

# World Food Day

## 16 October 2009

The WFWO call International communities on the occasion of World Food Day 2009 **"We need to invest on people and is time to take action to end poverty as per our common objective the Millennium Development Goals (1) committed by more that 190 states to be achieved by 2015". With an estimated increase of 105 million hungry people in 2009, there are now 1.02 billion malnourished people in the world, meaning that almost one sixth of all humanity is suffering from hunger.**

The global economic crisis dominates the news and dominates government agendas. Trillions of dollars are being spent to resuscitate wealthy economies, but who will bail out the poor? The world needs to be reminded that not everyone works in offices and factories. The crisis is stalking the small-scale farms of the world too, where 70 percent of the world's hungry live and work.

The situation in rural areas in developing countries is dire, coming in the wake of the surge in food and fuel prices in 2007–2008. This second crisis is hitting the poor while they are down. Money sent home from relatives working in the city or abroad has declined as unemployment bites. In small agricultural villages, the poor have already exhausted their savings to buy food.

The FAO calculates that agriculture in developing countries needs US\$30 billion a year in investment to help farmers. Such a level of investment is needed to achieve the 1996 World Food Summit goal of reducing the number of hungry people by half by 2015. That amount is low when contrasted with US\$365 billion spent in 2007 to support agriculture in the rich countries, US\$1 340 billion spent by the world each year on armaments and trillions of dollars found in short order in 2008–2009 to prop up the financial sector.

Investments of US\$30 billion a year would generate an overall annual benefit of US\$120 billion.

This would:

- improve agricultural productivity and enhance livelihoods and food security in poor rural communities;
- develop and conserve natural resources;
- expand and improve rural infrastructure and broaden market access;
- strengthen capacity for knowledge generation and dissemination;
- ensure access to food for the most needy through safety nets and other direct assistance.

On this occasion of commemorating the World Food Day 16 October 2009, let us reflect and take action on those numbers and the human suffering behind them. Crisis or no crisis, we have to react to fight the hunger and to end poverty. We also have the ability to find better solutions of financial mechanism to support poor countries to solve problems when we consider them important. Let us work together for a better world to make sure hunger is recognized as a critical problem and can be eradicated. The up coming World Food Summit to be held in Rome at FAO on 16 November 2009 could be fundamental and crucial for ending the poverty.

WFWO's Communications Team

