

## Food Security, Environmental Stewardship and Disaster Resilience & Response

### Introduction to the commission

**Mandate of the Commission:** To contribute to interventions that seek to address the African food security situation, and advocate for enabling policies in the areas of budgetary allocation to agriculture, modernization of agriculture, promotion of modern farming technologies and sustainable agronomic practices that address environmental degradation and mitigate effects of climate change.

This commission focuses on: i) Food security

ii) Environmental Stewardship

iii) Disaster Resilience and Response

#### a) Food Security

Food insecurity is defined by the UN FAO as the “situation when people lack secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life.” Food insecurity can be caused by a number of factors, including the unavailability of food, unaffordable food, and unequal distribution of food between household members. Food insecurity is one of the major causes of poor nutrition.

According to *Africa Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2019*, after a long period of improvement, hunger in Africa – as measured by the prevalence of undernourishment – worsened in 2014–2018. This trend slowed in 2017–2018. Today 256 million Africans, or 20 percent of the population, are undernourished. Of these, 239 million are in sub-Saharan Africa and 17 million in Northern Africa. There is significant variation in the levels and trends of hunger in Africa’s subregions. The prevalence of undernourishment has for the past 18 years been highest in Eastern Africa and Central Africa, indicating persistent constraints in terms of availability and access to food. However, over the 2014–2018 period, the trend in the prevalence of hunger worsened the most in Western and Central Africa, for the most part due to conflicts, climate extremes and economic slowdowns, sometimes combined.

This broader measure of food insecurity shows that in Africa, the number of people that are severely food insecure is broadly in line with the number of people that are undernourished. However, an additional 399 million people were found to be moderately food insecure, i.e. they did not have regular access to nutritious and sufficient food, even if they were not necessarily suffering from hunger. Of these, 87 percent live in sub-Saharan Africa. Despite a

slowing in the upward trend in hunger, the food insecurity situation remains a challenge and food crises continue to affect millions of Africans.

Nutrition outcomes are generally improving across Africa, but at a very slow rate. Too slow in most countries to meet the SDG – and World Health Assembly (WHA) – global nutrition targets for stunting, wasting and overweight in children under the age of five, or for low birthweight, exclusive breastfeeding and anaemia in women of reproductive age.

Very few countries are on track to achieve the SDG target of a 40 percent reduction in the number of stunted children. Although the prevalence of stunting in children under five is falling at the regional level, the number of stunted children is rising, reaching 58.8 million in 2018. Economic growth is necessary to reduce stunting, but alone it is not sufficient, and nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions are also needed.

The Council builds capacity, coordinates and share best practices of its members work on food and nutrition security across the continent with focus on:

**i) Sustainable food production**

Africa is rich in minerals, oil and natural gas, fresh water, fish, forests, and wild game and birds, flora and fauna. Two thirds of Africans are dependent on farming for their livelihoods, so boosting Africa's agriculture can create economic opportunities, reduce malnutrition and poverty, and generate faster and fairer growth. To achieve that, African farmers need more investment, better access to financial services such as loans, and quality inputs such as seeds and fertilizers. The production systems should also be sustainable to avoid negative environmental impacts occasioned by unsustainable agronomic practices. The Council promotes amongst its members ecological land use management practices.

**ii) Market systems**

Small-scale family farms provide the bulk of food to African cities. Although a few large-scale farmers produce specifically for the market, most small-scale farmers produce staples (cassava, maize, rice, millet, bananas, meat, milk, fruits and vegetables) primarily for subsistence and only the surplus is sold. The marketing chain begins with trader-collector drivers who buy produce from rural markets or directly from individual farmers. The trader-collector drivers constitute the main link between geographically scattered small farms in rural areas and the distribution network of wholesale and retail markets in cities. They also sell directly to consumers. Produce is usually transported loose or in sacks by trucks that provide little protection against the tropical heat. It is

common to find haulage trucks being used for sorting, packing and storage of produce in places where no wholesale markets exist. Standard weights, measures and grading systems are non-existent in the rural-urban trade of local produce, and as a result trading by sampling is predominant. Inefficient handling and high levels of deterioration and wastage, especially in the case of perishables, increase the cost and undermine the spatial marketing function in African Food Supply and Distribution Systems.

### iii) **Agricultural policies**

In spite of being the most important and main economic activity in Africa compared to other sectors, Agriculture has persistently not performed to expectations partly because women and youth, who play a crucial resource in agriculture and the rural economy as farmers, labourers and entrepreneurs, face more severe constraints in access to productive resources such as land, farm inputs, market and credit facilities. Moreover, much of the land in Sub-Saharan Africa is still owned by farmers under customary tenure system. This limits women and youth's access, control and ownership of land despite having many female-headed households. This limits their engagement in agriculture.

#### **Global Statistics**

- 11% of the world's population are undernourished – this means they have a caloric intake below minimum energy requirement.
- 820 million people globally are undernourished.
- 22% of children younger than five are 'stunted' – they are significantly shorter than the average for their age, as a consequence of poor nutrition or repeated infection.
- 9% of the world population – around 697 million people – are severely food insecure.
- One-in-four people globally – 1.9 billion – are moderately or severely food insecure.

*(Our World in Data, 2020)*

## b) Environmental Stewardship

Climate change is one of the world's most pressing challenges. Human emissions of greenhouse gases – carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), nitrous oxide, methane, and others – have increased global temperatures by around 1°C since pre-industrial times.

A changing climate has a range of potential ecological, physical and health impacts, including extreme weather events (such as floods, droughts, storms, and heatwaves); sea-level rise; altered crop growth; and disrupted water systems.

### Global Statistics

- Global average temperatures have increased by more than 1°C since pre-industrial.
- CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in the atmosphere are now well over 400ppm – their highest levels in over 800,000 years.
- Globally we emit over 36 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year – this continues to increase.
- There are large differences – more than 100-fold – in per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions between countries.
- Today, China is the world's largest CO<sub>2</sub> emitter – accounting for more than one-quarter of emissions. This is followed by the USA (15%); EU-28 (10%); India (7%); and Russia (5%).
- The USA has contributed most to global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to date, accounting for 25% of cumulative emissions. This is followed by the EU-28 (22%); China (13%); Russia (6%) and Japan (4%).
- A large amount of CO<sub>2</sub> is embedded in traded goods – this means some countries' emissions increase while others decrease when we look at

### c) Disaster Resilience and Response

CAPA together with its partners, Episcopal Relief & Development & the Anglican Alliance strive to enhance the local Anglican Church capacity in **preparing for and responding** to disasters. We hope to encourage and build on the global examples of active church engagement in affected areas to support the most vulnerable as they recover from disasters both in the short and long term. While there is recognition that localized surge engagement is more efficient, there generally remains a lack of country-level skills and resources to support such an engagement.

In order to do this, the Council together with the partners have developed and established *Partners in Response & Resilience (PiRR)*, a regional south-to-south human resource exchange mechanism for accompaniment of the local church in times of disaster preparedness and planning and, also in time of large disasters **when local capacity is overwhelmed**.

The mechanism is designed to be flexible and tailored to the particular context and needs of the local church. It could entail an initial deployment for early support and establishing relationships, then accompaniment from a distance over time, with follow-up visits as determined and agreed reflecting on the evolving situation. This program is **not designed to replace** other existing initiatives or mechanism but to provide additional capacity support to local churches as needed. In the case of preparedness deployment, this include facilitating a disaster resilience training workshop using the **Pastors and Disasters** resource, then accompaniment from a distance as preparedness activities are implemented.

Among the ongoing accompaniments include:

#### 1. Cyclone Idai Response & Recovery – Zimbabwe

Following the disaster caused by Cyclone Idai that occurred in Mozambique, Malawi and Eastern Zimbabwe from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> of March 2019, the Diocese of Manicaland and Masvingo through Anglican Relief and Development in Zimbabwe raised a requisition for both financial and human resources support. The Council secretariat then sent a resource person to accompany the Church in their time of response and recovery.

The visit established that many families were still living in the IDP camps and were mainly supported by UNHCR and WFP. The government was doing infrastructural rehabilitation that included roads and bridges reconstruction. Some affected schools were also rehabilitating their structures especially the sanitation facilities.

Besides the appreciation of the impact of the cyclone on communities affected, the resource person together with ARDeZ staff team also engaged with government departments and non state actors for collaboration in response and capacity enhancement on Disaster Risk Management.



## 2. Covid19 Response

A viral infection with pneumonia-like symptoms detected in Wuhan, China was first reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) Country Office in China on 31

December 2019. The outbreak was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020. WHO has recorded 10,836,298 infections, 519,605 confirmed deaths and 6,057,192 recoveries affecting 213 countries, areas or territories by 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2020. In Africa's 55 states, there are over 414,011 cases of infection, 10,260 deaths and 195,729 recoveries according to Africa Centre for Disease Control.

CAPA has convened 3 regional consultations for the Anglican Church in Africa to share on the pandemic status of different Countries in regard to epidemiology, socio-economic impact and the Church's response. The consultations have been attended by Church representatives from Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Mozambique, South Africa, Kenya, Egypt, Zimbabwe. The Council is also supporting Church response in Guinea, Cameroon and Mozambique with food aid and sanitation supplies and equipment. We continue to engage and support the Church and Communities in Africa in close partnership with Anglican Alliance, Anglican Communion Fund, Mothers Union and Episcopal Relief and Development.