



The World Food Day



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Each year on 16 October, the world marks the World Food Day (WFD) with different themes to draw public attention to areas of high concern. The WFD brings into focus the plight of the over 800 million people in the world who do not have enough to eat. This year the theme is **“World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy”**.

This year’s observance and related activities should serve as an important occasion to promote implementation of the outcomes of the High Level Conference, Rome June 2008 on “World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy”. We need to interpret this theme to better suit the realities of our country Ethiopia: here, the primary concern should be to achieve, as soon as possible, adequacy and even surplus of food for our people.

Given that many do not have enough income, many Ethiopians cannot rely on the market to buy food from other countries; therefore they need to be assisted to produce enough within this country. The WFD, therefore, is an opportunity for the people of Ethiopia, the Government and Ethiopia’s international partners (including FAO and WFP) to rededicate themselves to a productive and prosperous Ethiopian agriculture.

It must be stressed that agricultural success will depend largely on Ethiopia’s own efforts and continuation of the high commitment, clear direction and policy support of government to producers, processors and traders. As part of the international partners community, FAO and WFP look forward, as always, to supporting Ethiopia’s clear vision of its future among the world’s prominent agricultural nations.

Today, despite the effort of averting food crisis by humanitarian agencies like WFP, the number of people who go to bed with an empty stomach is still on the rise. Amazingly, hunger still claims the lives of more people than HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria combined.

We believe that solving the problem of food insecurity is the key to ending hunger and uprooting the main causes of poverty. For this to succeed, we have to continue to work together in a strengthened manner. We need the government, its development partners, the private sector and individuals to join together in a partnership. If we can all work together, we can actually break the generational cycle of hunger and poverty in this country.

Together we are stronger, and together we can turn aspirations into reality.