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Researched by Khadim
Hussian (SAAG Member)

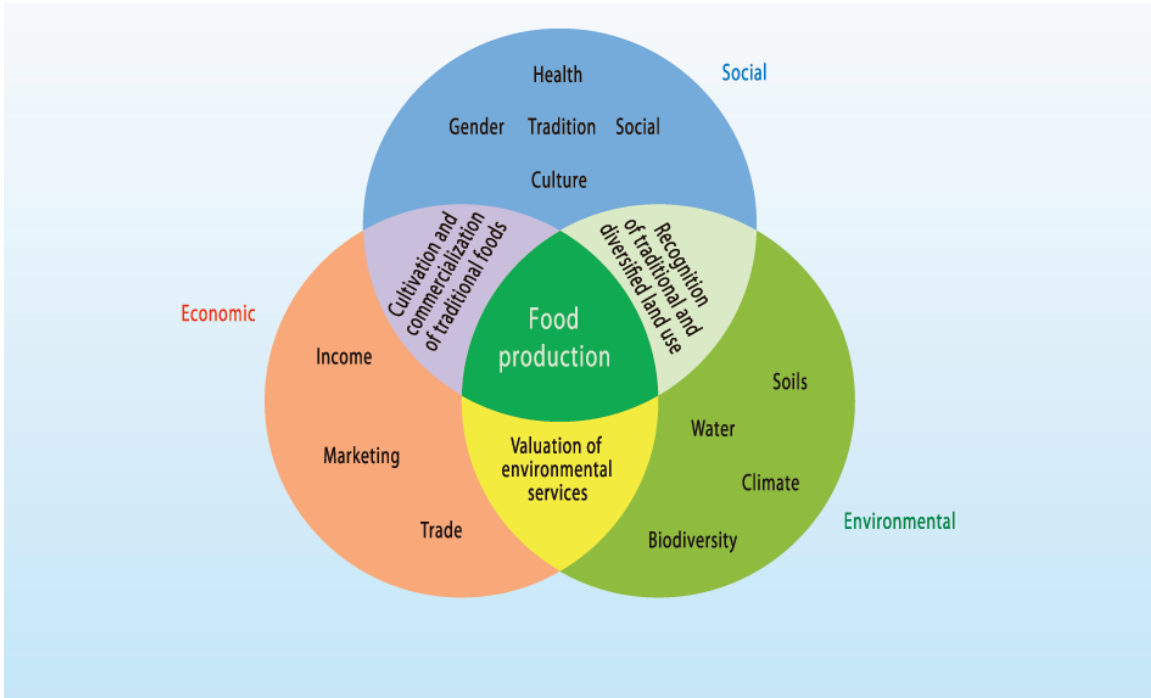
Coordinated by

Abdul Rasheed
SAAG Coordinator

SAAG
Sustainable Agriculture Action Group

FOOD SECURITY AMONG CRISES

PAKISTAN'S SCENE AND POSSIBLE WAY OUT



Courtesy IAASTD

WRITTEN BY

KHADIM HUSSAIN

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ACRONYMS

Abbreviations	Full
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
ES	Economic Survey of Pakistan
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Area
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FSM	Food Sovereignty Movement
GMOs	Genetically Modified Organisms
IAASTD	International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights
MINFAL	Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
SAAG	Sustainable Agriculture Action Group
UNHCHR	United Nations High Commission for Human Rights
VGRF	Voluntary Guidelines for Right to Food
WFP	World Food Program
WFS	World Food Summit

INTRODUCTION

Humanity has been facing hunger, malnutrition and malnourishment in spite of all the development and progress. Food still remains the concern of billions of human beings. Debates around and discourse of food security have been going on for decades but the number of hungry people couldn't be reduced and now FAO estimates the number of hungry to be 1.02 billion. In its report "The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2009" it confirms that "the increase in food insecurity is not a result of poor crop harvests but because high domestic food prices, lower incomes and increasing unemployment have reduced access to food by the poor. In other words, any benefits from falling world cereal prices have been more than offset by the global economic downturn". (FAO, 2009) This crisis was brought by the advanced world. Similarly WFS declaration of 2009 says, "We are alarmed that the number of people suffering from hunger and poverty now exceeds 1 billion. This is an unacceptable blight on the lives, livelihoods and dignity of one-sixth of the world's population. The effects of longstanding underinvestment in food security, agriculture, and rural development have recently been further exacerbated by food, financial and economic crises, among other factors." (WFS 2009) Meanwhile food security assessments in Pakistan point towards the deterioration of situation as compared to 2003 and 61% of the districts are not food secure.

Civil society has expended a lot of energy to raise the concerns about food security and its various dimensions and has put forward the alternative concept of 'food sovereignty' and meanwhile has advocated that the states take the 'Right to Food' obligations seriously. Sustainable Agriculture Action Group (SAAG) in Pakistan is a network of NGOs/CSOs which has been striving to spread awareness about the food security related issues of food production, food trade and sustainable agriculture. After the two crises—food crisis of 2006-7 and financial crisis of 2009-10—it considers necessary to take a fresh look at the food security and the related issues. Besides, Pakistan is passing through flood emergency which has serious threats of food insecurity in its store. In any case SAAG planned to review the situations in a way of updating the network's members and other sections of civil society about the discourse of food security in this crisis-ridden situation of the country. (Terms of References of this study are given in Annexure 1)

To start with, the study introduces and discusses the concepts of food security, food sovereignty and right to food by putting these together in a perspective. The next chapter goes into sketching out issues in connection with the food security. So as to encompass the whole spectrum of issues in this context it has also included all those aspects which are common knowledge; because SAAG's literature reaches out to diverse sections of the society. The study also mentions the kind of crises which have or can cause serious levels of food insecurity. The third chapter concentrates on Pakistan's conditions and status in this regard. This section looks at the agriculture, the food production systems, poverty and economic circumstances. In this chapter the research also informs the reader about crops, livestock, water availability, land issues, entitlements of resources, etc. etc. In addition, special problems facing Pakistan's agriculture and economy are discussed. The fourth chapter runs a commentary in a way of critically analyzing the various factors which pose obstacles in the way of solving problems leading to food insecurity. Finally, the conclusion guides towards the way-out.

FOOD SECURITY AND RELATED CONCEPTS

In the wake of World Trade Organization (WTO), the discourse of food security gained substantial currency in the civil society circles. Food security then was defined in a commonsensical manner as ‘food being available, accessible to everyone at all times, nutritious and culturally acceptable’ The discussions and concerns were obviously aimed at the possible threats of destabilization of food markets as the agricultural products were going to be traded heavily under WTO. In fact food security has been defined at various points in time, basically starting in 1970 when presence of adequate food supplies was equivalent to food security. Nonetheless, under the umbrella of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), definition of food security was concretized as “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”. (WFS, 1996) In addition the related components / dimensions of food security such as availability, accessibility, utilization and stability were also defined.

Accordingly, the definition primarily referred to the food security within the confines of a nation state, but between the lines it meant that international mechanisms such as WTO could help ensure it across the nations. Such a definition also made it clear that the scale of food production in a particular country would not guarantee food security of that nation because it is economic strength which would make a nation-state food secure. This in turn meant that it would depend on the country’s policy how to utilize its land and resources and not necessarily go on managing their agriculture as was done traditionally. Hypothetically speaking, a country could prefer cash crops so as to earn more money by selling the products and then buy cheap food—for instance genetically modified food—from other countries. In other words, it disregarded the centuries old livelihood patterns of farming communities as well as the socio-economic conditions of agricultural countries. In any case, the first World Food Summit (WFS) in its Plan of Action for food security said:

“In this regard, concerted action at all levels is required. Each nation must adopt a strategy consistent with its resources and capacities to achieve its individual goals and, at the same time, cooperate regionally and internationally in order to organize collective solutions to global issues of food security. In a world of increasingly interlinked institutions, societies and economies, coordinated efforts and shared responsibilities are essential.” (WFS, 1996)

On the one hand it suggested that each nation may be free in devising strategies to ensure food security of its citizens, on the other it emphasized the necessity of international trade so as to collaborate with the vision of WTO, which had authoritatively declared:

“History has shown that food security does not equal self-sufficiency of a country. It has more to do with international trade in food products that makes them available at competitive prices and sets the right incentives for those countries where they can be produced most efficiently. Food shortages have to do with poverty rather than with being a net food importer. Food security nowadays lies not only in the local production of food, but in a country's ability to finance imports of food through exports of other goods.” (WTO, 2002)

In any case, governments in general and states’ bureaucracies in particular, along with the traders and corporate sector, harped on the liberalization bandwagon. Therefore the

transnational corporations barged into the national agricultural markets and started transforming the so called “comparative advantage” of various nations into vulnerabilities. Case after case exposed the schemes of the advanced world to rip off the poor economies with the help of weapons of WTO’s rules. Various countries felt helpless in arguing their case in WTO negotiations and CSOs / NGOs saw through the whole game played by the agents of globalization on the stage of WTO. As a response to this emerging scenario, farmers’ organizations, human rights organizations, CSOs and social / political activists questioned the very notion of FAO-defined food security and brought forward the concept of food sovereignty.

Food Sovereignty:

The concept of food sovereignty first came into being in 1996 as a response to WTO’s rules regarding agriculture. Via Campesina, a coalition of renowned farmers’ organizations across the globe, while explaining various dimensions of this concept in its statement, started with the following in a way of defining it:

“Food is a basic human right. This right can only be realized in a system where food sovereignty is guaranteed. Food sovereignty is the right of each nation to maintain and develop its own capacity to produce its basic foods respecting cultural and productive diversity. We have the right to produce our own food in our own territory. Food sovereignty is a precondition to genuine food security.” (Via Campesina, 1996: p.1)

About five years later, its International Planning Committee (IPC) further elaborated it:

.. ...food sovereignty comprises four priority areas, or pillars: the right to food; access to productive resources; mainstreaming of agro-ecological production; trade and local markets.... The *right to food* pillar is concerned with developing a human rights approach to individual entitlement to safe, nutritious and culturally acceptable food. The *access to productive resources* pillar deals with the promotion of access to land, water, genetic and other natural resources and with the distribution of benefits which are derived from their use. Genetic resource ownership and use is an important issue within this pillar. The pillar dealing with *agricultural production models* advocates the mainstreaming of agro-ecological production, which is defined as the application of ecological principles to the design and management of agro-ecological systems. The final pillar, *trade and food*, aims to promote policies which tackle the effects of subsidized exports, food dumping, artificially low agricultural prices and other negative elements of the agricultural trade model. that the framework is a 'total package'; that the four pillars of the framework can not be isolated from each other and that reform of food and agriculture requires fundamental change. (Lee, p.6, 9)

As mentioned earlier, more the CSOs experienced helplessness and frustration in playing an effective role in WTO negotiations, more they came to advocate for the concept of food sovereignty. In such a situation, IPC planned its first mobilization on the occasion of WFS 2002. At the camp of CSOs / NGOs, established in Rome parallel to WFS, the main theme was food sovereignty, which was thoroughly discussed, disseminated and thus commitments made. In line with this, an impressive rally was taken out on the streets of Rome, which fully exhibited the concept of food sovereignty by the banners, posters and flags.

Meanwhile, Doha round tried to pacify the activism of the world’s civil society through Doha Development Agenda but in vain. By then CSOs / NGOs had gained substantial knowledge about the WTO, they had rather educated the respective negotiators and their

demands more and more aligned with the concept of food sovereignty. As a result food sovereignty movement (FSM) became strong and its advocates were fully capable of handling all the food related issues in its fold.

From 23rd -27th February 2007 the 'World Forum for Food Sovereignty' convened in Mali. This meeting sought to clarify the objectives and actions of the Food Sovereignty movement. Seven themes were discussed: trade policies and local markets, local knowledge and technology, access to and control over natural resources, sharing territories between sectors, conflict and disaster response, migration and production models. In terms of trade policies, the demand is for "...a radical change in the rules that govern food and agriculture at the international level, removing these from the WTO and challenging bilateral and regional trade agreements and policies, based on the neo-liberal model of economic development which reduces farmers, fishers, food and farming to focus on trade-able commodities." . In terms of production methods, the objective is to "...promote the use of locally-controlled, diverse, small-scale agro-ecological production methods and artisanal fisheries in all regions of the world." (Lee, p.9)

Right to Food:

Main thrust of food sovereignty movement (FSM) was that food was a fundamental right because this is what right to life should mean. This put FAO and other UN bodies on the defensive because since 1948 they had earned the reputation of creators and promoters of human rights. Hence FAO and human rights commission of the UN probably wanted to come out strongly to declare food as a right. In fact UN agencies, out of their experience, felt very confident that just putting a language of rights on the paper would take the sting out of the FSM. It was in this context that a section of civil society was suffering from the euphoria that the WFS 2002 would declare food as a fundamental right. Apprehensions of corporate and traders' lobby aside UN/FAO could not afford to declare food as a right straight away. So a statement was circulated a day before the close of the summit which declared the same old "right of access to food" enveloped in a long sentence which was full of if and buts. This too disappeared from the actual declaration; rather the matter was referred to United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (UNHCHR). To a common man this 'right' means that one has a right to purchase food; so this right was just a damp squib. Simple "everyone has a right to food" would have meant that a hungry person could take the food from any source without being penalized.

In any case, the developments in this direction started and various discussions and meetings were held on the platform of UNHCHR and International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR); meanwhile FAO developed Voluntary Guidelines on the Right to Food (VGRF). In short, at WSF 2009, Ms Kyung-wha Kang, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights stated:

The right to food means that every woman, man and child has a right to access, at all times, to affordable and adequate food or means for its procurement, . . ., The full realization of the right to food and freedom from hunger may need to be achieved progressively. However, at the same time, States have the responsibilities to take immediate action to move forward towards better realization of these rights, to prohibit discrimination in the enjoyment of these rights and to ensure the satisfaction of, at the very least, the minimum essential levels required to be free from hunger. (Statement by Kang, 2009)

Nonetheless, Special Rapporteur on the right to food made critical comments on the summit's declaration and stressed for accountability:

Accountability based on the right to food is not a luxury, or an add-on to the two tracks that have hitherto characterized our actions to achieve food security – 1° direct action to immediately tackle hunger for the most vulnerable and 2° medium- and long-term development programmes to eliminate the root causes of hunger and poverty.... The past approaches have failed, in no small part because of the absence of accountability and follow up on solemn commitments made summit after summit. We now have a historic opportunity to fix the system of global governance, in order to ensure that this trend is reversed. If we fail to seize this moment, we will be judged harshly by those who will succeed us. (Statement by De Schutter, 2009)

Advocates of all three concepts claim that their main aim is to remove hunger and reduce the number of undernourished & malnourished people from the world. However they approach the problem quite differently. Looking from the implementation point of view, actions and responsibilities would fall under the governments no matter which concept they follow. In other words it would totally depend on the functionaries of a certain state and the political will of the respective rulers which concept they prefer—their definition of national interest and sovereignty would be the key to the choice. So far, there is hardly any state which wants to abide by the prescription of food sovereignty as most of the countries are members of WTO and United Nations (UN) and find it difficult to take the route of food sovereignty. As regards ‘right to food’ path, as Graham Richez establishes, even the rich countries and welfare states are not following it correctly. The main problem is that the food is considered a commodity in the way of realization of this right (Richez.2003)

However, taken all three together, these can be taken as legal, political and technical aspects—respectively representing ‘right to food’, food sovereignty and food security—of the same general issue of food. Similarly, these can be considered as relating to individual, national and multinational domains. (Harmon, FAO) Yet, from another angle, ‘right to food’ can be set as a goal; food security as the means to achieve that goal and food sovereignty as a policy to achieve such means. But in the real world of power-play, inequality, search for dominance and wealth, only the concept of food security seems to stand the ground. One of the reasons is the over-whelming power of the UN in setting the agenda for the donor community. The language and the objectives of the projects funded by the donors keep revolving around the notion of food security and thus most of the NGOs had to revert back to the litany of food security. Nevertheless, in the final analysis, due to impact of the discourse of ‘right to food’ and food sovereignty, the very concept and definition of food security has undergone a substantial change. In short, the concept of food security has been broadened so as to include every perceivable aspect of food and it is open for including more dimensions to it.

ISSUES AND CRISES FACING FOOD SECURITY

With the broadening of the concept of food security, food has captured the centre stage of a country's policy. A number of issues are related to it and food security can be affected and influenced by almost all types of crises—financial, energy, conflict, climate change, natural calamities, emergencies, etc.—and thus this needs a right governance with careful planning in advance.

Most of the researches, in particular the assessment studies of food security / insecurity, go by focusing on the components or dimensions of food security such as availability, accessibility, utilization (also called absorption) and stability.

Availability means “the availability of sufficient quantities of food of appropriate quality, supplied through domestic production or imports (including food aid).” (FAO, 2006) Food mainly consists of crop/plant-based products—cereal, vegetables, fruits, oilseed, pulses, etc.—, livestock-based (dairy products and meat), fisheries and poultry. That's why in a country like Pakistan all these sectors come under one department or ministry called Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock (MINFAL). In such an agricultural country, which possesses adequate resources—water, cultivatable land and suitable climate—water management, land entitlements, cropping patterns or preferences and agricultural methods or technologies would be the major issues which acutely affect the food production. Net food availability is calculated by making adjustments with imported or exported food; this, actually, could be quite different if the wastage or smuggling is taken into account.

Access is defined as “Access by individuals to adequate resources (entitlements) for acquiring appropriate foods for a nutritious diet. Entitlements are defined as the set of all commodity bundles over which a person can establish command given the legal, political, economic and social arrangements of the community in which they live (including traditional rights such as access to common resources).” (FAO, 2006)

On the world level and in Pakistan, enough food is available but a large number of people can't purchase it. The issue of access is more complicated as it is connected to socio-economic system / structure of a country, that's why it has been referred to entitlements and productive resources in the above-mentioned definition. Simply put, it depends on the income (level of poverty, unemployment etc.), percentage of income needed /spent on food and hunger-fighting strategies (safety nets, food stamps, charity, etc.). For instance, food in developing and poor countries is very expensive in the sense that a large portion of the income in such countries is spent on the basic food items. Comparatively speaking, only a small portion of incomes is spent on food in the advanced world.

Utilization means “utilization of food through adequate diet, clean water, sanitation and health care to reach a state of nutritional well-being where all physiological needs are met. This brings out the importance of non-food inputs in food security.” (FAO, 2006)

It is basically related to health and nutrition issues and depends on the quality of food and water, cooking methods, eating habits, knowledge or education of hygiene & nutrition and traditions of food distribution in the family. For example, if girl children and women have adequate food, it will have a long term effect on the health of the nation; in addition this will save a lot of resources which are generally spent on diseases and other health issues. All this also means that solving the problems of utilization would be even more

difficult; it would probably require a cultural revolution to improve the absorption of food.

Food Safety and GMOs

Technological advances in agriculture and particularly in food production has made possible to produce food in abundance with enhanced and desired qualities; this food in turn would be cheap and thus affordable for poor people. But, with the introduction of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), a sharp criticism of GM food has emerged and a lot of issues have been raised. Besides the main issue of control of GM seeds by big companies coupled with the negative effect on the livelihood of poor farming communities, environmental concerns and safety of such food have been raised on various forums. FAO has brought out the debate and the relevant concerns in its publication called ethical series. (FAO 2001) Meanwhile countries are required to frame bio-safety guidelines before they start experimenting or producing GM crops and plants. In this regard, experience of green revolution shows that once the new seeds came, these automatically replaced the old seeds and gradually the latter just vanished; hence the world is stuck with the seed varieties of the green revolution in spite of their defects. Same way, once the GM seeds dominate the agriculture, there would be no returning back. So extreme caution is being suggested all around meanwhile there is a strong campaign against the GM crops and GM food.

WTO-Related

WTO rules, trade liberalization and agricultural trade have been the focus of the food security discourse. The debates have been acutely contentious and consumed a lot of energy of the NGOs / CSOs. Thanks to the efforts of civil society, that terms like Agreement on Agriculture (AoA), its three pillars (domestic support, market access and export subsidies), various boxes—green, blue and amber—, non-tariff barriers (NTBs), Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary Measures (SPS), Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs), patenting, bio-piracy, plants breeders right legislations, etc. etc. have become household concepts. Accordingly, campaigning groups of countries like G-33 (Special Products), G-20, G-90 and so on, emerged and advocated for their particular positions in the WTO negotiations. Finally, due to their collective force, the WTO negotiation process was suspended.

The problem in essence had been that extraneous factors now could disturb the food security status of a country or a region as a whole, in various manners (In the past only invasions could do that). This problem will stay because it is not easy to counter the strong phenomena of globalization.

Commodification, Commodity Pricing and Financial Control

International trade of agricultural goods increasingly commoditized food products to such a level that farming communities couldn't save their own food and seeds as the standing crops (sometimes, even before sowing) would be sold. But its worst form came to the fore when the commodity pricing mechanism would not be dependent on the local conditions with specific input costs. And lastly, when the commodity markets were hit by speculation, it not only brought the food crisis but was followed by a full fledged financial crisis which made everyone fall down. At present, learning from the recent

financial crisis, efforts are being made to regulate the commodity future markets and put in place a risk management system to deal with the specter of speculation.

Country Specific Issues and Pakistan

Issues and possible crises may differ from country to country, to such an extent that an advantage of a country could damage other country. That's why the efforts to evolve a fair multi-lateral system are being made. If a country produces surplus food, it would like to sell it, at the same time would like to capture a market for its economic sustainability and would like to maximize the profits. On the other hand, if a country is very deficient in food production, would also be in favor of promoting the trade of food products but at the cheapest possible prices. Those countries which have reasonable status of self-sufficiency could be tempted to increase the production of a certain agricultural product, so as to increase the national revenues, but at the cost of their food crops. The real challenge for such countries is, whether they adopt sustainable, safe, defensive, conservative approach towards their agriculture to ensure the food security for their people or take the risk of following aggressive, greedy and crisis-prone strategies for their agriculture. In the final analysis it depends on their political circumstances which are crucial for choosing a particular course of action. Policy and governance aside, the actual productivity related issues in Pakistan are land use including land reforms, water availability or water management, trade policy about food items and other agricultural products, rural development, land rights for women and sustainable agriculture comprising agro-forestry, kitchen gardening, organic farming, etc. etc.

Crises—Lack of Stability

“To be food secure, a population, household or individual must have access to adequate food at all times. They should not risk losing access to food as a consequence of sudden shocks (e.g. an economic or climatic crisis) or cyclical events (e.g. seasonal food insecurity). The concept of stability can therefore refer to both the availability and access dimensions of food security.” (FAO, 2006)

Crises affecting the food security should not be strictly divided into internal and extraneous ones because in a “globalized” world these two generally become interconnected; however for the conceptual clarity these can be discussed separately. Drought, bad crop, unusually low yield, low rainfall, pest attacks, increased input costs (of electricity, diesel, fertilizers, pesticides and seeds), highly fluctuating production scenes, diversion to cash crop, floods and natural disasters could cause food shortages and hence could trigger a situation of a crisis. Meanwhile external factors may be supply-demand scenario of food items in the region or in the world, trade practices of the powerful countries & big companies vis-à-vis a country and international level food, fuel and finance crises as seen in the near past.

The main and persistent threat to the food security of developing world is from the WTO-induced trade laws. These not only put pressure on the countries to change laws but also restructure their agriculture and economy. This can be regarded as a permanent crisis. Related to this, other crises, like financial, GMO-induced epidemics, converting to agro-fuel crops on a large scale and international war are a possibility.

Pakistan is facing multiple crises already—related to governance, political instability, national insecurity, terrorism, ineffective regulatory mechanism, defective policies,

shortage of water and energy, deforestations, land degradation, faulty distributional mechanisms and overall corruption. As a whole, the country is facing sustainability issue in almost every field and on every front.

Another Way to Look at the Issues—IAASTD

The International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) “was sponsored by the United Nations, the World Bank and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Five UN agencies were involved: the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the UN Development Program (UNDP), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO).” It claims to provide “information on how agricultural knowledge, science and technology can be used to reduce hunger and poverty, improve rural livelihoods and human health, and facilitate equitable, environmentally, socially and economically sustainable development.” (IAASTD, 2008) It has discussed eight cross-cutting themes and its reports with the following headlines have been disseminated.

1. Bioenergy and Biofuel: Opportunities and Constraints
2. Business as Usual is Not an Option: Trade and Markets
3. Business as Usual is Not an Option: The Role of Institutions
4. Food Security in a Volatile World
5. Food Safety, Plant and Animal Health: Human Health and Sustainability Issues
6. Human Health and Nutrition
7. Towards Multifunctional Agriculture for Social, Environmental and Economic Sustainability

In this manner, most of the issues relevant to food security have been thoroughly discussed. As the process for these assessments was broad based, the merit of these reports is that they have encompassed all the critical aspects, concerns and fears which had been raised by the civil society and developing countries. Further, these have made bold observations which might have pinched the winners of food trade; that is probably the reason that its global report didn't win the agreement from USA, Canada and Australia, while 58 countries accepted it. For example, note the observations like these:

17. Opening national agricultural markets to international competition can offer economic benefits, but can lead to long term negative effects on poverty alleviation, food security and the environment without basic national institutions and infrastructure being in place...

18. Intensive export-oriented agriculture has increased under open market operations but has been accompanied by both benefits and adverse consequences depending on circumstances such as exportation of soil nutrients and water, unsustainable soil or water management or exploitative labor conditions in some cases.... (IAASTD, Global Summary, p.7)

Overall, all these various assessments raised the concerns of the poor farmers, rights of the farming communities, women rights in agriculture, about safety of GMOs and GM food, long term benefits of sustainable agriculture, etc. etc.

Lastly, it advocated for the multifunctional approach towards agriculture.

Agriculture operates within complex systems and is multifunctional in its nature. A multifunctional approach to implementing agricultural knowledge, science and technology (AKST) will enhance its impact on hunger and poverty, improving human nutrition and livelihoods in an equitable, environmentally, socially and economically sustainable manner. Multifunctionality recognizes the inescapable interconnectedness of agriculture's different roles and functions, i.e. agriculture is a multi-output activity producing not only commodities, but also non-commodity outputs such as environmental services, landscape amenities and cultural heritages. (IAASTD, Issues in Brief # 7, p1)

In fact, under this concept, it raised awareness about the importance of agro-forestry, organic farming, natural resource management, conservation agriculture and agro-ecology. Overall these reports create an atmosphere for all parties to sit together, debate the issues, understand each other's points of view and find a collective way out. Due to this, these reports have earned appreciation from various quarters.

PAKISTAN'S SITUATION

Food security situation in Pakistan could become a peculiar and interesting case study. One set of the opinion makers keeps thanking God for bestowing this country on them, highlights all the resources and potentials of this nation, problems notwithstanding, and is hopeful that this country will emerge as a strong and prosperous nation of the world—*inshaAllah* (if Allah likes) These people are generally the spokespersons of governments, military, civilian bureaucracy, traders, landlords, clergy and overall literate and well off people. Quite contrary to this, a tiny group of intellectuals and knowledgeable individuals considers it a failed state; it faces serious threats to its existence and has already become a soar point on the globe. Unfortunately the latter view is agreed to and shared by the international community of opinion makers. In accordance with these two streams, on the one side Pakistan is a nuclear power, has a strong army, very dynamic stock of human beings, rivers (water), fertile lands, enviable biodiversity, a long coast and so on; on the other its economy is in shambles; country is heavily indebted and spends about half of its budget on debt servicing; is trapped into nagging crises of inflation, terrorism, emergencies and corruption; and presently is acutely short of electricity, fuel, infrastructure and developmental activity. Food availability, which it had been managing to some extent, is emerging as a new crisis. Roughly, a decade ago, shortages of single food items following the respective price hikes started; at different times different items were hit. But for the last five years a combined and overall crisis of price-hike in the food sector has come and threatens to set in.

Food Production

From the very beginning Pakistan is considered as an agricultural society and country. Performance of agricultural sector has a direct bearing on the food production because this includes almost every form of food production—food crops, livestock, fisheries and poultry. Economic Survey of Pakistan (ES) always starts its section on agriculture with a note of its importance.

The *Agriculture* sector continues to play a central role in Pakistan's economy. It is the second largest sector, accounting for over 21 percent of GDP, and remains by far the largest employer, absorbing 45 percent of the country's total labor force. Nearly 62 percent of the country's population resides in rural areas, and is directly or indirectly linked with agriculture for their livelihood. The *Agriculture* sector's strong linkages with the rest of the economy are not fully captured in the statistics. While on the one hand, the sector is a primary supplier of raw materials to downstream industry, contributing substantially to Pakistan's exports, on the other, it is a large market for industrial products such as fertilizer, pesticides, tractors and agricultural implements. (Economic Survey 2009-10, p.13)

ES 2009-10 seems to break the tradition and has raised some alarms, although the production is not drastically different, given the usual erratic trend of Pakistan's crops' production if seen over a long period of time. The performance is represented by the following Table 2.3 of the survey. Another typical paragraph of agricultural section of these surveys which is representative of Pakistan's crops is repeated in every survey with new figures.

There are two principal crop seasons in Pakistan, namely the "Kharif", the sowing season of which begins in April-June and harvesting during October-December; and the "Rabi", which begins in October-December and ends in April-May. Rice, sugarcane, cotton, maize, mong, mash, bajra and jowar are "Kharif" crops while wheat, gram, lentil (masoor), tobacco, rapeseed, barley and mustard are "Rabi" crops. Major crops, such as, wheat, rice, cotton and sugarcane account for 82.0 percent of the value added in the major crops. The value added in major crops accounts for 32.8 percent of the value added in overall agriculture. Thus, the four major crops (wheat, rice, cotton, and sugarcane), on average, contribute 33.1 percent to the value added in overall agriculture and 7.1 percent to GDP. The minor crops account for 11.1 percent of the value added in overall agriculture. Livestock contributes 53.2 percent to agricultural value added – much more than the combined contribution of major and minor crops (43.9%). (Economic Survey 2009-10, p.14)

TABLE 1

Table 2.3: Agriculture Growth (Percent)

Year	Agriculture	Major Crops	Minor crops	Livestock	Fishery	Forestry
2003-4	2.4	1.7	3.9	2.9	2.0	3.2
2004-5	6.5	17.7	1.5	2.3	0.6	32.4
2005-6	6.3	3.9	0.4	15.8	20.8	1.1
2006-7	4.1	7.7	1.0	2.8	15.4	5.1
2007-8	1.0	6.4	10.9	4.2	9.2	13.0
2008-9	4.0	7.3	1.7	3.5	2.3	3.0
2009-10 P	2.0	0.2	1.2	4.1	1.4	2.2

P= Provisional Source: Federal Bureau of Statistics

Taken from: Economic Survey of Pakistan 2009-10, p.14

From these economic surveys and other statistics, one can derive some trends in Pakistan food production. One, that wheat, rice, maize, grams, pulses and oilseed crops are important food crops in Pakistan, which are essential to maintain the situation of food security in the country. Two, agriculture's contribution to the GDP has been decreasing by about 0.5 % a year but the workforce employed remains pretty much the same; it indicates falling incomes of the people making living through agriculture; which in turn adversely affects the accessibility dimension of food security. Three, the sector has been growing at the average rate of about 4.0 percent which is commensurate with its population growth. But it has been very erratic (with the extremes of -5.3% in 1992-93 to 11.7% in 1995-96). Four, value addition by the major crops has fallen from 41% in 2001-02 to 32.8% in 2009-10 while that of minor crops slightly increased. Nevertheless a surprising change in value addition occurred in livestock from 25.3 percent in 1996 to 53.2 percent in 2009-10. As a whole it seems that the major crops' scene is problematic. More serious than their falling share in the value addition is their erratic output, which may create crises from time to time.

A study on food crisis in Pakistan says:

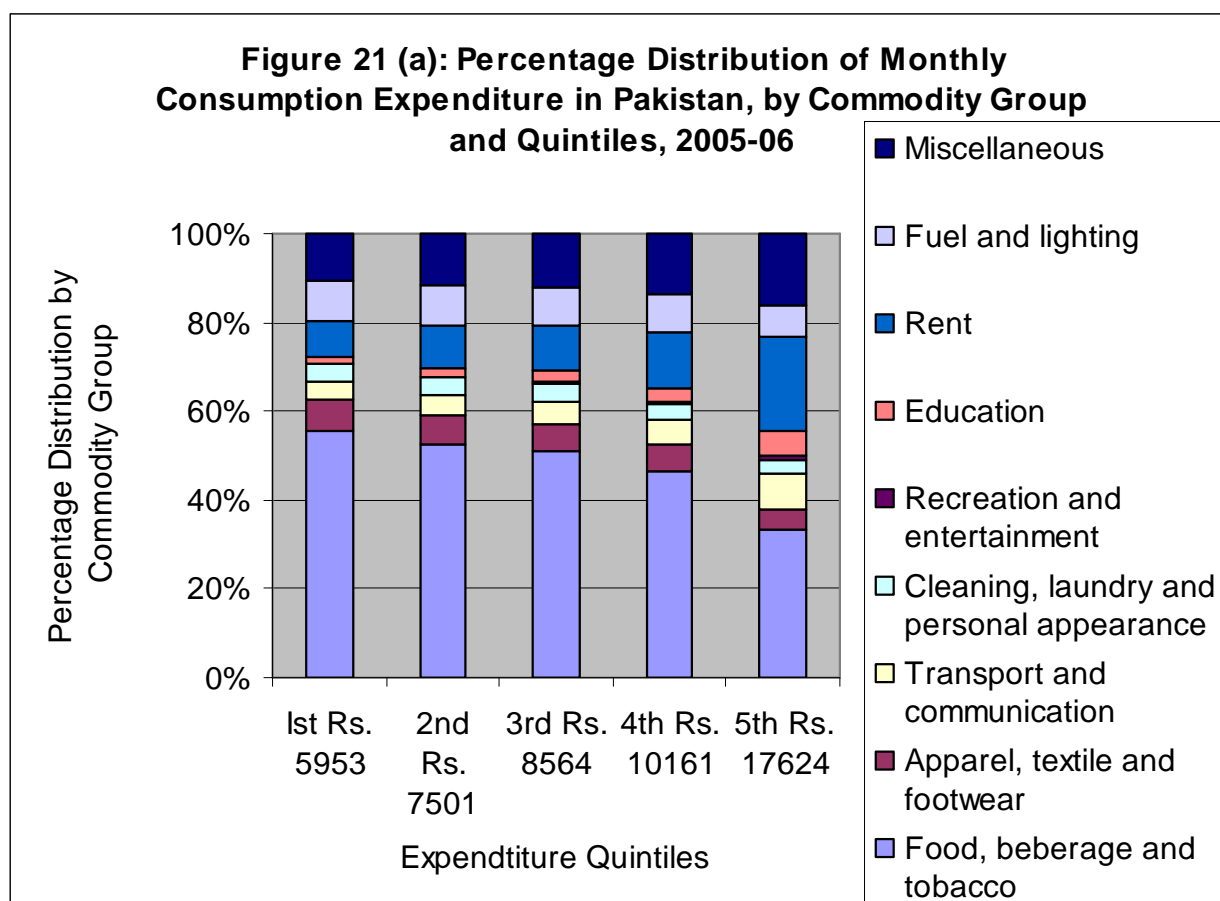
Overall, food crops' production in Pakistan can be considered adequate; shortfall and gaps in some crops can be covered by others—in quantity as well as value. As the area for the cultivation of cotton, sugarcane and other cash crops has not been increasing at the cost of food crops' area, the fear of cash crops becoming the reason for low production remains unfounded. Nevertheless,

Pakistan is regarded as a net food importing country because of imports of milk products and other food items like tea, processed foods and luxury items. (Food Crisis in Pakistan: Real or Artificial, 2008, p. 22)

This doesn't mean that there is no need to improve agriculture; in fact there is a lot of room for its development. All this means that as regards the supply side, agriculture sector of Pakistan is quite adequate and can't be blamed for any food crisis.

Inflation, Incomes and Expenditure on Food

Price hike of food items, inflation in general and consequently falling incomes hamper the accessibility to food. According to ES 2008-9 and ES 2009-10, inflation of food group was 15.0, 26.6 and 14.5 percent respectively during the financial years 2007-8, 2008-9 and 2009-10 (July to April), while the general CPI (Commodity Price Index) stood at 10.2, 22.4 and 13.3 respectively. (ES 2008-9 and ES 2009-10). In other words the total rise in food prices was about 66 % from July 2007 to April 2010. Incomes couldn't catch up so quickly and hence purchasing powers of a large majority were curtailed. As the following figure shows, about 80% people spend more than 50% on food, beverages and tobacco category.



Source: Household Integrated Economic Survey 2005-06

(This graphical presentation about the distribution of expenditure is for whole of Pakistan and only for the year 2005-06. For comparison with the Rural and Urban figures and with the other years like 2001-02 and 2004-05, please see Tables 3, 4 and 5, which are given in the Annexure 2)

Although this high inflation is explained by the inflationary trends in the world, particularly in oil prices; but in Pakistan it is mainly due to lack of regulatory mechanisms which are almost ineffective or non-existent. In the recent months prices are rising again; this time reportedly due to floods.

Impact of WTO and Trade Liberalization on Food Security

Calculating a clear cut and quantifiable impact on the food security is difficult because there was no wholesome bench mark—food security assessments started after the laws and institutional arrangement in accordance with the WTO had been put in place. The debates and researches carried out have been mostly of theoretical nature and had been raising alarms. Prices of food products in Pakistan remained generally lower, so there was not seen any large scale dumping of wheat, rice, maize, etc. as was the case of maize in Mexico or rice in Philippine. Nevertheless studies have been taken up on the premise of “what would have happened” if Pakistan had liberalized its trade for wheat, rice, maize, rapeseed, etc. earlier than 2000 (Pakistan had fully utilized its available time for adjusting the tariffs). Irrespective of whether the models of analysis were right or not, there have been two opposite conclusions—one of the studies came up with the result that Pakistan would have gained (Zulfiqar, 2008) and the other concluded that it caused a net loss to Pakistan in 1997-1998 (Mahmood, Sheikh and Akmal, 2010).

From the review of such studies it is clear that Pakistan manifested a lot of changes in its laws and institutions dealing with the agriculture under the structural adjustment programs and hence weakened the regulatory mechanisms which were in place to absorb the shocks of shortfall of food items. Hence, now it is more susceptible to crises brought by the international food prices, inflations or financial problems. Overall state is not left with any capability to manage / control the food emergencies occurring from time to time.

Crises Facing Pakistan

These can be divided into two sets; one set relates to current or potential crises which will directly affect the food production while the other set belongs to extraneous crises which could turn out to be disastrous for Pakistan because of its vulnerabilities.

Water

ES 2009-10 has regarded the water situation very alarming.

“Pakistan’s agricultural performance is closely linked with the supply of irrigation water. As shown in Table 2.4, against the normal surface water availability at canal heads of 103.5 million acre feet (MAF), the overall (both for *Kharif* as well as *Rabi*) water availability has been less in the range of 2.5 percent (2005-06) to 20.6 percent (2004-05). However, it remained less by 2.5 percent in 2005-06 against the normal availability. Relatively speaking, *Rabi* season faced shortage of water during 2009-10.” (Economic Survey 2009-10, p.15)

Table 2

% increase/decrease over the Average surface water availability (Ave.=103.5 MAF)

Year	% increase/decrease
2003-4	-5.9
2004-5	-20.6
2005-6	-2.5
2006-7	-8.9
2007-8	-4.6
2008-9	-11.3
2009-10	-9.9

Source: Economic Survey of Pakistan 2009-10 (portion of the Table 2.4, p.15)

The trend seems really alarming but more alarming is the suggested solution that this could be tackled by more reservoirs (indirectly stressing for constructing dams and barrages).

Pakistan possesses the world's largest contiguous irrigation system commonly called as Indus Basin Irrigation system. It commands an area of about 14.3 million hectares (35 million acres) and encompasses the Indus River and its major tributaries. The system includes three large reservoirs (Tarbela, Mangla and Chashma), 23 barrages/ head-works /siphons, 12 inter-river links and 45 canal commands extending for about 60,800 km to serve over 140,000 farmer operated watercourses. Irrigated agriculture is the backbone of the national economy. The level of agricultural production is directly related to the availability and effective use of water as a major input. The demand for water is increasing rapidly while the opportunities for further development of water resources or maintaining their use to existing levels are diminishing. The shortage of water particularly in Rabi season has further aggravated the ongoing water. (Economic Survey 2009-10, p.34)

ES has painted a very bleak picture and quoting a table of the Planning Commission projected the per capita water availability of 858 cubic meters in 2025 while at present it is estimated to be 1066 (falling below 1000 is considered a critical stage) and it was 5260 in 1951. (Economic Survey 2009-10, p.34)

Land

Problems of water scarcity may not be easy to solve. Previous solutions in the form of irrigation projects have caused permanent damages, one of which has been the land degradation due to water logging and salinity. Then, the land reclamation projects came, which proved very costly and hence were not very efficient on cost-benefit ratio. Recently, the fresh legislation on Corporate Farming threatens to disturb the land entitlements. It proposes to do away with the land ceiling and to help create large farms which will be provided water, electricity and other facilities on the priority basis. This has attracted the foreign firms and Gulf States so as to buy land from the state—mostly these would be shoddy deals any way (like the privatization deals).

For years the agenda for land reforms has been on political burner and accordingly three efforts by the governments have been made. Now the things keep moving in the opposite direction, specifically after the Sharia Court's decision that fixing the land ceiling or

taking away land from the individuals by the state is un-Islamic. Still CSOs are campaigning about the land rights for women, tenancy rights, and land reforms.

In fact, various assessments of food security, including the world development reports of the World Bank have recommended that the entitlements of resources to small scale farmers may have a positive affect on the food security of an agricultural country like Pakistan. This is what the proponents of food sovereignty have been stressing that the realization of the rights of the poor farming communities, including right to land, water seeds, traditional agricultural practice would improve the food security situation of a country and in addition will help promote agro-ecology.

In various regions of the country, the record of land entitlements is missing which has encouraged land grabbers to take over large tracts of land. States' land is usually given to the retired military officers and political influential and still abundance of waste land is there. In particular the ownership of land in the riverine belts needs to be properly recorded. In short consolidation of land and entitlements has to be straightened up.

Seeds, Genetic Resources and GMOs

The main activity of the government seen in the field of agriculture is in the seed sector. According to ES 2009-10:

- During the year 2009-10, nineteen new seed companies were registered raising the total number of registered seed companies to 611 in the country including four public sector seed companies and five multinationals.
- Fifteen crop varieties were approved (wheat-4, cotton-4, oilseed-4, pulses-3, fodder-1, and vegetable-1) and thirty seven crop varieties were evaluated for registration.
- During the period under report, a total of 523.14 thousand acres of different crops offered by the various seed agencies were inspected for certification purposes.
- Under the provision of seed act enforcement, 33 cases were filed in the different Courts of Law against the seed dealers found selling substandard seeds. (Economic Survey 2009-10, p.23)

Mostly the foreign seed companies extend credit to farmers for the purchase of their seeds and chemical inputs and have captured a substantial part of the market. Similarly local companies which have registered in the Seed Certification Department mostly sell the products on behalf of the foreign companies.

Whether there is any record or Register of genetic resources of the country which has been recognized by World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is not known. Similarly it is not known whether the bio-piracy has been going on or not. Nevertheless the development of agriculture biotechnology has been in full swing. "Currently, there are 29 biotech centers / institutions in the country. However few centers have appropriate physical facilities and trained manpower to develop genetically modified crops. Most of the activities have been on rice and cotton. ... National Biosafety Guidelines have been promulgated in April 2005." (Zafar, 2007, p.1500).

BT cotton seed illegally entered and has been sown in various part of Pakistan; according to the CSOs/NGOs it didn't perform well and farmers have suffered losses. Therefore there is strong campaign against BT cotton by these organizations. Reportedly, only public sector is developing agriculture biotechnology in Pakistan but multinational companies have also entered under new laws. (Zafar, 2007, p.1507)

It seems that during the course of time all the local / indigenous seeds will be replaced by the new seeds or at least under the new ownership. Coupled with this control over seed sector the monopoly over the credit sector could create a real vulnerability as regards the food security of Pakistan.

Floods, Emergencies, Energy and Terrorism

Floods on a large scale have recently hit Pakistan with devastating effects and long term repercussion on the agriculture sector and food production. If the government agencies respond properly by providing credit, seeds and other facilities and make sure that sowing will not be affected, this could turn into a boom in food production, but given the lack of capacity, inefficiency and corruption in the government working, there is less hope for optimism.

There is always a danger in Pakistan that some other emergency situation comes up and takes the attention of the government away from the rehabilitation work. Energy situation is not less than a crisis itself. Why suddenly the electricity generation slumped on the eve of the change of the government in late 2007 will remain a mystery for all times to come. Shortfall in electricity affects all other sectors of life; basically it hits at the very root of economy, by reducing production, growth and hence overall development. And, if it is coupled with the rising food prices, financial problems and overall unrelenting inflation the situation gets really bad.

Terrorism is not yet over and keeps compounding other crises Pakistan is facing. Given already a dilapidated situation of food security, particularly the availability of food items, it may create a famine-like situation in the terrorism-affected FATA area.

To deal with such a crisis-ridden situation governance of a high quality would be needed. Unfortunately, the political instability, political confrontations, bickering among the premium institutions of the state, foreign interventions and tensions in the region don't seem to subside in the near future. And there is main threat of acute food insecurity giving rise to malnourishment, hunger and ultimately social strife.

ANALYSIS

1. A recent food security assessment report, in a way of summing up, says:

Around 61 percent (84 out of 137) of the districts are food deficient in terms of both agriculture and animal-based food availability... the number of surplus food producing districts has declined from 34 in the year 2003-04 to 24 in 2009-10. Proportionally, the food deficit districts have increased from 62 percent in 2003 to 76 percent in 2009. Many factors are responsible for the decline in food availability. Some of them include population growth, rapid urbanization, turning cultivable land into housing societies, climate change especially reduced water availability and brief rainy seasons, increase in prices of inputs, lack of coherent agricultural development policy, and shrinking investment both from the public as well as the private sector in agricultural research and development.” (Food Insecurity in Pakistan, 2009, p.30)

The trend of moving from secure to food insecure and from low food insecurity to extreme food insecurity continues and during this study 45 districts reportedly were found extremely food insecure.

The intensity of food insecurity in the country has increased since 2003. Many households have become insecure due to deteriorating socio-economic conditions. The increases in prices of food commodities have pushed many people below the food security line. Provinces with wheat flour crises showed a sharp increase in food insecurity. Across the country, 48.6 percent of the population is food insecure, with various degree of insecurity. Of the total food insecure population 22.4 percent are extremely food insecure in the country.” (Food Insecurity in Pakistan, 2009, p.98)

The conclusion therefore is that the country will be facing a continuous deterioration of food security.

2. First, let's see what options, under the normal circumstances, Pakistan's government has. Theoretically speaking, it can intervene in the agriculture sector through extending credit so as to attract the farmers towards sowing a particular crop. Further, it can give subsidies, control imports or exports and regulate the supplies through procurement & maintaining stocks. Another way is to ensure better quality seeds and chemical inputs for enhancing the yield or introducing technological innovations for better production. However the realities are different. Though ES 2009-10 quotes 166 + billion Rupees as total credit extended during the financial year, the truth is that no funds are being injected into these institutions. Credit mainly is being given only on paper and credit is basically revolving from year to year—at the end of a year recovery is shown and another loan of the same amount is sanctioned. Food departments' role has already been curtailed and as a result procurement quota reduced; so now such steps can only be taken in emergency situations. Similarly seed and chemical input market is mostly in private hands and seed certification department is acting as a rubber stamp. All such options do need the funds too and if the state is already starved how can it inject some funds in the sector. Only option left is to control export or import of food items and that too by bending the rules of WTO.

Second, what the government is doing at present towards improving food security? Mostly, it is collecting the statistics and producing various documents. Then, its various institutions under MINFAL are implementing various projects funded by the UN (FAO, WFP, etc.) and the donor community, the thrust of which is to develop certain scenarios

and then argue in favor of transforming the institutions to get tuned to the trade liberalization ideology and the WTO regime. For example, a number of research centers for developing agriculture biotechnology have been set up with the help of donors' funding. Other area where the projects are coming is the livestock sector because the dairy products are almost in the hands of foreign companies and they want to see this sector a developed one.

Government doesn't have any effective regulatory mechanism to promote sowing, harvesting or procurement. The total procurement target of wheat is only 20 percent of the total production, which it can utilize in responding to the shortages. However it does arrogate itself the powers of awarding licenses to export or import. The government can play an effective role by improving data collection and analysis and pre-empting crises by distributing projections and alerts. (Food Crisis in Pakistan: Real or Artificial, 2008, p.36)

Now, the government is unable to take any step divergent from what the international atmosphere of WTO, trade liberalization and inter-governmental bodies suggest or recommend. The government of Pakistan is not inclined to work against the international trends. However it can proactively put in place the legislation toward ensuring the "right to food" and then utilize it for begging the support from the UN bodies and the international community. It has already ratified most of the related conventions. Similarly it can tacitly encourage the critical section of academia and researchers, including the civil society, in raising the issues against globalization, WTO and the transnational companies.

3. This is an era of globalization and market forces are in command of all spheres of life. The agents of the phenomena, i.e. big powers and the corporate are its main beneficiaries; they are so powerful that the rest of the world has to get in line with their dictates. This prescribes a particular paradigm of development comprising the ideology of neo-liberal economic model, and one likes it or not, has to follow it. The critics have equated it to an era of re-colonization.

Take the example of recent financial crisis, which originated in the US and then involved the financial institutions of other advanced countries, in the end resulted in the inflation and soaring food prices in the developing world. But in the declarations of the G-20, the recommendations focus on pooling the financial resources, absorbing the shocks of the crisis and putting in place the risk management system to avoid the similar crisis in the future. They didn't do away with the speculation, the very root cause of the crisis. For the developing world they increased the resources of IMF and the World Bank so that these countries could borrow more so as to get more indebted. There is nobody to ask for the compensation of the damage this financial crisis caused to the poor world.

Take another example of IAASTD's reports. Whereas these take a critical look at what has happened during the recent years as a result of trade liberalization and suggest corrective measures. On the one hand these validate the concerns of the developing countries, on the other these reports stress the need, on the part of the developing nations, to take steps to cope with the circumstances of recent global environment of trade liberalization and overall globalization. So at the end of each report, a policy prescription or important points are highlighted. In totality the thrust of all these recommendations to the developing countries is that they should increase investment, particularly in research and development and in search of modern technologies. Moreover they should build new institutions or transform their existing ones. Basically these reports want to maintain the

status quo of trade and markets and in no way suggest that the developing countries should rebel against the WTO rules or reject it altogether. In essence IAASTD tries to build consensus between the wolf and the lamb. In such an atmosphere what can and should the civil society do towards providing food to the hungry and the malnourished.

4. At the larger international level what the civil society accomplished by stalling and suspending the WTO negotiations was a success story; still the fight is not over. At the national level and particularly in a country like Pakistan, it can't play a pivotal role to fight the specter of food insecurity. Having said this, there is certainly a role for the civil society. First, as the experience has shown, it needs to create a knowledge-based conceptual clarity about the issues at hand. This has been done and should continue through research and studies. Then, on the basis of this knowledge, awareness campaigns may start; no matter these have a limited impact. In line with this, in accordance with the available resources the right holders, victims, losers, vulnerable or affected communities may be organized so as to mitigate the threat of food insecurity. The existing strategies of advocacy, networking and community organization should also aim at the government. Farmers' charter of demands, poor people's "rights to food" agenda, and women's land rights, etc. etc. may be formulated and lobbying with the government may be carried out. At the minimum, civil society should express its position on the subject. SAAG's statement on the food crisis of 2008, which is given in the following, is the best example.

Press Release:

SAAG terms current food crisis man-made and un-necessary

Lahore, May 31, 2008: The on-going food crisis in Pakistan is purely man-made and unnecessary one, mainly led by the governance failure, mismanagement and the result of trade manipulation. The Members of Sustainable Agriculture Action Group (SAAG) reviewed the current situation of unprecedented soaring food crisis in their annual meeting held in Lahore, Pakistan. SAAG is a national network of civil society organizations and small farmer's groups to promote sustainable agriculture and advocate pro-poor policies in the country.

According to SAAG members, the agriculture system set in place by the Government has always been un-satisfactory, that serve the interests of big farmers & landlords and traders only, not the general masses. A secretive nexus between vested interests of Government functionaries and security agencies have by design enabled smuggling, speculation, price manipulations, hoarding and unwarranted export sale of wheat even before it was harvested, they observed. The crisis has more to do with corruption than the free market. The network believes that such food crisis is doomed to recur unless serious measures are taken to rescue Pakistan 's agriculture and rural livelihoods from being destroyed.

In the short run, SAAG recommends the formulation of adequate legal framework and its implementation mechanism to ensure optimum food requirements for all, not to be overridden by export-targets. The call of the Government is to ensure food sovereignty. Safety nets and social security for the poorest should be set in place through food stamps, public distribution and other mechanisms. No ad-hoc steps are recommended in the food

trade as was in the case with Afghanistan leading to hoarding and storages. (In the case of Afghanistan, regularized, transparent and pre-agreed fair trade agreement must be followed, they added.)

SAAG members were of the view that under no circumstances should security agencies be allowed to intervene or manage matters pertaining to the food procurement, distribution and cross-border trade as it inevitably leads to corruption, exacerbating the problem.

The network said that it was the so-called green revolution—the agricultural technologies adopted during the 60s—that also lay at the heart of the problem. Modern agricultural model had led to soil deterioration, degradation of biodiversity, environmental poisoning, and lowering nutrition of food crops apart from increased poverty and poor health, they maintained. Besides rectifying the food management system, SAAG believes that the solution lies in returning to “labour intensive biodiversity-based natural farming” which alone can re-generate our soils, increase yield, provide livelihoods and ensure food sovereignty to the masses.

SAAG Members also rejected lowering trade barriers and removal of export bans under the WTO regime, which had limited the authority of the governments to regulate and manage such crises. They demanded more flexibility in WTO negotiations for developing countries especially on food security crops.

(Food Crisis in Pakistan: Real or Artificial”, 2008, p.35)

CONCLUSION

Various perceptual flaws may complicate the situation for remedies and blur the vision for finding a way towards improving the state of food security in Pakistan. First, most of the people consider multilateralism as the right path for the future development and is considered better than bilateral mechanism of doing trade. This underscores the importance of globalization phenomena and its institutions like (WTO). In other words this suggests that the nations should agree to the global or international rules of the game whether in rule making or abiding by these rules. Major flaw in this whole thinking is that it is presumed that all nations believe in equality and they have no vested interests to pursue for which they would easily trample over the weaker ones. Equality may be the ultimate goal of the humanity but the reality dictates that nations want to maximize their wealth and power and there can't be a win-win situation in absolute terms. In other words powerful states are not human rights organizations, out there to support and help the poor people of developing countries. Therefore the mechanisms and institutions they would create like WTO, World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and UN would serve their own purpose as an ultimate consequence. Hence, becoming a part of all these global institutions may be considered as a compulsion— historic in nature—or because of ignorance.

Now, at the next level, the nature of the third world nation states is such that these can't exist within the confines of a national boundary. Again, history aside, the reason is that these are hardly sovereign or representative of their people; following the procedures of representation notwithstanding. That means the people who are in control of these states actually have their own interests of garnering power and wealth and not there to serve the people as it is generally perceived. If, for a change, the elite of a country takes such a step to break free from the international stranglehold, it is continuously threatened by the world powers. In short, the rulers of the third world states don't want to put their power in jeopardy by resorting to people-friendly and sovereign agenda. The truth is that the ruling classes have their own vested interests in keeping intact the international system of governance and they fall in line with the agents of globalization; this is grossly against the interest of their masses. Simply put, it doesn't suit the decision makers of the developing countries to challenge the interests of the powerful nations. As a result they neither like to nor able to pursue the policies for national or people's interests. Besides, the decision makers—politicians and bureaucracies—are socialized and trained in such a manner that they don't feel obligated to fight against hunger and poverty of their people.

At the third level this is a misperception that civil society organizations or activists can solve the problem of the society. Pakistani civil society or the civil societies of developing countries are not too strong to bring a drastic political change in the country, even if we presume that they sincerely want to reduce the difficulties of the poor people. Generally the CSOs/NGOs are dependent on the funds of their own governments, international organizations and of the powerful nations. In any case, civil society at least can make modest contributions by collecting the voices of the poor and the hungry and then spreading some awareness about the issues in hand. Something is better than nothing.

Lastly, UN is the most deceptive institution; it seems from the language of its proceedings and declarations that this body wants to solve the problems of the poor and

helpless around the world, but in fact they want to bind these people through their governments so they may not break away from the shackles of such rules which have kept them in bondage for centuries. UN bureaucracies have the expertise of manifesting a hypocritical system which they inherit from the cold war era; on the one hand to satisfy the socialist block and poor countries through composing humanitarian language and verses and on the other to serve the interest of capitalist block to facilitate them in penetrating the developing economies and the markets.

Thus, the way out should be based on what the poor and hungry themselves can accomplish, in a country like Pakistan. In the context of food security, the very producers of food have the least access to it. The first principle therefore should be that the producers secure the food as a first priority. In other words, in Pakistan, where 88 percent of the farmers are small scale farmers owning less than five hectares of land, farm workers should only sell the surplus food. This is very much possible by organizing them and making them aware of the threats of food insecurity for their households looming large during the coming days. The advice for mixed cropping pattern, seed saving, grain stocking, livestock for their household dairy needs, vegetable gardening and appropriate agro-forestry may be propagated among these communities.

The main problems for them may be the dependence (merely psychological or real) on chemical inputs and the need for credit. The next problem may be the greed to earn more money by sowing cash crops or risk their resources in some other adventure. The farmers' organizations should inculcate in the rural masses the traditional values, such as the sense of securing their annual quota of food grain, saving and sharing the seeds, and keeping intact the village level solidarity and cooperation. Next step is organizing them on village level through cooperatives so that they collectively may control the pricing and marketing of their produce; keep an extra village level stock for emergency and advocate for the mitigation of their other difficulties. As a third step, every farm should start planning for organic farming. In accordance with the requirement, the farm should have enough livestock for manure and natural fertilizer. Similarly, there should be enough trees and plants which provide pesticides (like *neem*).

It is possible that the total production may not give the small farmers enough earnings for the whole family; in that case some of the young men should volunteer to go to the urban centers to find jobs (as they generally do); but the basic economy and food stocks of the family should be kept in tact. If the family members in the urban centers face difficulties they should be able to return and have at least food available for them and not vice versa.

All these farming communities and rural people should be made aware that what the rich farmers do and what the government officials recommend will never work for them or at least will not stay beneficial in the long run. What is being taught in the agricultural universities will hardly be of any use to them. All these chemical inputs, new seeds, modified seeds, so called new varieties and new technologies may not be appropriate for their kind of agriculture and life. Similarly they should be made aware that all unconcerned / outsiders like urban traders, foreign companies and the government officers have no interest in them—all they want is to take away food from them at the cheapest possible price or with a minimum possible reward. They want to ensure their own food security at the cost of villages' food security.

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ANNEXURES

Annexure 1

Terms of the Reference of the Research

Research: Food Security Among Crises: Pakistan's Scene and Possible Way out

The Context:

Food security has been under intense discussion for about 15 years, at all levels. It was certainly triggered by the civil society in each nook and corner of the world, when the agriculture and food produce was included in the ambit of World Trade Organization (WTO). Various civil society sections including farmers, social and political activists and people-friendly opinion makers have been protesting at all the important events of WTO, UN and the G-8 meetings. In such gatherings and in their own forums (like social forums), they have raised all kinds of concerns about the threats to food security across the world.

Despite all these efforts to arrest the problem of food insecurity, the food crises hit the world and as usual, the developing and poor countries were hit harder; while the representatives of rich countries were still pondering over the opportunities created by these crises. Civil society again got sweat by explaining the reasons behind these crises and thus a plethora of researches came on the fore. Then the financial crises hit the world and this gave a crushing blow to all the hopes of improving food security in the developing nations.

Pakistan also faces other serious crises, along with the continuing price rises of food products and the government departments can get away with by diverting the issues to such crises of terrorism, insecurity and shortage of energy resources. In the eyes of civil society thinkers, Pakistani state agencies have serious drawbacks in the arena of strategic thinking, policy making and practices when it comes to dealing with food production, its trade and WTO negotiations. On the other hand government officials remain suspicious about the credentials of such thinkers.

Sustainable Agriculture Action Group (SAAG) is a network of various Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), which has been concentrating on the issues facing Pakistan's agriculture, food production and its trade; meanwhile supporting the related government agencies by providing research-based information and policy advice to them. At this juncture, SAAG wants to once again look at the present situation of food crisis and the possible way out. The terms of reference for this study, with the above-mentioned headline, are thus given in the following.

TORs

1. The main objective of the study is to take a fresh look at the situation of food security in Pakistan and to propose in the end the correct approach to make Pakistan adequately food secure.
2. To start with, the study will sketch out the debate on the related concepts of "right to food" and "food sovereignty" while dwelling upon its connections with trade, finance and development paradigms.

3. The study will focus on the situation in Pakistan, Government's approach and civil society's propositions in the realm of policy. It should highlight the divide or gaps if any, along with the possibilities of creating a consensual mechanism for the future.
4. The analysis will cover the impact of other crises—financial, governance and security—which may undermine the actions towards improving the status of food security in Pakistan. This should also link up with the process of globalization.
5. As a conclusion, the study will recommend a policy prescription for a sustainable agriculture and food security for the people of Pakistan.

Annexure 2

TABLE - 3

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MONTHLY CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE BY COMMODITY GROUPS AND QUINTILES, 2001-02

COMMODITY GROUPS	
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PAKISTAN (Figure 19 (a))

Average Monthly Consumption Expenditure (Rupees.)

	1st Rs. 4004	2nd Rs. 5011	3rd Rs. 5728	4th Rs. 6514	5th Rs. 10334
Food, beverages and tobacco	57.26	56.40	53.72	50.92	40.11
Apparel, textile and footwear	7.62	7.52	7.34	6.97	5.39
Transport and communication	2.18	2.60	3.00	3.56	5.18
Cleaning, laundry and personal appearance	4.36	4.12	3.99	3.86	3.46
Recreation and entertainment	0.14	0.29	0.25	0.33	0.76
Education	1.77	2.15	2.61	2.98	5.26
Rent	8.01	8.35	10.01	11.55	18.16
Fuel and lighting	9.13	8.59	8.48	8.00	7.07
Miscellaneous	9.54	9.97	10.63	11.82	14.41

PAKISTAN URBAN (Figure 19 (b))

Average Monthly Consumption Expenditure (Rupees.)

Percentage of consumption expenditure on:

	1st Rs. 4472	2nd Rs. 5630	3rd Rs. 6592	4th Rs. 7587	5th Rs. 12610
Food, beverages and tobacco	50.51	50.69	46.47	44.08	33.28
Apparel, textile and footwear	7.61	6.81	6.72	6.29	4.90
Transport and communication	2.03	2.51	3.04	3.71	5.24
Cleaning, laundry and personal appearance	4.40	4.25	4.12	3.86	3.49
Recreation and entertainment	0.34	0.49	0.31	0.54	1.00
Education	2.85	3.37	3.92	4.50	6.64
Rent	13.67	14.36	17.31	18.06	24.91
Fuel and lighting	10.05	8.96	8.87	8.26	6.69
Miscellaneous	8.54	8.56	9.23	10.69	13.83

PAKISTAN RURAL (Figure 19 (c))**Average Monthly Consumption Expenditure (Rupees.)**

Percentage of consumption expenditure on:

	Ist Rs. 3904	2nd Rs. 4864	3rd Rs. 5452	4th Rs. 6057	5th Rs. 8376
Food, beverage and tobacco	58.92	57.97	56.53	54.56	48.95
Apparel, textile and footwear	7.62	7.72	7.58	7.34	6.48
Transport and communication	2.22	2.62	2.98	3.49	5.12
Cleaning, laundry and personal appearance	4.35	4.09	3.93	3.87	3.42
Recreation and entertainment	0.10	0.23	0.22	0.22	0.44
Education	1.51	1.82	2.10	2.17	3.47
Rent	6.61	6.70	7.18	8.08	9.40
Fuel and lighting	8.90	8.49	8.29	7.87	7.55
Miscellaneous	9.78	10.36	11.17	12.42	15.17

Source: Household Integrated Economic Survey, 2001-02

TABLE -4

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MONTHLY CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE AMONG HOUSEHOLDS BY COMMODITY GROUPS AND QUINTILES, 2004-05

COMMODITY GROUPS					
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
1	3	4	5	6	7
PAKISTAN (Figure 20 (a))					
Average Monthly Consumption Expenditure (Rupees.)					
Percentage of consumption expenditure on:					
	Ist Rs. 5171	2nd Rs. 6458	3rd Rs. 7440	4th Rs. 8856	5th Rs. 14619
Food, beverages and tobacco	58.74	56.73	54.80	51.74	39.75
Apparel, textile and footwear	7.13	6.92	6.53	6.19	5.14
Transport and communication	2.94	3.33	3.63	4.41	7.16
Cleaning, laundry and personal appearance	3.94	3.86	3.87	3.82	3.47
Recreation and entertainment	0.04	0.10	0.16	0.21	0.65
Education	1.38	1.55	1.82	2.40	4.40
Rent	7.55	8.36	9.88	11.05	17.52
Fuel and lighting	8.69	8.51	8.40	8.03	7.13
Miscellaneous	9.60	10.64	10.91	12.16	14.77

PAKISTAN URBAN (Figure 20 (b))**Average Monthly Consumption Expenditure (Rupees.)**

Percentage of consumption

expenditure on:

	Ist Rs. 5621	2nd Rs. 6752	3rd Rs. 7994	4th Rs. 9830	5th Rs. 17043
Food, beverages and tobacco	53.70	51.65	48.55	46.23	34.95
Apparel, textile and footwear	6.39	6.42	6.32	5.79	4.77
Transport and communication	2.76	3.22	3.44	4.63	7.62
Cleaning, laundry and personal appearance	4.13	4.19	4.01	4.01	3.58
Recreation and entertainment	0.04	0.22	0.28	0.42	0.88
Education	2.08	2.26	2.60	3.01	5.29
Rent	12.24	13.93	16.47	17.17	22.57
Fuel and lighting	9.43	8.95	8.53	8.19	6.86
Miscellaneous	9.25	9.16	9.80	10.54	13.48

PAKISTAN RURAL (Figure 20 (c))

Average Monthly Consumption

Expenditure (Rupees.)

Percentage of consumption

expenditure on:

	Ist Rs. 5086	2nd Rs. 6384	3rd Rs. 7239	4th Rs. 8381	5th Rs. 11819
Food, beverages and tobacco	59.80	58.07	57.30	54.89	47.74
Apparel, textile and footwear	7.28	7.06	6.62	6.42	5.74
Transport and communication	2.97	3.36	3.70	4.29	6.39
Cleaning, laundry and personal appearance	3.90	3.78	3.81	3.71	3.29
Recreation and entertainment	0.04	0.06	0.11	0.08	0.26
Education	1.23	1.36	1.50	2.05	2.93
Rent	6.57	6.88	7.25	7.55	9.12
Fuel and lighting	8.53	8.40	8.35	7.93	7.59
Miscellaneous	9.67	11.03	11.36	13.08	16.93

Source: Household Integrated

Economic Survey, 2004-05

TABLE-5

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MONTHLY CONSUMPTION EXPENDITURE PER HOUSEHOLD BY COMMODITY GROUPS AND QUINTILES, 2005-06

COMMODITY GROUPS					
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
1	3	4	5	6	7

PAKISTAN (Figure 21 (a))

Average Monthly Consumption Expenditure

(Rupees.)

Percentage of consumption expenditure on:

	Ist Rs. 5953	2nd Rs. 7501	3rd Rs. 8564	4th Rs. 10161	5th Rs. 17624
Food, beverages and tobacco	55.61	52.63	50.91	46.29	33.14
Apparel, textile and footwear	6.98	6.68	6.32	6.08	4.81
Transport and communication	4.23	4.33	4.92	5.58	7.86
Cleaning, laundry and personal appearance	3.99	3.98	3.96	3.77	3.14
Recreation and entertainment	0.11	0.28	0.38	0.57	1.01
Education	1.27	1.79	2.46	3.07	5.46
Rent	8.22	9.72	10.27	12.67	21.28
Fuel and lighting	9.02	8.88	8.56	8.21	7.09

Miscellaneous	10.56	11.71	12.22	13.76	16.21
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PAKISTAN URBAN (Figure 21 (b))

Average Monthly Consumption Expenditure (Rupees.)

Percentage of consumption expenditure on:

	Ist Rs. 6364	2nd Rs. 8392	3rd Rs. 9346	1099.00	19923.00
Food, beverages and tobacco	50.95	47.70	45.26	42.30	29.06
Apparel, textile and footwear	6.51	6.28	5.80	5.61	4.29
Transport and communication	3.82	4.32	5.42	5.62	8.35
Cleaning, laundry and personal appearance	4.05	4.30	4.14	4.03	3.17
Recreation and entertainment	0.30	0.52	0.70	0.86	1.26
Education	1.94	2.67	3.57	4.01	6.30
Rent	13.79	15.24	16.19	17.81	26.65
Fuel and lighting	9.34	8.85	8.48	7.96	6.76
Miscellaneous	9.28	10.13	10.44	11.81	14.17

PAKISTAN RURAL (Figure 21 (c))

Average Monthly Consumption Expenditure (Rupees.)

Percentage of consumption expenditure on:

	Ist Rs. 5877	2nd Rs. 7232	3rd Rs. 8275	4th Rs. 9677	5th Rs. 14542
Food, beverages and tobacco	56.55	54.36	53.29	48.93	40.80
Apparel, textile and footwear	7.08	6.82	6.54	6.39	5.39
Transport and communication	4.32	4.34	4.71	5.56	6.94
Cleaning, laundry and personal appearance	3.98	3.86	3.88	3.60	3.08
Recreation and entertainment	0.08	0.19	0.25	0.38	0.54
Education	1.13	1.49	1.99	2.45	3.90
Rent	7.10	7.78	7.78	9.26	11.19
Fuel and lighting	8.96	8.89	8.60	8.37	7.72
Miscellaneous	10.82	12.26	12.96	15.06	20.04

Source: Household Integrated Economic Survey, 2005-06