

খাদ্য অধিকার বাংলাদেশ
RIGHT TO FOOD BANGLADESH

STRATEGY FOR RIGHT TO FOOD BANGLADESH



(STAND TOGETHER FOR ACHIVING RIGHT TO ADEQUATE FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SECURITY FOR ALL)

FOREWORD

At present 795 million people of the world do not have enough food to eat and a huge portion among them (281.4 million) live in the South Asia Region by FAO report, 2015. These figures, however, underestimate the true extent of food insecurity, which includes hidden hunger, micronutrient deficiencies, food wastage and unsafe food. The challenge of hunger and malnutrition in Asia is complex and multi-faceted. It will require a multi-pronged approach, including interventions for greater availability of food through improved and climate adaptive agricultural production; enhanced livelihoods for secure access; education for improved food utilization; availability of potable water for improving health and nutrient uptake and agriculture; women's empowerment and social protection for an equitable distribution of food and a focus on resources amongst other relevant interventions. In adopting the goals of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the international community took responsibility for building a sustainable future. But meeting the goals of eradicating hunger and poverty by 2030, while addressing the threat of climate change, will require a profound transformation of food and agriculture systems worldwide. Therefore a broad-based transformation of food and agriculture systems is needed to ensure food security, provide economic and social opportunities for all, protect the ecosystem services on which agriculture depends, and build resilience to climate change. Without adaptation to climate change, it will not be possible to achieve food security for all and eradicate hunger, malnutrition and poverty.

The effects of climate change on agricultural production and livelihoods are expected to intensify over time, and to vary across countries and regions. Beyond 2030, the negative impacts of climate change on the productivity of crops, livestock, fisheries and forestry will become increasingly severe in all regions.

Regarding the context of food and nutritional security, an alarming situation exists in the South Asian Region that is SAARC countries. Bangladesh is not an exception in this case. Around 16.4 % of the total populations are hungry and undernourished in Bangladesh. Industrial and chemical intensive agriculture threaten the food and nutritional security and economic development of the people of Bangladesh. Moreover, the multifaceted environmental and climatic challenges make it difficult for the small holder producers of the country to maintain their lives and livelihoods.

Considering these diversified challenges, as part of incessant effort in conducting various activities including local and national level campaign, lobbying and policy advocacy on Right to Food issues, a number of national and international organizations and networks had organized the South Asia Right to Food-SARF Conference 2015 in Dhaka on May 30-June 1, 2015. More than 2000 Activists, Citizens, Civil Society representatives, NGOs, Academia, Bilateral and Multilateral development partners, Researcher, Policy makers, Law makers, Trade unionist, Political society, Youth, Peasant's organizations, Rural and urban poor, Small holders, Farmers, Women's organizations and indigenous people and their organizations from across South Asian countries and beyond participated in this conference.

Participants from South Asia region putted their conscientious efforts to conceptualize the meaning and standard of Right to Food vis-a-vis other tenets of human rights, had widespread and threadbare discussions about different challenges and opportunities towards establishing a legal framework and its proper implementation. Most importantly, the umbrella network 'Right to Food Bangladesh' has been evolved through the conference. This network will connect and elaborate the CSM (Civil Society Mechanism) process in Bangladesh with heavily active and engage civil society regarding right to food and food sovereignty.

South Asia is one of the most food vulnerable areas in the world. A large majority of the extreme poor and food-insecure people (281.4 million) live in this part of the world where the incidence of malnutrition is very serious. The region is also backward in terms of other social development indicators. In south Asia Bangladesh is far behind of formulating or implementing any law or bill concerning right to food. In Bangladesh, food grain production and storage capacity has increased and food grain availability has been successfully maintained at a satisfactory level. Alongside with the 16.4 percent undernourished population, people who are in below poverty line also facing vulnerable situation in terms of food and nutritional security.

Neoliberal policies of trade liberalization, privatization and deregulation facilitated by international trade and financial institutions have benefited transnational corporations and the elites. It has reduced the capacities of the people in Bangladesh as well as other south Asian countries to ensure self-sufficient food production and right to food for everyone, worsened hunger, poverty, malnutrition, contributed to the displacement, landlessness, loss of life & livelihood. It is concerning that people of South Asia, especially small producers suffer intersectional violations based on their gender, class, caste, ethnicity and religion and they face worsened situation due to neo liberal atrocities.

Considering these diversified issues and challenges, a national platform of action is pivotal accelerating right to food movement in Bangladesh. Formation of national platform was endorsed in the South Asia Right to Food Conference 2015 through Dhaka declaration and thereby Right to Food Bangladesh Network has been evolved. The formal launching of 'Right to Food Bangladesh Network' has been announced in the Press Conference on 20 August 2015. It is a canopy network on 'Right to food and nutrition security' comprising civil society, NGOs, social movements, academia, researchers, policy makers, law makers, trade unionists, political society, youth, peasants' organization, urban poor, small holders, farmers, women organizations and indigenous people and their organizations.

VISION

A Hunger and Poverty Free Just Society

MISSION

Ensured Right to Food and Nutritional security for citizens and especially for the poor, marginalized, women and children and it will decline the underlying causes of hunger and poverty.

OBJECTIVES

1. To Strengthened Right to Food Bangladesh network at local and national level and deepening South Asia region and International process for participation, non-discrimination and empowerment of citizens for solidarity and communicative action.
2. To Develop and Formulate a legal framework and regulatory provisions as Right to Food law and related national policies for ensuring the Right to Food and nutritional security.
3. To act as a catalyst with relevant institutions public and privet, UN bodies and development partners to influence the appropriate policies.
4. To monitor the Social protection program based on NSSS, Seventh Five Year Plan of Government of Bangladesh and SDGs for improved implementation status towards achieving the Right to Food and Zero Hunger in Bangladesh.
5. To monitor and measure the adequacy in a rights-based perspective of land ownership and tenure rights, food safety laws, food wastage, water rights and consumer protection agencies legal, regulatory and institutional structures and the mandates of relevant institutions.
6. To safeguard and ensure the sovereign rights of small holder agriculture, local food producers and communities to the biodiversity, right to work and employment, access to safe and renewable seed and market access.

RIGHT TO FOOD BANGLADESH NETWORK WILL RAISE VOICE ON THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIC ISSUES

- A. Commitment to End Hunger in Bangladesh by 2030.
- B. Support to GoB in achieving the goals of eradicating hunger and poverty by 2030.
- C. Commitment to ensure food and nutritional security, food sovereignty of all the people across the country.
- D. Establishing and implementing a legal framework regarding the issue of food and nutritional security in ensuring sufficient food for all.
- E. Establishing sustainable food production procedure through ensuring the development of agriculture sector and prioritizing small holder.

- F. Facilitating and act together with all social movements and learn from existing experience to ensure provisioning of legal framework and proper implementation of right to adequate food and nutritional security.
- G. Ensuring elimination of all sorts of violation, discrimination and oppression against smallholder farmers and producers of this country based on their gender, class, caste, ethnicity and religion and other grounds.
- H. Pressurize relevant national government institutions, policy makers, political societies and pertinent stakeholders accountable to adapt appropriate measures for right to food, potable water rights, agriculture and food systems which must respond to the crises and nutritional security issue and relevant policy reforms at national level.
- I. Promoting social protection systems considering rights of urban and rural poor, subnational special poverty zones, indigenous people, and people with disabilities, elderly, women and children.
- J. Supporting and facilitating the farmers led participatory process to establish seed banks for preserving agrological bio-diversity, and support farmers with free flow of seeds across the country in farmers' necessity.
- K. Ensuring unadulterated and organic food.
- L. Ensuring education, health and employment for all people in order to ensure food and nutritional security.
- M. Enliven South Asian Food Bank and South Asian Seed Bank.
- N. Formulating and implementing agrarian reform in a participatory and transparent manner for smallholder producer considering the national food security realities.
- O. Adapting to climate change in small scale farming and small-scale production systems to take practicable pathways for farm households and others dependent on such systems to build greater resilience through adaptation and diversification strategies that also improve their livelihoods and, therefore, contribute to ending hunger and poverty.

WAY FORWARD

As way forward, activities of the network need to be specified to appear this platform as functional and operational that provides directions to the Right to Food movement in Bangladesh. As a major part of the activities, the platform will conduct campaign and facilitate the process for involvement of pertinent stakeholders to spread the issues of right to food and nutritional security and to enacting Right to Food Act. We know that Right to Food is not only a matter of development of agriculture policies, rather it is also associated with other related policies i.e. nutrition, trade, environment, investment, climate change, social protection, health, etc. Therefore, policies relating to food security should address the voice and views of marginalized and vulnerable population. Broad-based agricultural and rural development can help reduce exposure and sensitivity to climate shocks and enable farmers to benefit from new opportunities for improving rural livelihoods and food security. Improvements in infrastructure, extension, climate information, access to credit, and social insurance, which are at the heart of rural development, need to go hand in hand in order to foster the adoption of improved practices and the diversification of rural livelihoods. Besides, critical observations on policies or acts which are discriminatory or violating people's right to food, food sovereignty and nutritional security are also imperative to pursue review proposition to the government. In this connection, Right to Food Bangladesh will learn from in country situation and regional experiences in formulating a persuasive research document in a form of legal framework for ensuring the food and nutritional rights of the people of Bangladesh.

Secretariat: WAVE Foundation Office, 3/11, Block-D, Lalmatia, Dhaka-1207
Phone: 01755655430, 8143245, 58151620, Fax: 8143245, 58151620 Ext.-123 Email:
info.rtfbd@gmail.com, Website: www.rtfbangladesh.org