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Hunger should stay on the world policy agenda as the critical issue to solve.

While numerous international crises are now competing for the attention and mobilization of worldwide policymakers, the world food crisis, however less present in the media, stays a critical and urgent problem that has to be tackled. 55 million children under 5 are suffering from acute malnutrition, 923 million people in the world are suffering from hunger in 2008, 75 millions more than last year. This is especially worrying as, since 6 or 7 years, that number had been, if not reduced, at least stabilized. Those lives could be saved if only the needed measures were taken in a timely manner. If this dynamic continues, the Millennium Goals will not be reached. Instability could spread. Solutions are known, they exist and what is now lacking is the political momentum to support, fund and implement them. There is an ethical emergency to act.

Why such a crisis?

The causes of the current world food crisis are now well known: climate change, the development of biofuel, the increased production of meat, the increased cost of energy, limited food stocks, speculation, poverty. In some countries, market intermediaries have been making huge margins by increasing their prices while keeping the producers' price as low as possible, and prevented the small farmers from taking advantage of the price increase to reduce their poverty. In some countries the national market is structured in such a way (poor infrastructures, preference for cheaper importations supported by subsidies) that poor farmers cannot even sell their products. In some countries access to land is restricted. As a result, hunger is more widespread today in the rural areas, among poor farmers, than in the cities.

What are the solutions?

The first solution is to adopt a long-term strategy of strengthening the world agriculture. Agriculture is a crucial issue, it has to be preserved and supported as an important sector in all countries and societies. This is a requirement for production, but also for employment and livelihoods. Local solutions have to be promoted but global solutions have to be developed to restructure global markets (should be discussed for example subsidies issue, stocks systems, market chains, the capacity and opportunity to regulate world food prices).

Hunger is a health issue, and has to be recognized as such. Solutions also are medical, especially regarding the fight against children malnutrition.

In the short term, to respond to the urgency of the crisis, a new global governance system has to be put in place. Inspired by responses put in place to deal with HIV/AIDS, avian influenza or climate change, 3 tools could be supported:

- At the global political level, a worldwide yearly conference to support one global strategy, mobilize political leadership and organize financial pledges.
- At the global technical level, a network of experts to discuss strategies and technical implementation issues, and support a smooth and efficient collaboration between all actors. Such a network would help taking into account the complex, diverse but complementary dimensions of the world food crisis, rather than reducing it to a production issue only.
- At the financial level, the creation of a trust fund to sustain emergency and long term funding.



In parallel to those governance efforts, a strong support has to be given to the emergency responses, to save at risk children and adults.

At the national levels, we should support civil societies mobilizations to fight hunger by forcing governments to take action, as each country has also a role to play to contribute, at its own level, to the fight against hunger.