

POLICY BRIEFING

# Food security in a just food system

## Abstract

Hundreds of millions of people live in food insecurity, lacking nutritious food and the means to develop their resilience to natural and man-made disasters and shocks. Obstacles to improving the situation are numerous and include climate change and resource scarcity, poor regulations and rights-based considerations, insufficient human and technical capacities and training. Nevertheless, it is possible to produce enough food for all and to build a more sustainable and just food system. For this to happen, small-scale, sustainable agriculture must be developed and strengthened. Private finance across the food system will play an increasingly important role in this process. But for the livelihood and resilience of agricultural producers to be ensured, investments must be responsible and combined with targeted and inclusive initiatives.

This Policy Briefing was requested by the European Parliament's Committee on Development.

**AUTHORS:**

Judit BARNA and Marion EXCOFFIER (intern)  
Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union  
Policy Department  
WIB 06 M 049  
rue Wiertz 60  
B-1047 Brussels

**CONTACT:**

Feedback of all kinds is welcome. Please write to:  
[judit.barna@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:judit.barna@europarl.europa.eu).

To obtain paper copies, please send a request by e-mail to:  
[poldep-expo@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:poldep-expo@europarl.europa.eu).

**PUBLICATION:**

English-language manuscript completed on 8 November 2013.  
© European Union, 2013  
*Printed in Belgium*

This Policy Briefing is available on the intranet site of the Directorate-General for External Policies, in the [Regions and countries](#) or [Policy Areas](#) section. and on the Internet at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/activities/committees/studies.do?language=EN>

If you are unable to download the information you require, please request a paper copy  
by e-mail : [poldep-expo@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:poldep-expo@europarl.europa.eu)

**DISCLAIMER:**

Any opinions expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the European Parliament.

Reproduction and translation, except for commercial purposes, are authorised, provided the source is acknowledged and provided the publisher is given prior notice and supplied with a copy of the publication.

## **Table of contents**

<b>1</b>	<b>Food security on the agenda</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Strengthening the resilience of small-scale agriculture in developing countries</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1	Need for resilience and empowerment	5
2.2	The EU perspective	6
2.3	Challenges to building resilient systems	8
<b>3</b>	<b>The involvement of private sources of finance and transnational companies</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1	Potential benefits of private sector involvement	9
3.2	New Alliance – new model	10
3.3	The concerns: towards a more unjust food system?	11
3.4	Responsible agricultural investments – the way forward?	11
<b>4</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>The European Parliament on food security</b>	<b>13</b>

## 1 Food security on the agenda

The 2008 and 2011 food crises have revealed the stresses facing the global food system.

Scarcity, climate change, land use and rights, demographical changes and patterns of consumption are major concerns for future food security.

About 870 million people are under-nourished today, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to nutrition and health may not be reached by 2015.

Initiatives for food security, resilience, sustainable agriculture and a more just and equitable food system should go hand in hand.

The 2013 World Food Day focused on the need to implement sustainable food systems for improved food security<sup>1</sup> and nutrition. The backdrop was the food crises of 2008 and 2011 that unequivocally revealed a global food system not only under stress but harbouring serious imbalances: many areas of the developing world and especially rural populations with limited resources were and still are exposed to food insecurity.

These crisis peaks exposed a number of practices and facts that will need to be reckoned with in the future if further shocks are to be mitigated and avoided. There are multiple reasons for concern as the strain increases on the world's carrying capacity. Arable land and water are becoming scarcer, land-grabbing continues as property rights are poorly regulated, more chemicals and inorganic substances are used in production, crops and land are diverted for non-food, including biofuel production, and, as a result, the price of staple crops is rising. Furthermore, the world population is expected to reach 8 billion by 2030, with most of this growth happening in developing countries. At the same time, the growth of middle classes in emerging economies is expected to increase demand for meat, which will put further pressure on grain supplies. Armed conflict and financial speculation on food prices will continue to exacerbate many of these challenges. Climate change is likely to reduce yields in sub-Saharan Africa and extreme weather events around the globe will impact on harvests more frequently. Today about [870 million people](#) are under-nourished and the 1st Millennium Development Goal that aims at eradicating poverty and halving the number of people suffering from malnutrition and hunger by 2015 is unsure to be reached. Looking at the challenges above, the future can look rather bleak.

Yet, some argue that the world can produce not only enough food but, if the modalities of food production, transport, distribution, trade and consumption are changed, a more equitable, sustainable and just food system can be achieved. The jury is still out on what kind of changes are required and in particular on what kind of agricultural development is desirable and most effective to feed the world in the coming decades in a way that shields populations from recurrent shocks in the food system but does not add further stress to the environment and the global climate either. Consequently, environmental sustainability, food security and a more equitable and just food system have become major themes of discussion on the international agenda. Various courses of action are being examined in order to devise systems that fulfil the four dimensions of food security (availability, access, use and stability), make the most vulnerable populations more resilient and open the space for debate and action on making the food system more just. In this context, the promotion of smallholder resilience and

---

<sup>1</sup> According to the [1996 Rome Declaration](#), food security 'exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life'.

the recent trend of increasing private sector investment in the food system will be examined.

## 2 Strengthening the resilience of small-scale agriculture in developing countries

### 2.1 Need for resilience and empowerment

A broad range of actors must make a concerted effort to achieve food security from the local to the global level.

Smallholders are highly vulnerable to natural disasters, poverty and global shocks.

Community networks, training and better regulatory frameworks and implementation could all strengthen smallholders' resilience through empowerment.

Building local capacities and adopting context-specific, targeted measures are essential to develop resilience.

Achieving global food security requires concerted efforts aimed at enhancing the role of small-scale farmers by multiple levels of actors on the international and domestic level, involving, among others governments, international organisations and civil society organisations. In many developing countries, the majority of the poor make their livelihoods as smallholder farmers or pastoralists. Agricultural development, therefore, has a key role to play in ensuring the availability of food and raising incomes directly. Yet, the reality is that many smallholders are highly vulnerable to shocks, poverty and hunger for a number of reasons. They are hampered by the poor quality – and often degradation – of land, inadequate water supplies, reliance on basic farming equipment and a lack of land tenure security. These are compounded by the increasing impacts of climate change and poor access to local markets, extension services and rural financial services. Despite being at the very centre of food insecurity's vicious circle, smallholders often lack influence and power over decisions that affect them.

The issue of resilience is therefore hardly separable from that of empowerment for which several modalities have been proposed. First, integrating farmers in community networks such as co-operatives and farmers associations could facilitate collective actions aimed at securing land rights and access to better market opportunities. Second, their participation would need to be facilitated also in decision-making regarding national and local agriculture policies. Realising these goals will, in turn, require increased transparency and accountability especially on the domestic level and better monitoring of implementation on all – the sub-state, state and international – levels. Third, training and information sessions at the grassroots level should reach out to help farmers with better stock management and more efficient use of water sources, production methods and fertilisers. Programmes that focus on how to cope with natural disasters, on how to prevent them or on how to behave in the supply chain should also be offered to smallholders.

The widely embraced resilience approach seeks to enhance smallholders' and pastoralists' coping and recovery capabilities and capacities both in the face of natural and man-made disasters. The approach takes into consideration the diversity of environmental and social settings of food production based on the tenet that improving food security and food justice should be specific to each community. Local capacity building is therefore at the heart of context-specific measures that aim at delivering farming

Action should be undertaken at both the household and the community level.

The Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) promotes sustainable agriculture, food security and an inclusive approach.

improvements. In this regard, it has been pointed out that action needs to be taken on two levels that directly affect small-scale agriculture<sup>2</sup>. First, at the household level, civil society, governments, the private sector or the international community should commit themselves in order to raise small farmers' awareness with regard to food crises management in their daily life. Second, at the community level, the same actors should address the root causes of food insecurity, such as the lack of agricultural infrastructure, the government's poor planning capacities or the lack of political will and financial commitment.

At the international level, following the L'Aquila summit of the G20, the [Global Agriculture and Food Security Program \(GAFSP\)](#) was launched in April 2010 involving pledges of around EUR 1 billion and administered by the World Bank. The programme supports strategic, country-led agricultural and food security plans that focus on sustainable agriculture and improving incomes and food security for over 10 million small-scale farmers, including especially women. The fund seeks to mobilise both public and private sector funding (public funding constituting the bulk) and provides a platform for engaging farmers and civil society in both decision making and implementation.

## 2.2 The EU perspective

The EU has frequently named food security as a priority target.

Especially since the Millennium Declaration and the 2008 food crisis, the food security issue has been high on the agenda of the European Union. The EU Food Facility, established by way of [Regulation 1337/2008](#) in response to the soaring food prices in 2007 and 2008, provided an example of a broader EU approach regarding the issues of resilience, food security and food justice. It provided EUR 1 billion over three years (2009–2011) to improve agricultural productivity and food supply in the 49 most affected countries, deal directly with the effects of volatile food prices on local populations, increase food production capacity and improve the way agriculture is managed in the longer term, including through microcredit, investment, equipment, infrastructure and storage support.

In response to the food crisis, the EU Food Facility, worth EUR 1 billion, was established in 2008. Some 59 million people, mainly in Africa, have benefitted.

The Food Facility reached a total of 59 million people, mainly smallholder farmers, and agricultural production increased in over 30 countries. For instance, in Guinea-Bissau, seeds, fertilisers, tools and training were dispatched to 38,000 farms. In Zambia, 180,000 farmers were trained on conservation agriculture principles in order to increase maize production by about 30%. The Food Facility also helped to improve farmer networks and encouraged them to collectively defend their interests. Local and civil society organisations have played a crucial role in the implementation and success of

---

<sup>2</sup> Presentations by CONCERN worldwide at the launch of the 2013 Global Hunger Index "The Challenge of hunger: building resilience to achieve food and nutrition security" - 16 October 2013, European Parliament.

In 2010, the EU adopted a 'policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges'.

The EU has recognised the need for a long-term approach to food security, and the European Parliament (EP) has underlined the need to focus on food security challenges in the post-2015 agenda.

Two EU initiatives in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel region exemplify the new approach, which seeks to better link emergency and development programmes.

this instrument.

In 2010, an 'EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges'<sup>3</sup> was adopted for the period covering 2014 to 2020. Improving smallholder resilience and rural livelihoods lies at the heart of this action plan. Supporting regional agriculture and food and nutrition policies as well as strengthening social protection mechanisms, particularly for vulnerable population groups are also part of the priorities.

Looking at the recurrence of food crises, the EU has recognised that there is a need to build a long-term approach to address chronic vulnerability deriving from increased exposure to risks. Several policy documents have set out the EU's approach to food security, resilience and nutrition<sup>4</sup>. In 2012, the Commission published a communication on 'the EU approach to resilience and disaster risk reduction in developing countries: learning from food security crises'. At the core of this approach – in line with the path taken by the international community –, is the understanding that reacting to crises by only providing humanitarian assistance is insufficient. Instead, emergency and development programmes need to be closely linked in order to anticipate and prevent crises, help reduce the damage caused and facilitate recovery and restoration in a way so as to upgrade the capacities to respond to future shocks. The European Parliament's recent [draft report](#) on this subject underscores the need to put more emphasis on this issue in the post-2015 agenda. It also calls for the prioritisation of 'disaster risk reduction' in future development programming, stresses the importance of all actors, in particular local authorities, in building resilience and calls for better coordination of efforts between the EU and Member States.

The change of policy is embodied by two recent EU initiatives [Supporting Horn of African Resilience](#) (SHARE) and [L'Alliance Globale pour l'Initiative Résilience Sahel](#) (AGIR). Three components lie at the centre of the "bottom-up" approach of these initiatives: anticipating crises by assessing risks (early warning information systems); focussing on prevention and preparedness (disaster risk management, public-private partnerships, need for string local structures, need for functional markets, and investments in research and technology transfer, emergency stocks); and enhancing crisis response (definition of strategic priorities, learn from past experiences, structured dialogue with partner countries, more synergies).

Although much has been done to create more coherence between humanitarian and development policies in the field of food security, it has also been pointed out that although the EU has been a major actor in this

---

<sup>3</sup> Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament 'An EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges' [COM\(2010\)127 final](#).

<sup>4</sup> Communication 'Increasing the impact of EU Development Policy: an Agenda for Change' [COM\(2011\) 637 final](#); Communication 'the EU approach to resilience: Learning from food security crises' [COM\(2012\) 586 final](#); Commission Staff Working Document 'Boosting food and nutrition security through EU action: implementing our commitments' [SWD\(2013\) 104 final](#); Communication 'Enhancing Maternal and Child Nutrition in External Assistance: an EU Policy Framework' [COM\(2013\) 141 final](#).

Although the EU's commitments are ambitious, the Union's coherence on development policy and its aid effectiveness agendas should be improved.

field, against its repeated political commitments, a lack of true coherence across its development and other policies can have the potential to undermine its credibility. Under the [Policy Coherence for Development \(PCD\) Work Programme 2010-2013](#) several policy areas are identified as related to food security (agricultural policy, trade, research and development and innovation, biodiversity, land use and the impact of bioenergy production, and fisheries policy) and needing a development-sensitive approach. As evidence suggests, however, while there are commitments, in operational terms both the policy coherence and effectiveness agendas need to be better implemented. One can put it in various ways: 'it is necessary for the EU to get serious and realistic about PCD at the political level in the area of food security'<sup>5</sup> or, in so far as aid effectiveness is concerned, 'there was a clear gap between the EU's commitment at the global level and its implementation on the ground'<sup>6</sup>; in order to maintain EU credibility, the way forward is clearly to have both true political clout behind commitments and improved institutional mechanisms to be able to deliver on those commitments.

### 2.3 Challenges to building resilient systems

There are many obstacles to building a resilient system.

Unstable political regimes in developing countries tend to undermine implementation.

There are several challenges to building a resilient system, including governance problems, demographic changes, high degree of dependence on food imports and a fluctuation of market prices, low domestic agricultural efficiency and productivity and the impact of climate change. The success of the implementation of a resilient food system greatly depends on the will and commitment of developing countries' governments. While there are laudable initiatives<sup>7</sup>, in a number of developing countries the political situation is unstable and the principles of rule of law, good governance or fundamental human rights are not respected. Endemic corruption stifles reforms and security is often prioritised over food production, climate change concerns and public funding for social policies. Under such circumstances, the implementation of both domestic and international programmes aimed at increasing agricultural productivity and resistance to natural disasters is difficult, especially as most initiatives launched require close cooperation and coordination with public authorities.

According to the 2013 of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the 'warming of the climate system is unequivocal'<sup>8</sup>. In fact, climate change has resulted in an increase in frequency and intensity of natural disasters and in the future both mitigation and adaptation efforts will be essential for smallholders to be able to cope with the changing conditions of production. Among these latter, new techniques, including new water harvesting and

---

<sup>5</sup> [EU Policy Coherence for Food Security: Aligning Parallel Agendas](#). ECDPM Discussion Paper No. 153. October 2013.

<sup>6</sup> Carbone, M. (2013). Between EU actorness and aid effectiveness: The logics of EU aid to Sub-Saharan Africa. *International Relations*, 27, 341-355.

<sup>7</sup> As an example on how a government can engage in and promote resilience and food security see e.g. Niger's [3N "Nigeriens feed Nigeriens" initiative](#).

<sup>8</sup> [Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis](#). IPCC

In addition to mitigation efforts, any resilience initiative must prioritise coping with climate change through adaptation. This requires sustainable financial and technical assistance.

irrigation techniques and sustainable enhancements to farming like intercropping, agro-forestry, composting, and soil conservation measures have been promoted in many communities in order to lessen dependence on unreliable rainfalls. Yet, resilience – and the mitigation of negative impacts – will also greatly depend on effective early warning systems, requiring increasingly sophisticated data gathering, managing, and analytical capabilities.

Mitigation and adaptation efforts will necessitate sustained financial and technical assistance. While traditional sources of development finance have come under increasing stress during the last years, private sources of financing and investment have substantially grown in size and they have become a focus of attention of international development circles.

### 3 The involvement of private sources of finance and multinational companies

#### 3.1 Potential benefits of private sector involvement

Private actors can play a role in complementing public-financed food security initiatives.

Domestic and international public financing sources are fundamental especially to low-income countries and for sustained efforts of poverty reduction and the provision of essential public services. Such assistance has been a significant source of support to small-scale farmers and resilience building. Nevertheless, these sources amount to a smaller percentage of overall financing than private sources: today it is undeniable that the private sector can and should play a substantial role in complementing the efforts of governments and other stakeholders in promoting food security. Indeed, the above-mentioned Global Alliance for Food Security is a good example of multi-stakeholder cooperation, involving public and private funding, government engagement and civil society and farmer engagement. Even from a purely from a business logic perspective, the private sector has a key stake in developing a more sustainable and resilient agriculture model: climate change can put supply chains at risk and, in a vicious circle, vulnerability and poverty can put considerable stress on public services, create political instability, hamper markets and spoil the business climate.

The private sector's involvement can contribute to agricultural productivity, agribusiness, new techniques, scientific research, building capacity through training and providing sustainable business opportunities.

Private sector involvement can help transform traditional agricultural models and help establish linkages with regional and international trade systems. By providing additional sources of funding, the private sector can contribute to increasing agricultural productivity. Private investments and microcredit solutions can allow smallholders to adopt new techniques, modernise equipment, move into agribusiness and generate income that enables them not only to meet their basic needs but produce even for the market. Enhancing investments in research on non-conventional sources of food could help improve resilience: developing crop varieties that are more resistant to climate change is believed to be a solution for enhanced food production and a reduction of risks deriving from shocks. Private investments can even contribute to improving capacity building of small producer organisations and farmers through offering literacy promotion and vocational training programmes. Last but not least, private business, through committing themselves to the highest standards of compliance with laws,

codes of conduct, their own corporate business principles and the principles of corporate social responsibility, have a potential to create sustainable business opportunities and practices that benefit all actors along a supply chain. Nevertheless, major shifts in the involvement of the private sector and especially the role of major agribusiness companies in developing countries has raised concerns. The question arises: can the urgency of the food security agenda lead to solutions that will go against the goal of creating a more just and equitable food system?

### 3.2 New Alliance – new model

In May 2012, the 'New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition' (NAFSN) was launched to increase private sector involvement in African agriculture.

The European Commission is also looking at new ways to engage with the private sector post-2015.

In a step rather divergent from the foundations of the Global Alliance for Food Security and the work of the UN's Committee on World Food Security (CFS) that is another inclusive mechanism, the [New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition](#) (NAFSN) is a recent initiative that seeks to harness explicitly the potential of large-scale private investment. Launched at the May 2012 G8 Summit, NAFSN seeks to enhance domestic and foreign private investments in African agriculture, promote innovations that can enhance agricultural productivity and reduce the risk borne by vulnerable economies and communities. The strategy recognizes the critical role played by smallholder farmers, especially women, and commits to achieve sustained and inclusive agricultural growth and reduce poverty. Yet, how exactly this critical role will materialise under the projects is not entirely clear given the presence of some of the biggest agribusiness giants among the firms that declared their intention to participate. Nevertheless, the reaction of the EU has been positive and, its communication '[Beyond 2015: towards a comprehensive and integrated approach to financing for poverty eradication and sustainable development](#)' suggests that the bloc is also moving towards strategies that will increasingly seek to mobilise public financing. In the communication the European Commission writes that private investments (EUR 3 652 billion for domestic and international private finance for 2010 against 3 475 billion for domestic and international public finance) are the key drivers of growth and 'even a small shift in private investment priorities and modalities could bring about significant benefits to public policy goals. Such shift can be achieved primarily through domestic and international policy incentives, e.g. public-private partnerships'. At the same time, however, it asserts the caveat that private finance follows private interests and does not *per se* pursue public policy goals.

This is to be born in mind at a time when the unprecedented involvement of the private sector, including multinational corporations, in agriculture is moving the sector towards a market-based approach. Although the benefits of the increase of foreign investments in the agricultural sector of developing countries can prove to be substantial, it is early to say where and to whom exactly those benefits will flow and whether the profit-seeking logic of business will in fact be a blessing or a risk for food security in the longer term.

### 3.3 The concerns: towards a more unjust food system?

NGOs have expressed concerns about excessive reliance on private finance.

Key issues include land and resource grabbing, labour rights, loss of biodiversity, soil erosion and degradation, water misuse, food sovereignty, and seed ownership.

NGOs tend to be critical with regard to this new agribusiness, market-based approach. Referring to NAFSN, some go as far as talking about corporate interests hijacking African food and agricultural policy.<sup>9</sup> Themes of critique of the initiative are numerous. First, despite the fact that the NAFSN documents reaffirm all parties' commitment to FAO's [Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests](#) (2012), land and resource grabbing remain a significant issue for developing countries. The involvement of private commercial players can indeed be used to open markets to multinationals and increase their control over the resources, in particular arable land. Thus, small-scale farmers might end up displaced or become wage-labourers instead of being integrated into value chains themselves. In September 2013, the EP [draft report](#) on the role of property rights, property ownership and wealth creation in eradicating poverty and fostering sustainable development in developing countries strongly condemned the practice of land grabbing and highlighted Ethiopia's success story with regards to the protection of small-scale farmers' rights to land.

Second, high input-intensive monoculture can result in a loss of biodiversity. Third, soil erosion, land degradation, the impact of increased fertiliser use, the overexploitation of lands and water misuse all have long-term environmental repercussions. Fourth, large-scale foreign investments can endanger food sovereignty in so far as making agricultural development dependent on foreign companies instead of promoting domestic ownership and the interests of farmers and rural communities. Fifth, ownership is an issue also when it comes to the use of seeds. By today the commercial seed sector has restricted farmers from engaging in customary practices of freely sharing, exchanging and selling seeds 'through patents on seeds, seed monopolies, biopiracy, genetic engineering and creation of non-renewable sterile seeds'<sup>10</sup>. The potential risks pointed out above have given rise to calls for responsible agricultural investments in developing countries.

### 3.4 Responsible agricultural investments – the way forward?

Governments must monitor and encourage responsible private investments.

Policy coherence should lie at the heart of any investment policy in agriculture.

Governments have an important role in establishing framework conditions that complement and encourage responsible private investments. Accordingly, initiatives should be introduced in order to assist the private sector in contributing positively to food security and ecosystem management so that business' interests do not take the upper hand over small farmers' interests. The OECD has developed a [Policy Framework for Investment in Agriculture](#) in order to support countries' efforts to mobilise private investment in agriculture. In addition, policy coherence across various sectoral policies is essential to creating an attractive environment for all agricultural investors. Therefore, investment policy should be well aligned with agricultural, social, environmental, economic and development policies. At present, 'Responsible agricultural investment (rai)' principles building

<sup>9</sup> [The corporate take-over African food security](#). Afronline

<sup>10</sup> [Declaration on Seed Freedom](#)

'Responsible agricultural investments' principles are being developed by the international community and should be ready by October 2014.

upon existing FAO and CFS standards are being developed by an Open-Ended Working Group, the CFS Secretariat and the CFS Bureau through an inclusive, multi-stakeholder consultation process. The European Union, being a full member of the CFS, is involved in the discussions. The expected outcome of this process will be a set of principles to promote investment in agriculture which contributes to food security and supports the progressive realisation of the right to adequate food. According to the [Zero Draft](#) of the principles, they will address food security, nutrition and sustainable development, policy coherence and sector development and governance, grievance mechanisms and accountability. Following a wide-ranging consultation process it is expected that these principles will be endorsed in October 2014.<sup>11</sup>

Norms and standards for food production, trade and export were strengthened also under the aegis of the EU Food Facility. In Ghana, Kenya and Uganda, the capacity of the National Bureaus of Standards to assist companies with food safety requirements was improved. In Mozambique, the Food Facility enabled the preparation of a National Export Strategy, provided training courses on international standards and facilitated the accreditation of laboratories to add value and ensure quality of food products.

## 4 Conclusions

Achieving food security requires a multi-sectoral approach, policy coherence and close coordination.

Building global food security and a more just food system presents multiple challenges that require context-specific initiatives, a multi-sectoral approach, [policy coherence for development](#) and close cooperation and coordination of a broad range of actors – governments, the private sector and civil society organisations.

Considering the urgency of the issue of food security, the EP could consider the following approach:

- Continue emphasising the fundamental role that small-scale farmers play in establishing a more sustainable and resilient food system. They need to be in the focus of policy priorities related to sustainable agricultural development. At the same time, while acknowledging the role of private investments in promoting economic growth, the EP needs to emphasise that public funding continues to be essential to the poorest countries.
- Closely follow the issue of the effectiveness of public-private partnerships in the area of development. Considering the gradual increase of private sector involvement, the EP could support the endorsement of the 'Responsible agricultural investments' principles and call for a monitoring mechanism concerning their implementation.

---

<sup>11</sup> [Responsible agricultural investments](#), Committee on World Food Security

- Continue to provide support for developing countries in their endeavours to ensure good governance and promote transparency for a fair, efficient and sustainable agricultural development. This should be accompanied by policy and economic incentives across all relevant EU financial instruments for external assistance.
- In the context of EU policies, continue to insist on better implementation and monitoring of EU commitments in the field of policy coherence for development and aid effectiveness as regards food security and resilience.

## 5 The European Parliament on food security

The EP commented on the issues of food security and resilience in several recent reports.

EU approach to resilience and disaster risk reduction in developing countries: learning from food security crises ([2013/2110\(INI\)](#))

Millennium Development Goals - defining the post-2015 framework ([2012/2289\(INI\)](#))

For a comprehensive EU fishery strategy in the Pacific region ([2012/2235\(INI\)](#))

Advancing development through trade ([2012/2224\(INI\)](#))

Development aspects of intellectual property rights on genetic resources: the impact on poverty reduction in developing countries ([2012/2135\(INI\)](#))

EU 2011 report on policy coherence for development ([2012/2063\(INI\)](#))

Special report 1/2012 (2011 discharge): Effectiveness of European Union development aid for food security in sub-Saharan Africa ([2012/2059\(DEC\)](#))

Agenda for change: the future of EU development policy ([2012/2002\(INI\)](#))