



Let them Eat Promises: Global Policy Incoherence, Unmet Pledges, and Misplaced Priorities Undercut Progress on SDG 2

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Abstract

The international community has adopted and endorsed an ambitious global development agenda for the period 2015–2030 in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG 2 seeks to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture. This reflects a broad international consensus on the unacceptability of hunger articulated previously at the 1996 World Food Summit and reiterated at the 2008 High-Level Conference on World Food Security. In 2009, at their L'Aquila Summit, the G8 heads of state and government pledged a significant expansion of aid to agriculture, in order to address the global food-price spike of the preceding year. However, serious global policy incoherence severely undermines this apparent political will to end hunger and boost developing-country agriculture. In particular, although official development assistance to agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa (hunger's center of gravity) doubled between 2003 and 2012, the share of total global aid going to agriculture, at just 5% in 2014, is well below the 20% share of the mid-1980s. In addition, donor-country agricultural trade and security policies often undercut support for agricultural development in the Global South. Furthermore, there is incoherence within donor policies on aid to agriculture, which tend to focus more on promoting commercialization and exports than on boosting smallholder productivity and the economic empowerment of women farmers. For their part, developing-country governments have not fulfilled pledges to increase their own agricultural development budgets (as seen in the African Union Declarations of Maputo and Malabo), and the bulk of those budgets go to recurrent expenditure rather than development investments. In Sub-Saharan Africa, military expenditures account for a greater share of public funds. This paper suggests that while policy makers in both the Global South and North treat food security and agricultural development as priorities, these remain in a relatively low position on policy agendas because other concerns respond to much stronger constituencies.

Keywords Hunger · Food security · Agriculture · Smallholder farmers · Policy coherence · Aid

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Introduction

Ending hunger by 2030 features prominently among the Sustainable Development Goals, and the international community has made repeated pledges over the past two decades to take action to achieve global food security. To achieve this, aid donors have promised, among other things, to boost the resources that they provide to smallholder agriculture. Governments in Africa, which forms world hunger's center of gravity, have similarly agreed to boost the share of their budgets going to the rural sector. Nevertheless, hunger stubbornly persists, and the world's food insecure population actually increased between 2015 and 2018 (FAO 2019). Governments in both the Global South and the North have, in essence, issued "words that succeed and policies that fail," to borrow Edelman's (1977) phrase. Too often, global policy makers have simply made nice-sounding promises of action to end hunger, and then have carried on with business as usual. Even when they have backed up their pledges with resources, they have frequently undercut this with incoherent policies, as when donors of agricultural aid also dump their farm surpluses on aid receiving countries. Finally, policies aimed at eradicating hunger and promoting agricultural development often are ineffective, as when agricultural aid and budget allocations go to recurrent expenditures rather than development investment.

This article explores these issues as follows: the next section examines some of the major global and regional intergovernmental declarations on ending hunger and investment in smallholder agriculture issued since 1996. We then discuss the gap between those declarations on the one hand, and resource allocation and food security on the other, based on UN, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and African Union (AU) data. Next, we discuss in turn, from a political economy perspective, the problems of unfulfilled pledges, policy incoherence, and ineffective policy implementation. The final section provides conclusions.

Twenty Years of Far-Reaching Promises...

At the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015, the international community adopted an ambitious global development agenda, aimed at ending deprivation, improving well-being for everyone, advancing women's rights, and achieving peace, justice, equality, and environmental sustainability by no later than 2030, working through global partnerships. In a step beyond the agreements at the UN's 2000 Millennium Summit, the 2015 gathering explicitly pledged to "leave no one behind," made inequality central to the discussion, and sharpened the focus on governance issues in global development discourse (UN 2015).

Seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) form the centerpiece of this agenda, with "end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture" near the top of the list as SDG 2 (UN 2015). Target 2.3 under that goal reads, "By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment." The indicators to measure progress on the target focus on the volumes of production by the size of agricultural enterprises and the average incomes of small-scale food producers, disaggregated by sex and indigenous status.

An additional target 2.A calls upon the international community to “Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries.” The relevant indicators measure governments’ agricultural orientation (the share of government budgets going to agriculture divided by the agricultural proportion of gross domestic product, or GDP), and total official flows (aid and other international public resources) going to agriculture.

Even before the Sustainable Development Summit issued its bold blueprint, a broad global consensus had emerged on the need for international cooperation to achieve food security. In 1996, at the World Food Summit, high-level representatives of 185 countries, including many heads of state and government, agreed to reduce the number of hungry people in the world “to half their present level no later than 2015.” In order to achieve this, the Summit Plan of Action called on UN member states to “pursue, through participatory means, sustainable, intensified and diversified food production,” and to invest in agricultural research, extension, and education services responsive to the needs of “small-scale farmers, fishers, and foresters,” including women producers (FAO 1996). Four years later, the Millennium Summit called for halving “the proportion of people who suffer from hunger” (UN 2000).

In response to the dramatic escalation of food prices in 2007–2008 (Cohen and Smale 2011; Clapp and Cohen 2009; FAO 2008; von Braun 2008a, b), the UN created a High-Level Taskforce (HLTF) on the Global Food Crisis. In July 2008 this issued a Comprehensive Framework for Action, which put considerable emphasis on boosting smallholder farmers’ food production, in both the short- and long-term. The framework asserted, “Unleashing the full potential of smallholder farming is key to the global food security agenda...” (HLTF 2008).

Africa is the global region that has both the highest prevalence of hunger, and the deepest hunger, as it has the largest population and the highest percentage (27.4% in 2016) of people living in *extreme* food insecurity (FAO 2017). Although the absolute number of food insecure people is higher in South Asia (279 million vs. 256 million people in Africa in 2018), the prevalence of food insecurity has declined steadily in that region since 2010, while it has increased in Africa (FAO 2019). African heads of state agreed in the 2003 Maputo Declaration to devote at least 10% of their budgets to agriculture and rural development, and to “revitalize the agricultural sector including livestock, forestry and fisheries through special policies and strategies targeted at small scale and traditional farmers...” (AU 2003). To achieve this, African governments adopted the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) (NEPAD 2003), which was intended to operate under the joint African Union (AU)-UN African Peer Review Mechanism (UN OSAA 2013).

In 2014, the AU heads of state and government reaffirmed their commitment to the 10% target in their Malabo Declaration. They also agreed “to conduct a biennial Agricultural Review Process that involves tracking, monitoring and reporting on progress,” in order to deepen the commitment to substantive monitoring and evaluation (AU 2014).

...and Disappointing Results

As the Indian agricultural scientist M.S. Swaminathan has commented, it is unfortunate that the human body cannot digest cellulose (personal communication); as things stand, fine words on paper do not fill bellies. Indeed, the declarations, plans, and programs discussed in the

preceding section have led to mixed-to-failed outcomes in terms of either accelerated progress against hunger or substantial new financial resources for smallholder farmer-led agricultural development and agrarian gender justice. While both the number and the proportion of hungry people worldwide dropped between 2000 and 2015 (the implementation period of the Millennium Declaration), the decline in both figures fell far short of the goal of “cutting hunger in half” (FAO 2017). Alarming, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) estimates that hunger *increased* in both relative and absolute terms between 2015 and 2018 (FAO 2019) (Fig. 1). In Sub-Saharan Africa, the prevalence of hunger declined from 2000 to 2010, but then remained essentially the same before increasing after 2015. Moreover, FAO data indicate that both the number and percentage of the region’s population living in severe food insecurity increased during 2014–2016, with the number of extremely food insecure people rising 16% (FAO 2017, 2019).

In real terms, aid to agriculture and rural development steadily declined from its peak in 1988 through 2004. Although funding increased thereafter, it failed to return to late 1980s levels, and remained flat after 2013 (OECD 2017a, 2018b) (Fig. 2). The agriculture share of aid from the members of the OECD’s Development Assistance Committee—the donors that account for the bulk of official development assistance—declined from 20% in the mid-1980s to 7% in the late 1990s, and has stayed around that level since then.

That said, it is noteworthy that the HLTF’s Comprehensive Framework proved to be more than just another exhortation with modest-to-few results. At the 2009 G8 summit, the world’s wealthiest countries pledged \$20 billion over three years toward implementation of the Framework, supporting African countries in fulfilling their Maputo pledges, and attaining the Millennium Declaration’s hunger reduction target. The summit stressed the need to increase aid to agriculture and help foster increased productivity, with an “emphasis on... smallholders, women, and families” (G8 2009).

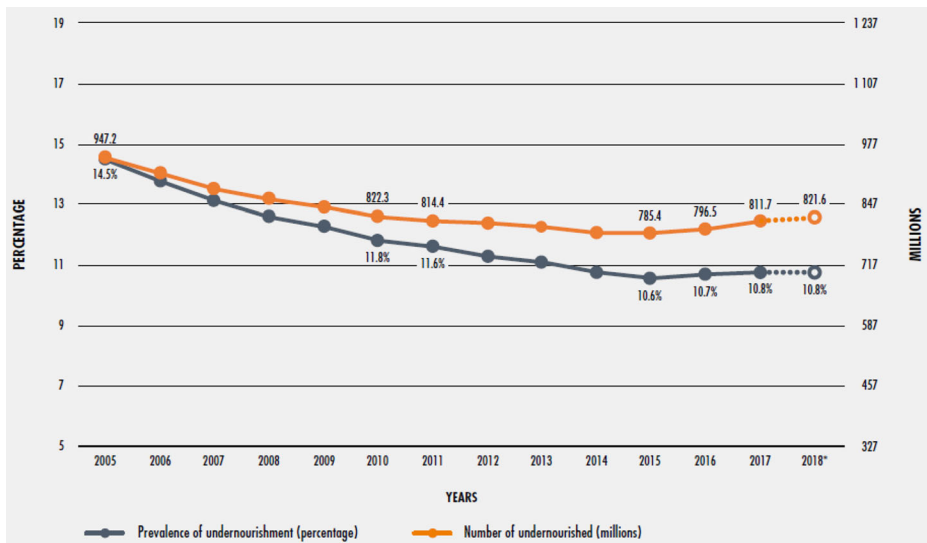


Fig. 1 Prevalence and number of undernourished^a people in the world, 2005–2018^b. Source: FAO (2019). Notes: **a.** FAO defines undernourishment as the condition of an individual whose habitual food consumption is insufficient to provide, on average, the amount of dietary energy required to maintain a normal, active, healthy life. **b.** Figures for 2018 are projections as illustrated by the dotted lines and empty circles

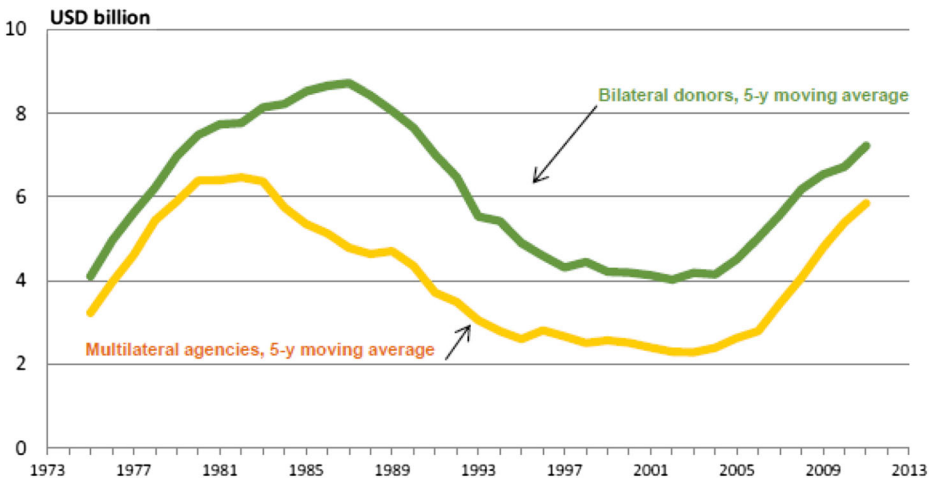


Fig. 2 Five-year moving average, official development assistance commitments to agriculture and rural development, 1973–2013 (constant 2013 prices). Source: (OECD 2017a)

These pledges did result in new resources for agriculture. The US government created the \$3.5 billion Feed the Future initiative as its share of the G8 funding target, and argues that this leveraged \$18.5 million in additional funds from other donors. Furthermore, without attributing the outcomes to the initiative, in 2018 the US government noted that 5.2 million fewer families are hungry in the 19 Feed the Future focus countries, and assisted farmers enjoyed yields above their national averages (Feed the Future 2018). The European Union created the €1 billion Food Facility in 2009, and the following year issued a food security policy framework that emphasized a rights-based approach; support to smallholders, including women; and sustainable natural resource management. OECD data indicate that agriculture-related aid from all donors increased by one-third between 2007 and 2015 (OECD 2018a).

With regard to the Maputo Declaration, although public agricultural expenditures in Africa grew substantially between 2003 and 2010, the continental average fell short of the 10% target, reaching only 7.4%. Just 13 of the 55 AU member states actually attained the 10% goal (Benin and Yu 2012). The first CAADP Biennial Review, covering 2015–2016, revealed a worse balance sheet, with just 10 of the member states devoting 10% or more of their budgets to agriculture (with Ethiopia and Malawi each allocating more than 16%) (AU 2018). Moreover, there is not much evidence that the Declaration has contributed to improvements in agricultural yields on the continent (Kreuger 2015¹). The biennial review found that only 13 member states achieved CAADP’s yield increase target of 10% in 2017, and just 12 met the goal of investing at least 1% of agricultural GDP in agricultural research (AU 2018).

Worldwide, similarly deficient results are apparent. The global agriculture orientation index dropped substantially, from 0.38 in 2001 to 0.21 in 2015 (UN 2017). That is far from an encouraging baseline from which to proceed on meeting SDG 2.

¹ Kreuger bases this conclusion on analysis of FAO and World Bank data, acknowledging the limitations in the available evidence.

Why the Gap between Words and Action?

It has become a cliché to state that the technical knowledge to end hunger is available, and that humanity can achieve the task at relatively low cost; all that is lacking is the political will to do so (see, for example, McGovern 2001). It would seem that at the level of rhetoric, at least, the political will is already there. The world's leaders have no difficulty declaring that hunger is unacceptable, or repeatedly endorsing a package of solutions. What keeps them from putting up the resources?

It is not so much that heads of state and government are cynical, and endorse summit declarations knowing full well that they will not implement them. Rather, most of the time, they view other things as more important. Funding for aid to agriculture illustrates this well. Between 2000 and 2005, total development aid from the OECD donors rose dramatically, more than doubling in nominal terms (OECD 2018b), but aid to agriculture remained largely stagnant. Donors' security concerns in the wake of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks were obviously the key factor driving the overall increase (Radelet 2003).

Much of the additional funding went to areas outside of agriculture and broader rural development, and even before 2000, donors had made other areas their main priorities after the late 1980s. This shift away from agriculture resulted from the success of efforts to boost agricultural productivity in developing countries and the associated long-term decline in global food prices after 1960. This encouraged a certain degree of complacency among policy makers regarding the world food situation. In addition, many development thinkers had come to view agriculture as a "sunset" activity, in light of growing urbanization and their sense that industrial and service sector development were more important over the longer term. This coin had another side, of course: rural poor people almost everywhere are far less politically powerful than urban elites and middle-class people, and therefore command less attention from policy makers (World Bank 1997).

The priorities that donors pursued outside of agriculture and rural development included the following:

- Global health (particularly child survival and tackling HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis);
- Governance;
- Gender equality;
- Stabilizing fragile states; and
- Environmental protection.

Donors have recently given some attention to such areas as the links between agriculture and health, how gender discrimination reduces agricultural productivity, and the multifaceted connections between sustainable natural resource management and agriculture. However, such holistic, integrated approaches remain exceptional, with sectoral siloing more often the norm (UN 2017; Hagen-Zanker and McCord 2011; Radelet 2003; World Bank 1997).

It is also important to note that the domestic constituencies in donor countries for some of the non-agricultural aid priorities, notably health and environment, tend to have far greater political influence than those that support agriculture and action against hunger. As a result, during the 1990s, despite the overall tight US aid budget, the share going to child survival increased (Randel and German 1996).

Sometimes, aid to agriculture moves onto the policy front burner. This was the case in the response to the global food-price spike of 2007–2008. The political consequences of that crisis

served as the main impetus for the substantial boost in agricultural assistance. Higher prices had led to widespread hardship and sometimes violent protests in at least 60 countries, in both the developed and developing world. Many of the demonstrations took place in urban areas, especially politically salient capital cities. Violence in Port-au-Prince led to the collapse of Haiti's government, while in Egypt, the government boosted spending on already expensive food subsidies to allay political difficulties in Cairo (Cohen and Smale 2011). The more recent flattening out of aid funds for agriculture suggests that policy makers have once again turned their attention elsewhere.

Policy Incoherence

Policies are considered “coherent” when they reinforce one another rather than working at cross-purposes. The problem of policy incoherence comes up at the country level when, for example, rural transportation infrastructure policies undercut biodiversity preservation by destroying habitats and facilitating forest exploitation (Barry et al. 2010: 141). Policy Coherence for Development (PCD) refers to efforts to ensure that aid donor government policies outside the development arena do not undermine development cooperation. SDG 17, on development partnerships, includes a target aiming to “enhance policy coherence for sustainable development” (OECD 2016: 38).

Agricultural trade and security policies are particularly important to the PCD agenda (Barry et al. 2010: 133). According to the OECD (2016: 38), PCD “seeks to avoid situations in which Official Development Assistance (ODA) supports another country's agricultural development, while simultaneously undermining its export opportunities through tariffs or subsidised agricultural production in the provider country.” For its part, FAO has shown how high military spending can drain resources for agricultural and general development (Teodosijević 2003).

Dumping Destabilizes Development

Even though aid to agriculture ticked back upwards after the food-price crisis, donors too often undermine their aid programs through their agricultural trade policies. The case of US rice exports to Haiti offers an egregious example. Following the devastating 2010 earthquake in the latter country, the US government pledged substantial aid to the agricultural sector as part of its strategy for assisting reconstruction, given the importance of agricultural livelihoods. Haiti became one of the Feed the Future focus countries. US agricultural assistance included support for adoption of the agroecological system of rice intensification, and supported rice farmers achieved notable gains in output of Haitians' principal daily staple (Cohen 2013).

At the same time, generous subsidies to US rice farmers have consistently led to surpluses that go well beyond domestic demand. US government and international financial institution efforts to get Haiti to lower its tariff on imports to near zero have meant that the country has consistently ranked as the second or third largest market for US rice exports since the mid-2000s. US rice is cheaper than what Haitian farmers produce, despite strong evidence of local consumer preference for “national rice,” so imports, mainly from the US, now account for 80% or more of consumption. Brazil, which has helped finance purchases of local rice for school meals, similarly ships its own subsidized rice to Haiti (Cohen 2013; Cochrane et al. 2016).

In a like manner, the European Union has provided €27 million to a multi-donor project to support African farmers' organizations during 2013–2018. The program has funded livestock

projects in several African countries (EU 2018). Meanwhile, European milk powder exports to West Africa nearly tripled between 2011 and 2016. Subsidies paid to European dairy farmers and Russia's boycott of European food have left milk surpluses hanging over the European market. West African countries impose a low 5% tariff on imported milk, so small-scale milk producers and processors in countries such as Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Senegal have difficulty competing in their home markets with cheaper European powder. The consequences are not just possible loss of African livelihoods. Adama Ibrahim Diallo, the leader of Burkina Faso's dairy farmers and processors association points to the subregion's already serious security problems: "The sons of pastoralists become jihadists—not out of conviction but because there are no jobs" (Livingstone 2018).

Arms Vs. Farms

Defense spending and arms sales undermine agriculture and action against hunger in two ways. First, the military tends to absorb a large share of the budget, notably in Sub-Saharan Africa. Second, FAO attributes recent increases in food insecurity in part to violent conflict, with climate-related shocks intensifying the negative effects (FAO 2017, 2019). Military expenditures and the global arms trade both reflect and fuel global conflicts. During 2012–2016, four of the five leading aid donors—the United States, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom—were also among the six leading arms exporters. The United States accounted for over half of the arms transfers to the Middle East. Both France and Germany made about 9% of their sales to Africa. China, Russia, and Ukraine sold more than three-fifths of the weapons purchased in the Sub-Saharan part of the continent (Fleurant et al. 2017; OECD 2017b).

For the two decades between 1980 and 1999, Sub-Saharan Africa governments allocated an average of 14% of their budgets to defense (Table 1). The average share going to agriculture declined from 7% in 1980–1989 to 4% in 1990–1999. By 2000–2012, the average military share had fallen to 8%, compared to 3% for agriculture, notwithstanding CAADP commitments to a 10% proportion. Thus, the gap between the two shares was larger than in 1980–1989, despite the substantial decline in the percentage going to defense, with the military getting almost three times as much of the budget as agriculture received, compared to twice as much in the earlier period. Clearly, these figures reflect that military establishments enjoy vastly greater political clout than low-income farmers (Chuter and Gaub 2016; FAO 2018).

Violent conflict undermines food security in multiple ways, such as by destroying crops and livestock, uprooting populations, and destroying social infrastructure. The disastrous level of food insecurity caused by the war in Yemen illustrates this nexus all too clearly. The effects may continue long after fighting ends in the form of farmland littered with landmines, lost human capital, and enmity among social groups that may lead to renewed conflict. Conversely, food

Table 1 Annual average defense and agriculture shares in total public spending in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1980–2012, Percent

Years	Defense	Agriculture
1980–1989	14	7
1990–1999	14	4
2000–2012	8	3

Source: IFPRI Statistics on Public Expenditures for Economic Development (SPEED) (cited in Goyal and Nash 2017).

insecurity can contribute to the outbreak of conflict under certain circumstances (FAO 2017; Messer and Cohen 2015). Policies that provide the wherewithal to conduct warfare go against the grain (sometimes literally) of efforts to develop agriculture and promote food security.

Ineffective Policies

Perhaps the biggest barrier to achieving global goals on ending hunger and supporting small-holder farming lies in both aid-donor and recipient-country governments implementing ineffective policies to achieve the goals. For example, an assessment of Feed the Future found that, as intended, the initiative provides support to low-income farmers, but projects tend to allocate resources to “market-ready” smallholders, frequently bypassing the poorest and most marginalized rural producers. Also, despite the objective of advancing women’s economic empowerment in agriculture, projects often disproportionately benefit men (Tumusiime and Cohen 2017).

In the case of the European Union, its international agricultural development and food security policy articulates a commitment to the empowerment of smallholders, in particular women, while supporting environmentally sustainable approaches to agriculture. However, a review of 7500 EU-funded projects found opaqueness in reporting, suggesting a lack of accountability. In addition to the resulting data problems, the available information indicates that less than 25% of EU agricultural development aid targets small-scale farmers. Just 3.5% has gender equality as a principal or significant objective. Instead, much of the funding goes to production of industrial and export crops, rather than foodcrops for domestic consumption in recipient countries. It was difficult to determine whether projects support ecological sustainability. Another problem is that the EU does not provide its agriculture aid in ways that facilitate long-term planning in recipient countries. The amount fluctuates significantly from year to year, and little of the flexible aid as budget support that the EU provides to partner countries goes to agriculture budgets. Finally, foreign policy considerations substantially shape aid flows. In 2015, per capita aid to agriculture in European countries receiving such aid from the EU was €1.29, compared to €0.35 provided to Sub-Saharan African countries (Mayrhofer and Saarinen 2017).

Dutch aid to agriculture increased between 2011 and 2015. Similar to EU aid, much of the assistance targets cash crop production and few resources go to advancing gender equality. In addition, the share of Dutch agricultural aid implemented by public-private partnerships has increased steeply, rising from 3% in 2006 to 11% in 2015. There are concerns that such a modality for aid implementation may not target the poorest farmers or uphold the principles of aid effectiveness (Hooijer and Meijer 2017).

On the aid-receiving country side, a study of CAADP compliance in Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, and Tanzania examined how the study countries actually use their agriculture budgets, and found a number of distortions. Resources tend to go overwhelmingly to recurrent costs, such as the salaries of ministry of agriculture staff. For example, in Ghana, in 2015, over 80% of the agriculture budget went to salaries (which alone accounted for 77% of spending) and other operating costs. Moreover, there is sometimes significant underspending of budgeted development funds: In 2014, the Tanzanian government only spent 39% of what it had budgeted for agricultural development projects; in Ghana the figure was less than 10%. In contrast, Tanzania spent 94% of the funds budgeted for salaries, while Ghana overdrew that account, spending 156% of the budgeted level (Mwanzia 2017).

The same study found that agriculture budgets, like donor funds, tend to bypass the poorest and most marginalized farmers. In 2013, 58% of Ghana’s budget went to support production of

a key export crop, cocoa, at the expense of foodcrops, livestock, and fisheries. Most cocoa is produced in the country's south, but poverty is higher in northern Ghana, where 75% of the people depend on agricultural livelihoods. Little government support goes to facilitate their access to extension services or agricultural education (Mwanzia 2017).

Similarly, the agriculture budgets tended to bypass women. Across the African continent, over 70% of women face financial exclusion, a problem that agriculture budgets could help address. But in Tanzania, only 3% of farm households received credit, and most of those were male-headed. Women also faced exclusion from extension services and agricultural training. In Tanzania, 5% of women received agricultural advice, and almost 90% of the extension agents were male. During 2012–2015, 60% of the farmers who received training from the government of Tanzania were male (Mwanzia 2017).

Failure on the part of aid-donor and recipient governments in agricultural gender justice has serious consequences. According to FAO (2011: 5), women farmers around the world enjoy less access than their male counterparts to “many assets, inputs and services—land, livestock, labor, education, extension and financial services, and technology.” Eliminating these disparities in access to resources would boost yields on women's farms by 20–30%, thereby increasing agricultural production in the Global South by 2.5–4%, and cutting the number of people living in hunger by 12–17%.

Conclusions

It is clear from 20 years of global declarations and action plans that the world's political leaders and policy makers view ending hunger as a priority. Consensus exists that boosting small-holder farmer productivity and fostering agrarian gender justice are key to achieving that priority. Yet the results of implementing these good intentions have fallen far short of the oft-repeated lofty goals. It is worth remembering that as long ago as 1974, the then US Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger, declared at the World Food Conference, “Within a decade, no child will go to bed hungry; no family will fear for its next day's bread” (cited in Simon 1990: 122). The reality of 1984, of course, was much different, with food emergencies occurring in much of Africa, including serious famine in the Horn.

We have shown in this paper that global policy makers fail to implement their agriculture and food security pledges because they tend to pay greater attention to other priorities, because their policies lack coherence, and because when they do attempt to fulfill their promises, they often do so in ineffective ways. So, what is the way forward to meet SDG 2 by the target date of 2030?

First, anti-hunger advocates can marshal the evidence needed to put ending hunger higher on global policy agendas, mobilize the necessary resources, and make policies more coherent:

- According to a recent study by the International Food Policy Research Institute and the International Institute for Sustainable Development, the cost of ending world hunger is nontrivial, but far from unaffordable. Using a computable general equilibrium model, the study finds that, between 2016 and 2030, it would take additional global expenditure of \$400 billion targeted to agriculture, non-farm rural development, nutrition, social protection programs, and crucially, creation of an enabling policy environment. The study breaks this down to an annual average of \$11 billion in new public spending (divided between \$4 billion in increased aid and \$7 billion in new developing-country government expenditures), along with the \$5 billion a year in private funds that this would leverage (Laborde et al. 2016).

- Evidence is likewise available to attempt to persuade policy makers of the value of investing in smallholder agriculture and gender equality on the farm, as noted throughout this paper.
- Not tackling food insecurity is also expensive: hunger exacts high costs in terms of the ill health, lost human potential, and reduced sustainable development that it creates.
- In addition to the instrumental value of eliminating hunger for advancing development, it also has an intrinsic value, inasmuch as everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, according to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Getting policies to change in the right direction to ensure a food-secure world is not just a matter of putting together a persuasive case, however, as important as facts and evidence are for sound policy. Policy making is an inherently political process. A key lesson from two decades of unfulfilled and underfunded plans to end hunger is that good policy blueprints need to have a strong constituency behind them. This must include greater public support for global food security in donor countries. In addition, it is essential that smallholder farmers and women in developing countries—the people who bear the brunt of world hunger—have political voice and a say in the decisions that affect them.

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