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Ghana attains MDGs and World Food Summit goals - Report



Ghana is among seven countries that have reached the targets set by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the World Food Summit (WFS) in halving the proportion of the population suffering from undernourishment.

Ghana has been able to reach this far, because it has partnered with the private sector and civil society in implementing and reviewing policies and programmes to develop the agriculture sector.

Mr Bukar Tijani, Food and Agriculture Organisation's (FAO) Regional Representative for Africa said around one person in four persons in Sub-Saharan Africa suffered from undernourishment, down from one in three persons 25 years ago.

Mr Tijani was speaking at the launch of the first edition of the FAO's Regional Overview of Food Insecurity in Africa (SOFI) 2015 report, on the theme, "African Food Security Prospects Brighter than Ever" in Accra on Tuesday.

The report presented the key undernourished figures for Sub-Saharan Africa and examined the factors driving the progress made in food security in the Africa Region.

The documents also briefly discussed successful experiences in African countries to institute and sustain policies, which have contributed to improve nutritional and food security.

Mr Tijani said despite the progress, a considerable scope for improvement remained with respect to the World Food Summit target of reducing the number of hungry people by half.

The FAO Regional Representative for Africa said the number of underweight children in Sub-Saharan African has declined over the last two decades, while stunting has stagnated and overweight was on the rise among children below five years.

Mr Tijani said the regional report said another key factor for Africa was the extent to which countries have implemented the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, which targeted policies promoting gender and nutrition, social protection and investment arena.

“The 2015 African report on food security also shows some factors of positive change and progress towards the MDGs hunger goal,” he added.

Mr Tijani said these multi-faceted and interrelated factors included economic growth, smallholder agriculture productivity, market access, international trade, social protection programmes and timely access to information.

Dr Ahmed Yakubu Alhassan, the Deputy Minister of Food and Agriculture in charge of Crops, commended the three United Nation Agencies for the report.

He expressed the belief that it was through the contributions and support from partners and donors that have made Ghana excel in the MDGs and the WFS.

He appealed to African governments and civil society organisations to continue the advocacy on agricultural development and policy implementation.

The Deputy Minister urged on African governments to decentralize the management of agriculture activities as was done in other sectors of the economy.

Other countries that reached the target set by the MDGs and WFS goals are Angola, Djibouti, Cameroon, Gabon, Mali and Sao Tome and Principe.

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