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SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY IN THE ERA OF LOCAL AND GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

Edited by

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BACKGROUND

Science and research have brought us technical advances no one would previously have thought possible. But amidst all the progress we have achieved, humanitarian emergencies related to hunger, environmental change and political conflicts seem to be spreading like a metastasized cancer. These acute crises are a double tragedy: not only do they devastate people and landscapes, but they also divert financial resources and human energies from the cause of human development. These emergencies are constantly covered by relevant media. Yet, underlying these tragic events is the silent crisis - the crisis of underdevelopment, of chronic and growing poverty, of mounting population pressures, and widespread environmental deterioration.

As the Bellagio Declaration on Overcoming Hunger in the 1990s had stated more than two decades ago, we have collectively failed more than one billion of our people in a world of potential food plenty. Today, we still have not managed to eradicate hunger in the world. The available figures speak for themselves, revealing the true horror. Yet, today's failure may be but prologue to a much larger failure in the future. In a context marked by the rising vulnerability in the global and regional food supply and market systems, projected increases in food demand due to population growth and changing dietary patterns, sustainability concerns from energy, land and water constraints, unfolding climate change impacts, huge social, economic and environmental inequalities, food insecurity is becoming a global challenge threatening the integration of our established systems.

To reverse this trend, a holistic shift is needed. This shift should be political, economic, and paradigmatic. From this perspective, achieving sustainable food security in the decades ahead emerges as one of the greatest challenges humanity has ever faced. The goal is to improve the availability of, and access to, adequate and safe food in a sustainable manner, especially for the large number of poor, women, and other vulnerable groups. This will require not only the improvement of agricultural productivity and profitability while minimizing environmental impacts, but also requires the focus on income and land distribution, on household livelihoods and dietary needs, on food distribution and waste, on women's status and their opportunities, and on the protection and regeneration of the resource base for food production - terrestrial, aquatic, and climatic.

PRIMARY AUDIENCE FOR THE WORK

This publication is targeted at a wide audience, including policy-makers and program officers, international organizations, research experts and academic institutions, private and civil society actors, and the general public with an interest in linkages between food security, climate change, food production and consumption, global market, etc.

INPUT OF THE BOOK COMPARED TO RELEVANT EXISTING PUBLICATIONS

This book focuses on food insecurity that currently emerge as a key challenge within a very complex context marked by many different challenges, especially global and local environmental change. The call for a sustainable food security as one of the relevant solutions raises other political, economic and scientific debates on sustainability, technology, redistribution mechanisms, public health, trade mechanisms, sovereignty, governance, ethics, and collective security. Exacerbation of the current world

food crisis, and the human and environmental impacts of climate change and globalization (especially on the world's poor) call for a rethinking of food security in a particular way. Hence the need for a holistic approach addressing the issue within all its recognizable complexity, in a spirit of economic, social and environmental sustainability, equity and solidarity. This book aims at participating in this debate, explore and share the relevant experiences, and suggest some relevant recommendations.

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