

Agricultural Development for Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development

**POSITION PAPER ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION FOR INTERNATIONAL
MISSION AND DIACONIA ON 3 DECEMBER 2013.**



1. Introduction

Theological foundation

Striving to make it possible for all people to live a decent life, free from hunger, is part of the essence of the Church. When we celebrate communion, we hear Paul's words: "Because there is one bread, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one bread." (1 Corinthians, 10). Of the words, "one body" and "the one bread" follows a duty to work to abolish systems and structures that lead to hunger and deprivation. To our way of thinking, this also means recognizing, examining and changing the parts we play in these systems and structures. We have an obligation to meet the immediate needs that exist in the world today, but also to work to eliminate the underlying causes.

The international work of the Church of Sweden has its identity and starting point in a life-affirming theology – a faith that starts with, and works to defend, lives at risk and those whose voices have been silenced or go unheard, those who are marginalized or otherwise are in vulnerable situations. The Church of Sweden sees it as its duty to share the Gospel, to defend human dignity, to protect the Creation and to live in faith, hope and love.¹ In word and in action.

The Church of Sweden's position on agricultural development therefore starts with the perspectives of those who live in poverty, primarily smallholding farmers and agricultural workers. The positions take the human rights perspective as a starting point, from which follows that gender equality and gender justice are central elements.²

The need to take firm positions on agricultural development

Agriculture plays an important role in relation to several of the greatest challenges facing humankind today: hunger and poverty, climate change and other environmental threats, and global food security in the future. Agriculture produces food for us all and is fundamental to the livelihoods of a good share of the world population. About 2.6 billion people, nearly 40 per cent of the world population, are dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods.³ Of the estimated 1.4 billion people who live in extreme poverty, and among the more than 840 million people who suffer from malnutrition, the dependence on agriculture is even greater: about 70 per cent are dependent, wholly or in part, on agriculture for their livelihoods.⁴

Agriculture plays an important role from a broader development perspective, as well. In a majority of low- and medium-income economies agriculture stands for a considerable share of GNP and export income. Agricultural development has major multiplier effects in the national economies; when farmers' incomes rise, their demand for local products and services rises, which in turn stimulates economic development more widely and boosts employment.⁵

Continued – and expanding – production of agricultural products is entirely dependent on so-called ecosystem services.⁶ According to the UN Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 15 of 24 identified essential ecosystem services are being degraded or used unsustainably today. Agriculture is one of the prime causes of these changes,

1 The Church of Sweden International Department, *Our theology: A life-empowering faith as our driving force*, 2013.

2 The Church of Sweden, *Position on gender justice and gender equality in the Church of Sweden's international work*. Position paper adopted by the Commission for international mission and diaconia on 24 April 2012.

3 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), *Decent Rural Employment : Key for Poverty Reduction and Food Security*, 2010.

4 International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), *Rural Poverty Report 2011*, 2010.

5 The World Bank, *World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development*, vol. 19, 2007; Mats Härsmar, *Why Is Agriculture so Important to Reducing Poverty?* NAI Policy Notes 7, 2010.

6 The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency defines ecosystem services as "direct and indirect contributors to human well-being". Ecosystem services are generally categorized in terms of provisioning (e.g. supplying food and fibers), regulatory and supportive (e.g. local, regional and global climate stabilization, pollination, decay/degrading of waste and pollution, recycling of nutrients, and biological pest control), and cultural (e.g., aesthetic values) services. Naturvårdsverket, *Sammanställd information om ekosystemtjänster* [Information on ecosystem services], NV-00841-12, 2012.

but it is also one of the sectors most heavily impacted by them.⁷ Farming and animal husbandry, for example, release very large volumes of greenhouse gases.⁸ Meanwhile, changes in the climate threaten to worsen the conditions for farming in many regions.

Enabling agriculture to help meet the challenges of poverty, climate change and providing enough food will require substantial investments. But it also calls for a fundamental change of course for agricultural development efforts, one that keeps the needs and rights of smallholding farmers and farm workers, as well as ecological sustainability, at the center.

The Church of Sweden's commitment to agricultural development

The Church of Sweden has worked with issues relating to agriculture and hunger since the early days of Church of Sweden Aid. The Church has supported agricultural development in collaboration with the The Lutheran World Federation and many bilateral partners, as is well documented in numerous internal reports over the years. Agricultural development projects have been supported in, for example, Ethiopia, Liberia, Uganda; India, Bangladesh, Cambodia; Colombia and Central America. Support to integrated rural development projects and sustainable natural resources management, in which agriculture plays a central part, made up 40 percent of the Church's bilateral cooperation in 2010-2012.⁹

In the program period 2010-2012, a special project on capacity building was carried out together with partner organizations to develop the knowledge base and facilitate the exchange of practical experience relating to the sustainable agriculture.¹⁰ Support to agricultural development will continue to be a major focus in the coming program period, primarily in relation to the policy objective, 'Sustainable livelihoods'.¹¹ Continued policy dialogues on agricultural development are included in the draft program for global policy dialogue.¹²

For many years, the Church of Sweden has worked to increase small and medium-sized agricultural businesses' access to microfinance, through, for example, Oikocredit. Through its involvement in Fair Trade, the Church has continued to stimulate demand for agricultural products that are purchased on stable and economically advantageous terms. Through our membership in SwedWatch, the Church has cast light on a range of social and environmental problems, particularly agricultural workers' conditions, relating to the production of cash crops in low-income countries.

At the European level, the Church of Sweden has taken part in APRODEV's working group for *Trade, Food Security and Gender* since it was formed in 2002. The working group has produced a number of documents relating to agricultural trade¹³, EU's Common Agricultural Policy¹⁴ and agricultural development in Africa¹⁵.

7 Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, *Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Synthesis* (Island Press, 2005).

8 Andreas Gattinger and others, *Mitigating Greenhouse Gases in Agriculture. A Challenge and Opportunity for Agricultural Policies*, ACT Alliance and others, 2011; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), *Livestock's Long Shadow. Environmental Issues and Options*, 2006.

9 Total support to partners amounted to 636 M SEK in the program period 2010-2012, 122 mkr of which was humanitarian support. Projects under the strategic objectives, 'Sustainable livelihood' and 'Sustainable natural resource use' amounted to SEK 220 million. Church of Sweden (2013) Program report 2010-2012. Adopted by the Commission for international mission and diaconia, 18 March 2013.

10 See, for example, *Foundations for Farming*, Workshop report. Church of Sweden workshop 9-11 April 2013.

11 The policy objective, 'Sustainable livelihoods' is formulated, as follows: "People who live in vulnerable situations are entitled to basic security and to strengthened social and economic empowerment."

12 A passage from the draft program: "The work toward achieving ecologically sustainable farming practices carried out in the preceding program period, which has relevance to climate impacts, adaptation to climate change, as well as food security, will continue. Experience gained in our own cooperation with partners will be used to inform the policy dialogue in international arenas (e.g., in relation to the pan-African framework, the Comprehensive Agriculture Africa Development Programme, CAADP). A key concept in the Church of Sweden's policy dialogues will be 'agro-ecology', around which much of the international dialogue on sustainable agriculture has revolved in recent years. EAA and ACT/APRODEV are important partners in cooperation on the international level."

13 See, for example, APRODEV, *Annex II : Rebalancing the Agreement on Agriculture in Favour of the Poor*. Position Paper by the APRODEV Working Group on Food Security, Trade and Gender, 2005; APRODEV and CIDSE, *Reform of the Sugar Regime in the European Union, Policy Recommendations from a Development Perspective*, 2005; APRODEV, Food for the Hungry. Position Paper on the Food Crisis, 2009.

14 See, for example, APRODEV, *Facing the Global Challenge of Food Security for the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) Reform 2013*, A discussion paper, 2010; APRODEV, *Commentary on the Legislative Proposal on CAP Reform*, 2011; APRODEV *Statement on CAP Reform 2013*, 8 October 2013. A dozen policy briefs were issued in advance of the decision taken by the European Union on CAP Reform in late 2013.

15 See, for example, CIDSE and Caritas Europa APRODEV, *Commentary on the Commission Communication "An EU Policy Framework to Assist Developing Countries in Addressing Food Security Challenges"*, 2010; Mark Curtis, *Agricultural Research in Africa: Why CAADP Should Follow IAASTD*, APRODEV, PELUM and others, 2012.

The Church of Sweden has also participated actively in the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA) campaign, ‘Food for Life’, which started in 2009; in 2010-2013 we took part in the campaign’s strategy group.¹⁶ The Church has also participated in APRODEV and ACT working groups on climate change, where agriculture figures significantly.¹⁷

In Sweden, the Church of Sweden has a long tradition of cooperation with other civil society organizations, such as the Federation of Swedish Farmers (LRF), The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, and We Effect (formerly the Swedish Cooperative Centre). The cooperation has resulted in joint projects, publications, op-ed articles in the Swedish press, and letters to policy-makers. ‘The Trialogue’, a series of dialogues between the Church of Sweden, LRF and the Society for Nature Conservation, led to the publication in 2006 of the report ‘Agricultural Policy and International Solidarity’. The conclusions reached in the dialogues were adopted by the Central Church Board. The collaboration be-

tween the three organizations was followed up in 2011 with the publication, ‘Agriculture at a Crossroads’, which offered additional recommendations from the three organizations.¹⁸

The Church of Sweden takes part in public discussions of agricultural development in Sweden by participating in and arranging seminars in collaboration with institutions and organizations like the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry (KSLA), the Swedish International Agricultural Network Initiative (SIANI) and the Swedish National FAO Committee.¹⁹ For many years, the Church of Sweden has had a seat on the Committee²⁰ and has been represented in the Swedish delegation to the Committee on World Food Security, CFS.

This position paper is based on positions taken in previous documents on related issues²¹, solicited comment on draft policies from government agencies²², official correspondence²³, articles in the Swedish press²⁴ and numerous publications²⁵. In March 2011, an internal

16 Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA), *Food for Life Campaign. Framework for Action 2009-2012*, 2009. The campaign strategy will continue through the coming program period, but with a greater emphasis on sustainable agriculture. EAA Food for Life Campaign. *October 2013 Bulletin*.

17 Andreas Gattinger and others, *Mitigating Greenhouse Gases in Agriculture*, 2011.

18 Federation of Swedish Farmers, Church of Sweden and Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, 2006, *Agricultural Policy and International Solidarity*; Federation of Swedish Farmers, Church of Sweden and Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, 2011, *Jordbruket vid ett vägskäl: Hur får vi maten och planetens resurser att räcka till alla?* Svensk sammanfattning av den internationella studien IAASTD, International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development - världens hittills största tvärvetenskapliga utvärdering av hur kunskap, vetenskap och teknik inom jordbruket kan bidra till en hållbar utveckling, [Agriculture at a crossroads: How can food and the planet’s resources, Swedish Summary of IAASTD, International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development].

19 The Committee advises the Swedish Government on matters relating to the Government’s participation in the work of the Food and Agriculture Organisation and informs the public on issues relating to food security worldwide.

20 The Church of Sweden was earlier represented by Margareta Ringström, former Director of Church of Sweden Aid. Since 2002, the Church of Sweden is represented by Gunnel Axelsson Nycander, Policy Adviser.

21 Svenska kyrkan, 2003, *Riktlinjer för handelsfrågor och deras relation till global utveckling*. Antagna av Nämnden för internationell mission och diakoni 2003-11-20; [Church of Sweden, 2003, Guidelines on trade issues and how they relate to global development, *adopted by the Commission for international mission and diaconia* 2003-11-20; Church of Sweden, 2008, *Church of Sweden’s Position on Climate Change and Development*. Adopted by the Commission for international mission and diakonia 24 April 2008.

22 Svenska kyrkan, *Yttrande över förslag till reform av den gemensamma jordbrukspolitiken efter 2013* [Comments on the draft proposal on Common Agricultural Policy reform after 2013]. KS 2012:92.

23 Letter from Federation of Swedish Farmers, Church of Sweden and Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, to Minister for development cooperation Gunilla Carlsson regarding the government’s strategy on Africa, 11 February 2008; Erik Lysén, Svante Axelsson och Anneli Rogeman, letter to Minister for development cooperation Gunilla Carlsson regarding the government’s special support to food security, 28 June 2011; Erik Lysén, letter to Minister for rural affairs Eskil Erlandsson regarding the reform of EU Common Agricultural Policy, 18 November 2011; Erik Lysén, The Church of Sweden’s input to the governments Platform on development cooperation policy, 15 August 2012.

24 See for example Christer Åkesson, ‘Den oacceptabla hungerkrisen’ [The unacceptable hunger crisis], Västerbottenskuriren and around ten other regional daily newspapers 8 March 2011; Erik Lysén, Svante Axelsson och Anneli Rogeman, ‘Biståndsmministern vill att afrikanska bönder ökar gifter i jordbruket’ [The Minister for development cooperation wants African farmers to increase the use of chemical pesticides in agriculture], Newsmill, 3 April 2012; Erik Lysén och Anna-Maria Sandström, ‘Så kan fler människor mättas’ [How to fight hunger], Helsingborgs Dagblad and more than 30 other regional daily newspapers, 16 October 2013.

25 Fatima Grönblad, *Genteknik - ett svar på hungern i världen?* [Genetic Engineering – A solution to world hunger?] Globala studier Nr 23, Lutherhjälpen, 2005; Lutherhjälpen, *Bönder, handel och hunger* [Farmers, Trade and Hunger], 2006; Church of Sweden, *Sustainable agriculture and food security in a changing climate*, 2008; Peter Einarsson, Food enough, land enough? – About hunger, agriculture, trade and global solidarity, Global studies No 35, Church of Sweden and others, 2010; Svenska kyrkans internationella arbete, *Allt för att utrota hungern – om varför så många hungrar och drivkrafter till förändring* [All to eradicate hunger – on the reasons why so many go hungry and forces for change], 2010.

seminar was held with invited experts to gather views on the first draft of this paper.²⁶

Purpose and limitations

This paper treats the role, and potential role, of agriculture in contributing to food security, poverty reduction and an economically, socially and ecologically sustainable development. The focus is both global and rests on the regions where the Church of Sweden actively supports agricultural development, i.e., primarily Africa, Asia and Latin America. The paper expresses the fundamental convictions of the Church of Sweden with respect to the directions in which agriculture should develop and how it should be supported.

The position paper focuses on the issues that we consider crucial to the kind of development in agriculture that helps to reduce poverty and contributes to sustainable development, and factors that hinder and promote such development. In this connection, the paper touches on a number of related issues that are not fully penetrated in either analyses or positions, some of which clearly merit position papers of their own.²⁷

²⁶ Experts invited to the meeting were Lennart Båge, Inge Gerremo, Anita Ingevall, Ingemar Jarlebring and Mikael Ståhl.

²⁷ For example: how the global food system works, including global markets for inputs, commodities and food; large-scale land investments; biofuels in relation to food crops; the risks and potential benefits of genetic engineering; strategies toward realizing the right to food and achieving food security; the relation between agriculture and forestry; the EU Common Agricultural Policy; international trade policy; strategies for reducing waste throughout the food chain; and consumption and food habits.

2. Agricultural development, poverty reduction and sustainable development

Governments' responsibility for agricultural development

In countries where agriculture has developed with vigor, government policy has played a decisive role. Government involvement has taken many forms: research and training, infrastructure, advisory services, financial services, access to markets and, in several cases, measures that have guaranteed high and stable prices.²⁸

For many years, agriculture has developed considerably more slowly in Africa than in other regions, and the challenge to increase productivity is especially great there.²⁹ In Africa, both agriculture and rural areas have been disadvantaged for a long time. This is the result of price policies, taxation and monetary policies that are designed to benefit industry and urban populations, and low investment in infrastructure and services in rural areas. It has been possible to import cheap grain from the USA and Europe, where production has been highly subsidized. This has made it easy to supply city-dwellers with food, and reduced the need to develop agriculture. One feature of the so-called structural adjustment programs of the 1980s and 1990s was the privatization of most of the institutions that had previously managed the distribution of inputs and purchasing of agricultural products ('marketing boards', etc.). The private actors who were expected to take over these functions didn't find them profitable, given the small quantities that smallholding farmers produced and the poor infrastructure in most rural districts. The previous systems may

have had their faults and been prone to corruption, but they did provide growers access to inputs and markets for their production. Today, these systems are things of the past in many areas, and government agricultural advisory services have been reduced significantly.³⁰

In addition to support to agriculture, investments in rural areas more generally are needed in order to make positive development of agriculture possible. Investments to develop infrastructure and institutions improve farmers' access to markets. Access to water, sanitation, education and health care strengthen rural areas' human resources. Rights-based social protection³¹ also represents "investments in human capital", while helping to strengthen local purchasing power, which makes it possible for local markets to grow and develop. A supportive trade policy may be needed to create the preconditions for the development of local and national markets.³²

Over the past decade many African governments have begun to take more active interest in agricultural development. The Maputo Declaration of 2003, with its pledge to devote 10 per cent of national budgets to agricultural development³³, is an expression of this greater interest. Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)³⁴, adopted in 2004, constitutes the overarching policy framework to channel international aid to agricultural development in Africa today.

28 Peter Hazell, *The Role of Agriculture in Pro-Poor Growth in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Paper prepared for a workshop on Policy, Poverty and Agricultural Development in Sub-Saharan Africa, March 8-9, 2006, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Stockholm, Sweden, 2006; International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, *World Disasters Report 2011. Focus on Hunger and Malnutrition*, 2011.

29 UNDP, *Africa Human Development Report 2012: Towards a Food Secure Future*, 2012; Inge Gerremo, *På väg mot tryggad livsmedelsförsörjning i Afrika* [Toward assured food security], Svenska FAO-kommitténs skriftserie no. 6, 2009.

30 Esbern Friis-Hansen (ed.), *Agricultural Policy in Africa after Adjustment*, CDR Policy Paper (2000); Manitra A Rakotoarisoa and others, *Why Has Africa Become a Net Food Importer? Explaining Africa Agricultural and Food Trade Deficits*, FAO 2011.

31 Church of Sweden, *Social protection as a means of combating poverty and hunger in developing countries*. Position paper adopted by the Commission for international mission and diaconia on 17 October 2011, revised on 11 April 2012.

32 APRODEV, *Left in the Cold by the WTO, Policy Brief on the Special Safeguard Mechanism in the WTO*, 2009.

33 So far, however, less than ten countries have fulfilled the pledge.

34 CAADP is a program under the auspices of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which in turn is a program of the African Union, AU.

On the global level, the Committee for World Food Security (CFS) has developed into an inclusive and legitimate forum for the development of global norms and policy development.³⁵

Agricultural development was accorded high priority among international aid donors in the 1970s; then, for example, fully one-third of the World Bank's resources went to the sector. But, starting in the mid-1980s agriculture was given successively lower priority. The food price crisis of 2007-2008 and agriculture being the theme of the World Development Report from the World Bank³⁶ contributed to a turn of the tide. Aid to agriculture has increased again, but still remains at a relatively low level.³⁷ At the same time, the focus has shifted from production of cash crops for export to production of food crops for national markets.

Today, Sida's support to forestry and agriculture amounts to 4 per cent of Sweden's total official development assistance (ODA).³⁸ In 2009, the Government of Sweden initiated a special program to improve the food supply systems in recipient countries. Starting with an initial budget of SEK 100 million, the sums have averaged around SEK 200 million in succeeding years. Initially, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs channeled the money directly to the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA); today, however, the money is appropriated to Sida.³⁹ Still, Sweden's assistance to agricultural development lacks an overall strategy or policy, despite the fact that agriculture plays an important role in relation to several lodestar priorities for Swe-

dish aid, e.g., economic growth, climate, and women's rights.

The potentialities and needs of smallholder agriculture

What constitutes 'smallholder agriculture' varies between countries and regions. In some parts of Africa and Asia family farms of up to 2 hectares in size are considered small, whereas the term is used to describe much larger farms in parts of Latin America, North America and Europe. There are an estimated 500 million small holdings in the world today, and they produce a considerable share of world food production. Smallholders' farms are the backbone of the food supply in many countries; they are an important factor for the social, economic and ecological development of all countries.⁴⁰ Development of small-scale farming is therefore totally essential if agriculture is to be able to bring about greater food security and less poverty. Smallholders also play a vital part in preserving and developing local and traditional knowledge and in preserving biodiversity and genetic diversity in agriculture.

Fewer people are expected to be farmers in the future, and a majority of the world population will make their livings in towns and cities. Despite rapid and large-scale migration to urban areas, however, the vast majority of the people living in poverty will continue to eke out their livelihoods in agriculture for decades to come.⁴¹ Meanwhile, urban agriculture, too, will grow in importance.⁴²

Smallholders produce for their own subsistence and for markets. Income from farming is often supplemented with wage labor. In contrast to common assumptions,

35 After a reform of the Committee in 2009, CFS involves not only national governments, UN agencies, and international development banks in discussions and dialogues on food security and farming, but farmers' organizations and other civil society organizations and the private sector, as well.

36 The World Bank, *World Development Report 2008: Agriculture for Development*, 2007.

37 The agricultural sector's share of total foreign aid in OECD countries increased from 3.6 to 6.2 per cent in the interval between 2006 and 2011. <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?datasetcode=TABLE5>

38 Sida, *Sida's development cooperation in figures*, 2013.

39 The Government Offices, *Regeringens särskilda satsning på livsmedelsförsörjning år 2010* [Special appropriation to world food security 2010], Protokoll UF2010/62591/UP, 22 October 2010; Regeringen, *Regleringsbrev för budgetåret 2013 avseende Styrelsen för internationellt utvecklingssamarbete* [(Document issued by the Cabinet stating) the Appropriation to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, fiscal year 2013], 2013.

40 The High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the Committee on World Food Security (HLPE), *Investing in Smallholder Agriculture for Food Security*, 2013.

41 The World Bank, *World Development Report 2008*, 2007.

42 Maria Höök, *Odlan staden. Hållbar urbanisering för hållbar utveckling i Syd – med stadsjordbruket som planeringsstrategi* [Grow the city; sustainable urbanization for sustainable development in the South – with urban agriculture as a planning strategy], SLU, 2009.

small-scale farming tends to be more productive (per unit of area) than large-scale farming.⁴³ Smallholdings also provide more jobs per unit of area than large-scale farms.

Small-scale farming is undergoing far-reaching changes in the world today. Urbanization, globalization and national policies tend to put smallholders at a disadvantage, with the result that many are under great economic pressure. In Latin America, Asia and Africa food is to a large and growing extent marketed by large wholesale-retail chains. These companies have centralized supply chains that often exclude small-scale farmers. To be able to sell their products to food chains farmers have to fulfill strict demands regarding standardized product quality and reliability of delivery.

The largest investments in agriculture are made by farmers themselves. If investments in land management and improved farming methods are to take place, credits and adequate extension services have to be made available, and farmers must have secure access to the land, to water and to genetic resources.⁴⁴ Women farmers require special attention in development policies inasmuch as they generally have poorer access to essential resources and services than men.⁴⁵

One means to facilitate smallholding farmers' access to markets and to improve their negotiating position vis-à-vis buyers is to organize, i.e., to form producers' co-operatives. Such initiatives need support in the form of market analyses and help in accessing new markets.⁴⁶ Information and communication technology offers new

and instant access to information on, for example, market conditions.⁴⁷ Local procurement of food to schools can give rise to long-term and stable trade relationships.⁴⁸ Out-grower schemes are another way of giving smallholders market access. It is important that out-grower schemes are designed so as to prevent exploitative relationships.

Agricultural production is characterized by uncertainty and risks, related to both the weather and markets. The risks tend to become graver as a consequence of climate change and the extreme volatility of market prices in recent years. Smallholders have greater difficulty in protecting themselves from different kinds of risks. Most low and middle-income countries lack the kind of institutions and policies that the EU and the USA can deploy to mitigate the risks farmers face.

Limited access to credit poses a severe hindrance to smallholders. Micro-finance does not provide a solution since farming requires larger sums and other loan conditions than those offered in traditional micro-loans. Limited access to insurance is also an important constraint for smallholders.

Smallholders are relatively seldom included in policy-making processes⁴⁹, but there are good examples of how they can be brought into⁵⁰ both policy discussions and research and development efforts. Strong farmers' organizations are a major asset with regard to growers' ability to take advantage of market opportunities, and for their views and needs to be accorded more attention in national politics in developing countries.⁵¹ As the

43 Göran Djurfeldt, "Spekulation i mark och de fattigas rättigheter, exemplet Afrika söder om Sahara" [Speculation in land and the rights of the poor; the example of sub-Saharan Africa] in *Utländska markinvesteringar i utvecklingsländer – bidrag eller hot mot hållbar utveckling?* Svenska FAO-kommitténs Skriftserie Nr 7, 2011; HLPE, *Investing in Smallholder Agriculture for Food Security*, 2013; Peter Einarsson, *Food enough, land enough? – About hunger, agriculture, trade and global solidarity*, Global studies No 35, Church of Sweden and others, 2010

44 HLPE, *Investing in Smallholder Agriculture for Food Security*, 2013.

45 Asian Development Bank, *Gender equality and food security – women's empowerment as a tool against hunger*, 2013.

46 For example, the Church of Sweden's cooperation partner in Colombia supports organizations that work to help farmers sell their products locally by providing market analyses, contacting buyers, arranging farmers' markets in urban centers, and so forth.

47 See www.ict4ag.org.

48 There are other examples from, for example, Brazil and Kenya. World Food Programme (WFP), *Home-Grown School Feeding. A Framework to Link School Feeding to Local Agricultural Production*, undated; Kei Otsuki and others, *Home-Grown School Feeding Project Brazil: A Desk Review of the National School Feeding Programme*, WFP, 2007.

49 Global Donor Platform for Rural Development, *Agricultural Sector Experiences in Implementing the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*, 2008.

50 Pimbert and others, *Democratising Agricultural Research for Food Sovereignty in West Africa*, IIED, 2010.

51 Through its work with LWF Colombia, the Church of Sweden has strengthened smallholding farmers' demands on the Colombian government by helping them found an organization that demands a national agricultural policy that pays greater deference to their needs, and a stronger voice in policy discussions.

Church of Sweden understands the concept, demands for *food sovereignty* express a striving for greater influence over the food system and better opportunities to enforce accountability, not necessarily resistance to international agreements or international trade.⁵²

Large-scale agriculture and agricultural labor

It is sometimes presumed that large-scale agriculture is the answer when it comes to satisfying future needs to increase food production. Large-scale agriculture plays a significant role in many countries, not least as a means to generate export revenue. Large-scale agriculture and investments should not, however, be the prime strategy by which to strengthen food security or increase productivity in agriculture.

In recent years investments in large-scale agricultural production, particularly international investments, have increased markedly, in part as a consequence of rising food prices and demand for biofuels. Acquisition of vast tracts of land⁵³ have sharpened the competition for land and led to a number of conflicts and discussions about ‘land grabbing’. Profitability in large-scale production of biofuels has, however, proved difficult to achieve, and in several cases tracts of land acquired for that purpose have not been put to concrete use.⁵⁴

The investments are welcomed by national governments who expect the investments to bring about employment, access to modern technology and infrastructure, and – in the longer term – tax revenue. The sale or lease of land, on the other hand, is not expected to bring in

very much revenue, as land prices and lease rates are generally very low.⁵⁵ To ensure that the establishment of large-scale farms does not give rise to conflicts or undermine local residents’ access to the land there must be greater transparency surrounding acquisitions and provisions in national legislation that safeguard the rights and interests of local communities. Equally important, the laws must be applied in an inclusive manner with well-functioning processes of consultation with the local population. Last, but not least, investors should put time and resources into understanding the local context and to designing their investments in close cooperation with local communities and other actors having deeper knowledge of the local conditions. In Africa, where land tenure and land use rights are often complicated, creating inclusive procedures for consultations is an especial challenge.⁵⁶

Meeting the requirements of ecological sustainability is a particular challenge for large-scale agriculture. Large-scale monocultures reduce agro-biodiversity, thereby increasing the crops’ vulnerability to pests, which in turn increases the need to apply chemical pesticides.⁵⁷

In many cases large-scale agriculture produces crops for export, which implies a direct link to world markets and the issue of companies’ social responsibility, CSR. The global trade in primary products from agriculture is highly concentrated; a handful of companies dominate the trade in grain, coffee and cocoa, for example. Market concentration has put growers at an even greater disadvantage vis-à-vis buyers with respect to prices and

52 The term, ‘food sovereignty’, coined by the international alliance of smallholding farmers, Via Campesina in 1996, has been defined variously. In 2008, IAASTD offered the following definition: “Food sovereignty is defined as the right of peoples and sovereign states to democratically determine their own agricultural and food policies.”

53 Estimates of total areas are uncertain. The Land Matrix Project has estimated that 227 million hectares were sold or leased out between 2000 and 2010 (the total area of Sweden is 45 million ha). The Land Matrix Project is an initiative that aims to bring about greater transparency and accountability concerning investments in land. It is operated by a group of research institutions working in collaboration with development assistance organs, NGOs and journalists.

54 Kjell Havnevik, *Responsible agricultural investment in developing countries – how to make principles and guidelines effective*. Discussion paper prepared for the Swedish FAO Committee. 2014.

55 According to a study from FAO, negative consequences outweigh the advantages to local populations in the short term in areas where land rights are unclear or not protected in law. FAO, *Trends and Impacts of Foreign Investment in Developing Country Agriculture. Evidence from case studies*, 2012.

56 FAO, *Trends and Impacts of Foreign Investment in Developing Country Agriculture*, 2012; SwedWatch, *Utan mark, utan makt. Kvinnorna utan rätt att fatta beslut när Swedfund investerar i Addax Bioenergy i Sierra Leone*, 2013. [No land, no power. Women without decision-making power when Swedfund invests in Addax Bioenergy in Sierra Leone.] English summary available at http://www.swedwatch.org/sites/default/files/summary_addax_swedfund_0.pdf

57 International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD), *Agriculture at a Crossroads: Global Report*, 2008.

the terms of delivery.⁵⁸ Consumers can help to improve environmental conditions and the situation of agricultural workers on large holdings by addressing the companies that operate on the global market and urging them to offer better terms.⁵⁹

Poverty and malnutrition in rural areas cannot be reduced without significant improvements in agricultural workers' conditions. Some 450 million men, women and children⁶⁰ worldwide labour as waged workers in agriculture. They make up no less than 40 per cent of the labor force in agriculture and work on both large and small-scale farms. Many smallholding farmers supplement their incomes with wage labor on other farms. Agriculture, along with construction and mining are the three most dangerous occupations to work in. Agricultural labor is also poorly paid, with little or no job security. It is often seasonal, and many migrant workers are denied their human rights at work. A relatively low proportion of agricultural workers belong to unions, and the right to organize is restricted in many countries.⁶¹

Increased production and ecological sustainability

Today, agriculture produces more than enough food to feed the world.⁶² By 2050, the population is expected to have increased by 30 per cent, but FAO believes that production will need to increase by 70 per cent during the same interval. The main reason for FAO's progn-

sis is an expected rise in consumption of dairy products and meat as standards of living rise.⁶³ In industrialized countries today, as much as two-thirds of total grain production is used for fodder; in the world as a whole the share is one-fifth.⁶⁴ Losses and waste in food supply systems – from post-harvest losses due to poor storage facilities to waste from retail shops and households – amounts to roughly one-third of all food production.⁶⁵ Production levels need to rise substantially, but to be able to meet the needs of the world population in 2050, it will also be necessary to reduce the losses and waste in food supply systems, and dietary habits need to be changed. Increased production implies that soil fertility is maintained and that urban growth respects the integrity of currently productive farmland.

Climate change, together with other environmental problems to which agriculture is a major contributor, will make it more difficult to increase agricultural production in many parts of the world. Even today, the Church of Sweden's partner organizations report that farmers have to adapt to new conditions. Global warming affects access to water, and the incidence of drought and flooding: changes in the pattern and schedule of monsoon rains, more intense and less predictable rain periods, fluctuations in water levels in glacier-fed river systems, and the intrusion of saltwater in coastal land as sea levels rise. In Africa south of the Sahara an increase in temperature of 1.5 degrees is expected to mean that other crops will

58 Klas Rönnbäck, *Världsmarknad i obalans. Småbrukare, storföretag och den globala jordbrukshandeln* [A world market out of balance; Small-holding farmers, mega-corporations and the global trade in agricultural products], *Globala studier* nr 26. Kooperation utan gränser, Forum Syd och Lutherjälpen, Svenska kyrkan, 2006.

59 SwedWatch and the Church of Sweden have cast light on environmental conditions and the situation of agricultural workers in numerous publications: *Kaffe från Brasilien – en bitter smak av orättvisa* [Coffee from Brazil – the bitter taste of injustice] (2005), *Etik för dyrt för svenska kaffebolag* [Ethics costs too much for Swedish coffee companies] (follow-up, 2010), *Dyrare kaffe är bra – om odlarna får sin del av kakan* [Higher coffee prices are good – if growers get their fair share] (follow-up, 2011); *Chokladens mörka hemlighet* [Chocolate's dark secret] (2006), *Chokladföretagen fortfarande ingen kontroll på arbetsvillkoren* [Chocolate companies: still no improvement in working conditions] (follow-up, 2009); *Människor och miljö i fruktindustrin – två fallstudier från Chile och Sydafrika* [People and the environment in the fruit industry – two case studies from Chile and South Africa] (2005), *Importen av frukt till Sverige* [Fruit imports to Sweden] (follow-up, 2009).

60 An estimated 220 million children in the world today work to supplement their family's income. About 70 per cent of these children work in agriculture. A large proportion work on the family farm, but there are also many wage-laborers. FAO, ILO och IUF, *Agricultural Workers and Their Contribution to Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development*, 2007.

61 FAO, ILO och IUF, *Agricultural Workers and Their Contribution to Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development*, 2007.

62 Net average availability of food for human consumption is about 2 770 kcal per person and day, after deductions for animal fodder, food losses and waste, and food used for other purposes. FAO, *World Agriculture Towards 2030/2050. The 2012 Revision*, 2012.

63 Annual per capita consumption of meat in Sweden rose by more than 40 per cent between 1990 and 2012 and is today over 85 kg per person and year. Jordbruksverket, *Köttkonsumtionen i siffror. Utveckling och orsaker*, Svenska matvanor och matpriser 2013, no. 2, 2013. Annual average per capita consumption in most African countries is in the range of 10–30 kg; in many countries the average is less than 13 kg per person and year. <http://www.geocurrents.info/cultural-geography/culinary-geography/global-geography-of-meat-and-fish-consumption>

64 Karl-Heinz Erb and others, *The Impact of Industrial Grain Fed Livestock Production on Food Security: An Extended Literature Review*, 2012.

65 FAO, *Food Wastage Footprint. Impacts on Natural Resources*, 2013.

have to be introduced on about 40 per cent of the area where maize is cultivated today. An increase of less than 2 degrees is believed to lead to a 10 per cent reduction in yields by mid-century.⁶⁶ These changes will have the most severe impact on those who are the poorest and most vulnerable even today.

A greater degree of gender equality with a stronger position for women is an important strategy whereby agricultural production on small holdings can be increased. Women make up a large share of the agricultural labor force, particularly in Africa, but also in Asia and to a lesser degree in Latin America. In all three parts of the world women have poorer access to land, education, credits, etc. Consequently, their yields are less than men's. If women in low-income countries were to be given the same terms as men, not only would equality of men and women improve, but women's agricultural production might increase by 20-30 per cent.⁶⁷

Ecologically unsustainable agricultural methods are today one of the principal threats to the planetary ecosystem. We find examples of untenable farming methods in both large-

scale industrial agriculture⁶⁸ and small-scale traditional agriculture⁶⁹. Small farms are generally more diversified and therefore have better prospects of becoming ecologically sustainable. A contributing factor behind ecological unsustainability is the fact that agronomic research and development has long focused on yields of single crops instead of taking account of farms' multifunctionality and contributions to various ecosystem services.⁷⁰

A number of international studies have concluded that the challenges that climate change, population growth and the negative impacts of agriculture pose are of such a magnitude even today that a fundamental change of course in world agriculture is called for.⁷¹ "Nothing less is required than a redesign of the whole food system to bring sustainability to the fore," writes the British Government Office for Science in a Foresight study.⁷² A variety of terms are used to describe the change of course, which has the dual aim of increasing productivity and making farming practices more sustainable. Only in part do the differences in phraseology reflect differences of opinion as to the direction the change of course should take: "multifunctional agricultural system"⁷³

66 World Bank, *Turn Down the Heat. Climate Extremes, Regional Impacts and the Case for Resilience*, 2013.

67 FAO, *Women in agriculture: closing the gender gap for development. State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11*, 2011.

68 Water use is intensive, and often inefficient. Groundwater reserves are diminished, and in many places mismanagement of water resources also damages the soil. Intensive application of fertilizers gives rise to considerable emissions of greenhouse gases, leakage of nutrients and eutrophication of streams, lakes and the seas. Chemical pesticides pollute water, impact on biodiversity and poison hundreds of thousands of people each year. Monocultures reduce both biodiversity and the fertility of the soil, while they also are in greater need of synthetic fertilizers and protection from pests. Agricultural production on deforested land, for example, leads to major losses of biodiversity and emissions of carbon dioxide. Chemical fertilizers and machines are dependent on fossil energy, which in the long-term is unsustainable. Intensive livestock production leads to major releases of greenhouse gases.

69 New cultivation of land that was formerly forest, for example, leads to major losses of biodiversity and emissions of carbon dioxide. Farming without replenishment of nutrients leads to declining fertility. The practice of shifting cultivation without long enough fallow intervals is unsustainable and degrades the soil. Concentrations of a single crop, such as the preponderance of maize cultivation in Africa, deplete soil nutrients. When crop residues are removed from the fields and manure is used as fuel, the mulch and nutrient content of the soil suffers; local biocycles of nutrients are broken. Growing on steep hillsides results in soil erosion and loss of topsoil, and too many animals on the commons causes overgrazing and soil erosion. When small-holdings are unsustainably managed, it is generally because smallholders lack sufficient resources, knowledge and influence, and/or they have been crowded off the most fertile farmland to marginal land.

70 IAASTD, *Agriculture at a crossroads: Global Report*, 2008.

71 IAASTD (see footnote 57 and 70) concludes that "business as usual is not an option". The World Bank and several UN organs, together with 58 national governments, including Sweden's, have declared their support for IAASTD's conclusions; UNEP calls for a "managed transition" in "conventional" as well as "traditional" agriculture. UNEP, *Towards a Green Economy: Pathways to Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication*, 2011; UNCTAD writes of the need for a "fundamental transformation" of agriculture. UNCTAD, *Assuring food security in developing countries under the challenges of climate change: Key trade and development issues of a fundamental transformation of agriculture*, 2011.

72 The Government Office for Science, *The Future of Food and Farming: Challenges and Choices for Global Sustainability*, Foresight, Final Project Report, London 2011.

73 Multifunctionality means that research and development efforts take as their starting point the fact that agriculture does more than produce food, that it also fulfills a range of environmental, social and economic functions, such as reducing climate change and preserving biodiversity. The concept has primarily been advocated by IAASTD (see note 71).

and “agro-ecological approaches”⁷⁴ or “sustainable intensification”⁷⁵.

In the Church of Sweden’s view, agriculture is sustainable when it maintains the mulch content of the soil, preserves biodiversity and does not result in the accumulation of heavy metal, persistent or harmful chemicals in the soil or water. Sustainable agriculture relies on the use of locally available resources, which means that nutrients are recycled to the greatest extent possible through composting, use of manure and nitrogen-fixing crops, and through crop rotation and a variety of crops cultivated at any given time. These practices make it possible to improve yields and to produce more stable harvests year for year. They also offer better preparedness for the effects of climate change. If they are not sufficient to maintain soil fertility, soil nutrients from outside may have to be added.⁷⁶ This characterization of sustainable agriculture coincides well with the concept of agro-ecology⁷⁷.

The term ‘agro-ecology’ is frequently used as a general approach, encompassing a variety of different methods, some of which are also frequently mentioned as examples of sustainable intensification. These include agro-forestry⁷⁸, Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture (LEISA)⁷⁹, Integrated Pest Management (IPM)⁸⁰, and conservation farming⁸¹. Organic agriculture is another example that differs from the foregoing in that it is strictly regulated, so that consumers can rest assured that ‘certified organic’ or ‘eco-certified’ products have been produced in observance of fixed standards.⁸²

A number of reports have indicated that production can increase substantially with the help of agro-ecological methods when the starting point is traditional small-scale agriculture with limited use of external inputs.⁸³ Another advantage of agro-ecological farming is that it is more resilient⁸⁴ and is better equipped to adjust to climate changes. In addition, it enhances the soil’s carbon sequestration capacity by increasing the mulch content. Furthermore, agro-ecologically inspired farms

74 Olivier De Schutter, *Agro-ecology and the right to food*. Report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on the right to food, 17 dec 2010, A/HRC/16/49, 2010.

75 Sustainable intensification means a dual striving toward both greater yields and lighter environmental impacts, without avoiding either chemical inputs or genetically engineered crops. “Sustainable Intensification aims to have a smaller environmental footprint by minimising the use of fertilisers and pesticides, generating lower emissions of such greenhouse gases as carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide and, at the same time, contributing to the delivery and maintenance of a range of public goods, such as clean water, carbon sequestration, flood protection, groundwater recharge and landscape amenity value.” The Montpellier Panel, *Sustainable Intensification; A New Paradigm for African Agriculture; Towards the Future We Want*. 2013, sid 11; Sustainable intensification has also been seriously questioned: Friends of the Earth, *Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing? An analysis of the ‘sustainable intensification’ of agriculture*, 2012.

76 Soil fertility in many parts of Africa is low. At the same time, use of synthetic fertilizers is lower in Africa than in other regions.

77 “Agro-ecology is both the science and practices that use knowledge of ecological relationships and other principles of sustainability to analyze, design and implement food-producing systems. The approach views the farm as a multifunctional unit rather than as a producer of individual crops; consequently, it includes a variety of techniques, applications and innovations ... including local and traditional knowledge – to enhance sustainability.” LRF, Naturskyddsforeningen och Svenska kyrkans internationella arbete, *Jordbruket vid ett vägskäl: Hur får vi maten och planetens resurser att räcka till alla?* [Agriculture at a crossroads: How do we make food and the planet’s resources to be enough for all?], 2011.

78 ‘Agro-forestry’ methods combine trees and shrubs with cultivated crops for harvest or grazing in ways that produce positive synergies.

79 LEISA aims to achieve sustainability with a low share of external inputs. It involves inspiring farmers to make use of local resources, natural processes and their own know-how, culture and values in order to increase productivity and income in an ecologically sound manner. See www.leisa.info.

80 IPM stands for methods that minimize the use of chemical inputs to protect crops, replacing them with preventive measures such as well-designed crop rotation systems, appropriate cultivation techniques, strategic application of soil nutrients and liming, irrigation, drainage and hardy and resistant seed. See, for example, *Journal of Integrated Pest Management*.

81 ‘Conservation agriculture’ is based on no-till cultivation and use of cover crops. There are essentially three different forms: farming without any external inputs; farming with a reduced amount of external inputs; and cultivation of genetically engineered, herbicide-tolerant varieties (maize and soy beans). This last form has led to increased use of a single active substance, glyphosate, on large-scale monocultures in the USA, Brazil and Argentina.

82 Swedish KRAV and British Soil Association are two examples of private certifications that comply with the EU Regulation on organic production.

83 Jules Pretty and others, “Resource-Conserving Agriculture Increases Yields in Developing Countries,” *Environmental Science & Technology* 40, no. 4, 2006; Hans Herren and others, “Agriculture. Investing in Natural Capital,” in *Towards a Green Economy. Pathways to Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication*, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), 2011.

84 The term ‘resilience’ refers to a system’s long-term capacity to cope with change and to develop further. Distinguishing characteristics of the concept are that it has a distinct focus on the interaction between ecological and social systems, and that it does not presume a linear, predictable course of development.

are more diversified, which improves the prospects for both production and consumption of nutritious food. The big challenge today is to devise strategies and mobilize resources for scaling up agro-ecological methods, above all, through development and dissemination of knowledge.⁸⁵

Knowledge-intensive agricultural methods based on agro-ecological approaches have a great potential to be profitable for society and individual farmers alike. Plant breeding and agronomic research today is totally dominated by the private sector.⁸⁶ Few agribusinesses and suppliers of agricultural inputs see any profit in spreading knowledge about sustainable methods based on local resources. As a consequence, there is an inherent risk that strategies for increasing yields will be biased towards input-intensive methods. Research and development with a focus on sustainable methods is grossly underfinanced.⁸⁷

In recent years several initiatives have been taken with the aim of increasing productivity in Africa. These include CAADP, AGRA⁸⁸ and New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in Africa⁸⁹, all of which to varying degrees involve government agencies, the private sector

and philanthropic organizations. Some civil society organizations have expressed concern about the fact that these initiatives have a strong focus on increasing productivity through applying external inputs, whereas sustainable methods are accorded very low priority. Among these organizations are the Church of Sweden and the Church of Sweden's international networks, EEA and APRODEV.⁹⁰

Plant varieties with new characteristics are needed, both to boost yields and to adapt to climate change. Both farmers and researchers breed plants; more collaboration between farmers and the research community is needed.⁹¹ Genetically modified (GM) varieties are cultivated on approximately 70 million ha in primarily North America, Latin America and parts of South Africa.⁹² Resistance to herbicides ("round-up ready") and insects, are the predominant characteristics of the GM crops that are available on the market today. There is to date no scientific consensus on whether genetic modification increases yields or offers other advantages.⁹³ Some negative environmental impacts, however, have been noted, and although certain worries have proven to be unfounded, many questions remain open.⁹⁴ The Lutheran World Federation and the ACT Alliance have adopted

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- 85 Church of Sweden, *Sustainable agriculture and food security in a changing climate*, 2008; EAA, *Nourishing the World Sustainably: Scaling up Agroecology*, 2012.
- 86 In 2005, the world's ten largest biotech companies spent nearly 3 billion dollars on agriculture-related research and development. That is ten times more than the combined budgets of the 15 research institutions within CGIAR (<http://www.cgiar.org/who-we-are/>), the international network of agricultural research institutions that together represent the principal source of publicly funded agricultural research. Bharucha, "Sustainable food production: Facts and Figures", SciDevNet Spotlight: producing food sustainably. <http://www.scidev.net/global/food-security/feature/sustainable-food-production-facts-and-figures.html>, accessed 15 Nov 2013.
- 87 UNCTAD points out that despite the obvious advantages that sustainable farming methods offer, so far they have been given far too little attention among either donor countries or the developing countries, themselves. UNCTAD calls for a fundamental change in the national policies of donors and recipient countries alike. *UNCTAD, Sustainable agriculture and food security in LDCs*. Policy Brief No 20 May 2011.
- 88 Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) is an initiative supported by Bill Gates, i.a.
- 89 New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in Africa is an initiative on the part of the G8 countries in collaboration with private enterprise and a number of national governments in Africa.
- 90 APRODEV and PELUM Association, *Agricultural Research in Africa: Why CAADP should follow IAASTD*, 2012; Anneli Rogeman, Svante Axelsson och Erik Lysén, "Bistandsministern vill att afrikanska bönder ökar gifter i jordbruket" [The Swedish Minister for Development Assistance wants African farmers to use more poison], *NewsMill* 2012-04-03; EAA och CIDSE, *Whose Alliance? The G8 and the Emergence of a Global Corporate Regime for Agriculture*, 2013.
- 91 EAA, Gaia Foundation and African Biodiversity Network, *Seeds for Life: Scaling up Agro-Biodiversity*, 2013.
- 92 Clive James, *Global Status of Commercialized Biotech/GM crops*, ISAAA Brief 44, 2012.
- 93 Zareen P Bharucha, "Sustainable food production: Facts and Figures", SciDevNet Spotlight: producing food sustainably, 2013, <http://www.scidev.net/global/food-security/feature/sustainable-food-production-facts-and-figures.html>, accessed 15 Nov 2013; Fatima Grönblad, *Genteknik – ett svar på hungern i världen? Röster för och emot* [Genetic Engineering – A solution to world hunger? Voices for and against]. Globala studier nr 23. Diakonia och Lutherhjälpen, 2005.
- 94 Formas, *Kunskapsöversikt Miljökonsekvenser av GMO*, Rapport 2:2009, 2009; A group of 93 scientists say that claims that GM foods are safe for humans 'have no scientific basis'. Carla Almeida, "Rifts emerge in scientists' views on safety of GMOs, Sci Dev Net, 2013, http://www.scidev.net/global/gm/news/rifts-emerge-in-scientists-views-on-safety-of-gmos.html?utm_medium=email&utm_source=SciDev.Net&utm_campaign=3278840_13%2f11%2fo4-Newsletter+GLOBAL&dm_i=1SCG,1Y9YW,AZRQO4,70JPV,1 Accessed 2013-11-01.

policies that limit the use of GMO crops in their humanitarian food relief programs.⁹⁵ Genetic engineering per se might offer benefits for smallholding farmers,⁹⁶ but so far the technology is too costly to use to develop varieties that are adapted to local conditions. High costs and the reliance on extensive patent protection have meant that the supply of genetically engineered products is concentrated in very few hands. This, in turn, makes it difficult to marry genetic engineering to inclusive agricultural systems where farmers are active partners in the development of new varieties, instead of being relegated to the role of passive recipients or consumers of new varieties.

⁹⁵ ACT Alliance, *Policy Paper on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) in Emergency Operations*, Policy paper adopted by the ACT Executive Committee, June 27-28, 2006.

⁹⁶ GM research aiming at developing salt- and drought-resistant crops is on-going. If genetic engineering were to contribute to achieving these goals, its potential benefits would increase. At the same time, there are environmental risks in these plant properties: the likelihood that these tolerances might spread to wild species is greater than in the case of herbicide resistance, which is advantageous only to plants in cultivation.

3. The Church of Sweden's position

Part of the worldwide Church, the Church of Sweden is called to work, globally and locally, to mend the world and bring about global justice. As part of the worldwide Church the Church of Sweden has a mandate to be a prophetic voice wherever extreme vulnerability prevails. The Church of Sweden – working in concert with sister churches, ecumenical networks and partner organizations – is committed to promoting agricultural development in ways that are economically, ecologically and socially sustainable, keeping the needs and rights of the most vulnerable and poorest groups in society – agricultural workers and smallholding farmers in particular – in focus.

Working together with, and at the request of local partners and international networks, the Church of Sweden seeks to carry on a rights-based policy dialogue that promotes sustainable agricultural development. The policy dialogue is based on the following principles, or 'positions', that outline the conditions that need to be in place in order for farming to be able to realize its potential to reduce poverty and contribute to sustainable development:

National governments, acting in collaboration with smallholding farmers and other actors in the sector, assume their responsibility to promote and guide agricultural development.

- Governmental institutions, systems for facilitating market access, and extension services that have been discontinued or reduced are reinstated and given more resources, or are replaced or supplemented by systems designed to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.
- Fora and channels for participation and accountability are put in place.
- Research and educational resources are strengthened.

- Initiatives to spur agricultural development are accompanied by improvements in the rural infrastructure, access to water, sanitary facilities, health care, education and rights-based and gender-integrated social protection.⁹⁷

All policy areas are coherent, and different policies work together to support sustainable agricultural development.

- National trade policies, EU Common Agricultural Policy⁹⁸, and other policies that have a bearing on the trade in agricultural products, and international trade agreements are designed to support the development of local markets and local and national processing of agricultural products.

Sweden increases its commitment and support to rural and agricultural development.

- Sweden is prepared to match African countries' commitments under the Maputo Declaration, so that at least ten per cent of Swedish development assistance is directed toward the development of agriculture.⁹⁹
- Sweden develops a policy/strategy for agricultural development in bilateral development cooperation.
- Sweden is a driving force with regard to sustainable agricultural development, with a distinct emphasis on poverty and human rights perspectives in policy dialogues with partner countries and in discussions of the global development agenda post 2015.

Agribusinesses and food retailers work toward sustainable agricultural development.

- Companies work to attain more sustainable practices in their own operations and those of their partners through, for example, capacity building about more sustainable growing techniques, certification

97 The ESC Covenant (www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CESCR.aspx) sets out a number of rights that have been elaborated by the ESC Committee, including the right to food (General comment no. 12), to education (no. 13), to health (no. 14), water (no. 15) and the right to social security (no. 19).

98 Church of Sweden, *Yttrande över förslag till reform av den gemensamma jordbrukspolitiken efter 2013* [Comments on proposed reforms of the Common Agricultural Policy after 2013]. KS 2012:92.

99 Under Article 2 of the ESC Covenant signatory states are bound to contribute to other countries' "full realization" of the rights recognized in the Covenant.

programs, rewarding suppliers that demonstrate social and environmental responsibility, and taking measures to increase, for example, the availability of micro-credits.

- Companies audit and report their fulfillment of international norms for responsible business practices, such as the UN Guidelines on Business and Human Rights, and OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises.

Consumers create the preconditions for sustainable agricultural production.

- The consumption of vegetarian food increases in groups who consume large amounts of meat today.
- Consumers pay the full social and environmental costs of food production.

Support to agricultural development takes the needs and conditions of smallholders as a point of departure, facilitating cooperation among them and improving market access.

- Agricultural development measures take their starting point in the situation, experience, priorities and needs of smallholders and are carried out in cooperation with them.
- Farmers' organisations are supported and strengthened so that they may influence national policy and decision-making.
- Small-scale producers gain access to markets through direct channels to consumers and through public procurement to, for example, schools.

The rights of smallholding farmers to land and water resources are defended and strengthened, and their traditional freedom to breed, save and trade seed is guaranteed.

- The rights of smallholders to land and water are set out in the UN Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security and the UN Voluntary Guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land fisheries and forests.
- Farmers' rights are recognized in the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and

Agriculture, Article 9.

- Women's opportunities to own or otherwise have access to farmland is strengthened.

Farm workers' conditions are improved.

- The conditions under which farm workers work and live are put in focus and given higher priority in programs to reduce poverty and develop agriculture.
- Farm workers' rights as set out in ILO Core Labour Standards¹⁰⁰ and the ILO Safety and Health in Agriculture Convention are respected.

All acquisition of land and land rights for the purpose of establishing large-scale agricultural production or other investments in productive agricultural land shall take place in a transparent manner and in keeping with international guidelines.

- Commercial enterprises follow the recommendations set out in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the Voluntary Guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land fisheries and forests, and the soon-to-be adopted CFS Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment in the context of food security and nutrition (CFS-RAI).
- All transfer of land rights requires the free and prior and informed consent (FPIC) of the people who use the land or hold rights to the land.
- In cases where land rights are held collectively, all holders of the rights in question are included in consultations and given the opportunity to exercise their right to have a voice in decisions that affect them.

All agriculture is focused on achieving a greater degree of ecological sustainability

- A greater degree of ecological sustainability implies more efficient use of resources, reduced negative impact on climate change, and an ecologically sustainable intensification of production, based more on biocycles and locally sourced inputs, renewable energy sources, biodiversity and ecosystem services than on chemical inputs and fossil fuels.

¹⁰⁰ Freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, non-discrimination, equal pay for men and women workers, the abolition of forced labour, and the elimination of child labour.

- Sustainable agriculture based on agro-ecological principles enhances ecosystems' natural processes and makes optimal use of locally available resources. Should this prove insufficient to maintain soil fertility, fertilizers may have to be brought in and applied as a complement. In most cases, alternatives to chemical pesticides and herbicides are sufficient.

Agricultural research and agricultural development take multifunctionality of agriculture and the priorities of smallholders as a starting point and contribute to greater ecological sustainability.

- Agricultural research, both public and private, keeps the multifunctionality of agriculture in focus and aims to increase the overall productivity and sustainability of the agricultural system.
- Publicly financed agricultural research and development programs take their point of departure in the situation, experience, needs and priorities of smallholding farmers and are carried out in cooperation with farmers.
- Publicly financed agricultural research, development, training and extension services focus on ecologically sustainable methods that are profitable from the grower's and society's point of view.
- Smallholders have access to information and exten-

sion services that enable them to make independent choices regarding agricultural methods, without being dependent on commercial actors.

When new plant varieties are introduced, risks to human health, the environment and the socio-economic conditions are minimized.

- Laws that regulate risks and establish liability are implemented, and observance of the laws is followed up.
- In accordance with the precautionary principle, the health and environmental risks of all innovative plant varieties are assessed before they are allowed to be grown.
- Risk assessments are necessary, regardless of whether varieties have been developed through conventional breeding, genetic engineering, or traditional methods. It is the number and degree of innovative characteristics in the variety, not the technology used to produce it, that determines the degree of testing and risk assessment that needs to be performed.
- The terms of use for new varieties and new farming methods are designed so as to avoid creating 'debt traps' for the user.

4. The role of the Church of Sweden

This position paper provides a platform for the continued policy dialogues relating to agricultural development that the Church of Sweden carries on in a number of different processes and arenas: the global development agenda, Sweden's and the European Union's development, trade and research policies, i.a.

The position paper shall also provide a basis for dialogue with partners and contribute to the further development of the Church's international cooperation and popular education and information programs. It, furthermore, will inform future discussions of the Church of Sweden's role as landowner and potential investor in enterprises in the agricultural sector.

TERM OF VALIDITY

The position paper applies to the program period 2014-2017.

Cover photo: Paul Jeffrey/ACT

A woman returns from working in her farm field in Chisatha, a village in southern Malawi. Her community has been hard hit by drought in recent years, leading to chronic food insecurity, especially during the "hunger season", when farmers are waiting for the harvest.

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