

## **DRAFT REPORT**

# **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HUNGER, FOOD AID AND GMOs**

**Maputo, Mozambique  
July 2004**

### **ORGANISERS:**

**União Nacional de Camponeses (UNAC), Mozambique  
Environmental Rights Action, Nigeria  
Consumers International Regional Office for Africa, Zimbabwe  
The Oakland Institute, US  
Accion Ecologica, Ecuador  
Oxfam Solidarité, Belgium  
Third World Network, Malaysia  
Friends of the Earth International, The Netherlands**

### **WITH THE SUPPORT OF:**

**Novib  
World Council of Churches Working Group on Genetic Engineering  
Action Aid**

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## **DRAFT REPORT**

### **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HUNGER, FOOD AID AND GMOs**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Over 110 participants from more than 20 countries around the world met in Maputo, Mozambique between the 14 and 17 of July to discuss the problematic around the topics of hunger, food aid and GMOs. The Conference was organized by 8 organizations representing consumers, environment, development, and farmers groups from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latinamerica, and Northamerica. It was hosted by UNAC –the Farmers Union of Mozambique-.

The idea of organizing the conference arised following the growing controversy over the shipment of GMOs via food aid to developing countries, which started to be increasingly controversial since 1999. In 2002 the controversy reached its hottest moments when several Southern African countries refused to accept Food aid with GMOs during a food crisis. In 2004 the controversy grew again, after the Angolan and Sudanese Governments decisions to introduce restrictions over Genetically Modified Food Aid. Moreover five countries in the Southern Africa region - Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe-, according to WFP, are facing food shortages again in 2004. Malawi, Zimbabwe and Mozambique in 2002-03 had the policy not to accept GM food aid unless milled.<sup>i</sup>

But the GMO issue is only one of the many problems and difficulties surrounding the current model of food aid. The problems identified go much further than environmental and health concerns over GMOs, which are widely documented. The food aid system has many problems per se. It is widely recognized that food aid historically has been used inappropriately with industrialized countries using it to dispose of surpluses and create food dependencies. The way the WFP operates in some countries has also prompted calls for accountability and an audit of the way the humanitarian operations are done. For example, some have said that WFP is not building the capacity of the organizations in developing countries, but just building their own capacity in those countries. It is certain that the debate over GMOs in food aid has contributed to renew the debate over the problems of the food aid system per se.

In this context in 2002 several organizations thought necessary that the key stakeholder dealing with the topics of food aid, hunger, and GMOs needed to meet in order to gain better understanding of the problematic, build new alliances and strategies. A comprehensive international meeting with the participation of key stakeholders, such as development, farmers, food relief, consumers, environmental and church related groups never took place during 2000-2004. That is why eight organizations representing the abovementioned different groups, decided to form a Steering Committee in 2003, and organized a Conference on the topic of food aid, hunger and GMOs in July 2004 in Maputo, Mozambique.

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

The objectives the Steering Committee wanted to achieve with the Conference were the following:

- 1) Strengthen the understanding of the problem of food aid and GMOs by sharing information, and start a real dialogue between the different stakeholders attending the event in order to build better knowledge of the problem of food aid and GMOs in relation to hunger.
- 2) Facilitate the interaction between civil society and experts from all over the world towards establishing strategies at the national, regional and international level to deal with food shortages, as well as manufactured crises, and prevent them from happening in the future.
- 3) Identify new allies in developing and developed countries who would work in the future on these issues.
- 4) Establish strategies to strength campaigns, and see how to provide support to groups in the Third World on these issues.

## **3. CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES**

The official Programme of the Conference was divided into three parts:

1. Field trip: 14 July
2. Conference: 15-16 July
3. NGO Strategy Meeting: 17 July

### **1. Field trip**

The field trip consisted in a visit of two different local farmers communities in the countryside. First the participants visited communities, which received food aid, and secondly another community, which did not receive food aid. The field trip was very important as the experience gained with it was used in a few occasions during the Official Programme of the Conference. For example in the beginning of the Conference a representative from the Mozambican Minister of Agriculture made a statement giving examples of the good policies the Ministry had on food security policy. One of the participants from Western Africa, who was in the field trip, was shocked because what he saw the day before did not correspond with the Mozambican Government statement, and openly challenged it by describing what he saw during the field trip.

### **2. Conference**

The Conference was attended by 115 participants from over 20 countries.

The conference was opened through a presentation offered by a Marracuene peasant theatrical group that gave us an overview about the conference subject: "Hunger, Food Aid and GMOs". This created an excellent environment for initiating the work.

The Minister of Commerce and Trade, Carlos Morgado, officially opened the conference saying that the theatrical representation in the beginning of the conference means the renaissance of the peasant's power. For him, the conference showed that the civil society can promote the dialogue between different social and political actors in order to solve several societies' problems.

The aim of the first day primarily was to build knowledge in the two main areas of the Conference. The first session was devoted to food aid and hunger, and experts from food relief, development, and farmers gave presentations, primarily focused on national and regional experiences. The second session of the first day focused on hunger and food aid in relation to GMOs. At the end of the first day a panel of African representatives interacted with all the participants in a debate about how Africa should cope with hunger and the role of GMOs and food aid.

The second day of the Conference aimed to engage the public in a more participatory way. Two working group sessions were prepared with a primary division between regions in order to pave more concrete discussion which help develop later on concrete strategies. The end the second day of the official Conference Programme, UNAC organized an evening visit to a dance performance, which introduced all the participants to the traditions and culture of the people of Mozambique.

### **3. The strategy meeting**

The strategy meeting consisted of a smaller group of NGOs of around 20-28 people. The session in the morning was divided, first on the issue food aid and hunger and later on GMOs.

#### **a) Hunger and Food aid**

In the morning session some of the main challenges and strategies identified over the Conference were summarized:

- Lobbying our governments to increase support to small scale and vulnerable farmers so that they can increase support to small scale and vulnerable farmers so that they can increase agricultural production so that food aid becomes unnecessary. This can be done through a) increased availability and access to inputs and means of production; b) the creation of affordable microcredit schemes that men and women who are the custodians of food security and are more adversely affected by hunger
- Governments should only appeal for international food aid after local food stocks have been exhausted. This means government should have valid food inventory data bases in country and regionally of non-GMO quality.
- Vulnerability assessment and food aid targeting. It should be entrusted to credible local NGO(s) that has grassroot network of community based NGOs that can use local community committees that will select beneficiaries in a transparent

- and participatory manner. The same system can be capacitated to carry out vulnerability assessment and nutrition surveillance studies on regular and continuous basis updating the nation on food trends so as to assist in preparedness.
- Lobby for comprehensive and coherent food aid policy that will make our governments and all the players in food aid –the UN system (WFP), donors and international non governmental organizations) accountable to the citizens and civil society.
  - Develop early warning systems that in addition to climatic effects take into account national structural changes, stress and conflict

In the afternoon, precise questions were made to the participants of the Conference in order to go in further detail on the strategies. Nevertheless, this session proved to be very difficult, and it was not possible to come out with precise and concrete strategies at the meeting further than the general objectives and strategies already identified. But fortunately, through small informal meetings it was achieved a bigger deal of precision in strategic thinking. For example in one of the informal meetings with relief groups in the Southern Africa region the small group managed to go further in the analysis of the problematic of a few countries namely, Malawi and Zimbabwe and it was agreed that it was necessary cooperation between a diversity of stakeholders at national, regional and international level to challenge the current problems in that region.

#### **b) GMO issue**

Some of the main challenges and strategies pointed out were:

- Need to develop clear information, education and communication material for awareness creation.
- Create a network for capacity-building and strengthening the anti-GMO debate at the national level and regional level
- Lobby our governments to demand labeling of imports and send a clear message to the South African Government on the importation and export of GM maize to other African countries.
- Lobby African Governments to implement the African Model Law on Biosafety as soon as possible

The GMO discussion in the afternoon continued the debate on the main challenges, and general strategies. It was agreed that all groups will work towards defending the African Model Law on Biosafety from the attacks of the Biotech industry, and will work towards its implementation at the national level in as many countries as possible in Africa.

#### **c) The Maputo Communiqué**

During the Strategy Day a Declaration was elaborated following the wishes of many of the participants. The Declaration was called the Maputo Communiqué (See Annex III)

### **4. EVALUATION OF OBJECTIVES. DID THE CONFERENCE ACHIEVE ITS AIMS?**

The Steering Committee considered that all the objectives set at the Conference were met:

a) The Conference strengthened the understanding on the issues of hunger, food aid, and GMOs by providing comprehensive information on those topics

The Conference brought on a very diverse range of stakeholders from different sectors, food relief, farmers, development, consumer, environmental, religious issues. A large amount of information from national, regional and international experiences from all the different stakeholders abovementioned was shared during the two days of the Conference Programme (See Annex I Conference Programme).

The feedback obtained by many participants signaled that in general were very happy with the presentations and its quality. Nevertheless it was mentioned by several participants that there were too many topics on the table, and that at least the Conference should have had one more day. A couple of them said “how you organize such a good conference, just in two days”.

Most of the presentations were distributed already at the Conference venue, and the proceedings will be sent to all the participants, so the Steering Committee hopes that all the participants, which have further interest in the topic and have difficulties in absorbing too much information in a short time could use the written material later on.

b) The Conference identified key issues and gaps

The Conference allowed to map and identify the main challenges and problems on the topic of hunger and food aid, and the introduction of GMOs. The diversity of background and perspectives among the participants provided a comprehensive overview of the main key issues and challenges.

c) The Conference helped to identify new contacts and allies

The Conference preparations required a significant effort in identification of stakeholders and new allies from different sectors interested in different fields. At the Conference it became evident that all the participants acquired important knowledge in issues that it is not their traditional field, and many of them will start incorporating the different issues of the conference in their work. For example many consumers, environmental, and farmer representatives attending the Conference would be paying more consideration at the issue of food aid per se, and also the other way around, development and food relief organizations present would be also taking more seriously the problems related to GMOs. A real dialogue was initiated between representatives from those different groups abovementioned during the formal Conference Programme, but also crucially through informal small meetings hold during the event.

d) The Conference set in motion a process to tackle the problems identified and pave the way for the development of concrete strategies and projects

The Conference aim was to set in motion a process to tackle the problems identified. As a unique effort to put around the table stakeholders with such different backgrounds and experiences the Steering Committee wanted to put people together which usually do not seat around the same table, in order to later work and cooperate together. For example at the meeting the participants from Southern Africa region were able to explore in more detail the food aid problems in that region, and now several of them are

trying to organize a follow up meeting to go into more detailed strategies. The project being discussed would aim to challenge the unfair model developed by organizations such as WFP which continue in some countries to send food aid where national organizations affirm is not needed, and prevent in some countries the empowerment of the local food relief groups of the responsibility for the assessment of the needs and the food distribution at the local level.

e) The Conference helped to mobilize civil society in Mozambique on the topic of food aid, hunger and GMOs

Particularly at the national level in Mozambique, the Conference provided an excellent opportunity for mobilizing civil society. For UNAC the meeting in Mozambique was a great opportunity to build capacity on the issues of food aid, hunger, and GMOs. Over 50 Mozambican participants from different sectors: farmers, environmental, consumers, women, etc.. attended the Conference and some of them prepared specific contributions to the Conference. For example a women organization organized a meeting the day before of the Conference to established their positions on the topic and presented it at the Conference calling for a five years moratorium on GMOs.

The media coverage of the Conference was important and serve to create a lot of awareness-raising around the issues of hunger and GMOs among the Mozambican population.

## **5. FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES**

The real success of the Conference will depend on the follow up activities, The Conference has provided the framework to start cooking a new set of precise projects and strategies to tackle all the problems identified, among newly met partners from different backgrounds and perspectives. The Steering Committee never wanted to create a new network but identify new allies that will act as an “informal network”.

Several follow up activities are already being explored by the participants:

### **1) Conference webpage and BCC list.**

A comprehensive webpage of the Conference will be prepared by Anuradha Mittal of the Oakland Institute. The webpage will contain all the relevant documents of the Conference, including the proceedings. A strategy for distribution and outreach of the results of the Conference will be prepared soon. It has been suggested that the webpage could be launched on the World Food Day on 16<sup>th</sup> of October.

### **2) Tackling the Southern African food aid system.**

Thanks to the new allies identified during the Conference very precise information was revealed during informal meetings with development organizations. A critical problem identified in at least three countries in the Southern Africa region is the reluctance of WFP to empower local food relief organizations with the management of the food aid distribution. It is currently being explored the possibility to organize a meeting between several experts of the region to go further in the analysis achieved at the Conference and see whether it would be possible to create concrete strategies at the national level, and regional level in the Southern Africa region.



### **3) National GMO meeting in Mozambique.**

Due to the high interest in Mozambique on the topic a meeting will be organized soon at the national level. It became clear during the Conference that in order to challenge properly the threat of genetic engineering in agriculture it was necessary at the national level to forge alliances between different stakeholders with concrete joint plan of action and strategies. With this aim UNAC plans to organize a meeting in coalition with several other organizations in Mozambique.

### **4) Cooperation with the International Food Security Network**

The International Food Security Network, a recently created network dealing with food security and coordinated by Action Aid will be cooperating with several of the organizations and participants in different topics related to biosafety, food aid and hunger.

### **5) New regional meeting in Latinoamerica and Africa**

Several of the participants are currently exploring the possibility to organize other regional meetings on this topic in Latinoamerica and Africa to develop more concrete strategies on the topics of GMOs, hunger and food aid at the subregional level.

### **6) Link the outcomes of the meeting with the “More and better aid” Campaign**

Contacts will be made with the responsables of the more and better aid campaign, as a follow up of the Conference. The feedback and outcomes of the meeting will be provided to them.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

The Conference has achieved all the objectives the Steering Committee had initially. The Conference has allowed a very much needed interaction between key stakeholders that dealt with the topics of GMOs, hunger and food aid from different perspectives. The organization of the Conference was excellent and UNAC had a solid team, which made all participants feel in a very warming atmosphere, very favourable to facilitate good work. The General ideas and broad strategies discussed during the official Programme, were also further developed in small working groups and informal discussions between the participants in parallel to the Conference, and right afterwards. But it was clear for the Steering Committee that the real success of this Conference will be dependent of the follow up activities of the meeting. There were many problems identified, which need to be tackled by develop joint and short-medium-long term strategies.

The GMO issue particularly in Africa had a lot of attention from the participants, and there are already a lot of many environmental, consumers, development, farmer groups working on it around Africa. More bridges have been created among activists from all over Africa and abroad working on the topics of GMOs and biosafety. The exchange of perspectives between so many different stakeholders has certainly richen the knowledge, and has build new alliances that will allow stronger work at the national, and regional level in Africa.

On the issue of food aid and hunger it became clear once again the complexity of the issue. One of the way forward to tackle the chronic flaws of the food aid system is the necessity that the various groups working on food relief, development at the local level in the different regions and subregions in the world to get together, and come out with

their own concrete national and regional strategies. Any international strategy must build upon the national, and regional ones. To challenge the food aid system there is a need for precise data and well documented case studies at the national level, in order to come with some kind of regional approach. In this sense, there is an increasing need to do more concrete exploratory work focused in a few countries, and regions. For example in the Southern Africa region it has been identified similar problems in three different countries. In Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi it seems there is several organizations working on food relief which desire that WFP stops centralizing the delivery and distribution of food aid at the local level, and that more empowerment is given to the national organizations. If the system needs to be changed a detailed analysis of the situation of the situation in those countries need to happen, and concrete information needs to be mapped, as a necessary first step before elaborating more concrete strategies at the national and regional level.

The use of GMOs as food aid is just one of the many problems surrounding the food aid model that functions today in the world. The GMO problem cannot be tackled by ignoring the chronic failures of the food aid system. Moreover one the best way to tackle the GMO issue is by concentrating all efforts in changing the food aid model per se. In this context it seems there is little room for environmental, and consumer groups to get deeply involved into this issue, and their role is limited. Those groups can contribute and help catalyze some processes and provide general support, but unless food relief, and development groups take the lead on this issue, and actively commit to change the chronic deficiencies of the food aid model already identified, the problems would probably not be solved.

The Steering Committee:

Amade Suca, União Nacional de Camponeses (UNAC), Mozambique  
Amadou Kanoute, Consumers International Regional Africa Office, Zimbabwe  
Nnimmo Bassey, Environmental Rights Action Nigeria  
Anuradha Mittal, Food First, United States  
Elizabeth Bravo, Accion Ecologica Ecuador  
Thierry Kesteloot, Oxfam Solidarity, Belgium  
Lim Li Lin, Third World Network, Malaysia  
Juan Lopez, Friends of the Earth International, The Netherlands

## ANNEX I: CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

### Conference Programme

### HUNGER, FOOD AID AND GMOs

Maputo, Mozambique, 15-16 July 2004

DAY 1, 15 July

9:00 – 9:05

#### Welcome Address

- *Amade Suca, Steering Committee of the Conference*

9:05-9:25

Mystica

9:25 –9:45

#### Opening Ceremony

- *Ismael Ossemane, Executive Coordinator of UNAC, Mozambique*
- *Anuradha Mittal, Steering Committee Conference Hunger; Food aid and GMOs*
- *Carlos Morgado, Mozambican Minister of Trade and Industry*

9:45-10:30

#### Session I: Hunger and Food Aid

- **The role of food aid as a mechanism to cope with hunger: a global perspective**  
*Dr. Wilma Salgado, Former employee of WFP in Latin America*
- **The impact of food aid in farmer communities in Mozambique**  
*Armando Ali, National Farmers Union of Mozambique (UNAC)*
- **The roots of hunger and how food aid works in Zambia: problems with food aid system in Zambia and the way forward**  
*Dr. Drinah Nyirenda, Programme Against Malnutrition, Zambia*

10:30 – 11:10 Open discussion and questions

11:10- 11:30 Coffee Break

11:30 – 12:00 Continuation Session I

- **Need Assessments and alternatives to Food Aid**

*Frédérich Mousseau, Food Security Consultant, France*

- **Towards ensuring Food Sovereignty**  
*Anuradha Mittal, Director Oakland Institute, United States*

*Facilitator Session I: Juan López, Friends of the Earth International*

**12:00-13:00 Open discussion and questions**

**13:00 – 14:00 Lunch**

**14:00 – 15:00**

### **Session II: GMOs, Hunger and Food Aid**

- **The debate over food aid and GMOs in Latin America (2000-2004)**  
*Dr. Elizabeth Bravo, Acción Ecológica, Ecuador*
- **Food aid and GMOs: Africa and the consumers right to choose**  
*Amadou Kanoute, Director Consumers International Regional Africa Office, Zimbabwe*
- **Current developments at the African regional level on Genetic Engineering and biosafety threats**  
*Mariam Mayet, African Center for Biosafety*
- **GMO's in agriculture potential opportunities and challenges for Mozambique**  
*Norberto Mahalambe, Organic Agriculture, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development Association (ABIODES), Mozambique*

**15:00 – 15:15 Open discussion and questions**

**15:15 – 15:30 Coffee Break**

**15:30 – 16:00 Continuation Session II**

- **Biosafety, Challenges and National Biosafety Framework in Zambia**  
*Dr. Mulenga, Chief Science and Technology Officer at the Ministry of Science, Technology and Vocational Training, Zambia*
- **GMOs and hunger: a perspective from the Churches**  
*Puleng LenkaBula, South African Council of Churches/World Council of Churches*
- **Gender perspectives on hunger; food aid and GMOs**  
*Paulina Chiziane, Network of women's Association in Zambezia, Mozambique*

*Facilitator Session II: Lim Li Lin, Third World Network*

**16:00 – 16:15 Coffee Break**

**16:15 – 18:00**

**Panel: AFRICA COPING WITH HUNGER. THE ROLE OF FOOD AID, AND GMOs**

**Is the aim of food aid to eliminate or to perpetuate dependence? Will GMOs move Africa towards food sovereignty or increasing dependence?**

*René Segbonou, Dr. Drinah Nyirenda, Mariam Mayet, Amadou Kanoute, Nnimmo Bassey, Dr. Mulenga, Puleng LenkaBula, Paulina Chiziane, Norberto Mahalambe*

*Facilitator: Ismael Ossemame, Peasant National Union (UNAC)*

**DAY 2, 16 July**

**9:00 – 10:30**

**Working Group Session I: Identifying main problems & challenges**

**10:30 – 11:00 Coffee Break**

**11:00 – 11:30**

**Reporting to Plenary by WG**

**11:30 – 12:45**

**Session IV: International, regional and national regulation of food aid and GMOs**

- **Codex Alimentarius, WTO and Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety**
  - *Lim Li Ching (Third World Network)*
  - *Samuel Ochieng (Consumers Kenya)*
  
- **National and regional regulation of GMOs and food aid**
  - *Mariam Mayet, Regional African perspective*
  - *Dr. Mulenga, Zambia*
  - *Rene Segbonou (IUB), Western Africa,*
  - *Hugo, L. and Cugala, D. Mozambique*

**12:45 – 13:00 Open discussion**

**13:00 – 14:00 Lunch**

**14:00 – 15:30**

**Working group Session II: Coping with challenges at the national, regional and international level**

- **WG 1. How to address the problematic in Mozambique**
- **WG 2. Regional Strategies for Africa.**
- **WG 3. International challenges.**

**15:30 –16:00 Coffee Break**

**16:00 – 16:45**

**Reporting to Plenary by WG**

**16:45 – 18:00**

**The way forward: How to work towards ending hunger, and the need of food aid in Africa?**

**18:00 Traditional dance show**

## **ANNEX II: CONCEPT PAPER**

**União Nacional de Camponeses (UNAC), Mozambique**  
**Environmental Rights Action, Nigeria**  
**Consumers International Regional Office for Africa**  
**Oakland Institute, US**  
**Accion Ecologica, Ecuador**  
**Oxfam Solidarité Belgium**  
**Third World Network**  
**Friends of the Earth International**

### **INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON HUNGER, FOOD AID AND GMOs**

**CONCEPT PAPER, April 2004**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The shipment of GMOs via food aid to developing countries has brought growing controversy since 2000. In 2002 the controversy reached its hottest moments when several Southern African countries refused to accept Food aid with GMOs during a food crisis. Countries in the Southern Africa region were left with few choices and the US and even the World Food Programme (WFP) pushed those countries to accept GM food. Real alternatives were not provided to those countries in need, nevertheless WFP has as policy to respect the wishes of the recipient countries and their right to choose what foods to accept.

In 2004 the controversy is growing again, after the Angolan and Sudanese Governments decisions to introduce restrictions over Genetically Modified Food Aid. In March 2004 the United States Administration ceased food aid to Sudan because of their request to provide a certificate of Gm free food. Also in March 2004, in Angola WFP told the Government that it would face a significant decrease in the food aid committed if it kept insisting that it wanted GM grain to be milled. Moreover five countries in the Southern Africa region - Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe-, according to WFP, are expected to face food shortages again in 2004. Malawi, Zimbabwe and Mozambique in 2002-03 had the policy not to accept GM food aid unless milled.

#### **THE NEED FOR AN INTERNATIONAL MEETING**

Since the debate on food aid and GMOs started around 2000, one NGO regional meeting specifically on food aid and GMOs took place in 2001 in Ecuador organized by Acción Ecológica. That meeting was crucial since it inspired many activists and catalysed more regional activities which effectively challenged the shipment of GMOs via food aid. For example, the discovery of StarLink in a US Agency for International Development (USAID) donation in Bolivia, and the findings of GM corn grain sent to centers of origin in Nicaragua and Guatemala via WFP Food aid took place after this strategic meeting. A meeting was also convened by Consumers International in November 2002 which gave international visibility to the Zambian crisis, but to our knowledge, a comprehensive international meeting with the participation of key stakeholders from the whole region of Southern Africa has not taken place.

Though the controversy has increasingly expanded worldwide and India has rejected US Food aid, countries like Uganda, Sudan, Angola have been pushed by the US to accept GM food aid. The need to tackle those developments and prepare new strategies is evident. The organization of an international event which would gather key activists and experts with knowledge and deep interest in developing capacity on those issues, would contribute to coping with the new challenges developing countries face.

## **MAIN CHALLENGES**

There has been a need for an assessment of the reality of food aid and GMOs since the first denouncements about the shipment of GMOs and food aid started in 2000. The problems identified go much further than environmental and health concerns over GMOs which are widely documented. The food aid system has many problems per se. It is widely recognized that food aid historically has been used inappropriately with industrialized countries using it to dispose of surpluses and create food dependencies. The way the WFP operates in some countries has also prompted calls for accountability and an audit of the way the humanitarian operations are done. For example, some have said that WFP is not building the capacity of the organizations in developing countries, but just building their own capacity in those countries.

A key concern is the link between food aid and trade. Food aid is being used as a tool for facilitating export surpluses or as a marketing tool to capture new markets. A clear link to trade should necessarily be made in our critique. There is a need for rules governing food aid aimed at achieving food security like responding to local food needs, local purchasing, adequate food supply, and provision of direct grants rather than loans requiring purchase of imports. Certain rules are now included in the proposals made at the WTO (Agreement on Agriculture), in the European guidelines on food aid, as well as in other FAO or OECD guidelines, but these are clearly not sufficient.

There is a need to include in a strategy meeting the causes of food crises, which are also a result of more structural policies: liberalisation of agricultural markets increases vulnerability to food shortages. Lack of capacity to set up strategic stocks, priority to export-oriented agriculture, competition and destruction of small farming systems are all consequences. Therefore there is a need to address the broader picture of agricultural policies that destroy/compromise food security and food sovereignty.

## **OBJECTIVES**

The problems identified and ways forward need to be urgently addressed at the international level. The meeting would intend to achieve the following objectives:

- Strengthen the understanding of the problem of food and GMOs by sharing information, and start a real dialogue between the different stakeholders attending the event in order to build better knowledge of the problem of food aid and GMOs in relation to hunger.
- Facilitate the interaction between civil society and experts from all over the world towards establishing strategies at the national, regional and international level to deal with food shortages, as well as manufactured crises, and prevent them from happening in the future.



- Identify new allies in developing and developed countries who would work in the future on these issues.
- Establish strategies to strength campaigns, and see how to provide support to groups in the Third World on these issues.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Until now the problem of food aid and GMOs has been particularly driven by some environmental and consumer organizations. The problems identified in this field crosscut with many different issues at the same time like environment, health, development policies, food relief, etc. This makes it a complex issue, which requires good multidisciplinary knowledge on such diverse issues. Therefore, solutions and proposals to improve the current system and prevent these situations from happening again need the combination of the different expertise and skills from different stakeholders such as development, food relief, environment, consumer, farmers and church related groups. Therefore the meeting would be an international event, which would gather consumer, development, farmer, church related organizations, environmental and other experts on the fields related to hunger, food aid and GMOs.

The meeting would be divided in two parts. The first one would be a Conference where presentations from experts and case studies would be addressed. The experts attending the meeting would be able to give a clear overview of the problems that have been happening in recent years with GMOs in food aid; a good overview of how the food aid system works; the link between trade and GMOs; and the real causes of food crises. The second part would be an NGO strategy meeting, where strategies to tackle the problems that have been raised would be developed by the participants of the meeting.

Between 30-40 participants would attend the meeting, representing all different regions in the world with a particular focus on Africa.

## **TIME, VENUE AND LOGISTICS**

The meeting will take place in Maputo, Mozambique between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of July 2004.

### **Steering Committee:**

Amade Suca, União Nacional de Camponeses (UNAC), Mozambique  
 Amadou Kanoute, Consumers International Regional Africa Office, Zimbabwe  
 Nnimmo Bassey, Environmental Rights Action Nigeria  
 Anuradha Mittal, Oakland Institute, United States  
 Elizabeth Bravo, Accion Ecologica Ecuador  
 Thierry Kesteloot, Oxfam Solidarity, Belgium  
 Lim Li Lin, Third World Network, Malaysia  
 Juan Lopez, Friends of the Earth International, The Netherlands

### **ANNEX III: CONFERENCE DECLARATION**

#### **MAPUTO COMMUNIQUE**

We, the undersigned organizations that met at the International Conference on Hunger, Food Aid and GMOs which was held in Maputo, Mozambique from 15 – 16 July 2004, and which was a gathering of farmers, environmental, consumers, development, and faith-based organizations from Africa, Latin America, Asia, Europe and North America;

Note with concern that hunger is still a chronic problem across the world;

And reaffirm that food security and an end to hunger can only be achieved through food sovereignty.

Noting that neo-liberal policies are impoverishing and destroying small-scale farmers and their agricultural systems, reducing food production and productivity, and provoking hunger;

And that this situation is made worse with the introduction of GMOs and intellectual property rights on seeds;

We call for the enactment and implementation of policies that provide means of production, markets, and fair prices to small farmers in order to achieve food sovereignty.

While recognising the necessity for food aid in situations of crisis;

We condemn the use of food aid as an instrument of political domination, to open markets, to dump surplus agricultural produce which destroys the competitiveness of local agriculture and distorts consumption patterns, and threatens biodiversity, to introduce GMOs, and to impose conditionalities on countries;

And demand that when food aid is necessary, it must be timely and in line with development policies, be sourced locally and regionally, be culturally acceptable and must respect consumer rights.

As GMOs are a threat to the environment, our health, agricultural systems, societies and economies, and are not a solution to world hunger, but in fact will worsen this crisis;

We call for a moratorium on the import and releases of GMOs and their products in our countries until all the concerns about GMOs are resolved, and demand that GMOs must not be used in food aid.

## **ANNEX IV: MEDIA COVERAGE**

## **ANNEX V: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

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<sup>i</sup> See Africa Center for Biosafety et al. 2004. GM Food Aid: Africa without choice once again?