



Claiming the right to food

A guide for civil society organisations



UNIVERSITY OF
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PLAAS
Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies
Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences



"Land is Life"
ZAMBIA LAND ALLIANCE

Claiming the right to food

A guide for civil society organisations



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Preface

This information resource serves as a practical guide on the right to food that is aimed at civil society organizations (CSOs) and social movements. It clarifies the entitlements of rights holders and the obligations of states with regard to the right to food, offering a useful overview of two key instruments on the right to food: The Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security, and the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems. The objective of this booklet is to promote a human rights-based approach to food and nutrition security within the context of changing agro-food systems across rural landscapes in Southern Africa.

Building on our exploratory research on changing agro-food systems and the role of agribusiness in Mozambique and Zambia, this information resource offers detailed case studies and insights into the complex ways in which the right to food is being progressively realized in one way, yet undermined in another. A rights-based approach to food and nutrition security goes beyond mainstream food security frameworks, not only because it is based on international human rights, but because it also considers the means by which people access food (UN HRBA, 2017).

The research reported in this booklet is the product of a joint-action research project with CSO partners Acção Académica para o Desenvolvimento das Comunidades Rurais (Academic Action for the Development of Rural Communities) (ADECRU) and the Zambia Land Alliance (ZLA), based in Mozambique and Zambia respectively. With the generous support of the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA), our studies set out to investigate the impact of small-scale farmers' participation in the expanding soybean value chain on the food security status of households and people's right to food.

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Cape Town, Lusaka, Maputo

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We are grateful to the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa for supporting our work on African agro-food systems and the right to food. We also gratefully acknowledge our programme managers, Louise Olivier and Masego Madzwamuse, for their ongoing support.

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List of acronyms

ADECRU	Acção Académica para o Desenvolvimento das Comunidades Rurais (Academic Action for the Development of Rural Communities)
AU	African Union
CESCR	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
CLUSA	Cooperative League of the United States of America
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSO	civil society organization
CSR	The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GNFS	Global Network on Food Security
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICM	Institute of Cereals of Mozambique
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	nongovernmental organization
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OSISA	Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa

UDHR	United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
WTO	World Trade Organization
ZANACO	Zambia National Commercial Bank
ZLA	Zambia Land Alliance
ZNFU	Zambia National Farmers Union
ZNS	Zambia National Services

Section A





1. Introduction

The right to food is a human right recognised under several international human rights and humanitarian laws, and can be understood as the right to feed oneself.



The right to adequate food is authoritatively defined by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) as follows:

“The right to adequate food is fully realised when every man, woman and child, alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or means for its procurement.”

(CESCR General Comment No. 12, 1999)

There are three key components of the right to food, namely food adequacy, accessibility and availability. These components build on previous attempts to clarify the meaning of the right to food in a more practical sense by outlining the duties and responsibilities that the right to food imposes on various actors, including governments and the private sector (CESCR, 1999).



Adequacy

How is “food adequacy” defined? Food adequacy is a central component of the right to food, as it addresses the factors that determine access to specific foods and diets, as well as the suitability of these foods and diets in view of the obligation of states to take the necessary steps to tackle hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity, as stipulated in Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). Food adequacy largely depends on “prevailing social, economic, cultural, climatic, ecological and other conditions” (CESCR, 1999). The right to adequate food implies the availability of sufficient food, and the economic and physical ability to access food.



Availability

What is meant by “food availability”? Food availability refers to sufficiency both in terms of quantity and quality to meet the “dietary needs of individuals, free from adverse substances, and acceptable within a given culture”. “Dietary needs” relate to the required mix of nutrients that satisfy all human physiological needs throughout the life cycle in accordance with gender and occupation, and steps to ensure dietary diversity and suitable consumption patterns (including breastfeeding). The notion of “food that is free from adverse substances” establishes a food safety framework for protective measures to be taken by public and private means, while the concept of “cultural or consumption acceptability” of food highlights values attached to food other than its nutritional content (CESCR, 1999). Food availability is determined by the channels through which food is acquired, including own production, which requires productive land and other natural resources, and the distribution, processing and marketing systems by which food is moved from a production site to the consumer.



Accessibility

“Food accessibility” is defined by the economic capacity to procure food and measures to what extent people enjoy the right to adequate food, and food access for physically vulnerable people. Sustainable access implies the ability to acquire food without compromising the enjoyment of other rights currently and for future generations.

In order to provide practical guidance to states on the implementation of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food were adopted in November 2004 (FAO, 2016). A decade later, in 2014, the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) hosted by the FAO adopted the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems to promote a human rights-based approach to investment in the agriculture and food sectors.



Photo: Creative Commons, Neil Palmer (CIAT)

2. How did the right to food emerge?

The human right to food was first recognised by the United Nations (UN) in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR or Declaration) as one of the elements of the right to a decent standard of living.

There are international legal instruments at different levels, some of which are binding and some of which are nonbinding. The purpose of nonbinding instruments is to provide guidance on the implementation of existing international instruments. In other words, nonbinding instruments have no legal status.

Given the nonbinding nature of the UDHR, the rights it sets out were subsequently implemented in 1966 through the adoption by the UN General Assembly of two international covenants that are binding on ratifying states (Bultrini, 2014):

- (i) The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR); and
- (ii) The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

The right to food is contained in the ICESCR (or Covenant), which came into effect in 1976. The right to food is binding under international law for the 160 states that have ratified the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (see Appendix A).



Article 25 of the UDHR states:

“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”

(UNDHR Article 25, 1948)



What are human rights?

Human rights can be understood as basic rights and freedoms to which every person is entitled. Human rights are inherent, inalienable, interdependent, and indivisible. According to these core principles, these rights and freedoms cannot be granted or taken away, the enjoyment of one right affects the enjoyment of others, and they must all be respected.

The Covenant establishes the right to food as one of the conditions for the fulfilment of the right to an adequate standard of living for everyone, which covers minimum entitlement to basic human needs including food, shelter and clothing:



“The States Parties to the present Covenant recognise the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this effect the essential importance of international co-operation based on free consent.”

(ICESCR Article 11, 1966)

The Covenant also specifies a set of actions that are to be taken to ensure the realization of the right to food:



“The States Parties to the present Covenant, recognizing the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger, shall take, individually and through international co-operation, the measures, including specific programmes, which are needed:

- (a) To improve methods of production, conservation and distribution of food by making full use of technical and scientific knowledge, by disseminating knowledge of the principles of nutrition and by developing or reforming agrarian systems in such a way as to achieve the most efficient development and utilization of natural resources;**
- (b) Taking into account the problems of both food-importing and food-exporting countries, to ensure an equitable distribution of world food supplies in relation to need.”**

(ICESCR Article 11, 1966)

This interpretation is affirmed by the UN CESCR General Comment 12 of 1999 in relation to the right to food, which asserts that *“the right to adequate food is indivisibly linked to the inherent dignity of the human person”* (CESCR, 1999).

The Covenant also emphasises the need for appropriate economic, environmental and social policies, at both the national and international levels, as necessary conditions for the fulfilment of the right to food (CESCR, 1999). Therefore, Article 11 of the 1966 ICESCR, which is the first international agreement by member states recognising the right to food under international law, essentially established the normative content of the right to food, addressing key aspects of the substantive meaning of the right to food. Accordingly, General Comment 12 provides a practical explanation of the right to food with explicit remarks on the necessary measures or conditions required to ensure the progressive realization of the right to food for all.

Although some elements of the right to food in the ICESCR are also addressed in the fundamental right to be free from hunger, the right to food is far broader, because it requires states, as the ultimate duty-bearers, to ensure the economic, political and social conditions necessary to enable people to achieve food security on their own (OHCHR, 2006).

2.1 Events that led up to the recognition of the right to food: A short history

While the recognition of the right to food under international law through the ratification of the ICESCR in 1966 marked an important moment in the global fight against hunger and malnutrition, food security debates in subsequent years remained focused on world food output and availability (Shaw, 2007). Key elements of the right to food, particularly food access and adequacy, continued to be sidelined in national policies and international discourse on food security.

The first significant high-level international mobilisation to address the weaknesses of the global food system and respond to food insecurity emerged out of the world food crisis in the early 1970s, and led to the first World Food Conference in 1974. However, it was not until the 1980s and 1990s that the human right to food received attention in food activism by CSOs (FIAN, 1995).

It was the devastating conditions witnessed in rural areas across the developing world as a result of a set of policy reforms in the 1980s which led to the explicit use of the right to food among CSOs, and triggered the interpretation and reaffirmation of the right to food and its content in international law (Vanreusel, 2008). Policy reforms¹ imposed on governments in developing countries by powerful financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (working alongside powerful governments including the United States and European Union member states) introduced excessive economic liberalisation and privatisation, as well as the abolition of agricultural

1 The structural adjustment programmes (SAPs), which involved a set of preconditions for African governments to receive loans, were introduced in Africa in the early 1980s (and operated until the 1990s) in response to the African debt crisis of the 1970s. In 1989, the Washington Consensus, which consisted of state-led and market-oriented policy recommendations, was introduced in response to the Latin American debt crisis of the 1980s.

subsidies and cuts in public support for social services, including grain boards and storage facilities that resulted in small-scale commercial and subsistence farmers being exposed to fluctuating world market prices for both inputs and agro-commodities (Heidhued & Obare, 2011; Gore, 2000). This wave of reforms was followed by the introduction of a new series of national food and agriculture policies across the African continent at around the same period as the commencement of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995, which paved the way for greater corporate control and increasing levels of concentration in these sectors today. The WTO was established to facilitate the global trade in goods and enforce rules for international trade.

2.2 The role of civil society in the struggle for the right to food

CSOs were instrumental in driving the clarification of the right to food (Windfuhr, 1998). Two decades after the first World Food Conference in 1974, the appointment of a director-general of the FAO, Jacques Diouf from Senegal, led to the call for a second World Food Summit² to be held in 1996 (Shaw, 2007).

An open critic of the UN and the international financial institutions that were behind the economic reforms that had exacerbated poverty in much of the global South, Diouf sought to bring agriculture back onto the international agenda and position the FAO as a key institution with regard to international development policy (McKeon, 2009).

In addition, the adoption of a resolution to ensure the inclusion of all stakeholders in the FAO conference and its operations and interventions at various levels, signalled a step forward in the struggle for the right to food. Following a lengthy planning and consultation process by the CFS and the FAO to ensure civil society participation in the 1996 World Food Summit, the Global Network on Food Security (GNFS) was formed.

At the same time a group of large-scale commercial farmers highlighted the role of farmers in the production of food and their concerns in the face of increasing corporate control and concentration in agricultural value chains. In addition, small-scale commercial and subsistence farmers mobilized in response to the impacts of the economic policy reforms of the 1980s and 1990s, which resulted in an increase in rural poverty. They contested the narrow definition of food security that focused on world food output and called for the recognition of the concept of food sovereignty.

In end, the NGO Forum for Food Sovereignty, which represented farmers and rural social movements and their partners in civil society, held its own summit alongside the 1996 World Food Summit in Rome to develop an alternative food security model.

2 The call for the second World Food Summit to be convened in 1996 was made by FAO director-general Jacques Diouf during the 28th Session of the FAO Conference in October 1995.



What is food sovereignty?

The concept of food sovereignty was first developed in the early 1990s by La Vía Campesina (an alliance of small-scale farmers and other food producers from Latin America, Europe, North America, Asia and Africa founded in 1993) and presented at the 1996 World Food Summit. Over time, the concept of food sovereignty has evolved, receiving wide support from food justice activists around the world.

“Food Sovereignty is the right of peoples, communities, and countries to define their own agricultural, pastoral, labor, fishing, food and land policies which are ecologically, socially, economically and culturally appropriate to their unique circumstances. It includes the true right to food and to produce food, which means that all people have the right to safe, nutritious and culturally appropriate food and to food-producing resources and the ability to sustain themselves and their societies.”

(NGO/CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty, 2002)



Photo: Creative Commons



Photo: Creative Commons

In the statement by the NGO Forum to the World Food Summit titled *Profit for the Few or Food for All, Food Sovereignty, and Security to Eliminate Globalisation of Hunger* (Shaw, 2017) the NGOs emphasised, among other things, the call for equitable food systems, strengthening the capacity of family farmers and indigenous peoples, agrarian reform in the interests of rural people, agriculture and production systems based on agro-ecological systems, trade policies that do not hinder or undermine food security for everyone, the need to disband the concentration of power and wealth, and the obligations of national and local governments to ensure food security (FAO, 1996).

The reaffirmation of the right to safe and nutritious food for all people at the 1996 World Food Summit led to the Rome Declaration on World Food Security by member states, reasserting their commitment to the realization of the right to food:



“We pledge our political will and our common and national commitment to achieving food security for all and to an ongoing effort to eradicate hunger in all countries, with an immediate view to reducing the number of undernourished people to half their present level no later than 2015.”
(Rome Declaration, 1996)

In the Declaration, member states also pledged to support the implementation of the World Food Summit Plan of Action, which includes a call for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to clarify the right related to food, as contained in the ICESCR, and to develop ways to implement and realize these rights (Rome Declaration, 1996).

The call by the NGO Forum to the 1996 World Food Summit for greater detail regarding the meaning, monitoring and implementation of the right to food led to the development of the International Code of Conduct on the Human Right to Adequate Food prepared by NGOs in 1997. The main goals of the process were to support the adoption of an international instrument for the implementation of the right to food that governs different actors, including CSOs and the private sector (Windfuhr, 2016).

In 1999, the strict legal clarification of the right to food was adopted by the CESCR in General Comment 12, which emphasises the need for appropriate economic, environmental and social policies, at both national and international levels, as necessary conditions for the fulfilment of the right to food (UN CESCR, 1999).

Another key milestone in the struggle for the realization of the right to food was the establishment of the Office of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food by the UN OHCHR in 2000. The core mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the right to food is to promote the realization of the right to adequate food and drive the adoption of measures toward the implementation of the right to food at national, regional and international

levels, developing close co-operation with all states, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations, the CESCR, and other relevant stakeholders.

A fourth World Food Summit was convened at the request of the FAO Council in 2002, during which the Declaration on World Food Security was adopted. The aim of the Summit was to track the progress achieved with regard to world food security. Member states pledged their commitment to the International Alliance Against Hunger, reaffirmed “the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food” and “the importance of strengthening the respect of all human rights and fundamental freedoms,” and highlighted the role of trade in achieving food security. A key outcome of the Summit was the creation of an Intergovernmental Working Group (IGWG) of the FAO CFS that was tasked to develop a set of guidelines for action by member states towards the implementation of the right to food at national level within two years.

2.3 The right to food and food security

The right to adequate food goes beyond the widely used narrow definitions of food security that emphasise the minimum intake of calories, proteins and other essential nutrients, as the right to food is achieved progressively. The right to food obliges states to fight against hunger by taking steps to reduce hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity even in the event of natural disasters and emergencies.

There has been less consensus on the meaning of food security, a concept which came to the fore in the context of the 1972 global food crisis and 1974 World Food Conference (Shaw, 2007). The concept of food security has been defined and redefined 200 times in public policy since it was first coined. Initial definitions tended to focus on food production and supply, but a shift in the 1990s led to a broader concept of food security that addresses consumption-side concerns, namely food access and utilisation, to reflect concerns from the individual or household level to the global level.



Defining food security

While various definitions of food security remain in use, the most widely accepted one is the 1996 World Food Summit formulation:

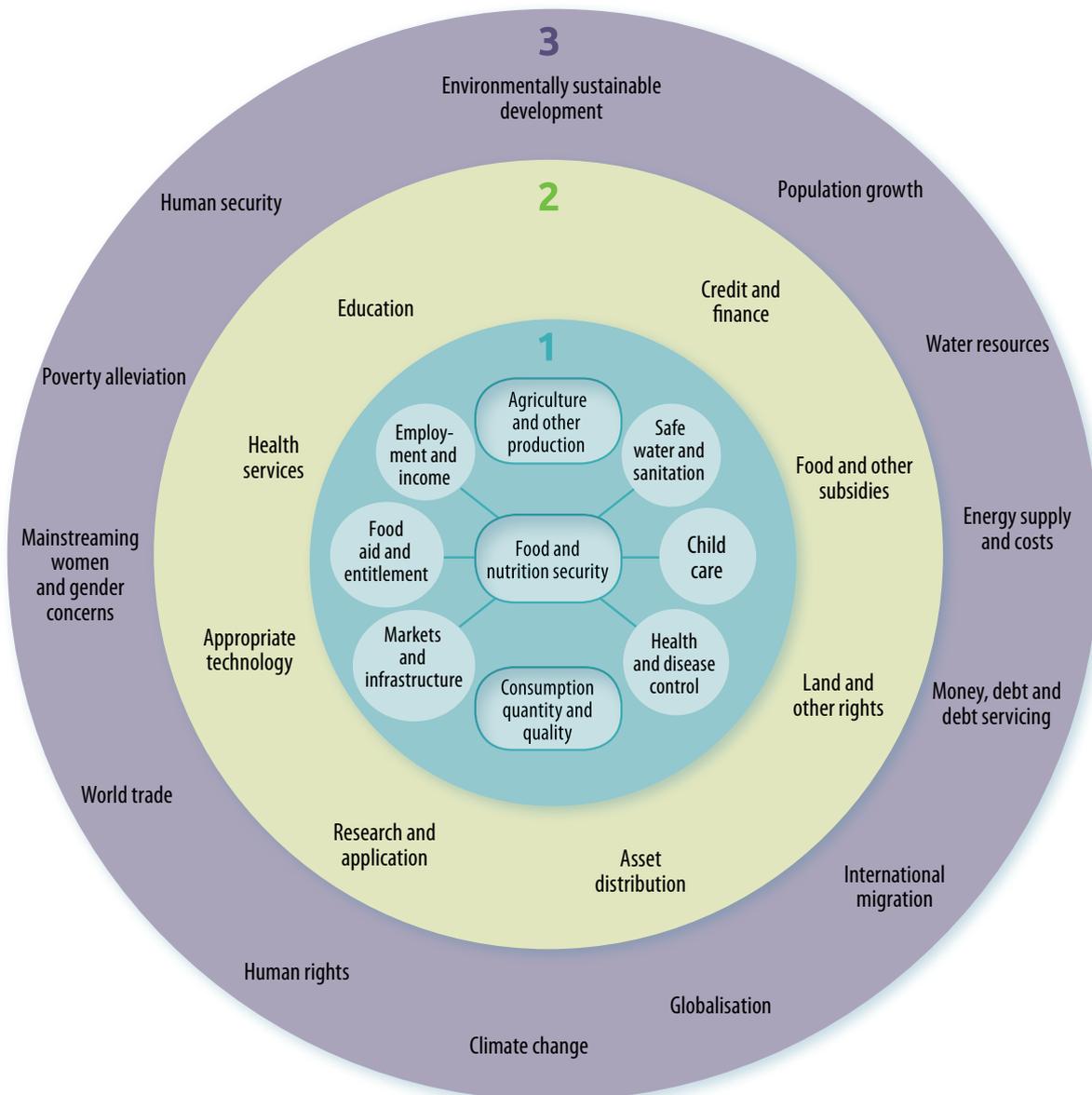
“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”

(World Food Summit, 1996)



Photo: Creative Commons, Surendran Rajaratnam

Figure 1: A broad concept of food and nutrition security, the eye of the storm



Source: Shaw, 2017

Figure 1 is a graphic representation of the evolution of the use of the concept of food security in public policy over time. The three concentric circles illustrate the various levels and facets of food security.

The innermost circle, or “the eye of the storm”, comprises a range of interrelated food and nutrition security concerns at the local level. These are influenced by broader food security concerns at the national and regional levels such as basic services, technology, assets, and human rights, as outlined in the middle circle. The outermost circle addresses global food security concerns and dynamics such as climate change, world trade, and population growth that ultimately influence and shape food security dynamics and concerns reflected in the innermost and middle circles (Shaw, 2007).

Policy thinking around the mitigation and alleviation of hunger had been dominated by aspects of food security, often without the provision of a national framework law on the right to food. The development of the concept of food security in the 1990s led to a convergence in the discourses that brought the right to food and food security closer together.

Nonetheless, Mechlem (2004) has argued that the human right to food “is a distinct and encompassing” principle that should not be treated as a pathway to food security. Rather, the right to food approach supplements food security in that it introduces the value of human dignity and places emphasis on notions of transparency and accountability with regard to how people access food.



3. State obligations

As arguably one of the most violated human rights, the right to food can be contravened on a large scale and affect many people at once, for instance in cases of natural disaster. Yet some violations of the right to food have occurred as a result of a range of incidences and conditions that fall under the control of states, including unjust food systems or policies that undermine the wellbeing of some people while privileging the interests of certain groups and entities in society, including corporations. In such instances, the nature of the violations and related problems can be obscured.

States are charged with four main obligations for the progressive realization of the right to food. Binding international instruments, in the form of treaties, covenants or conventions, impose legal obligations on ratifying states to ensure the effective enforcement of the agreements at the national level. The ways in which the right to food can be violated are outlined in the CESCR's General Comment 12, along with strategies for the implementation and monitoring of the human right to adequate food (Khiza, 2008).

The precise description of the legal obligations incumbent on states, as the most important actors for driving and ensuring the implementation of the right to food, are defined in Article 2 of the Covenant:



“Each State Party to the present Covenant undertakes to take steps, individually and through international assistance and co-operation, especially economic and technical, to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Covenant by all appropriate means, including particularly the adoption of legislative measures.”

(ICESCR Article 2, 1966)

Under international law, the recognition of human rights imposes three types of obligations on states, namely to fulfill, respect and protect:

1. States' primary obligation to fulfil encompasses the obligations to facilitate and to provide.
2. States must uphold the obligation to respect existing access to adequate food by ensuring that it does not take any measures that could potentially undermine this access.
3. The obligation to protect people's right to food mandates states to take measures to ensure that the actions of enterprises and individuals do not deprive others of their access to safe and adequate food.

The four main state obligations for the progressive realisation of the right to food



The obligation to respect, protect and fulfil the right to food

The first part of the obligation to fulfil (facilitate) the right to food essentially requires states to adopt actions to strengthen the channels by which people are able to ensure their access to food, including access and utilization of natural resources, as an important source of livelihoods and food security. The second part of the obligation to fulfil (provide) obliges states to intervene and ensure the availability of food directly, if an individual or group cannot for reasons beyond their control secure their own access to adequate food. The CESCR underlines that interventions for the direct provision of food by states must be extended to victims in emergency circumstances, including natural disasters.



The obligation to adopt measures toward the realization of the right to food

In order to ensure the implementation of the full and progressive realization of the right to food, states have the duty to take deliberate and concrete measures. Therefore, in addition to legislative measures, states must take administrative, economic, financial, educational and social actions, mobilizing the maximum amount of available resources and not diverting resources to other areas.



The obligation of nondiscrimination

The obligation of nondiscrimination applies to food access and the means by which individuals procure food. The universality principle of human rights means that they apply to all people, and any discrimination on the basis of race, colour, sex, language, age, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status constitutes a violation.



The obligation to co-operate

In compliance with their commitment to international co-operation, states must take separate and joint actions for the implementation of the right to food. This means that states must take measures to respect, protect and fulfil the right to food and take note of the right to food in international agreements.

Therefore, under no circumstances shall states use food to exert political pressure or withhold food on the basis of political or economic issues, including the use of food embargoes or economic sanctions that weaken or threaten people's economic, social and cultural rights in other countries. Furthermore, states have a joint and individual responsibility to co-operate and assist other countries hit by natural disasters and emergency situations (CESCR General Comment 12, 1999).

The nature of the obligations is further elaborated on in the CESCR General Comment 3 of 1990, on the "nature of states' obligations" (see Appendix B).

4. The status of agro-food value chains and the right to food in Africa: Case studies in Mozambique and Zambia



Olivier De Schutter, former UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food from 2008 to 2014.

A key feature of the rapid changes taking place in African agro-food systems as a result of the growing commodification of natural resources and the rise of finance in rural food systems has been the incorporation of small-scale farmers in emerging agro-commodity value chains. Despite the surge in large-scale land transactions for commercial agricultural production by agribusiness, small-scale farmers continue to play an integral part in ensuring the supply of specific food crops for local, domestic and international food and feed markets, not as farm labourers but through various forms of outgrower models. The participation of small-scale farmers in commercial value chains is being promoted on the basis that it will lead to improved farmer incomes and food security levels. In a report on the role of agribusiness and the right to food, former UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food Olivier De Schutter noted: *"Unless the realisation of the right to food serves as the foundation of the current reinvestment in agriculture, the situation of the poorest farmers working on the most marginal land could be further aggravated by this process"* (UN, 2011).

Both in the case of Mumbwa District in Zambia and of Gurue District in Mozambique, the majority of the population continue to depend on land and other natural resources for their livelihoods and food access. Our research focuses on the position of small-scale farmers in the soybean value chain and the dynamics that shape the production and procurement of food on a day-to-day basis.

The main benefit of soybean production among small-scale farmers is in the form of cash income, but higher income levels from soybean production among small-scale farmers do not lead to improved nutrition levels and better food access in a linear process. While it is unclear whether higher incomes are indeed contributing towards improved access to more nutritious diets, the impacts of loss of land and diminished food and crop diversity on food availability for households engaged in soybean production are traceable. Our case studies provide some insights into the impact of farmers' participation on their right to food and food security by analysing changes in the channels through which people access food: control over means of production and sale of surplus crops, and level of control over the process of purchasing food. The former denotes productive resources, inputs and access to markets, while the latter refers to the ability to generate income to purchase food and the nature of food environments.



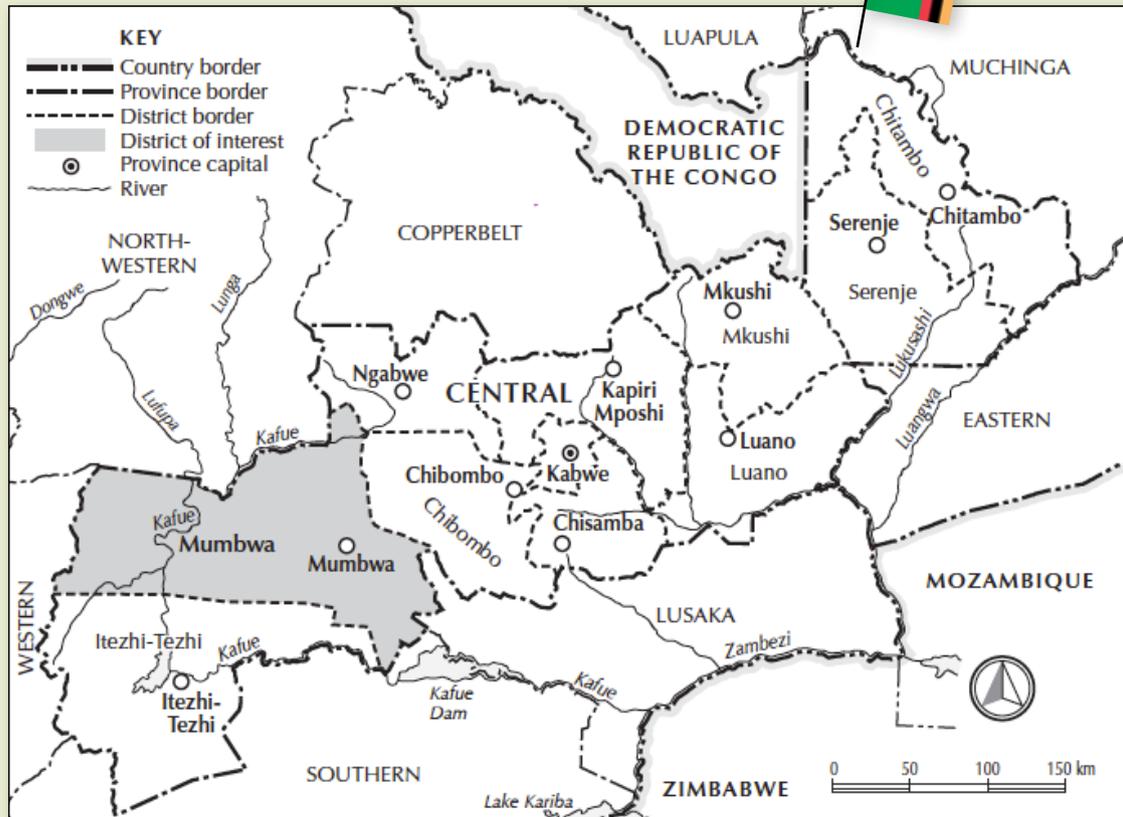
Methodology

We used a basic agro-commodity value chain analysis, which focuses only on production, processing and marketing. We examined the dynamics of each value chain segment in relation to the three pillars of food security and the right to food, which are food accessibility, food availability, and food adequacy.

Data were collected using a qualitative research approach and rapid rural appraisal techniques. These include the following:

- **Key informant semi-structured interviews;**
- **Focus group discussions with members of the community, including focus group discussions with women only, with men only, and with men and women together; and**
- **In-depth interviews with small-scale and emergent farmers.**

Figure 2: Mumbwa District, Central Province, Zambia



4.1 Research findings: The impact of farmers' participation in the soybean value chain on people's right to food in Zambia

Background of the study site

Located in the high agro-ecological zone in Central Province, Mumbwa District is primarily known for its cotton production, following the installation of a ginnery by LONRHO Zambia Limited in 1988. However, cotton production in the district has taken a major hit as a result of the boom in soybean production among small-scale farmers.

Soybean production among small-scale, emergent and medium-scale farmers in Mumbwa District reached an all-time high in the 2016-17 harvest season as farmers increased their production in anticipation of continuing price hikes. Soybean prices went up from ZMW2.50/kg (US\$0.25/kg) in 2015 to ZMW3.50-5.00/kg in 2016. Some of the emergent farmers are renting land from other farmers not only to increase their soybean production, but to diversify and expand their agricultural production into horticulture. While production continues to be dominated by large-scale commercial farms such as Amatheon Agri, soybean production has been a key driver of social differentiation among small-scale farmers in Mumbwa District.

Changes in production practices and control over means of production

In Mumbwa District, where the uptake of new technologies for improving production yields and productivity levels has been high among small-scale farmers, increasing levels of resources have been allocated to the production of soybeans and maize. While maize is a staple crop, most farmers reported decreasing crops and food diversity, due to a combination of factors, including high input costs, lack of access to markets and, as a result, pressure to grow cash crops for already existing markets in order to ensure capacity to access inputs in the next farming season to sustain household income.

Inputs

Most of the farmers we interviewed indicated that although they did not use commercially certified seeds, they did invest in other inputs to improve their yields. Since soybean and other legumes convert nitrogen gas from the air to a plant-available form, farmers do not use base fertiliser or nitrogen fertiliser; however, farmers indicated that they made use of top-dressing fertiliser, particularly the well-to-do emergent farmers. Almost every farmer interviewed reported that they made use of herbicides, while only a few farmers indicated that they used soil inoculant.

“We have been growing soybean for two years since 2015, after learning about the benefits of soybean production from our neighbours, who shared with us that they are able to generate a lot of income from growing soybean. In the past farming season in 2016, we were able to plant 20kg of seed that we bought from local farmers in Nangoma area for ZMW15.00 per 5kg. In total, we hold five hectares of land in total. As a young family, we cultivate the land with no outside help, because our children are too young and we cannot afford to hire a tractor or pay labourers. We planted the soybean in late December in 2016 due to late rains. The only other inputs we use are

*herbicides. We use 35ml of herbicide, which we buy in a sachet and dilute with water in a 12l bucket, and it is enough for the field. The herbicide sachet costs ZMW40,00 at AgriFocus (one of the largest agri-dealers in Mumbwa town). The herbicide only kills the leaves, and we have to use the hoe for weeding the stem and roots. This year, in May 2017, we harvested 14*50kg bags of soybean.”*
 Phillistus Maya (23) and Alon Tiam (29), Nangoma area, Mumbwa District

Zambian Fertiliser, a large supplier located at the edge of Lusaka, indicated that 80% of their transactions were with small-scale farmers for soybean products.

“We supply farmers in Mumbwa through our depot, which has one extension officer. Zambian Fertiliser has two branches, the input section which focuses on application of inputs and provides extension services, and a commodity distribution section.”

At the beginning of each season, Zambian Fertiliser distributes a product guide for small-scale soybean producers. The guide provides instructions for the use of different inputs, and highlights the benefits of these inputs. The company reported that while the use of inputs is aimed at helping small-scale farmers improve their yield, they have found that farmers do not comply with the stipulated waiting period for the residue of the chemicals to dissipate, and in some instances farmers apply the chemicals incorrectly. Zambian Fertiliser also supplies Amatheon Agri and Zambia National Service (ZNS) in Mumbwa (ZNS operates a commercial farm) with seed and soil fertiliser after conducting soil tests.

One of the key strategies for increasing crop yields and diversity that small-scale farmers have historically relied on is intercropping.³ The use of herbicides for maize (the main staple crop) and soybean (a cash crop), limits farmers’ capacity to grow food crops alongside cash crops. With increasing numbers of small-scale farmers in Mumbwa setting aside more land for the production of cash crops, mainly soybean and maize, using herbicides and other chemical inputs to ensure greater yields, the diversity of food crops produced for household consumption is significantly diminished. As a result, there has been growing reliance on local informal markets for accessing a range of food, including fresh vegetables such as onions, rapeseed and tomatoes. However, competing household needs, such as buying more inputs for cash crops to sustain household incomes, affect the quality and quantity of food that is consumed.

Farmers cited access to inputs as the biggest production constraint due to high prices. While some farmers are accessing credit to improve their production output, paying back the loans is a huge concern for farmers, because they take on great risk at the beginning of the farming season with no guarantee of what their yield will be. A farmer in Nkulumazhiba stated that the radio signal in the area was very poor, and farmers were forced to take risks with expensive inputs they had purchased to increase their yields.

3 Intercropping is a practice involving growing two or more crops in close proximity in order to maximise yield on a given piece of land, and making use of resource or ecological processes that would otherwise not be used.

"If we get rain, the rainwater just washes away the expensive chemicals and we are left with debt and low yields."
 Given Mabasa, Nkulumazhiba, Mumbwa District

Many of the programmes that are being implemented by international NGOs and agribusinesses to promote the soybean production among small-scale farmers started off with indirect subsidies, through training and facilitating expanded access to inputs by working with agribusiness and NGOs that offer subsidised inputs to promote the uptake of soybeans. For instance, as part of its facilitation role, the National Cooperative Business Association Cooperative League of the USA (CLUSA) promoted soybean production among small-scale farmers by improving farmer's access to inputs. As part of its food and nutrition project, World Vision facilitates access to inputs credit for farmers on the basis that this will improve farmers' productivity levels and help peasant farmers graduate into small-scale commercial farmers and eventually emergent farmers. However, this exposes farmers to greater risk if harvests are poor. Farmers are quick to adopt these inputs to improve their soybean yield in order to improve and sustain their household income and this exposes farmers to new constraints and pressures that leave them indebted and dependent on credit facilities that charge exorbitant interest rates. World Vision has facilitated farmers' access to credit with a range of institutions for different types of credit in Mumbwa District, including the Zambia National Commercial Bank (ZANACO), which offers inputs to farmers on credit at an interest rate of 25%; Vision Fund, which offers farmers loans at 20% interest, as well as inputs and farming equipment on credit and no down payment required; and Net Save, which is implementing a mechanization project that offers farmers credit for farming equipment.



*"I started growing soybeans in 2015, I went into soybean production to generate income. I hold 20 hectares of farmland that I inherited. Before I went into soybean production, I grew maize and cotton. When I first started with soybean, I planted 20kg of soybean seed on half a hectare of land, using a Brazilian seed variety that I had acquired from a fellow farmer for ZMW100. The only other input I used were herbicides that I purchased from an agro-dealer in Mumbwa town. For the 2016 production cycle, I cultivated 35 hectares using 150*25kg bags of seed. A company called GoCommercial came in 2016 and trained 10 farmers, who were randomly selected from September to October 2016, in conservation agriculture, focusing specifically on soybean production. We received loans in the form of inputs, we received seed, fertiliser and herbicide. The full packages of inputs that I received included 35 hectares for 150*25kg bags of seed, 150*50kg of basal fertiliser, and 35 litres of herbicide. The total loan amounts to ZMW5,450 per hectare, and interest is only charged on the cost of the fertiliser. I used my own tractor for clearing the land, and I employ 10 workers for planting. I only hired men because women get tired too quickly. When it came to harvesting, I hired 25 people that I paid ZMW350, and I used my tractor to shell the crop. During the training, GoCommercial promised us big machines for cultivation and harvesting. After the inputs were delivered end of October, we waited for the company to supply the machines, but when I realized I was losing*



*time, I decided to go ahead with planting using my own resources ... We were also promised a harvester, but I had to use my own tractor. I am still busy harvesting, but I estimate I will harvest about 1000*50kg bags. The company GoCommercial promised that it would provide markets, so we are able to settle the loan. However, I am not confident that the company will deliver on this promise, as they failed to deliver on all the other promises they made to us."*
Ephraim Gandize, Nkulumazhiba, Mumbwa District

Access and control over productive resources

Some emergent farmers are renting land from other farmers. From our interviews, it became evident that farmers who have the capacity to acquire more land are expanding their maize and soybean fields, with a few diversifying into horticulture.

Although farmers did not cite perceptible impacts as yet, the consolidation of land for cash crops is leading to increased pressure on rural land. Logically, the farmers who were early adopters of soybean production are the ones who have graduated from being small-scale farmers to becoming emergent farmers. The latter refers to farmers that cultivate between 5 and 20 hectares of land, while the former refers to farmers cultivating between 0.1 and 5 hectares of land, and accounts for the largest proportion of farmers in Zambia. There are also a few farmers currently operating as medium-scale farmers, cultivating over 20 hectares of land with diversified crop production, including fresh produce, mainly tomatoes. These farmers are increasing their landholdings, mainly for cash crops, by buying land from traditional authorities or leasing land from other farmers.



"I started growing soybean in 2015 because it fetches a good price compared to other crops. I started with 200kg of seeds, after getting training for soybean production from CFU and NWK Agri-services on 10 hectares of land. I also hold 24 hectares that I use for maize production, and another 5 hectares that I use for cotton production. I went into farming after I was retrenched at NWK Agri-services and I rent 24 hectares for ZMW250 for three years."
Helen Malamusuka, Mumbwa District

Control over sale of crops: ability to sell surplus food crops

Farmers' ability to exercise a level of control or influence over the sale of their crops is important, as it essentially determines their capacity to generate income to meet household needs, including the purchase of food to supplement their own production. The increase in soybean production among small-scale farmers has been attributed to the farm-gate price that farmers are offered for soybean in comparison to other crops. There are various marketing channels available for farmers in Mumbwa District.

At the village level, there are informal traders or agents who buy on behalf of wholesalers, and, in some instances, these traders work independently and sell directly to processors in Lusaka. Some of the large-scale buyers such as Cargill have depots in several blocks across the district. In the rural town of Mumbwa, there are medium-scale and large-scale registered aggregators. The primary buyers in Mumbwa include Badat, NWK Agri-business, Amatheon Agri and, in the past, Cargill.



Some emergent farmers hire trucks to transport their soybean to Lusaka to sell to Export Trading Group (which exports the raw material to Kenya, Congo and Malawi) and other processing companies such as Cargill, Novatech, Tiger Animal Feeds and Mount Meru directly. Prices are set by the processors, and farmers get the prices that are set by the aggregators and agribusiness buyers. About 75% of the aggregators operating in Mumbwa are members of the grain association, where local prices are determined on the basis of the market prices set in Lusaka.

Prices tend to be lower at the beginning of the harvest in May each year, and higher between August and September. The prices that are offered by the village depots and informal aggregators operating in the villages are lower than the farm-gate prices that aggregators and wholesale buyers such as NWK offer in Mumbwa town, because of lower transport costs that farmers incur when selling their crop output in the villages.

As a strategy, farmers typically sell their soybeans at the marketing points available in the villages immediately after harvest and part of the income they generate is used to transport their soybean production output for higher farm-gate prices in Mumbwa town.

“When we started buying soybean in 2012, it generally took about three to four days for us to fill up a truckload of 30 tonnes with soybean during the peak season from May to July, and even longer later in the year. Soybean has been profitable for us because of demand in Lusaka and Zimbabwe. At the beginning of the marketing season this year in May, we were able to fill up three to four truckloads with soybean per day; as the end of peak season nears now in July, it takes about two days to fill up one truck with soybeans. The soybean price is quite low this



year, so framers are holding onto their soybean output. According to our records, we transact with 500 to 600 farmers. We have a depot in Nangoma, and another in Nakajoli, and the one here in Mumbwa town. We buy from small-scale and emergent farmers mainly. We require farmers to supply a bag weighing 52kg, even though the prices are set for 50kg of soybeans using a digital platform scale. We do this to overcome the risk of foreign materials in the soybean such as soil or rotten beans. Our method for testing the cleanliness and quality of the crop is inaccurate, because we stick a sharp metal in the bag to see if soil pours out, before pouring the soybean into our bag for weighing. In terms of pricing, we collaborate as aggregators working in Mumbwa District, about three of the aggregators under the grain association, and we set the prices together.” Bennet Ngoma, Chakalala Farms Limited, Mumbwa District

Transport costs for bringing the beans to the aggregators’ doorstep are carried by the farmers, even though emergent farmers have some bargaining power because they are able to guarantee aggregators a 30-tonne truckload in one transaction.

In terms of intra-household dynamics, men cited that their biggest concern when selecting which crops to grow, were the price of inputs and the selling price of the crop in the market in the previous production cycle, to determine how many acres of each crop should be grown in order to maximise income. For women, however, crop diversity emerged as a key determining factor. The female farmers indicated that they all participated in soybean and maize production because they depended heavily on these crops for feeding their families and generating household income to pay



for children's school fees. While the vegetable gardens are typically overseen by women, men do intervene if inputs are purchased by them. When it comes to horticulture, men go for crops for which good marketing channels already exist, such as the market for tomatoes. Male farmers who grow tomatoes typically sell the tomatoes in Lusaka at the Soweto market, Zambia's largest market. Female farmers indicated that they preferred crops that did not require a great deal of inputs and could easily be sold locally, such as sweet potatoes, okra and rapeseed.

During a focus group discussion in Nangoma, a female farmer stated:

"We have six hectares of land. I generally take my children's preferences into account when deciding what crops to grow, so they are more willing to help with farming activities. In terms of food, the most important factor to consider for me is the time it takes for each crop to mature. Early maturing crops such as groundnuts and yellow maize are important for our food security when our food reserves start to dwindle."

Doreen, Nangoma, Mumbwa District

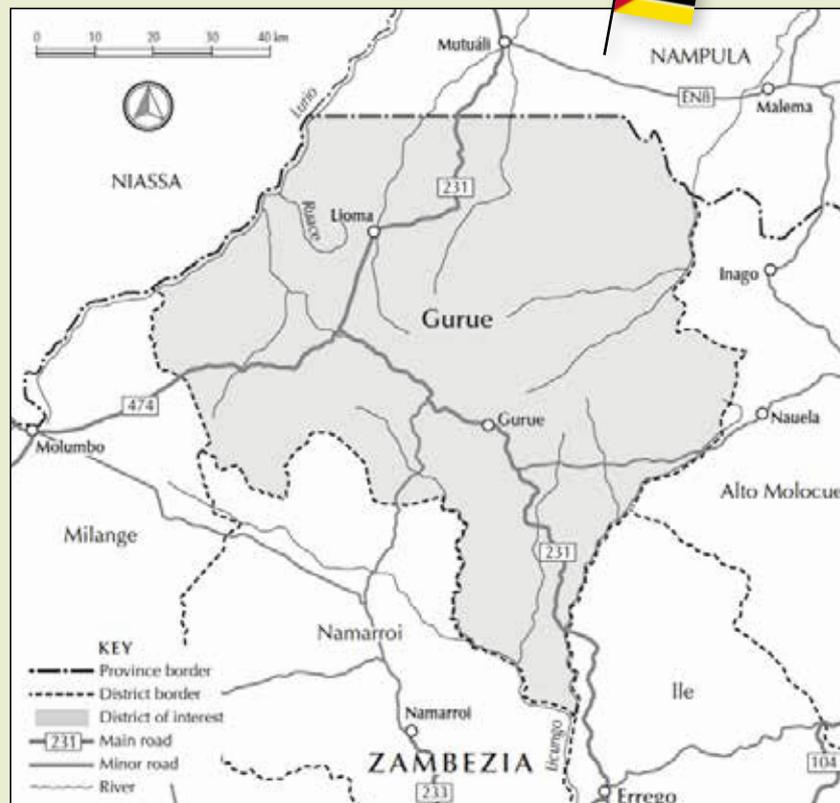
Focus group participants also highlighted that farmers who conducted their farming independently (farmers who were not members of co-operatives, the farmers' union or any farmers' association) generally struggled to access inputs, support from NGOs and new knowledge about different crops. Our interviews revealed that "independent/unaffiliated" farmers tended to have lower soybean yields and struggled to access inputs and markets. Across the board, farmers cited that despite a decline in the price of soybean in 2017, soybean producers were more food secure than those farmers who did not grow soybeans and relied on agriculture as the main source of income and food.





Photo: Creative Commons

Figure 3: Gurue District, Mozambique



4.2 Research findings: The impact of farmers' participation in the soybean value chain on people's right to food in Mozambique

Background of the study site

Soybean production was introduced in Gurue District in the 1980s by the Agricultural Complex of Lioma or CAPEL (Lioma is an administrative post within Gurue District), and soybean production was established with technical assistance from the Brazilian development co-operation.



Despite the failure of the project due to the bloody 1976-92 civil war, Gurue District has emerged as the second leading soybean producing district, after Milange in Zambezia province. Following the reintroduction of soybean production by World Vision in the early 2000s as part of its regional project to enhance nutrition and food security, the promotion of soybean production among small-scale farmers continues to be one of the main strategies for improving farmer incomes and food security by international NGOs working in the area.

Control over means of production

The use of inputs to boost production yields and productivity levels among small-scale farmers in Gurue District remains low, with only a few farmers indicating that they procured inoculant to boost soil health. For most farmers, access to productive resources has had a significant impact on food access, availability and adequacy due to dispossession of farmland.

Farmers cited increasing land pressure as the main reason for poor productivity levels, following farmland dispossession at the hands of Quifel Natural Resources. Farmers have had to seek farmland elsewhere and now hold dispersed pieces of land, some in the dryer parts of the area.

“The area where people here in Ruace have been able to access land for agriculture, called Mocha, is about three hours walking distance. Another area where



people are accessing farmland is at the border with Niassa Province, which is even further away. There is also a serious problem of water; farmers accessing farmland in these far-off places suffer because there is no water in these areas, and during the farming season, when people are working in their fields, people go without water for an entire day as there is no water available."

Berta Gloria Assane, Ruace, Gurue district

The cost of land is high. Prices for buying or leasing land vary according to the fertility of the land and access to water sources. For instance, one farmer cited that land in the dry area, where she is forced to stay overnight because of the time it takes her to travel to the area from her home in Ruace, cost 4000Mt (US\$65) for 1,5 hectares of land. She uses this land to grow maize, soybeans and cowpeas. The fertile land she acquired close to Lurio River, which is about 15 km north-east of Gurue, cost 35,000Mt (US\$570) for three hectares; she uses this land to grow vegetables and beans.

Control over sale of crops: ability to sell surplus food crops

While small-scale and large-scale farmers compete directly in the domestic market, large-scale farmers are able to negotiate terms of trade with buyers, whereas small-scale farmers often have to rely on middlemen, including registered and informal aggregators.



Due to the low market prices for soybean, which range between 22Mt/kg and 13Mt/kg, compared to 35Mt/kg (US\$0,25/kg) in 2016, emergent and large-scale farmers asserted that they were holding onto their soybean output as current market prices would result in significant losses. Although some small-scale farmers are also holding onto their soybean output in anticipation of higher farm-gate prices later in the season, the majority of small-scale farmers indicated they had sold their output to local aggregators for between 13Mt/kg and 16Mt/kg.

On the one hand, AgroMoz⁴ and Hoyo Hoyo Agribusiness⁵ indicated that while they were currently in negotiations with potential buyers and government, they were struggling to access markets. On the other hand, soybean processors indicated that they had been importing soybeans mainly from Malawi, Zambia, and South Africa, because of lack of domestic supply. Higest Mozambique, an animal feed mill company, reported that it required 300,000 tonnes of soybean for its full-fat soy meal for poultry. Novo Horizontes (the third largest poultry company in Mozambique after Higest and Abilo Antunes), which has now acquired King Frango, its former competitor, requires a supply of 300,000 tonnes of soybean for feed mixture and 90,000 tonnes for soy cake. Higest does not procure soybean locally from small-scale farmers, mainly because of quality and single variety standard requirements that small-sale farmers cannot meet. Small-scale farmers are only able to meet quantity demands by aggregating their crop outputs. Furthermore, Higest cited that the operational costs of procuring from aggregators were too high because aggregators expected payment on delivery. In 2016, Novo Horizonte sourced soybeans directly from farmers, but this posed a challenge for the company because farmers expected cash on delivery.

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- 4 AgroMoz in Lioma, Gurue District, is a large-scale commercial farm engaged in maize and soybean after attaining a DUAT for 9000 hectares in 2012.
 - 5 Hoyo Hoyo Agribusiness is a large agricultural concession in Ruace village in Gurue under BXR Group. Hoyo Hoyo is currently engaged in soybean and maize production.



The newly re-established Institute of Cereals of Mozambique (ICM), which is responsible for regulating and promoting agricultural production and commercialisation in Mozambique under the ambit of the Ministry of Industry and Trade, is currently focused on developing and facilitating market access. Mandated to act as the “buyer of last resort” for maize, a staple food crop, the ICM is responsible for ensuring availability of maize and that small-scale farmers have access to markets when markets are depressed.

Current specific interventions by the ICM geared towards supporting small-scale farmers include a micro-finance initiative called AZEBER in Zambezia province, which offers farmers loans, and AACECOM, which facilitates market access for small-scale farmers in Milange, along Mozambique’s border with Malawi. While the ICM does not engage with small-scale farmers directly, it has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Hoyo Hoyo Agribusiness and a contract with the agribusiness company to procure maize. In addition, the ICM is currently brokering a deal on behalf of Hoyo Hoyo Agribusiness with a buyer in Lusaka that will buy 3,000 tonnes of soybean from Hoyo Hoyo.

“We are establishing the link between Hoyo Hoyo and buyers in order to help them access markets. We have assisted a large-scale soybean producer in Tete with securing a deal, after identifying a buyer for them in Manica. We facilitated this process and provided the buyer with a sample from the soybean producer. Beyond this, we were not involved with price negotiation.”
Jorge Fuquisso, ICM, Maputo



4.3 Summary of the impacts

1. Farmers' participation in the soybean value chain has led to improved household income both in Mozambique and Zambia, mainly due to ready markets and competitive prices for soybeans, compared to other crops.
2. From a sustainability and food security perspective, farmers' gradual shift to mono-cropping to consolidate the activities of value-chain actors in national and regional animal feed to poultry markets poses a direct threat to their food access.
3. Prioritisation of soybean production over other crops among small-scale farmers has led to decreasing crop and food diversity. Among the adverse effects of new forms of production are deterioration of soil health, and dependency among small-scale farmers, who either get trapped in debt-cycles to maintain high yields or dependency on donor funds.
4. Increasing land pressure in Zambia due to land consolidation by emergent farmers and urban elites seeking to expand their pastoral and agricultural enterprises means that small-scale farmers' access to resources for food production are further constrained, which in turn impacts local informal food markets. In Mozambique, the lingering impacts of loss of farmland remain evident in Ruace village in Gurue District.
5. Farmers participating in the soybean value chain are faced with new constraints in the form of increasing costs of production imposed by institutional frameworks for obtaining inputs to sustain higher yields, and participation in markets over which they have no control.
6. The lack of variance in the price of inputs means that farmers are charged inflated prices by primary suppliers in the rural towns and villages, including registered and unregistered agro-dealers.

Both in Mozambique and Zambia, the impact of farmers' participation in the soybean value chain is differentiated. Poor small-scale farmers face high transport costs as farm-gate prices for commodities tend to be lower in the villages than in rural town centres. Well-to-do farmers are able to negotiate transport costs directly with aggregators, as they are able to offer aggregators a higher tonnage of soybeans in a single delivery. Income generated from the sale of soybeans is comparatively higher than that of other crops due to higher farm-gate prices since the introduction of soybean production among small-scale farmers. However, the unequal nature of the soybean value chain has resulted in new pressures and constraints, and the loss of access and control over productive resources, access to inputs, and the lack of bargaining power in the sale of crops for small-scale farmers that make the implications of higher incomes for household food security complex. We see that while some farmers are able to take advantage

of new farming practices and markets, the majority are only realising marginal gains. As such, farmers' participation in the soybean value chain is contributing to the progressive realisation of the right to food of emergent and some commercial small-scale farmers, and undermining the entitlements of some farmers, particularly those who have experienced loss of access and control over productive resources. For the majority of farmers, increased exposure to credit and marketing systems over which they have little control, means less control over their own food production system and agro-food system and nutrition outcomes.



Exercise 1

**(a) List the practical responsibilities and obligations of your government.
Which obligations does it currently honour?**

(b) What effects do state actions have on different people's right to food?

1. Farmers
2. Traders
3. Consumers (rural and urban)
4. Farmworkers



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Section B



5. The Voluntary Guidelines on the right to food

The Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food were adopted by 187 member states of the FAO General Council during its 127th Session in November 2004, following fierce debate among member states with civil society, and tough negotiation by the IGWG. While the Voluntary Guidelines on the right to food are nonbinding, they serve to elaborate on a binding international law instrument, and hence do not diminish the legal obligations imposed by the right to food or other related human rights.

In accordance with the mandate set out during the World Food Summit: five years later held in 2002, the Voluntary Guidelines on the right to food provide state actors with guidance on translating the legal obligations of the right to food within the context of national food security into practical strategies and actions.



Resources for further reading:

1. **The Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security, available at:**
<http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/009/y9825e/y9825e00.htm>
2. **Intergovernmental Working Group, available at:**
http://www.fao.org/righttofood/en/highlight_51596en.html.
3. **Künnemann, R., and Epal-Ratjen, S., "The Right to Food: A Resource Manual for NGOs." American Association for the Advancement of Science. Available at:** https://www.aaas.org/sites/default/files/RT_Food.pdf

Consisting of 19 individual guidelines, the Voluntary Guidelines on the right to food serve as an additional instrument in the fight against hunger to ensure access to nutritious food for all.



An outline of the Voluntary Guidelines on the right to food

GUIDELINE 1	Democracy, good governance, human rights and the rule of law
GUIDELINE 2	Economic development policies
GUIDELINE 3	Strategies
GUIDELINE 4	Market systems
GUIDELINE 5	Institutions
GUIDELINE 6	Stakeholders
GUIDELINE 7	Legal framework
GUIDELINE 8	Access to resources and assets
GUIDELINE 8A	Labour
GUIDELINE 8B	Land
GUIDELINE 8C	Water
GUIDELINE 8D	Genetic resources for food and agriculture
GUIDELINE 8E	Sustainability
GUIDELINE 8F	Services
GUIDELINE 9	Food safety and consumer protection
GUIDELINE 10	Nutrition
GUIDELINE 11	Education and awareness raising
GUIDELINE 12	National financial resources
GUIDELINE 13	Support for vulnerable groups
GUIDELINE 14	Safety nets
GUIDELINE 15	International food aid
GUIDELINE 16	Natural and human-made disasters
GUIDELINE 17	Monitoring, indicators and benchmarks
GUIDELINE 18	National human rights institutions
GUIDELINE 19	International dimension

6. Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems

Against the backdrop of the rush for land in the global South by investors from traditional and new hubs of capital following the convergence of the food, finance and energy crises, the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (RAI Principles) were adopted on 15 October 2014 by the member states of the CFS, hosted by the FAO (Kay, 2015). Aimed at promoting a rights-based framework for investment in agriculture and food systems and supporting national food security, the RAI Principles include actions to address environmental, social and economic concerns relating to agriculture and food systems.

In short, the RAI Principles refer to “investment in the creation of productive assets and capital formation, which may comprise physical, human or intangible capital, oriented to support the realisation of food security, nutrition and sustainable development, including increased production and productivity, in accordance with the Principles outlined in this document” (CSM, 2014).

The right to adequate food is highlighted in the overall objective of the RAI Principles, which states: “The objective of the Principles is to promote responsible investment in agriculture and food systems that contribute to food security and nutrition, thus supporting the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security” (CSM, 2014). The right to food is also emphasized in Principle 1, which outlines specific measures for contributing to food security and nutrition.

Like the Voluntary Guidelines on the progressive realization of the right to adequate food, the RAI Principles are voluntary in nature and globally applicable. They were developed to serve as a guide on how the capitalization of agriculture, fisheries and livestock at all levels and across all stages of value chains should be structured in order to address food and nutrition insecurity, while promoting sustainable livelihoods and the rights of vulnerable people (see Appendix C). The ten RAI Principles cover all types of investment in agriculture and food systems by public and private actors, including principal investors at different scales and contract farmers.



The Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems

- Principle 1:** Contribute to food security and nutrition
- Principle 2:** Contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic development and the eradication of poverty
- Principle 3:** Foster gender equality and women's empowerment
- Principle 4:** Engage and empower youth
- Principle 5:** Respect tenure of land, fisheries, and forests, and access to water
- Principle 6:** Conserve and sustainably manage natural resources, increase resilience and reduce disaster risks
- Principle 7:** Respect cultural heritage and traditional knowledge, and support diversity and innovation
- Principle 8:** Promote safe and healthy agriculture and food systems
- Principle 9:** Incorporate inclusive and transparent governance structures, processes and grievance mechanisms
- Principle 10:** Assess and address impacts and promote accountability



Photo: Creative Commons, Joe Nkadaani (CIFOR)

7. How does the right to food link to other rights?

The right to adequate food is affirmed in several other binding international law instruments (Bultrini, 2014):



1. **The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (CSR), 1951;**



2. **The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979;**



3. **The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989; and**



4. **The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), 2006.**

From a more regional perspective, the right to food is acknowledged and affirmed in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights was adopted by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), now the African Union (AU), in 1981 (African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, 1979).

The Charter is an international human rights instrument that promotes and protects civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights for the African continent (African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, 1982). The Charter recognizes individual and group rights. Although the right to adequate food is not specifically noted in the Charter, it is implicitly recognized in Article 4 on the right to life, Article 16 on the right to health, and Article 22 on development.

The implementation of the right to food through the approval of international instruments and constitutional recognition serves as key measure of individual states' commitment to the progressive realization of the right to adequate food (FAO, 2006).



Exercise 2

1. Given the food security context in your country, what should be included in your constitution regarding legislation on the right to food and the obligations of duty bearers?
2. What should be included in the constitution regarding legislation on land and water rights?
3. Should investors and/or corporations be held accountable by law?

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8. Recognition of the right to food in the region

The implementation process of the right to food using legislative instruments, policies and programmes within the context of national food security has progressed at varying speeds in different parts of the world, and within the southern African sub-region. At present, there are 166 countries that are state parties to the ICESCR. In terms of the two countries covered in our study, neither Mozambique nor Zambia have yet ratified the ICESCR, and are therefore not bound under international law to adopt measures to ensure the realization of the right to food. Nonetheless, both states are bound under national law to ensure that the right to food is not undermined.

Table 1: Approval of international instruments on the right to food in Southern Africa

Countries	RECOGNITION OF INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS				PROTECTION OF THE RIGHT TO FOOD IN THE CONSTITUTION	
	ICESCR (1966)	CEDAW (1979)	CRC (1989)	CRPD (1989)	Explicit protection	Implicit protection
Angola 	Accession (1992)	Accession (1986)	Ratification (1990)	Accession (2014)	–	–
Botswana 	Not a state party	Accession (1996)	Accession (1995)	–	–	–
Lesotho 	Accession (1992)	Ratification (1995)	Ratification (1992)	Accession (2008)	–	–
Malawi 	Accession (1993)	Accession (1987)	Accession (1991)	Ratification (2009)	X	X
Mozambique 	Not a state party	Accession (1997)	Ratification (1994)	Ratification (2012)	–	–
Namibia 	Accession (1994)	Accession (1992)	Ratification (1990)	Ratification (2007)	–	–
South Africa 	Ratification (2015)	Ratification (1995)	Ratification (1995)	Ratification (2007)	X	
Swaziland 	Accession (2004)	Accession (2004)	Ratification (1995)	Ratification (2012)	X	X
Zambia 	Accession (1984)	Ratification (1985)	Ratification (1991)	Ratification (2010)	X	X
Zimbabwe 	Accession (1991)	Accession (1991)	Ratification (1990)	Accession (2013)	X	

Source: FAO, 2018

Table 2: Constitutional recognition of the right to food at national level

Country	Constitutional recognition of the right to food
<p>Angola</p> 	<p>Article 2.2: "The Republic of Angola shall promote and defend the basic human rights and freedoms of individuals and members of organised social groups and shall ensure respect for them and guarantee their implementation through the legislative, executive and judicial powers, their organs and institutions, and on the part of all individuals and corporate bodies."</p> <p>Article 21: "The fundamental tasks of the Angolan state shall be:</p> <p>b) To ensure fundamental rights, freedoms and guarantees;</p> <p>c) To gradually create the necessary conditions required to effectively implement the economic, social and cultural rights of citizens ..."</p> <p>Article 28.2: "The state must adopt legislative initiatives and other appropriate measures to ensure the gradual and effective realisation of economic, social and cultural rights, in accordance with the available resources."</p> <p>Article 90: "The state shall promote social development by:</p> <p>e) Ensuring that all citizens enjoy the benefits resulting from collective efforts in terms of development, specifically with regard to quantitative and qualitative improvements to standards of living."</p>
<p>Botswana</p> 	<p>The Constitution of the Republic of Botswana does not explicitly guarantee the right to adequate food.</p>
<p>Lesotho</p> 	<p>Article 30: "Lesotho shall adopt policies aimed at securing just and favourable conditions of work and in particular policies directed to achieving –</p> <p>(a) remuneration which provides all workers, as a minimum with –</p> <p>(ii) a decent living for themselves and their families."</p>
<p>Malawi</p> 	<p>Article 13: "The State shall actively promote the welfare and development of the people of Malawi by progressively adopting and implementing policies and legislation aimed at achieving the following goals:</p> <p>(b) Nutrition: To achieve adequate nutrition for all in order to promote good health and self-sufficiency."</p>

Country	Constitutional recognition of the right to food
<p>Mozambique</p> 	<p>Article 11: “The fundamental objectives of the Republic of Mozambique shall be: c) the building of a society of social justice and the achievement of material and spiritual well-being and quality of life for its citizens; e) the defense and promotion of human rights and of the equality of citizens before the law.”</p> <p>Article 97: “The economic and social order of the Republic of Mozambique shall aim to satisfy the basic needs of the people and to promote social well-being.”</p>
<p>Namibia</p> 	<p>Article 95: “The State shall actively promote and maintain the welfare of the people by adopting, inter alia, policies aimed at the following: (f) ensurance that senior citizens are entitled to and do receive a regular pension adequate for the maintenance of a decent standard of living and the enjoyment of social and cultural opportunities; (i) ensurance that workers are paid a living wage adequate for the maintenance of a decent standard of living and the enjoyment of social and cultural opportunities; (j) consistent planning to raise and maintain an acceptable level of nutrition and standard of living of the Namibian people and to improve public health.”</p>
<p>South Africa</p> 	<p>Article 1: “The Republic of South Africa is one, sovereign, democratic state founded on the following values: (a) Human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedoms.”</p> <p>Article 7(2): “The state must respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights in the Bill of Rights.”</p>

Country	Constitutional recognition of the right to food
<p>Swaziland</p> 	<p>Article 59:</p> <p>“(1) The State shall take all necessary action to ensure that the national economy is managed in such a manner as to maximise the rate of economic development and to secure the maximum welfare, freedom and happiness of every person in Swaziland and to provide adequate means of livelihood and suitable employment and public assistance to the needy.</p> <p>(2) The State shall, in particular, take all necessary steps to establish a sound and healthy economy whose underlying principles shall include –</p> <p>(e) the recognition that the most secure democracy is the one that assures the basic necessities of life for its people as a fundamental duty.”</p> <p>Article 60:</p> <p>“(1) The State shall guarantee and respect institutions which are charged by the State with responsibility for protecting and promoting human rights and freedoms by providing those institutions with adequate resources to function effectively.</p> <p>(2) The State shall guarantee and respect the independence of non-governmental organisations which protect and promote human rights.</p> <p>(3) The State shall give the highest priority to the enactment of legislation for economic empowerment of citizens.”</p>
<p>Zambia</p> 	<p>Article 112: “The following Directives shall be the Principles of State Policy for the purposes of this Part:</p> <p>(c) the State shall endeavour to create conditions under which all citizens shall be able to secure adequate means of livelihood and opportunity to obtain employment;</p> <p>(f) the State shall endeavour to provide to persons with disabilities, the aged and other disadvantaged persons such social benefits and amenities as are suitable to their needs and are just and equitable.”</p>

Country	Constitutional recognition of the right to food
<p>Zimbabwe</p> 	<p>Article 3(1): “Zimbabwe is founded on respect for the following values and principles – (c) fundamental human rights and freedoms.”</p> <p>Article 11: “The State must take all practical measures to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms enshrined in Chapter 4 and to promote their full realisation and fulfillment.”</p> <p>Article 15: “The State must – (a) encourage people to grow and store adequate food; (b) secure the establishment of adequate food reserves; and (c) encourage and promote adequate and proper nutrition through mass education and other appropriate means.”</p> <p>Article 19(2): “The State must adopt reasonable policies and measures, within the limits of the resources available to it, to ensure that children – (b) have shelter and basic nutrition, health care and social services.”</p> <p>Article 21(2): “The State and all institutions and agencies of government at every level must endeavour, within the limits of the resources available to them (b) to provide facilities, food and social care for elderly persons who are in need.”</p>



9. What can civil society organizations do?

Civil society organizations and social movements, as agents of accountability, are actively involved in shaping policy dialogue around hunger and malnutrition, and advancing food security approaches that are multi-dimensional and responsive to what is happening on the ground. However, the lack of resources and access to decision-making spaces are principal challenges that CSOs face in advancing their cause.

Some of the key strategies for empowering CSOs are advocacy, creating public awareness around specific issues in order to influence action, and promoting open access to correct and accurate information. Building knowledge and driving the dissemination of information are crucial tools for the work of CSOs, and the Voluntary Guidelines on the right to food and the RAI Principles are powerful instruments that CSOs can utilize to shine a light on the right to food and related struggles.

Using the Voluntary Guidelines and the RAI Principles to develop strategies and counter-proposals to regulate markets to influential actors in the governance of food systems at national and local levels is one of the ways in which CSOs and social movements can respond to the rapid transformations under way and shape agro-food system change trajectories and outcomes.



Civil society has played a significant role in the history of the right to food since the first World Food Summit of 1974, gaining momentum in the 1990s with the drafting of the Code of Conduct and the call for clarification of the meaning of the right to food. Although the ultimate duty bearers in the implementation of the progressive realization of the right to adequate food are states, civil society, including organized and nonorganized groups (such as farmers' associations or groups, community-based organizations and faith-based groups) play a vital role in promoting the right to food and highlighting the importance of rights-based approaches for tackling food insecurity (Mulvany, 1997).

Our case studies in Mozambique and Zambia reveal that the impact of agro-food system changes are differentiated and that violations of the right to food take place at various levels of the agro-food systems. The expansion of the soybean value chain in Mumbwa District in Zambia, and Gurue District in Mozambique is restructuring how people produce and access food on various levels, from the reconfiguration of the institutional framework of input supply and the promotion of input credit, to the transformation of production practices and changes in food preparation and consumption patterns.

We suggest a new approach to food security and agriculture development in the region. Our research shows that current investment strategies and models in the food and agriculture sectors that are centred on the expansion of agriculture through large-scale farms and input-induced intensification among small-scale farmers, are giving rise to increasingly unequal food systems. Although food insecurity can result from events that are beyond the power and control of the state, such as natural disasters or global food market dynamics, the impacts of small-scale farmers' participation in the soybean value chain raise questions regarding the policies behind this agricultural model and approach to rural development.

Civil society organizations and social movements that are working with farmers in various capacities can challenge the changes under way in agro-food systems at the local level using the Voluntary Guidelines to understand what is happening in each segment of the system and develop targeted strategies. Taking stock of current government interventions and the policy frameworks shaping the agricultural and food sector is useful for gauging the current status of the implementation of the right to food at the country level and identifying opportunities for interventions that will protect and ensure the right to food of rural people. Table 3 illustrates selected indicators, based on the Voluntary Guidelines and the RAI Principles, for analysing and assessing the implementation of the right to food in relation to the various changes under way in the agro-food systems upon which rural communities depend.



Table 3: Indicators for analysing and assessing the implementation of the right to food and their impact across the agro-food system

Recognition of the right to food	Implementation of the right to food	Access and control over productive resources	Inputs and support	Access to and control over markets	Control of food purchasing process and nature of food environments
National recognition of international instruments	National policy on food security	Tenure security, including customary tenure of land, forests and fisheries	Access to inputs, training assistance and equipment	Infrastructure: - roads and transport, - processing facilities	Support for local markets
Constitutional recognition of the right to food	Multisector and interdepartmental approach to food security	Recognition of rights over the commonage	Regulation of agro-chemicals	Collective bargaining for farmers	Availability of adequate and culturally appropriate food
Explicit or implicit protection in the legal framework and policies governing food and agriculture	National and local government budgets for food security and nutrition programmes		Extension services that promote agro-ecological production practices	Competition regulation in local markets for inputs and agro-commodities	Opportunities for income generation so people can supplement own food production
					Support for production of diverse crops and food among small-scale farmers

By understanding the changes taking place in rural areas and the impact of this restructuring on how people produce and access food, CSOs can, firstly, hold their governments accountable, and secondly, begin to develop strategies for alternative interventions that can contribute to the progressive realization of the right to food. There are basic steps that CSOs engaging with rural communities should take to drive the right to food:

1. Demand inclusion in decision-making and participate in processes of law-making and policy-making on food security and agricultural development strategies. Challenging the current model of agricultural development, which promotes large-scale production and input-induced agricultural intensification is important for developing a different pathway for the commercialisation of agriculture and the eradication of rural poverty.
2. Promote concerted advocacy among CSOs for clear national food security legislation. A rights-based approach is important for challenging the notion that food provision by government is welfare rather than the protection of a human right. Promoting a rights-based approach for policy thinking on food security highlights the fundamental conditions required to ensure physical and economic access to food for all, as it covers access to productive resources and access to incomes in order to purchase food.
3. Lobby for food security to be centralised in government planning and spending. This step requires CSOs and social movements to directly engage policy-makers at the national level. Presenting evidence of what is happening at grassroots level is a strategic way in which CSOs can grab the attention of government officials and the public. For instance, the outcomes of farmer input subsidies that promote the

1. **What is the agricultural development policy?**
2. **What is the investment policy?**

1. **Is the right to food protected in the constitution?**
2. **Is there a national food security policy? Is there an implementation plan for the policy?**
3. **Does the constitution recognise and protect people's land and water rights?**

1. **What is the budget allocation for food security-related programmes?**
2. **What is the budget for farmer support programmes?**

production of specific crops also lead to growing reliance on markets and decreasing crop diversity.

4. Develop a co-ordinated and inclusive right to food movement that links the right to food to other struggles, such as the struggle for tenure security.
5. Build comprehensive awareness campaigns around violations to the right to food in rural communities.



Photo: Creative Commons

If food security is to be achieved, the right to food approach must be applied at both national and local levels and at every stage of the food value chains.

Elements of a rights-based food system can be summarised as follows:

1. Absence of human exploitation/abuse within the value chain.
2. Human rights guarantee, protection of farmworkers, living wages, freedom to form a union.
3. Democratic decision-making on food system choices that have impacts on people across the system – sometimes decisions are indirectly influenced by where the input and subsidisation lies, as well as market access.
4. Each person has a say in the protection of his/her rights.
5. Consider the case of small-scale farmers in Zambia being unable to decide on crops because of inputs from large-scale farmers and government.
6. The establishment of the right to food in international law has been one of the greatest gains made in the global fight against hunger and malnutrition, because it provides a basis for acknowledging and actively tackling the socioeconomic and political determinants of food insecurity (UN Human Rights Council, 2017).



Exercise 3

Using the Voluntary Guidelines on the right to food and the CFS Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems, what are the strategies that your organization or movement would implement at the local and national levels? Consider leveraging existing partnerships with other CSOs, officials in local and national government departments, traditional leaders and agribusinesses.

A large rectangular area with rounded corners, containing horizontal dotted lines for writing.

Appendices



Appendix A



Key international law definitions

Accede/Accession: “Accession” is an act by which a state indicates its agreement to be legally bound by the terms of a particular treaty or convention. The domestic protocol varies from state to state. For a state to officially accede to a particular human rights treaty, the instrument of accession, a formal sealed letter referring to the decision and signed by the state’s responsible authority, is prepared and deposited with the United Nations Secretary-General.

Ratify/Ratification: “Ratification” is an act by which a state essentially indicates agreement to be legally bound by the terms of a particular treaty or covenant. The state first signs the treaty/covenant and then fulfils its own national legislative requirements. Upon the state concluding domestic constitutional procedures and formally deciding to be a party to the treaty or covenant, the instrument of ratification (a formal sealed letter referring to the decision and signed by the state’s responsible authority) is then prepared and deposited with the United Nations Secretary-General. Ratification has the same legal effect as accession, but is preceded by an act of signature.

Adoption: “Adoption” is the formal act by which the form and content of a proposed treaty text are established. Treaties negotiated by an international organization such as the United Nations are usually adopted by a resolution of a representative organ of the organization whose membership more or less corresponds to the potential participation in the treaty in question (the United Nations General Assembly, for example).

Source: United Nations Treaty Collections, Glossary of the terms relating to treaty actions

Appendix B

The nature and scope of state parties' obligations

General Comment 3 of the UN CESCR on the ICESCR, adopted in 1990, addresses the nature of states' obligations of conduct and of result, and clarifies the scope of key obligations:⁶

1. **Progressive achievement of the rights recognised in the Covenant:** Paragraph 9 of General Comment 3 notes that the chief obligation of result reflected in Article 2 of the Covenant charges states with taking steps toward the progressive achievement of the rights recognised in the Covenant. The notion of "progressive achievement" grants states flexibility in relation to timeframes for achieving the full realization of the rights in the ICESCR. However, the CESCR highlights that progressive realization also establishes concrete obligations for states "to move as expeditiously and effectively as possible" to ensure the full realization of the rights in the Covenant. Additionally, states must ensure that any actions or "retrogressive measures" that undermine the enjoyment of the rights must be justified in view of the totality of the rights recognised in the Covenant, and within the "context of the full use of maximum available resources".
2. **Appropriate measures:** While General Comment 3 notes that each state must determine which measures are most appropriate for taking steps toward the progressive realization of relevant rights, the CESCR emphasizes the significance of legislative measures. Alongside legislative measures, the Committee points to the provision of judicial remedies, in line with national legal systems, for rights that may be considered justiciable, such as those that are associated with negative rights, for example rights that are to be enjoyed without discrimination. Other measures for taking steps towards the realization of relevant rights include, but are not limited to, "administrative, financial, educational and social measures".

⁶ CESCR General Comment 3: The Nature of States Parties' Obligations (Art. 2, Para. 1, of the Covenant), adopted at the Fifth Session of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 14 December 1990 (Contained in Document E/1991/23).

3. **Maximum available resources:** In Article 2, paragraph 1 of the ICESCR, states are charged with the obligation to take the necessary steps “to the maximum of its available resources” for the implementation of the rights in the Covenant. General Comment 3 elaborates on this, indicating that states are mandated with a minimum core obligation “to ensure the satisfaction of, at the very least, minimum essential levels of each of the rights in the Covenant”.⁷ The Committee emphasises that even in instances where failure of a state to meet its minimum obligation has been attributed to the lack of resources, states are required to strive to ensure the widest possible enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights under prevailing circumstances. Therefore, while resource limitations are recognised, states are nonetheless challenged to utilise available resources in the interests of the progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights. Likewise, states must ensure that obligations to “monitor the extent of realisation or non-realisation,” of the rights recognised in the Covenant, and to develop strategies and programmes for the promotion of these rights, are not disregarded on account of resource constraints. The Committee stresses that the need of the most vulnerable individuals must be given priority.⁸

In short, the nature of obligations imposed on state parties compels them to adopt actions that ensure that all members of their population have access to adequate minimum food that is nutritious, safe and culturally suitable for consumption.

7 General Comment 3, paragraph 10.

8 General Comment 3, paragraph 10, 11 and 12.

Appendix C

The Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems and the right to food

Recognizing the critical importance of investment in agriculture to promote food and nutrition security, the RAI Principles provide a rights-based framework for investment in agriculture and food systems in terms of national food security that highlights the central role of small-holders, who make up the majority of food producers (McMicheal, 2015). The RAI Principles are intended to distil the lessons learned and provide a framework for national regulations, international investment agreements, global corporate social responsibility initiatives, and individual investor contracts. The RAI Principles were adopted following a two-year global multi-stakeholder consultative process that involved research on the nature, magnitude and impact of increasing levels of investment by wide-ranging private actors in agriculture and food systems, and lessons drawn from best practice in legal and policy processes. During this process, the inclusion of the right to food in policy thinking on food and nutrition security was driven by the Civil Society Mechanism (CSM) for relations within the CFS. The CSM was established in 2010 following an agreement by Member States in 2008 to reform the CFS. The CSM facilitates civil society participation in policy processes at the international level in the fight against hunger and malnutrition (FAO, 2017; CSM, 2014).

The FAO describes agro-food systems as “the set of institutions and activities which combine to make and distribute agro-food products, and consequently act to meet human nutrition needs in a particular society.” However, the provision of sufficient balanced nutrient output through food systems should not be viewed as linear processes, but rather as contested outcomes of complex and dynamic systems (Pareira, 2014.) A broader food systems approach for understanding the changes taking place in local and regional agro-food systems highlights the relationships, interactions and dependencies of diverse agents that co-ordinate the activities of input providers, producers and downstream agents across scales, levels and space. As such, the RAI Principles address the entire range of activities involved in the production, processing, marketing, retail, consumption, and disposal of goods that originate from agriculture, from production inputs to the outputs generated in each segment of a value chain. This includes food and non-food products, livestock, pastoralism, fisheries including aquaculture, and forestry; and the inputs needed and the outputs generated at each of these steps.

Much like the Voluntary Guidelines on the progressive realization of the right to food, the RAI Principles are based on key human rights, including human dignity, nondiscrimination, equity and justice, gender equality, a holistic and sustainable approach, consultation and participation, the rule of law, transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement (CSM, 2014).

Some of the documents underpinning the RAI Principles include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Labor Organization Declaration on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. While the RAI Principles emphasize the role of states as the primary agents responsible for ensuring food and nutritional security, they also highlight the role of rights-holders in various capacities, such as producers, workers in agriculture and food systems, and consumers of the final goods generated (McKeon, 2015).

In addition, the RAI Principles clearly define the shared role of various stakeholders, including financing institutions, donors, foundations, and funds, as critical agents driving global investments and setting the terms of participation for various actors in agricultural and food value chains. Other key stakeholder categories that the RAI Principles address are inter-governmental and regional organizations, universities, agricultural training centres, extension organizations, and smallholders and their organizations.



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