

Civil Society Position on Food Security, Nutrition and Agriculture for the G7 Summit 2017

Food security and good nutrition are essential to build a strong foundation for development. These are vital to ensure people are healthy; their bodies, brains and immune systems fully developed, and enable them to reach their full economic potential. In this regard, the prioritisation of these two important issues through the 2017 Italian G7 presidency with the objective of moving from the vision of the Schloss Elmau and Ise-Shima Summits to concrete action, is warmly welcomed.

The G7 Elmau commitment to lift 500 million people out of hunger and malnutrition by 2030, will not be achieved at the current level of investment and a 'business as usual' approach. Moreover, with four famines looming and 20 million people at risk of starvation, it is imperative that the G7 act now to address this emergency alongside strengthening longer term food and nutrition security through development aid. Adequate investments in both food security and nutrition from the G7 donors with a transparent and time-bound action plan towards meeting this commitment will positively transform the survival and thriving potential of millions. It will also drive rapid economic and social development, and accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Global goals.

The G7 donors have the ability to galvanise the donor community in scaling up much needed investments for food security and nutrition, and support governments in high-burden countries in improving their own budgetary allocations and policy plans on the same. To achieve larger and more meaningful impact for these resources, the G7 should scale up their ODA investments for food and nutrition security through the Taormina Initiative and invest through bilateral, multilateral as well as innovative mechanisms to implement programmes targeting the poorest, most marginalised and vulnerable groups such as women, children, and small holder farmers. These programmes must also be aligned with country national plans without any donor driven conditionality.

Globally, more than 2 billion suffer from malnutrition. Improving food production and availability alone cannot solve the malnutrition crisis. Ensuring that nutrition is central to the Initiative's focus on food security can help achieve the greatest impact and value-for-money. Through the initiative, investments for nutrition should focus on scaling up short-term evidence based high-impact interventions such as improving maternal nutrition, strengthening breastfeeding and complementary feeding for young children, treatment of severe acute malnutrition, and Vitamin A supplementation, alongside a long-term integrated, multi-sectoral, and food systems approach aligned with the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition. To deliver the globally agreed objectives of the Decade, the G7 should announce ambitious resource announcements in 2017 to improving nutrition, and not just food security.

The recent G7 publication of the 'financial reporting methodology on food security and nutrition', to facilitate transparent and time-bound reporting against G7 contributions towards meeting the Elmau commitment is a step in the right direction. Tracking investments and outcomes, and bridging data gaps are critical to assess and improve progress on the Elmau target and the 2nd Global goal on food security and nutrition.