and overall trade policies are conducive to fostering food security for all through a fair and market-oriented World Trade System.

5. We will endeavour to prevent and be prepared for natural disasters and man-made emergencies and to meet transitory and emergency food requirements in ways that encourage recovery, rehabilitation, development and a capacity to satisfy future needs.

6. We will promote optimal allocation and use of public and private investments to foster human resources, sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry systems, and rural development, in high and low potential areas.

7. We will implement, monitor, and follow-up this Plan of Action at all levels in co-operation with the international community.

ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT REPORT (Agenda Item 6)

74. The Rapporteur gave a brief summary of the proceedings of the symposium and indicated broad areas that had been considered during the symposium. The changes and amendments which were suggested by the symposium have been incorporated in the final report.
CLOSING CEREMONY (Agenda Item 7)

75. Mrs. Patricia Hanekom, MP for Gauteng, Chairperson, Agricultural Standing Committee, Gauteng Province, and member of the Food Security Working Group delivered the closing statement to the symposium.

76. She remarked that it was gratifying that the symposium had been held in South Africa, particularly, at the time when the nation was celebrating the Constitution Week. Given the history of development within the country, she said that it was a great achievement for South Africa to be free and to enjoy socio-economic rights.

77. Mrs. Hanekom informed the delegates that the South African Constitution was one of the few in the World which enshrined the basic rights of access to food and water for all. She observed that the inclusion of these rights within the constitution would by themselves not be adequate, unless the Government ensured the availability of these commodities.

78. She further stated that there was need to address the main challenges facing the food security situation, particularly, since the problem was not one of food shortage, but one of accessibility. In this regard, she underlined the importance of putting accent on policies that emphasized a shift away from national food security to household food security and to one which focused on women. She noted that this was critical in meeting the overall goal for food security. In view of the important issues raised during the symposium, it was disappointing that some countries had been unable to participate. It was however her hope that in future, member States of the subregion would take such meetings more seriously since they were important fora for exchanging experiences and coordinating strategies for tackling the pressing development problems.

79. With regards to the Seven Commitments of the World Food Summit, Mrs. Hanekom, underscored the need for member States to set very ambitious goals in order to feed the entire population. In this connection, she informed the meeting that the Deputy President, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, had, during the World Food Summit, made
a commitment that everyone in South Africa should have access to food in accordance with the World Food Summit Plan of Action.

80. In conclusion, she thanked all the delegates for their participation at the symposium and noted that the deliberations had been fruitful. She then declared the symposium officially closed.

81. In his vote of thanks, Mr. S.A. Ochola, Acting Director of the Lusaka-based MULPOC stated that the last few days had been edifying, and that the participants at the symposium had been able to incisively examine critical issues that affected the attainment of food security in the subregion. In this regard, he thanked the delegates for their diligence. He expressed the hope that some of the key recommendations which had been crystallized during the group discussions and plenary sessions should go a long way in answering to some of the problems of food insecurity, should the Governments of the subregion refine and incorporate them within their planning framework and development agenda.

82. He stated that the main pre-occupation of the symposium was that Africa should not enter into the 21st Century with empty stomachs. The challenge, which therefore confronted the subregion was to rid itself of food insecurity. This required undiluted political commitment on the part of the Governments. In this connection, the time for empty rhetoric was over and the translation of recommendations and decisions taken at different fora into actual realities was long overdue.

83. Mr. Ochola thanked Mrs. Hanekom for accepting to close the symposium, and for her statement which had provided the reassurance that the political leadership was beginning to pay particular attention to "The Right to Food For All". He then wished all participants a happy return, and all those staying for the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts Meeting a happy stay in Pretoria.
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AGENDA

1. Opening Ceremony:
   (i) Statement by the ECA/SRDC/Lusaka Acting Director
   (ii) Statement by a representative of the Host Government

2. Election of the Bureau:
   (i) Chairperson
   (ii) 1st Vice Chairperson
   (iii) 2nd Vice Chairperson
   (iv) Rapporteur

3. Adoption of the Agenda and Work Programme

4. Presentation of Technical Papers (under Sub-Themes):
   (i) Trends and Prospects Towards Food Security in the Subregion
      (a) Agricultural Production in Eastern and Southern Africa: An Assessment of Factors that Affect Production (COMESA)
      (b) Food Storage and Reduction of Post-Harvest Food Losses: The SADC Experience (SADC)
      (c) Diversification of Food-based Sectors: Potential Contribution of Non-Conventional Food Resources (ECA)
      (d) Agricultural Production in Malawi: An Assessment of Factors that Affect Food Production in Malawi (MALAWI)
      (e) Development of Food Processing Projects to Promote Women Entrepreneurship in Eastern and Southern Africa (ECA/MULPOC)
(ii) Food Security - Inter Linkages Between Population, Land Use and Environment

(a) Food Insecurity, Rapid Population Growth and Environmental Degradation in Eastern and Southern Africa: Some Critical Issues (ECA)

(b) Effects on Land Use and Tenure Systems on Food Security in Eastern and Southern Africa (MULPOC)

(iii) The Role of Gender in Food Security in the Eastern and Southern Africa Subregion

(a) Enhancing the Role of Women in Food Security in Eastern and Southern Africa (ZAMBIA)

(b) The Role of Women in Agriculture in the Eastern and Southern Africa subregion with the Experience of Zambia (ZAMBIA)

(c) The Role of Gender in Food Security: The Namibian Case Study (NAMIBIA)

(iv) Critical Capacities - Prerequisites for Achieving Sustainable Food Security in the Subregion

(a) The Role of Research in Food Security (SACCAR)

(b) Household Food Security - Challenges in South Africa (SOUTH AFRICA)

5. Discussion by Working Groups and Presentation of Group Reports

6. Adoption of the Report

7. Any other Business

8. Closing Ceremony
WORK PROGRAMME

Tuesday, 18 March, 1997

08.00 - 08.45 Hours: Registration of Delegates
08.45 - 09.00 Hours: Election of the Bureau:
- Chairperson
- Vice-Chairperson
- Rapporteur

09.00 - 09.45 Hours: Official Opening Ceremony:
- Statement by the ECA/SRDC/Lusaka, Acting Director
- Statement by a Representative of the Host Government

10.45 - 10.15 Hours: Tea / Coffee Break

TRENDS AND PROSPECTS TOWARDS FOOD SECURITY IN THE SUBREGION

10.15 - 10.45 Hours: Agricultural Production in Eastern and Southern Africa: Assessment of Factors that Affect Production

10.45 - 11.15 Hours: Food Storage and Reduction of Post-Harvest Food Losses: The SADC Experience

11.15 - 11.45 Hours: Diversification of Food-based Sectors: Potential Contribution of Non-Conventional Food Resources

11.45 - 12.30 Hours: Agricultural Production in Malawi: An Assessment of Factors that Affect Food Production in Malawi
Tuesday, 18 March, 1997 (Cont'd.)

12.30 - 13.00 Hours: Development of Food Processing Projects to Promote Women Entrepreneurship in Eastern and Southern Africa

13.00 - 14.15 Hours: LUNCH BREAK

FOOD SECURITY - INTER LINKAGES BETWEEN POPULATION, LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENT


THE ROLE OF GENDER IN FOOD SECURITY IN THE EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA SUBREGION

15.15 - 15.45 Hours: Enhancing the Role of Women in Food Security in Eastern and Southern Africa

15.45 - 16.00 Hours: TEA / COFFEE BREAK

16.00 - 16.45 Hours: The Role of Women in Agriculture in the Eastern and Southern Africa subregion with the Experience of Zambia

16.45 - 17.30 Hours: The Role of Gender in Food Security: The Namibian Case Study
Wednesday, 19 March, 1997

CRITICAL CAPACITIES - PREREQUISITES FOR ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY IN THE SUBREGION

08.30 - 09.15 Hours: The Role of Research in Food Security
09.15 - 10.00 Hours: Household Food Security: Challenges in Southern Africa
10.00 - 10.30 Hours: Tea / Coffee Break
10.30 - 13.00 Hours: Four Working Group Discussions
13.00 - 14.15 Hours: Lunch Break
14.15 - 16.00 Hours: Each Working Group prepares its Report and Recommendations

Thursday, 20 March, 1997

08.30 - 10.00 Hours: Each Working Group presents its Report to Plenary
10.00 - 10.30 Hours: Tea / Coffee Break
10.30 - 16.00 Hours: Preparation of Symposium Report
16.00 - 17.00 Hours: Adoption of Symposium Report
17.00 - 17.30 Hours: Closure of the Symposium