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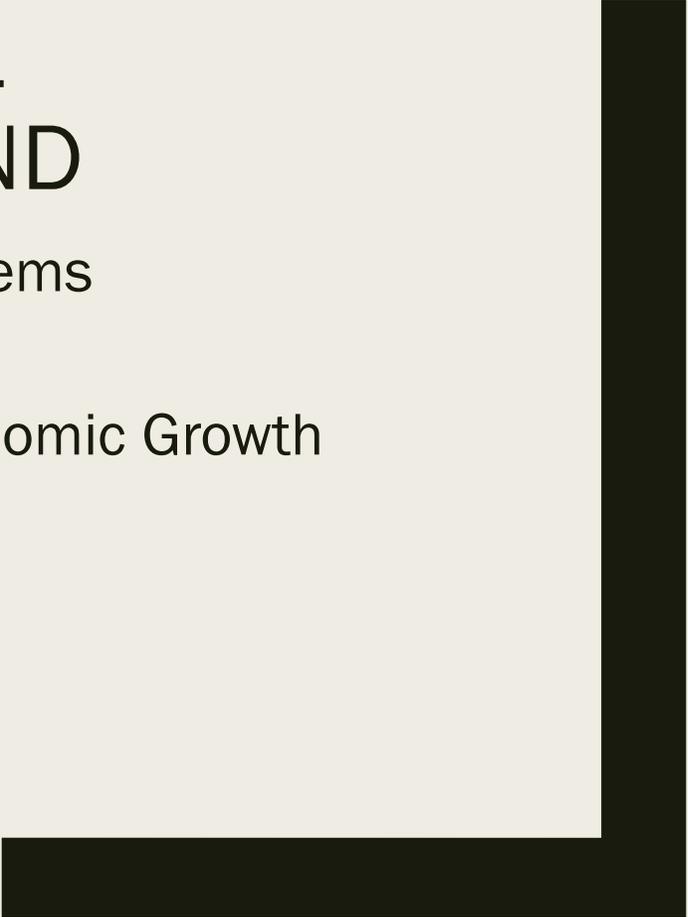
Investment in Sustainable Food Systems

for

Achieving Sustainable Food Security and Economic Growth

In

Somaliland



Introduction

Food insecurity and malnutrition has been a challenge so persistent and of a broad impact over 30 years in Somaliland. Reports indicate that large section of both urban and rural populations are affected. Among the factors responsible of the food insecurity condition include socio-economic, environmental and climatic ones.

Apart from periodic assessments and reporting of scale of suffering of those affected, and distribution of relief packages, there have not been broad and integrated endeavors for investing in sustainable agriculture and food systems. In the last 10-15 years, few agencies have launched resilience building projects, but this also had always limitations of scope and coverage.

Somaliland is at cross-roads with the deepening criticality of food insecurity and malnutrition, and lack of defined agenda to address the challenge.

SIAR is currently working on paper intended to study a globally adopted approach as a lasting solution for overcoming the problem (food insecurity) i.e. ***Investment in sustainable agriculture and food system for a sustainable food security.***

The next sections this presentation will project the subject matter of the paper in sufficient detail and clarity.

The presentation limits itself to preliminary inactive results of the study which will be finalized within a time space of at least two montns.

Concepts – The Concept of Food Security

What is food security?

- In 1996, countries at the World Food Summit agreed to the following definition: *‘Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy lifestyle.’ (FAO), 1996.*
- Food security is one of the important conditions that must be achieved for an individual to be nutritionally secure and to maintain good health.
- At the national level it was perceived mainly in terms of food available for consumption, as derived from food balance sheets.
- At the household or individual level, the emphasis has shifted from simple "availability of food" to a more complex system of "food access".
- As expressed by FAO's Committee on World Food Security (FAO, 1983a), this system consists of three components: adequate access, stability of food supplies and sustainability of food procurement.

Concepts – The Concept of a Food System

- *What is a food system?*
- *A food system consists of a food supply system (from producing to storing, processing, and till consumption) and its direct environmental factors and activities such as available business services or consumer characteristics. Furthermore, the larger natural environmental and socio-economic drivers such as climate or markets shape the dynamics in food systems (adapted from: van Berkum, et al., 2018).*
- *It is the entire range of actors and their interlinked value-adding activities involved in the production, aggregation, processing, distribution, consumption and disposal of food products that originate from agriculture, forestry or fisheries, and parts of the broader economic, societal and natural environments in which they are embedded.*
- *The food system is composed of sub-systems (e.g. farming system, waste management system, input supply system, etc.) and interacts with other key systems (e.g. energy system, trade system, health system, etc.)*
- *Food security and nutrition could be achieved only if the food system is sustainable; contrary to this, a condition of food insecurity results when the food security is not sustainable! This means that the food system to be sustainable it must be:*
 - ***Economic sustainability***: Profitable throughout
 - ***Social sustainability***: Provides broad-based benefits for society.
 - ***Environmental sustainability***: Impacts positively or is of neutral impact on the natural environment

Concepts– The Nexus of Food Systems and Food Security

What is the connection between food security and food system?

- Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (FAO, 1996)
- *The nexus is therefore found that: A condition of food security and nutrition to exist, there must be a food system which ensures a continuous supplies of adequate food at individual, household and national levels.*
- FAO describes “a sustainable food system as that delivers food security and nutrition for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental bases to generate food security and nutrition for future generations are not compromised.”¹
- An Agriculture and food systems to be sustainable must respond to the following five principles:
 - *Increase productivity, employment and value addition in food systems.*
 - *Protect and enhance natural resources.*
 - *Improve livelihoods and foster inclusive economic growth.*
 - *Enhance the resilience of people, communities and ecosystems.*
 - *Adapt governance to new challenges.*

Research Problem

The goal of the Somaliland government is to improve availability and access to adequate food and water in a sustainable manner, especially for rural communities, the urban poor and other vulnerable groups in the country (FAO).

The fact is that Somaliland has been in increasingly dire situation food insecurity and malnutrition over three decades.

The lead factors contributing to this persistent condition of food insecurity and malnutrition include:

- *Lack of suitable policies and strategies;*
- *Limited investment opportunities in the country*
- *Poor natural resource management skills;*
- *Poor marketing services and infrastructure;*
- *Frequent and unpredictable, risky weather conditions –*
- *Increasingly inconsistent supply of unaffordable inputs*
- *Invasive and common pests and disease infestation;*
- *Limited of access to innovation and improved technologies*
- *Lack of access to financial resources and services*

The reality on the ground, as a result of all these factors, is a almost total dependence of the country on food imports, as high as 85%. This is a robust indication that the local agriculture and food system barely provides for remaining 15% of national food supply. The resultant situation of food insecurity is relentlessly persistent. The study is exploring **the role of investment**

Research Rationale

The rationale of your research is that:

- The reviewed literature and available secondary data support the fact that Investment in sustainable agriculture and food systems is critical for achieving food security.
- This statement is supported by the following facts:
- Agriculture production systems worldwide are facing unprecedented challenges from an increasing demand for food for a growing population, rising hunger and malnutrition, adverse climate change effects, overexploitation of natural resources, loss of biodiversity, and food loss and waste.
- These challenges can undermine the world's capacity to meet its food needs now and in the future. In other words, fewer people have adequate access to enough nutritious food.
 - ❑ *According to United Nations sustainable agriculture and food systems are those that “contribute to food security and nutrition, make efficient use of natural resources, and do not degrade the environment or deplete natural resources.”*
 - ❑ *Sustainable food and agriculture (SFA) contributes to all four pillars of food security – availability, access, utilization and stability – and the dimensions of sustainability (environmental, social and economic). FAO promotes SFA to help countries worldwide achieve Zero Hunger and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).*
 - ❑ *Investment in sustainable agriculture and food systems can help to increase agricultural productivity, improve the quality of food produced, and enhance access to food for vulnerable populations.*
 - ❑ *Investment in sustainable agriculture and food systems help to mitigate the effects of climate change on agriculture and improve the resilience of food systems.*
 - ❑ *Promotion of sustainable agriculture and food systems can help to ensure that people have access to safe, nutritious, and affordable food both now and in the future.*
 - ❑ *In short, investment in sustainable agriculture and food systems is essential for achieving food security.*

Options for Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems in Somaliland

There are two approaches or options of investment:

- ❑ *Focus on **the impact of investment** in sustainable food systems on food security, the most effective investment strategies for promoting sustainable food systems, the key drivers of investment in sustainable food systems, and how to ensure that investment in sustainable food systems is equitable and inclusive.*
- ❑ *Examine **the challenges to investment** in sustainable food systems and how they can be addressed. By exploring these research questions, you can contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between investment in sustainable agriculture and food systems and sustainable food security.*

The Study: Research Questions/Hypotheses

Research Title:

Role of Investment in Sustainable Agriculture and Food System Results in Sustainable Food Security.

Research Questions:

Investment in sustainable food systems is a crucial step towards achieving sustainable food security. Here are some research questions that you could consider in your research topic:

- What are the most effective investment strategies for promoting sustainable food systems?
- How can we measure the impact of investment in sustainable food systems on food security?
- What are the key drivers of investment in sustainable food systems?
- How can we ensure that investment in sustainable food systems is equitable and inclusive?
- What are the most significant challenges to investment in sustainable food systems, and how can they be addressed?

Hypothesis: The hypothesis of the research could be that:

- Investment in sustainable agriculture and food systems plays a crucial role in achieving sustainable food security, through mitigation of effect of climate change on agriculture, increased food production, improved food quality, and greater access to food for vulnerable populations, for improve the resilience of food systems a result..

Preliminary research findings proved the hypothesis correct. There is a strong indication that investment in sustainable agriculture and food system is a globally proven and widely accepted approach for achieving national food security and nutrition, alleviating conditions of poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition.

Methods & Data Collection

For reasons of resource and time limitation, the researcher has chosen the following three methods as appropriate:

- Extensive literature review
- Assessment of secondary data
- Peer discussion and critical analysis

Literature Review/Theory

- The list of literature reviewed will be availed at the end of the study report.

Data Presentation/Findings

Conclusion and Recommendations

5 key principles of sustainability for food and agriculture:

1. By modifying current practices much can be done in terms of improving the productivity of many food and agricultural production systems. Productivity will need to continue to increase in the future to ensure sufficient supply of food and other agricultural products. However, this must be done while limiting the expansion of agricultural land as well as safeguarding and enhancing the environment.
2. Food and agricultural production depends on natural resources and therefore the sustainability of production depends on the sustainability of the resources themselves. Much can be done to reduce negative impacts and enhance the status of natural resources. While intensification has positive effects on the environment through reduced agricultural expansion and subsequent limitation in encroachment on natural ecosystems, it also has potentially negative impact on the environment.
3. Extreme weather events, market volatility and civil strife impair the stability of agriculture. Policies, technologies and practices that build producers' resilience to threats would also contribute to sustainability. Several signals in the recent past have illustrated the risks that shocks can represent for agriculture, forestry and fisheries. Increased climate variability, whether associated or not to climate change, impact farmers and their production. On the other side, increased food price volatility impact both producers and consumers who don't necessarily have the means to cope with them.
4. The transition to sustainable production can only take place when there is the right balance between private and public sector initiatives, as well as accountability, equity, transparency and the rule of law. Mainstreaming sustainability into food and agriculture systems implies adding a public good dimension to an economic enterprise. Agriculture is and will remain an economic activity driven by the need for those practicing it to make profit and ensure a decent living out of its activities.
5. Investment in sustainable agriculture and food systems is essential for achieving food security and nutrition. Investment in sustainable agriculture and food systems can help to increase agricultural productivity, improve the quality of food produced, and enhance access to food for vulnerable populations. It can also help to mitigate the effects of climate change on agriculture and improve the resilience of food systems. By promoting sustainable agriculture and food systems, investment can help to ensure that people have access to safe, nutritious, and affordable food both now and in the future.