

IV SUMMIT OF REGIONS ON FOOD SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY



2 ZERO
HUNGER





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TOWARDS THE IV SUMMIT OF THE REGIONS ZERO HUNGER

The latest information on the state of global food security shows increasingly worrying signs. After several decades of considerable progress in reducing the number of hungry people, food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition are increasing year by year, in the wake of growing new threats. **The 2020 report on "The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World" of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)** pays particular attention to the deteriorating food situation and raises legitimate concerns. The report shows that global food fragility is linked not only to economic precariousness, but also to socio-political conflicts, climate variability, extreme weather events, the weakening of the global economy and the emergence of pandemics such as the COVID-19.

The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the global economic outlook in a way that no one could have anticipated, exacerbating the number of undernourished people in the world. According to the FAO's 2020 report, about **690 million people, or 8.9% of the world's population, are undernourished**. However, the report suggests that, as a result of COVID-19, between 83 and 132 million people may be added to the above figure. When we dig into the above data, the phenomenon of inequalities in relation to the different continents emerges. Asia and Africa are the continents with the highest number of people exposed to severe levels of food insecurity. Furthermore, the emergence of new conflict zones in the Middle East, following the Arab Spring, has weakened the food balance, exposing the region to an aggravated state of food insecurity.

Another fundamental issue that arises in the international arena, beyond the lack of food, is the quality of this one. According to the FAO, **healthy diets are unaffordable for more than 3 billion people in the world**, as they are estimated to be more expensive than diets that only meet basic food needs. These trends contribute especially to the increased risk of malnutrition and overweight in children.

The problem lies not in the lack of food needed to supply the entire population, but in how these resources are distributed. It is unacceptable that, in a world where food production levels are at an all-time high, **more than 1.5 billion people cannot afford a diet of essential nutrients**. Inequality, the cornerstone of our food systems, is therefore one of the main causes of food insecurity.

According to the FAO report, inequalities in food and health systems exponentially increase inequalities in nutritional outcomes which, in turn, can generate other types of inequities and perpetuate a vicious cycle. Moreover, these imbalances are perceptible at the geographical level, with a growing dichotomy between urban and rural areas, where problems of overnutrition in cities and undernutrition and malnutrition in rural areas coexist in the same country.

In view of the above data, the urgency of global economic and food governance, aimed at transforming current food systems, is clear. This means guaranteeing access to a healthy diet for the entire population, as well as ensuring environmentally sustainable production and consumption mechanisms, generating important synergies that drive the development of the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030 set by the United Nations. However, there is no universal response that can be applied homogeneously to all countries; each country must adapt policies to its specific context.

Since its foundation in 2007, ORU Fogar has shown its full interest in placing food security at the centre of the development debate, as it is one of the basic foundations for a country's progress. Therefore, through this report, the organisation states its firm commitment and dedication to continue working on projects and programmes that make an effective change in the current food systems a reality. Furthermore, on the occasion of the convening of the Food Systems Summit by António Guterres, as part of the Decade of Action to achieve the **17 SDGs** by 2030, ORU Fogar presents the **IV Summit of the World's Regions on Food Security and Sovereignty** to be held in 2022. The aim of the Summit is to transfer the commitments, measures and decisions adopted in the framework of the Food Systems Summit to the regional level. The event aims to showcase the involvement of regions in developing initiatives and policies aimed at achieving healthier, more sustainable, inclusive and equitable food systems.

Our efforts will be aimed at transforming global food systems with a special focus on the most isolated and vulnerable communities, and on sustainability for both people and planet, in order to build a **future of peace, equality and food security globally.**

FAO AGREEMENT AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY CORE GROUP

In 2008, ORU Fogar signed an agreement on food security and food sovereignty with the FAO, which led to the creation of a working group known today as the **Food Sovereignty Core Group**. Initially, the group was led by French regions, first Lower Normandy, then Champagne-Ardenne. Later, in 2016, the presidency passed to the Ecuadorian province of Azuay.

The group began its journey with a theoretical and research base that allowed it to concentrate a valuable source of knowledge and experience, making ORU Fogar an important interlocutor on these issues in the international arena. As a result, the organisation is invited annually by the FAO to the World Committee on Food Security held in Rome. Since Azuay's presidency, the Core Group has taken on a much more practical aspect, promoting and supporting various projects such as, for example, "Maná" from the Colombian Department of Antioquia, which was awarded the Regional Best Practices Award in 2018.

The objectives to be achieved by the actions carried out by the Food Sovereignty Core Group are divided into two main areas:

- The promotion of regional action as a relevant response to the challenges posed by food insecurity.
- The development and implementation of a multilateral, multi-annual action plan.

The working group's action plan is based on two main lines of action, which in turn develop more concrete and specific programmes and activities. Firstly, the aim is to develop each region's capacity to promote a food security policy in its own territory, within the framework of national and international plans. Secondly, the aim is to increase cooperation between regions, both North and South, not as a juxtaposition, with the consequent risks of fragmentation and loss of effectiveness, but around a good convergence of human and financial resources.

Webinars are an example of an activity aimed at achieving **greater cohesion** in the Core Group by sharing good practices on food sovereignty between regions.

Another way of increasing collaboration and participation between regions is through the organisation of **Global Summits**, where new working groups, projects, policies and recommendations are created in order to manage food systems in a more specialised way for each territory while cooperating and facilitating the exchange of information and practices between regions.



WORLD SUMMITS

I Summit, Dakar, Senegal, 2010

The first World Summit of Regions on Food Security and Food Sovereignty was held in Dakar on 18-19 January 2010, against a global backdrop of economic and food crisis. More than 13 years had passed since the commitment made at the World Food Summit to halve the number of undernourished people by 2015, and progress in this area had been disappointing, bringing the world food situation to a critical level. The effects of the 2008 global economic crisis combined with those of the food crisis to increase the number of hungry people. For the first time in human history, the **number of undernourished people exceeded one billion**, according to FAO estimates, **while two billion people were undernourished**.

Under the influence of the economic crisis, climate change, population growth and the depletion of natural and energy resources, forecasts were converging towards a worsening of the situation, which would have an impact on the regions of the South in the short term, but also on those of the North in the longer term.



In this context, ORU Fogar's members decided to mobilise themselves to try to fight against hunger, alongside the efforts of States and international organisations. This commitment was reflected in the organisation of the first Summit of the World's Regions on Food Security held at the invitation of Mr Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal, with the support of the FAO, the UNDP, the WFP, the European Commission, WAEMU, the French and Spanish Development Agencies, the French Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, the French Ministry of Agriculture, the Generalitat of Catalonia and the Dakar Region.

The objectives of this summit were to promote the voice of the regions on the international stage as fully-fledged actors in the service of food security, to obtain recognition of territorial competences in this field, and to encourage the emergence of a global food policy involving all actors for more effective action.

In terms of food security, the objective was twofold: i) to increase the availability of food as a means to feed the population and generate sufficient income for actors in the agricultural sector to promote rural development, ii) to ensure that the most vulnerable populations have immediate access to food through the establishment of safety nets and social protection measures.

More than **800 people** attended, including representatives of regional and local governments, large regional groups, 38 national representatives, representatives of international organisations, producer associations, scientific experts, banks and NGOs.

The agenda of the Summit was organised around two plenary sessions between which six thematic workshops were held to show the relevance of the regional level in the implementation of specific actions leading to action plans, ways of improvement and a methodology for their implementation. The first part of the Summit was devoted to introductory lectures on the situation and general mobilisation on the food issue and a round table on the importance of the decentralised level in hunger eradication strategies. The second part focused on the presentation by four regional representatives of their respective experiences, main lines and methods of action in their regions.

The Summit concluded with the signing of the **final declaration** by ORU Fogar's members, in which the following conclusions were drawn:

- That global governance of food security should include all levels of actors in order to develop a more coherent and effective integrated strategy for food security and the fight against poverty.
- Commit themselves to active participation in the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) for a territorial and integrated implementation of the CFS recommendations.
- That the regions participate in the drafting, implementation and governance of national food security programmes.
- That the conclusion of the WTO negotiations in the framework of the Doha Round take into account the need to establish protection against low-priced imports that compete with local sectors and threaten food security.
- They call on donors to ensure that agriculture and food regain their place in ODA, and on governments to ensure that the budget allocated to agriculture, food and nutrition is commensurate with their importance in terms of food security.
- They call for funding mechanisms to encourage the adoption of sustainable agricultural technologies and practices.

- They call on States to assume their responsibilities for agricultural production and access to food for the most vulnerable.
- Improve the availability of food by involving small farmers and taking into account the traditional knowledge of developing regions.
- They undertake to implement a policy of sustainable partnerships with a view to achieving the objectives set out in the declaration and to promote triangular intercontinental cooperation to enrich exchanges and change the dynamics of development.
- They undertake to contribute to the fight against food insecurity in areas where the regions have real added value to offer, both economically and operationally.

To deliver on the proposals, the regions committed to create a **group of Northern and Southern regions in the first half of 2010** to work closely with ORU Fogar on multi-regional, multi-country and intercontinental cooperation with a multi-partner support framework (EC, FAO, UNDP, AECID, AFD, national cooperation agencies, etc.) to combat the risk of fragmentation of cooperation and ensure greater impact on food security.

II Summit, Medellín, Antioquia, Colombia, 2012

The second Summit of the World's Regions on Food Security and Food Sovereignty, held in Medellín on 22-23 October 2012, was organised by ORU Fogar and its food sovereignty working group together with the Department of Antioquia. Two years after the first summit in Dakar and more than fifteen years after the commitment made at the World Food Summit to halve the number of undernourished people by 2015, little progress had been made and the global food situation remained critical. Global food demand was at peak levels, yet the number of undernourished people remained at one billion, affecting mainly women and children. The food crisis, aggravated by the global economic crisis and commodity speculation, not only threatened people's health, but also the stability of territories.

In this context of food crisis, ORU Fogar's members decided to mobilise and hold the second Summit of the World's Regions on Food Security and Sovereignty in which **more than 1400 actors participated** and where nearly 30 countries were represented.



The objectives identified and prioritised by the World regions at the Medellín Summit were the following: i) To show the essential role of the sub-state level in anticipating crises and improving food security through territorial development plans and mechanisms. ii) To express their commitment to work towards the Millennium Development Goals of the Post-2015 Agenda on Food Security. iii) To integrate ORU Fogar into the governance and decision-making bodies on Food Security at national and global level. iv) That territorial specificities must be taken into account at the global level, in order to obtain the recognition and protection of the diversity of lands and cultures, production methods and to maintain territorial knowledge. v) To seek the association of local and regional authorities from the early stages of the development of projects that can have a lasting impact on the territory, on its natural resources and on the food security of the population.

The event focused on finding shared, innovative and effective solutions to address persistent food insecurity problems and to demonstrate the added value brought by the regions. The three thematic strands under which the debate focused were **governance systems, land ownership and the food chain.**

For his part, the mayor of Medellín, Aníbal Gaviria Correa, outlined the factors that should influence a good food security policy and gave as an example what his region has achieved with programmes such as **"Maná"** in Antioquia and **"Buen Comienzo"** in Medellín. *"The keys that we have identified to achieve food security are concentrated in political will, an integrated design of programmes and the combined will of the government and the actors in society,"* he said.

The Summit ended with the elaboration of the **final declaration** in which ORU Fogar members expressed the following commitments and proposals:

- They call for global governance of food security that integrates the Regions and local governments in order to develop a multi-level strategy for food security.
- Commit themselves to this governance through their active participation in the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) to achieve a territorial and integrated implementation of these recommendations.
- They commit themselves to create, through ORU Fogar's Food Sovereignty Core Group in synergy with FAO, a regional model of territorial organisation for Food Security called "Territorial Food System (T.F.S.). This system aims to assert the autonomy of the territories in terms of food security, through the relocation of production, consumption and distribution, with the objective of guaranteeing adequate and quality access to food for the entire population.
- They call on States and International Organisations to support the creation of this S.A.T., with resources, competences and responsibilities.

III Summit, Cuenca, Azuay, Ecuador, 2018

The third Summit of the World's Regions on Food Security and Sovereignty held in Cuenca, Ecuador, on 27-28 April 2018, was organised by ORU Fogar, the prefecture of Azuay and the Consortium of Autonomous Provincial Governments of Ecuador (CONGOPE). Following on from the previous two summits, which promoted the role of regional actors and territorial food systems, in this third summit, the regional governments provided a space for reflection, debate and intervention on current agri-food systems. The focus of the event was **Sustainable Development Goal 2 "Zero Hunger"**, understanding and recognising that it is in the regions that the basis for food security is established and that, therefore, it is there that the first steps must be taken.

This was the largest World Summit of Regions on Food Security and Food Sovereignty ever held, as it was not an event with limited participation, but an open invitation to all actors involved in development. The Summit was attended by more than **2,500 participants**, including governors, mayors, prefects, NGOs, regional presidents from 37 countries and 8 presidents, such as José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero from Spain and Felipe Calderón from Mexico.



For two days, representatives of regional governments from the Americas, Europe and Africa debated at working tables, forums and conferences, addressing policies to improve food production, provide better livelihoods for agricultural producers and ensure access to quality food for the entire world's population. The president of Ecuador, Lenin Moreno, called for **recognition of the rural environment and the role of the peasantry**. Felipe Calderón called for a **green revolution** that respects ecosystems. Nor were present-day problems left out, and that is that, paradoxically, alongside hunger and malnutrition, there is food wastage and obesity.

After intense days of reflection, dialogue and exchange of learning on agrifood systems and the role of intermediate governments in contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goal of Zero Hunger, the Summit concluded with the approval of the **"Cuenca Charter"**. A declaration with 21 proposals aimed at ending hunger, achieving food security, improving food production and promoting sustainable agriculture. The "Cuenca Charter" was not only disseminated to the regional governments present, but was also sent to all heads of government around the world, as well as to the United Nations.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Despite the will and efforts made at the previous three World Summits of the Regions, as well as some progress made in recent years, food security and food sovereignty are still unfulfilled rights for millions of human beings in the world. Still today, and accentuated by the COVID-19 pandemic, there are millions of people living under acute food insecurity without any capacity to cope with the resulting health or socio-economic aspects. Based on current trends, **by 2030, more than half of the world's chronically hungry people will be in Africa.**

In order to prevent the situation from becoming a vicious circle, it is important that all actors in the international arena mobilise and coordinate around a set of operational and strategic priorities. This is why ORU Fogar, on the occasion of the convening of the Food Systems Summit by the United Nations Secretary General, has organised the **IV Summit of the World's Regions on Food Security and Food Sovereignty** for 2022. The aim of the Summit is to translate the decisions and policies adopted at the 2021 Food Systems Summit into regional and local action. The event aims to show the regions' commitment to designing and taking collective action through interventions along the entire food supply chain, in the food environment and in the political economy that shapes trade, public spending and investment policies.

The summit will not only issue a call to action to territorial, local and regional governors, but will also call on national governments to incorporate nutrition into their agricultural approaches, strive to reduce cost-increasing factors in food production, storage, transport, distribution and marketing, support local small-scale producers to grow and sell more nutritious food and ensure their access to markets, prioritise child nutrition as the category with the greatest needs, encourage behaviour change through education and training, and integrate nutrition into social protection systems and investment strategies at the national level.

It is expected to be a multitudinous summit, surpassing the participation of the previous one, involving different social organisations and associations, regional and national presidents, as well as civil society. A summit that will promote the conceptual and practical exchange of public policies for learning and development around regional initiatives in favour of food sovereignty and security, while establishing alliances with actors in the international arena.

