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Transkript

„Dürre & Ernährungssicherheit in Ostafrika: Langfristige Lösungen und die Rolle des globalen Nordens“

Experten auf dem Podium

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press briefing

Transkript

Moderator (00:00)

Welcome everyone to the press briefing by the Science Media Center, Germany. My name is Iris Poff. We are currently in a global food crisis. The food price index is as high as it ever was before. And this is mostly felt by vulnerable countries, so, poor countries who rely a lot on food imports and who are heavily affected by climate change already. Now, the reason for this global food crisis is an unfortunate combination of factors. Most salient for us in Europe might be the Ukraine war, through which large amounts of grain and fertiliser are missing on the world market. But there's also the effects of the COVID pandemic. There are high energy prices around the world and severe droughts that are happening in different places of the world at this moment.

Now, this is a global problem, clearly a global issue. Why do we focus on East Africa? Now, there's a couple of reasons that make the situation there especially worrying. So there's an intense drought happening around the Horn of Africa. So here we're talking about Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia. There, the fourth rain season in a row has been far too dry and it's coming to an end now. And this has heavy implications for agriculture. At the same time, these countries depend a lot on food imports, depend a lot on the World Food Programme by the U.N., which also at this time doesn't have enough financial means and not enough food to supply people with even basic food supplies. Then we have a war going on in Ethiopia since 2020. And all of these factors combined lead to around 20 million people at this moment who are in a crisis state of hunger in Kenya, Somalia and Ethiopia. Now, we also want to include the country of Sudan into our focus here. It's a neighbouring country to Ethiopia, but it's more northern. It has quite a different climate and different rain seasons. It's part of the Sahel zone, so the beginning of the Sahara, it's very, very dry. And it's also a country that depends a lot on food imports from Ukraine and Russia and a country where there hasn't been a good harvest in the last three years. So also there, the situation is quite severe.

Now, we definitely could have similar discussions about other regions of the world that lack stable food systems, that are heavily affected by war and by climate change, such as Yemen, Afghanistan or West Africa. All of these regions, they need more short term help in terms of food aid. But what we want to focus on today, is long term solutions to the problem. How can East Africa develop stable food systems that are independent from the global markets and that are resilient against droughts, which are becoming more and more frequent with climate change? And how can the Global North help and should the Global North help in this transition?

To the journalists out there: A video recording of this discussion will be online still today, and a written transcript you can find on our website from on next week, Tuesday. Now I'd like to introduce our four experts here. I'm very grateful and thrilled that you are here with us today. So we have Dr. Noah Adamtey, who is a researcher at the Institute of Organic Agriculture in Switzerland, and he is coordinating a project in Kenya that compares organic and conventional farming. We have Professor Dr. Christian Borgemeister, who is executive director of the Centre of Development Research at the University of Bonn in Germany. He worked as a researcher previously in Kenya for around eight years. His speciality is insect and pest control, but he has brought knowledge about sustainable agriculture across the African continent. We have Dr. Kathleen Hermans who is a researcher at the Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in transition economies in Halle, Germany, as of this week, and she previously studied environmental change and migration, so a little bit of a different aspect, in Ethiopia. And we have Dr. Oliver Kirui, who is a researcher at the International Food Policy Research Institute in Khartoum, Sudan. He grew up in a farmer's family in Kenya. So you have some firsthand experiences of what we're talking about today. And he has researched agriculture and land degradation in different African countries, including Kenya, Ethiopia and Sudan now. Thank you very much for being here with us today. My first question goes to Christian Borgemeister. In Ethiopia and Kenya, around 70 percent of the population works in agriculture.



Still, these countries depend a lot on food imports, also outside of the acute crisis right now. Why is that? Why can't they feed themselves?

Christian Borgemeister (04:59)

Thank you, Ms. Proff. I think, at the heart of it, it is a combination of three major factors. On one hand, we have a tremendous demographic growth in Africa and also in these three countries that you've mentioned. I'm presently in Ibadan, Nigeria, on the western side of the continent. If you take the example of Nigeria, Nigeria presently has approximately 200 million inhabitants forecasted for 2100 800 million. So demographically speaking, Africa and South Asia are the last great frontiers of population growth on this planet. And second, you have stagnating yield levels of all major crops in Africa. They have been basically running flat over the last 15, 20 years. So we haven't made any progress in increasing yields of major agricultural commodities in Africa, in sub-Saharan Africa, I should qualify, contrary to the situation, say, in Asia or in Latin America, where yields of the key commodities have been steadily increasing. And last but not least, this is what you just mentioned, we are having more and more impact of climate variability, of extreme climate events as the current drought in East Africa. And all these three factors are interlinked and exacerbate each other. So, as long as we don't tackle all these three issues, as long as we are not addressing demography, as long as we are not addressing these dismally low yield levels, and as long as we are not really starting to act upon climate change – and there the North has a great responsibility in this respect –, we are not going to see change, on the contrary, we're going to see the situation further aggravating. Back to you.

Moderator (07:10)

Thank you very much. Second question goes to Oliver Kirui. Now we heard a little bit about the background situation. Let's focus on the acute situation, now. So how are the food systems in East African countries currently affected by the Ukraine war, by the COVID pandemic and the drought? I think you're muted. Maybe you can unmute yourself.

Oliver Kirui (07:33)

Thank you. Now, thank you so much for your question, Ms. Proff. Following up on what Professor Borgemeister just mentioned a moment ago, the countries in the Eastern African region, the Horn of Africa or East African region including Sudan to make it the Horn of Africa, are experiencing the worst drought in 40 years. There have been three or four consecutive seasons that have been very dry. And on the occasions when rain has come, it has been very extreme. We've seen also several other issues that followed, the locust outbreak and further challenges [which were] associated with climate change. If you look at the statistics and also the reality on the ground, is, that the last three seasons millions of farmers have lost their crops, there was a loss of their livestock because of these very extreme dry seasons. [...] The Ukraine crisis added another layer of challenges to what already was becoming a huge problem in the region. If I may be very specific, for example, if you look at the food security situation in Sudan, there's been a soaring acute food insecurity. And this is aggravated by, I would say, a combination of many factors. So, there is drought, which I just mentioned, there is COVID-19 that the country has been trying to recover from, and then there is low production of key staple crops. And this has happened also for over many seasons. There is the political instability. As many of you know, now Sudan is under a military rule and this has also [caused] disrupted production. And this is another layer of challenge to the ongoing issues that Sudan is facing. And then we have, I would say, another factor that is the conflict in Ukraine. So, if you look more generally, recent estimates that we have from the [Food and Agriculture Organization] is, that about 11 million people or close to 30 percent of the Sudanese population would need life



sustaining support in the year 2022, and the number is the highest in the last decade. And we cannot underestimate the significance of Russia and Ukraine in the African agriculture, particularly for Sudan and the other neighbouring countries. So, Russia, if you look, for example, in terms of main staple [crops] for Sudan, wheat is the second most important food for Sudan, only after sorghum. And you will see that only 15 percent of the total supply is from domestic production, 85 percent, which is about 2.5 to 3 million tons, is imported wheat. And this is particularly from Russia and from Ukraine. So the recent issues in the Black Sea region have a major implication on the situation here in Sudan. If I may put one number in perspective, it is that Sudan has seen an increase in prices of wheat. Currently, the local wheat prices at about 550 Dollars per ton. This is about a 180 percent increase compared to the same time period last year. And basically this increase could be attributed to the challenges that are happening in Ukraine and also in the global market surrounding the wheat trade. And perhaps a final point on this is that Russia is a key producer of fertiliser, many farmers in Sudan – and I know in Kenya as well – have had very difficult times receiving fertiliser this year. And this has really affected the amount of land that has been put under cultivation in Sudan. We've done a little bit of survey, and we find that about 40 percent of what was planted last year is what has been put into cultivation this year. So we are anticipating that there will be a huge food crisis in the coming months, given that the total production would be much lower than what is anticipated. Back to you. Thank you.

Moderator (11:54)

Thank you. These are really shocking numbers you've been mentioning there right now. Now, the next question goes to Noah Adamtey. So, we've heard from both Mr. Borgemeister, Mr. Kirui, about the problem of low production that we have in these countries. Now, this is exactly what you are researching. What would you recommend to farmers in Kenya who want to increase the productivity of their crop farming? You are muted.

Noah Adamtey (12:21)

Thank you. Indeed, the stagnation and low productive capacity of the farms in East Africa is an issue, and this is what we have identified for the past 14 years, working on the long term trial and also working with farmers in different regions and areas. The average nutrient input per year is at the moment around 45 to 50 kilograms per hectare for nitrogen and about 60 kilograms of phosphate fertiliser. We have observed that it could not [suffice to meet] the nutrient need of the crop to increase the year capacity. We also observed that the majority of [...] smallholder farmers use rainfed agriculture and with the drought, challenges and the climate change impact that has been mentioned are affecting productivity. Last but not least, the pest and disease incident is also a major issue. So from one trial, after 14 years we observed that the existing practise [...] would not be able to turn the wheel. In the last three years, we tried to diversify the farming system. What I mean by diversifying the farming system: We tried to include other crops that can serve in managing pests and diseases, including the integrated pest management technologies (IPM). We also increased the nutrient level beyond the existing practise to more sustainable practise, and we try to improve on water harvesting technologies. By doing so, we have increased the yield in both organic and conventional [farming] by 50 percent. So, we saw that that would be the way [to go] for farming systems in East Africa to be resilient against climate change impacts, in this case drought, pest and disease incident.

So, [referring to] diversification of the farming system and also selection of crops – because we are working areas [differing in the composition of] soil as well as amount of rainfall – there is the need for guidance in the selection of crops: Which crop will be able to survive and be able to grow well in the given region? And if this is done in conjunction with the diversification, it would be very helpful. The next issue is the soil fertility. For the past 14 years, we saw that this system that I have



described as the system of the small-scale farmers could not improve soil fertility [...]. On the other hand, in the high input system – like the organic one where we have been using organic input of an average of about 50 tons per hectare – we have been able to improve soil fertility after three years and have build soil carbon between years 6 to 14. And this has helped to increase the productivity of the farms. So there is the need for a paradigm shift from our soil fertility management through the traditional use of fertiliser alone, because in most areas the soils are so poor and acidic, that they are no longer responding to fertiliser application. The organic input use is a challenge and therefore there will be the need for livestock integration, promotion of livestock so that a lot of manure can be generated, which can be used as another input means to the management of the soil fertility or soil health. Then one issue is information. We have also observed from one of our studies which we have done for the past six years, that information reaching farmers are ending up either diluted or not in the right form. And therefore, if we want to increase productivity of small scale farmers, which contribute about 72 percent to the total of GDP of agricultural production in East Africa, then there will be the need to revisit our [...] system, there will be the need to link up the activities of the NGOs in the agriculture sector, there will be the need to harmonise all the actors in the agriculture food chain so that information reaching farmers would be well packed as it is from the source. Finally: market as an issue. It has an influence on farmers' productivity and this, if addressed, can help increase the productive capacity of the farms. Thank you.

Moderator (18:05)

Thank you, Mr. Adamtey. There were a lot of interesting points I would like to get back to later on. But first, I would like to introduce our fourth expert here, Kathleen Hermans. Do you expect that more frequent droughts will make regions in East Africa uninhabitable and that large numbers of people will leave these regions permanently?

Kathleen Hermans (18:23)

Yeah. Thanks, Ms. Proff. It's always difficult to estimate at what point certain regions become actually uninhabitable, not just for East Africa. But it's a matter of fact likely in East Africa will get increasingly under pressure. So, for example, in Ethiopia, it's vast areas of the highlands, it's vast areas of the lowlands, so basically those regions or parts of the regions that are also affected now by the drought. And there's a urgent need to deal with these stressors to secure the livelihoods. So, in East Africa, migration is a typical risk reducing strategy and can be a solution to secure income. And in 2018, the World Bank has published a major report, the Groundswell report, with a focus on Ethiopia. And there they estimated up to 1.5 million people could be displaced internally within the country by the year 2050. So in the last year there were 250,000 internally displaced people counted in Ethiopia. So that would be a major increase of those numbers just because of natural disasters, so not just droughts, but all kind of natural disasters, including floods and others. We have to be very cautious with those quantitative estimates of future migration numbers because they come with very high uncertainty related to climate change consequences, high uncertainties, particularly related to how do people actually respond in terms of migration as a consequence of climate change. But there is no doubt that extreme events like droughts will increase migration and displacement drastically. But there's also scientific consent that climate change doesn't push people around the entire globe. So it's mainly people who are leaving their homes because of climate change or because of extreme events. They are then moving in their own country. They move across short distances, mainly from rural to urban areas. But it's not that people are moving around the globe. That's an idea that you often get from the media but it's something that we haven't observed so far.

Moderator (20:43)



Thank you very much. Now I'd like to ask Mr. Kirui and Mr. Borgemeister. So, we heard from Noah Adamtey a couple of strategies that farmers could use to, for example, diversify the crops they use to integrate animal farming into crop farming, to use manure as a fertiliser. What do you think of these strategies and how could they be actually put into practise to increase productivity? I don't know who wants to go first.

Christian Borgemeister (21:18)

Oliver, you go ahead.

Oliver Kirui (21:22)

Okay. Thank you. I think I agree with with the suggestions there and [...] from my research on the economics of land degradation and looking at the cost of land degradation in East Africa, what we found out is similar to what Noah Adamtey just mentioned. What has been experienced over time is soil mining. The soil fertility is a huge issue for many small-scale farmers. And trying to improve that, soil fertility would be a good thing. And I believe that overdependence on fertiliser may not be the solution. We may have to think beyond the inorganic fertiliser and also move to organic fertiliser. I think at the very short and medium term, we need to improve the fertility of soil so that farmers are able to harvest at least some food to consume. But I would shift [the focus] a little and look into the potential innovations or potential technologies that could shift the productivity of most of the farms in the region – Kenya and Sudan and even Ethiopia in this case. And this is efficient irrigation systems. If we look at the potential for irrigated agriculture in our region or in these countries, it is very huge. But not enough investment has been put in irrigation systems. Efficient irrigation technology and energy saving technologies would be a plus. Many countries in the region depend a lot on power generators. Why not solar? Solar generators or solar powered technologies could really be good for the climate and also very efficient in terms of water utilisation and water harvesting. I think that the ultimate for all efforts that we are doing must be building a more resilient agriculture and food system for for the entire of this country. So besides providing inputs for the resource-poor and vulnerable communities, we need to develop and expand the agricultural and climate research and extension services. Most of the countries – Sudan being one of those – is very poor when it comes to extension services to farmers. Most farmers need the technology and the knowledge on what to produce, the diversification that Noah mentioned a few moments ago – they need information on this. What works where? What's better, under what conditions? So extension services would be needed. We need also to talk about alternatives, as I mentioned – moving out of out of a dependence on one crop. If wheat is for example the major staple [crop] in the food systems and then there is the Russia-Ukraine-conflict going on and this brings everything almost to a halt or increases prices three or four times. This is not sustainable. We need to think beyond wheat dependence to more resilient crops [...] like sorghum, millet and other crops. But also think of high value commodities that could also go to the export market so that it brings employment to the young people, but also foreign exchange to the country.

Christian Borgemeister (24:41)

Let me let me chip in a little bit on this. Noah made very, very good points here. Anybody in agriculture would know: It starts with the soil. The soil is basically the fundament of agriculture and Africa, geologically speaking, has the oldest soils on this planet. They are, if you [will] by definition, already nutrient depleted. Building up the strength, the health of the soil, this is a generational task. I totally agree with Noah and Oliver: We need mixed approaches here, which would include both organic as well as mineral fertiliser to improve. We have to keep in mind that the vast majority of the agricultural growth that we have seen in Africa over the last couple of years has been by



expansion of area of arable land. And this [means] we are expanding into areas that are forest, that are crucial savannas. So [...] through this agricultural expansion, we are destroying the last hotspots of biodiversity in Africa. There is no question whatsoever that the agriculture needs to be intensified, the yields have to increase. But this starts, as I said, as Noah said, as Oliver said, this starts from the soil. Water is the next point. If you look at Asian agriculture, about 55 percent of Asian agriculture is irrigated. I think, Oliver, correct me if I'm wrong, that the current figures in Africa are between four and five percent. There's a huge potential for irrigated agriculture. And obviously, with increasing droughts, if you irrigate your crops, be it through tapping into groundwater with solar powered pumps – something that is hugely popular in India, technologies that are there, that are on the shelf, that are actually inexpensive, that are ready to use in Africa – or through clever ways of rainwater harvesting, utilising the little rain that falls and keeping it throughout the growing period. [This is] another very crucial intervention that [...] increases yields and makes agriculture more climate resilient. And last point: The crops. We have in agricultural research over the last 50, 60 years, we have pursued a one-size-fits-all model. I call it the maize model. Everything was maize, maize, maize. Everybody was working on maize. [...] At least in terms of staple crops, [everybody] was looking at how to improve maize varieties, how to adapt them to more local conditions. Now if you look at it from an African perspective, one has to keep in mind that maize is an invasive plant [...]. Maize comes from Central America, was introduced to West Africa by the Portuguese in the 16th century [and] in East Africa, [there was] an even much more recent introduction. There are [staple] crops – Oliver mentioned them, sorghum and millet – [...] that are much more adapted to dry conditions. But much less resources have been invested into improving varieties of millet, improving varieties of sorghum, make them stronger and let them yield more. If just a fraction of the resources that international plant breeding giants have invested into various maize varieties, we would be in a more resilient situation having access to varieties of crop species that are more adapted to this ever drying climate in many parts of Africa. Back to you. Thank you.

Moderator (28:44)

We have a question by a journalist that addresses exactly that question, and she asks in that regards to Oliver Kirui: How come that there is this big wheat dependence that you mentioned in Sudan? And would it be possible to get back to these traditional crops that Mr. Borgemeister just mentioned – sorghum, millet and other?

Oliver Kirui (29:06)

I think it's it's a very good question. And it's also what we have been [dealing] with the last few weeks and months. We have written some studies that looked into wheat value chain in Sudan. Part of the story in Sudan is that for many years, the private sector involvement in wheat in terms of important exportation and packaging and processing has been very good. And therefore, if you go to the shops, [...] you'll find [that] wheat and wheat products are really available and ready and quite advertised. So the traditional crops – sorghum, millet – [these are] home-grown crops, it is a rural diet. Most urban consumers and most people in the cities and towns would not find packaged products [made] of these [crops]. [This] goes a lot into dietary diversification, but also [...] into nutritional education [...]. As Christian mentioned a moment ago, we need to [do] more in terms of education and in terms of promoting such crops and showing that the nutritional content in sorghum is not [...] any different from wheat. And in terms of resource requirements to produce a tonne of wheat and resource requirement to produce a tonne of sorghum – [this comparison] it would be lopsided. It is much more efficient to produce sorghum and millet and in terms of nutrition, [these are] not very far apart from wheat. More and more of private sector involvement must be encouraged and supported to make sorghum and other related crops more viable in the market. And also



in products that [...] farmers and consumers can easily associate with and buy. If I wanted a bread made from sorghum today and I went to the market – I wouldn't find it. But there would be maybe five or six or seven different types of breads on the same shelf made from wheat in the market. So we need to move into this support and promote the private sector and encourage private sector to invest much more in producing products that come from these other crops.

Moderator (31:37)

Thank you. I find it interesting that a lot of the solutions seem to be related to education. Both what you mentioned about education about nutrition and what Noah Adamtey mentioned at the beginning about education about farming practises. Now I'd like to broaden the view again a little bit and ask... Ms Hermans?

Kathleen Hermans (31:56)

Just to add, it's not just education, but it's also engaging the local communities and listening to them and considering their expertise and their knowledge. We have often experienced that farmers were telling: Okay, [...] a certain modern type of grain is promoted. But they say: Of course, we know these get a higher yield in principle, but they [...] are less suited for extreme heat, for example, or low precipitation. We basically know better what type of crops to use – those traditional types. But no one is actually really listening to us. In some cases there is even some sort of coercion to use [...] other crop types which are less suited according to the farmers. So I think it's really crucial to consider this knowledge and this experience from the local communities in addition to education. Thanks.

Moderator (32:54)

We have a question by a journalist about exactly that that aspect that you just mentioned. Are there local and countrywide institutions in the East African countries available and capable to manage agricultural transformation? I guess you need effective management and clear regulations to do so. [...]

Christian Borgemeister (33:19)

I start and then I pass on to Oliver. Take the example of Kenya. Kenya has a highly developed agricultural research and extension organisation, so it's not a lack of capacity and I would even say it's also not a lack of resources – it's sometimes finding the appropriate solutions. Let me go one step back, just a little footnote on this wheat situation. What is becoming a very popular strategy is substitution. You don't need to make a bread. If you want to have a bread with 100 percent wheat, you can substitute 20 percent of wheat with cassava flour that is locally produced. This is something that is happening a lot here in Nigeria and this is going to get a lot of traction. And this reduces the dependency on the Ukrainians and Russias of this world and also reduces the food import bill of the respective governments. Oliver, over to you.

Oliver Kirui (34:31)

I agree that there are a number of institutions in our countries that could actually drive an agricultural transformation. [...] It is not in question that [there are] capacities there. But in terms of resources, in terms of how much allocation is given to these institutions – if you look at the current



and recent estimations on how much money is put [...] in the agricultural sector and how much is put into science, agricultural research and extension: This is way below the recommendations from [...] the Malabo Declaration that says ten percent should go to agriculture from the budget and at least one percent [should] go to research and extension. Many countries are not doing even half of that. Yes, there are institutions, but we need to move... Public finances and public expenditure must improve in order to support for example, the scientists that are working in in these sectors and [...] [we need] promoting and taking the extension services to the farmers. There are local level institutions, they are regional institutions, there are international organisations as well. For example [there are] regional bodies and continental bodies like AGRA, the [African] Green Revolution Alliance [...] that are coming together to work out solutions to transform agriculture in Africa – a new green revolution. There are many people and many institutions that are coming together to do this. But in terms of resources, I guess we need to do much more than that. This would not be successful without the involvement of the private sector. For example, once [...] public investment is put into developing seed variety, you need [...] distribution, you need transportation, you need value addition. And this is not the work of the government – this is the work of the private sector. Policies and institutions might support [...] the strengthening of the existing private sector players so that they are able to improve the link between production and consumption and make it more seamless. For example the quality chains to reduce post-harvest losses – this is the work of the private sector. We need to put much more effort into building this. And maybe the last point, linking to what Christian Borgemeister said before: In terms of diversification and in terms of other players coming into play, for many years, maize security was almost synonymous with food security in some countries, particularly in Kenya for example. Most of the resources and most of the public investment went into maize research and maize promotion. [There is the same situation with] wheat [...] In Sudan. We have to be more careful on how public policies are crafted to move the story beyond one crop into [...] a food systems approach where we are talking about much more than producing, [but] also value addition and different crops and varieties at the same time.

Moderator (37:40)

Thank you. I would like to broaden the view a little bit here and ask about who is actually most affected by the current situation – the current drought and the current food shortage? [This is] a question for Mrs. Hermans. Is it more the farmers who now cannot farm anymore because there is a drought? Is it the pastoralists – the nomadic people moving around with their animals – or is it the urban population who has the hardest time to adapt?

Kathleen Hermans (38:05)

It's probably both. Also, depending on the exact location. It's definitely the rural farmers who are involved in cropfying, but it's definitely also to the pastoralists. It's probably also – I don't want to say it's less, but it's probably to a different extent or different type – the urban populations, because they are facing complete different challenges, let's say. But in the first instance it's the farmers and the pastoralists.

Moderator (38:39)

Mr. Adamtey, do you want to add to that? You are muted. I think you can just keep your microphone on.

Noah Adamtey (38:48)



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Yes. I agree with what Ms. Hermans just said. It affect both the pastoralists, the farmers and also water scarcity to the vulnerable communities.

Moderator (39:01)

And do you think that this nomadic lifestyle that we have in all of these East African countries in the part of the population, is that actually still sustainable facing the challenges we have now – so the population growth and climate change?

Noah Adamtey (39:17)

Very good question. Looking at the present practise whereby most of the livestock [graze freely], research has indicated that the quality of the pasture they feed on is not good, which is affecting the meat quality as well as the output in terms of productivity. So there should be the need to shift from the free grazing system into pasteurised production system whereby farmers can have control on the kind of feed given to the livestock. And for that matter, this will require infrastructure, capacity development, policies to support and to strengthen. So that there will be a paradigm shift to this direction to enable the livestock resist the climate change impact we are experiencing now. Thank you.

Moderator (40:21)

Thank you very much. We have a little question by a journalist to something you said before, Mr. Kirui. She asks: Which private sector do you want to strengthen – the local, the national or from abroad like the Chinese?

Oliver Kirui (40:40)

Every time we talk about private sector involvement, I think we have to be more open to options and variety. But in this case, if you look at Sudan, for instance, that the international players have not been in this space for long because of sanctions and because of, for example, the challenges that followed the regimes that were here before. So private sector, in my understanding, would be, of course, a lot of investment and a lot of investors, but also the international investors that would bring for example solar technology. This may not be a local company or local institution that is able to do this. Perhaps we would need cross-border kind of private sector linkages and networks. So I wouldn't limit it to local investment and [the] local private sector. But I would say, of course, we need to build a lot on [the] private sector and also the involvement of the other players – solar power suppliers from India, from China, from Germany [...] and water pumps and solar energy and the different aspects, transportation, quality contracts and so forth. This may go beyond a lot of investors into a hybrid kind of network of investment.

Moderator (42:02)

Thank you. And we're already at the end of our time. So I would like to come to the last question, which is a very important one. I'm curious what you will say. I would like to focus now on the role of the global north as this is an event for European journalists. [...] In which ways can the Global North help this agricultural transition? Noah Adamtey, you called it a paradigm shift multiple times. What can the Global North do and what do you expect of the Global North? Maybe, Mr. Adamtey, you want to start?



Noah Adamtey (42:38)

Thank you. I will categorise it in three main areas. One: support institutional building and strengthening amongst government, the private sector and civil society. So that the policy between, for example, the European Union and the African Union, can be harnessed. The EU is looking for green agriculture and has a percentage [...] of what they expect in five or ten years. If they could also link up with their counterparts in the African countries, it would be very helpful. So to support these institutions and strengthen the government, the private sector. The second thing is strengthen capacity development. And these I will categorise into technical development, infrastructure development, technology development and networking on local, national [and] regional food systems. This will also go a long way to contribute in transforming the food system. Consideration should also be given to the supply chain – I mentioned already, and Oliver [Kirui] also mentioned it several time – to diversify the production system, the local value addition [and] the processing [and to] improve aggregation and distribution at different levels. So this is how strengthening capacity development through the technical infrastructure and technology would help. And lastly, but not least, greater support to contextual – and I would like to emphasise on this so much – greater support to contextual and grassroots research. To generate a compelling and convincing evidence across the different components of food systems. It would be very helpful if they support research [...] based on the grass roots. It would be more helpful. Thank you.

Moderator (45:08)

A quick question about that. You are, for example, working on a project that's a collaboration between a European institution and Kenya. Do you think this is not happening enough or is this exactly what you mean?

Noah Adamtey (45:19)

This is one typical example – and that is what Africa needs. It is a long term trial. And for example, it took us fourteen good years to see a change in soil carbon build-up. Imagine the European partners [would have] got fed up and stopped funding this research. We wouldn't have been able to know that we can address the soil degradation problem and it comes at a point in time. So our long term trial is a typical example to see how the greater support from the North in their contextualised approach is helping to come out with knowledge and procedures and guidelines that can help to rejuvenate and sustain agriculture production systems.

Moderator (46:10)

Thank you. Same question to Ms. Hermans. What do you expect of countries of the global north?

Kathleen Hermans (46:14)

I think, first of all, a stable agricultural production requires a stable or at least a predictable climate. So under accelerating climate change increasingly undermines such conditions. Obviously, the most urgent step to be taken by the Global North is just to drastically cut CO2 emissions and to adhere to the Paris Agreement. It's fighting the root cause, not just the symptoms. The second point, and I mentioned that earlier already, is that – whenever it comes to planning and implementing land restoration activities or any other initiatives to decrease the vulnerability of local people to climate change and extreme events – we need to account for the needs and demands of the local people. And so local communities need to be actively involved and to start to consider their skills, their knowledge, their tradition, their culture, and to give them a voice in a decision making



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process. And this can result in solutions that lead to a more secure future. So when ignoring this and setting up typically bottom up approaches, as it has been done in the past, there's always some risk that those will fail, even if it becomes lots of international financial support. So international donors should actually request engagement and empowerment of local actors, of local communities, of women. Today we have not talked about the role of women at all. So women actually the backbone for local food production in East Africa. And then there is one point we haven't touched this today because it's a very broad topic. It's just our agricultural policy of the European Union and also the US. I mean, we distort the African market, as long as the EU or the Global North dumps highly subsidised products at the African markets, and those products cannot be produced by the local markets or by other African countries. So this distorts to agricultural production and trade and attempts of the development of an independent agricultural sector. So rather the domestic food production, as it was mentioned today, should be supported.

Moderator (48:19)

Sorry, quick question. Do you also mean food aid with that?

Kathleen Hermans (48:23)

No, I don't mean food aid. I really mean dumping subsidised products on the market. So removing agricultural subsidies in the north and introducing trade barriers in the south, that could increase the real value.

Moderator (48:38)

Thank you very much. Same question to Mr. Borgemeister. What do you expect from the Global North to help in this situation in East Africa?

Christian Borgemeister (48:47)

Then I make it simple: A lot of money. This is going to cost a lot of money. These resources are needed to enable Africa to adapt to climate change. And this includes building up a more resilient food system. This includes the restoration of land – we haven't talked about it. With the current set of arable land, we will not make the cut. So we need to claim backland and this is possible – Oliver [Kirui] is an expert for this – this is possible, but it's hugely expensive. Now, if we look at our recent crises, starting from the financial crisis in 2008 to COVID-19 and now to the Ukrainian war, we got completely used to using trillion figures. So if trillion figures are needed, one, two, three, four, five, they appear and they are spent. These kind of similar numbers, this kind of similar investment is needed to stabilise the environments in Africa, make them adapt to climate change. In addition to what Mrs. Hermans just said. Of course we in the north, we need to drastically cut our emissions. That's the root cause, obviously. But the genie is out of the bottle. So we need to enable vulnerable regions of the world through large subsidies to adapt to a changing climate. And this includes developing a resilient food system. Thank you.

Moderator (50:23)

Thank you very much. This might be controversial, [but I will ask a] quick question to that. Does this also benefit the global north or is this just giving money to the poor people of Africa?



Christian Borgemeister (50:37)

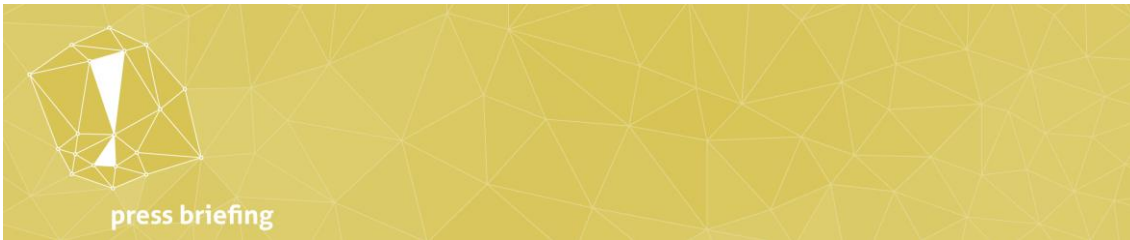
Absolutely not. It's a win win. I mean, adapting Africa to climate change and helping them develop a sustainable food system is going to boost these economies tremendously, making them even more interesting business partners. Economically speaking – Africa – why are the Chinese here? They're not only here to extract the last gram of cobalt from African soils, they are also on the continent because it's the last big economic frontier. We we're talking about gazillions of customers that are interested in products that come from China as well as from the North. So from an economic point of view, this is a very wise and lucrative investment. So I'm not talking about charity. I'm talking about helping these societies to adapt to climate change and helping them to develop their economies. And from this, we're going to benefit in the north tremendously.

Moderator (51:45)

Thank you very much. And same question lastly to Oliver Kirui. What do you expect from the Global North?

Oliver Kirui (51:52)

My colleagues have said almost everything I was about to say. Maybe I'll put it in different words but it is exactly the same thought. I think my takeaway and what I think the Global North could do, is really help in building a more resilient [...] food system in Africa and in East Africa and Sudan for that case, because this is where I am at the moment. This will be very helpful in giving households the ability to better withstand future economic shocks. [...] We have talked about providing agricultural inputs to the resourceful and the vulnerable. And again, I would agree with what my colleague said, starting from the bottom up – start from the very vulnerable, the households, the women farmers and also the resource-poor and those that are at the very margins of the society [...]. That is very key – we start from the very vulnerable. What the Global North could also do is to support the inputs to investment into sustainable land management. We've seen that every dollar invested in land management [...] brings back about 5 Dollars in return. So it's more lucrative to invest into sustainable land management practises (SLM). Food security [...] is an immediate problem that we must address, but in the long term we need to build the economic resilience of the households. So it's not just access to food, but also the distribution. And this is where the private sector would come in and this is where investment would come in. And also the economic power, the ability for the households to purchase their food, not just to produce. There is an aspect we didn't talk about and it's very key: supporting digitalisation. Today we speak in Europe and we speak in the Global North of robotics and farming. [...] I think [here in the north] we are like [version] 4.0 when it comes to technology. But in Africa we are still [working with] hand-held tools and now moving into appropriate mechanisation – like the use of tractors. This is where we are now. And not all farmers have access. 70 percent of farms in Africa [still do] cultivation by hand or by animal drawn implements. So appropriate technology, digitalisation and robotics – this is where we need to be [speaking about]. And for this we need also education. We need the capacity and we need to train and to support farmers. And finally, as we talked about it before, diversification is the way to go. I think the countries in the Global North would do better for Africa and for East Africa by supporting, for example, seed development. And in this case I'm not talking about maize seed alone, but informal and formal seed development and distribution networks for seed for main staple [crops] for Africa. This would be very important. If today you see crop failure, it is basically because we didn't get enough seeds, we didn't get fertiliser. Today the chairman of the African Union and the president of the African Union Commission are visiting Russia to meet with President Putin, basically to discuss releasing fertiliser to Africa, opening the Black Sea ports for grain to come to Africa. Because who has really been affected by what has happened in Russia – it's Africa. So you can imagine if we



were able to produce a part of the seed and fertiliser manufactured and procured in Africa, this would be a slightly different story. Thank you.

Moderator (55:32)

Thank you very much. And with that, I would like to close the press briefing. Thanks for the great discussion. I'm really happy that we were shining a spotlight on this very important topic, which I think is not dealt with so much in European media. Thank you very much for the discussion and for the interesting points and see you all soon.



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