



Paul Jeffrey/EAA

“Fast for Life” to reflect on consumption

Take one day – Ash Wednesday, 17 February to “Fast for Life” to reflect on our own consumption and commit to doing what we can to contribute to global food security. More than one billion people are suffering from hunger around the world, despite the goodness and bounty of God’s gifts to us in creation. At the same time, there are people in all parts of the world who suffer the effects of “too much”: too much salt, sugar, fat, calories. These are all dimensions of the unsustainable consumption of food. Ash Wednesday is a day of repentance and it marks the beginning of Lent. Ashes were used in ancient times, according to the Bible, to express mourning. Dusting oneself with ashes was the penitent’s way of expressing sorrow for sins and faults. Let’s take this as an opportunity to fast from food, fossil fuels and over-consumption as a symbolic gesture of support for people living with hunger.

Resources for worship, study and action are available at <http://www.e-alliance.ch/en/s/food/sustainable-consumption/fast-for-life-resources/>

More resources on “Fast for Change” available from the Canadian Foodgrains Bank: <http://www.endhungerfast.com/>

The Presbyterian Church (USA), an EAA member, has also developed monthly fasting materials on the global food crisis. Fasting materials up to September 2010 are available on-line at: <http://www.pcusa.org/foodcrisis/archive/index.htm>. Please add your reflections and resources on our Facebook page, see p. 4.

Calendar of Events 2010

1 - 6 March:

FECCIWA Food Consultation,
Accra, Ghana

8 - 10 March:

EAA Food Consultation

11 - 12 March:

EAA Food Strategy Group Meeting,
Cape Town, South Africa

8 March:

International Women’s Day

22 March:

World Day for Water

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Alliance

The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance is a broad international network of churches and Christian organizations cooperating in advocacy on food and HIV and AIDS. The Alliance is based in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, see www.e-alliance.ch/

This bulletin is located online
[www.e-alliance.ch/en/s/resources/
bulletins/](http://www.e-alliance.ch/en/s/resources/bulletins/)

From 2009 - 2012, the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA) is focusing on food – in order to overcome hunger and to improve livelihoods in harmony with creation and social justice. EAA members will advocate for:

- Just and sustainable food production, trade and distribution systems
- Just and sustainable consumption
- The realization of the right to food for all people



**Ecumenical Advocacy
Alliance**

150 route de Ferney
P.O. Box 2100
1211 Geneva
Switzerland

+41 22 791 6723
+41 22 710 2387
info@e-alliance.ch
www.e-alliance.ch

Consultation to strengthen ecumenical advocacy for food justice

The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance in collaboration with the Economic Justice Network of FOCCISA are organizing a Food Consultation for EAA members to be held in Cape Town from 8-10 March 2010. The consultation is an opportunity to discuss issues related to the campaign to build and strengthen the ecumenical movement for food justice. Participants will also have the opportunity to share about current efforts and deepen understanding and opportunities for collaboration. For everyone involved in the Food for Life campaign of the EAA, this is a chance to meet together face to face, share experiences and work on joint plans. The consultation will seek to broaden and deepen our joint work, both in plans for action and in theological understanding.

FECCIWA launches food security and poverty reduction campaign

The Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in West Africa (FECCIWA) is organizing the West African Church Leaders' Consultation on Food Security and Poverty Reduction on 1-6 March 2010 in Accra, Ghana. The consultation will bring together at least 40 church leaders and all 13 of FECCIWA's national food security campaign coordinators. The main objective of the consultation will be to lay the solid foundation for the FECCIWA Food Security Advocacy and Lobby Campaign through the churches in West Africa under the sponsorship of the German Protestant Church Development Service (EED). The consultation will offer church leaders the opportunity to discuss current political, economic and social conditions of West Africa and to consolidate a common advocacy platform to be used by national Christian councils and churches in fighting poverty and food insecurity in the region. The EAA Food Campaign Coordinator will attend and share the Food for Life Campaign Framework with the church leaders and national food campaign coordinators.

Brazilian Congress approves incorporation of the Right to Food into national constitution

On February 3, 2010, the Brazilian Congress approved the Constitutional Amendment Project (PEC in Portuguese) 047/2003, to incorporate the Right to Food as a fundamental right in the national constitution. The Right to Food will be included in article 6 of Brazil's supreme law that already contemplates other social rights such as the right to work, health, education, and social security. The project was promoted by the on line campaign "Food is a right for all", supported by FIAN Brazil and other civil society organizations, which collected over 50,000 signatures from people throughout the country. For more information please visit: <http://www.fian.org/news/press-releases/brazilian-congress-approves-incorporation-of-the-right-to-food-to-national-constitution>.

This case from Brazil could help to set a precedent of holding governments accountable to respect, protect and fulfill the right to food. Please use the EAA model letter available at <http://www.e-alliance.ch/en/s/food/rfj/> to lobby national governments.



Focus on: HEKS/EPER

Highlighting our strength as an alliance of members all over the world, each bulletin will feature campaign actions from a different member of the EAA.

HEKS/EPER was founded in 1949 by the Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches (FSPC). The organization gives humanitarian and emergency aid and fights the causes of hunger, injustice and social deprivation. It runs 40 projects in Switzerland and 290 projects abroad in over 45 countries through partnerships with church-related and other organizations at local level. Valentin Prélaz and Nicole Pignolet-Poschung spoke to the EAA about one of their successful campaigns designed to help raise funds for the development of rural communities.

What current action have you engaged in related to Food for Life Campaign?

In rural communities, we developed micro-credit schemes, one of which enables families to receive a nanny-goat. The goat makes a substantial difference to the wellbeing of the family. Its milk provides food for the family, the manure improves harvests and the first kid-goat serves as reimbursement for the debt and is passed on to another family who will benefit from the same micro-credit. The extra income generated from the sale of the other kids can be used to send the children to school. This has been shown to be very effective and sustainable. Families can become independent of development aid which is the ultimate goal of all our projects.

We began running a 'Give a Goat Campaign' in 2007 to support this project. We set up stands at food markets in towns and cities in Switzerland staffed by volunteers and at least one HEKS/EPER employee. We invite passers-by to donate 30 CHF to purchase a goat and have their photograph taken beside a cardboard cut-out goat which they are then given. You can also donate a goat from our campaign webpage and will receive a thank-you note with a brief description of the project. You can also send someone a goat e-card.

Donations are allocated to a fund that enables families to buy not just goats but other livestock, seeds, tools, a piece of land and to benefit from training programs; depending on the needs of the rural communities. In Zimbabwe, we distributed 53 goats between 2008 and 2009 in two wards of the Matobo district.

What impact is this campaign having?

The 'Give a Goat Campaign' has rejuvenated the image of HEKS/EPER and resulted in a better recognition of the organization and its activities, especially among families, the younger generations and people who are not church-goers. Goats generate sympathy among the population, so the campaign has also offered the opportunity to gain new and younger donors who are attracted to the idea of donating a goat to families in need.

If other organizations wanted to have a similar action, what advice would you give?

We find it useful to benefit from local contacts in the towns and cities. If we have a volunteer from a local parish on a campaign-stand, then it is much easier to reach out to the local population. But it really depends on the marketing strategy of the organization; what has worked for us may not do so for others.

HEKS/EPER: <http://www.beks.ch/en/>

'Give a Goat Campaign': <http://www.beks.ch/en/news-and-service/campaigns/give-a-goat/>

Strengthening food security by empowering farmers to contribute to seed biodiversity

The FAO Food Security Network (FSN) has been conducting a discussion on 'Strengthening Food Security by Empowering Farmers to Contribute to Seed Biodiversity' from 12 January to 8 February. The topic was raised by Maria van Heemstra working within the Health and Healing project of the World Council of Churches (WCC). The discussion can be found on the FSN website at: http://km.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/fsn/docs/PROCEEDINGS_empowering_farmers_to_seed_biodiversity.doc

Norwegian Church Aid launches report on the Yara and fertilizer industry in Malawi

NCA has recently launched a report detailing the role fertilizers and subsidies played for small farmers in terms of food security, increased production and price stability in Malawi. The report is available at http://www.e-alliance.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/docs/KN_Yara_rapport_27jan1.pdf

Cases on land and the right to food

The Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Mr. Olivier De Schutter made a call in January for cases on land rights and the right to food to feed into the annual report to the United Nations General Assembly. The report that the Special Rapporteur shall present to the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly will cover the protection of land users; land title schemes; agrarian reform; commercial pressures on land; agricultural workers on large-scale plantations; and the needs of special groups, as well as the tension between environmental preservation and access to land for agriculture. It will include an analysis of the relationship between access to land and the progressive realization of the right to food and recommendations to States on each of these topics. EAA submitted five cases on behalf of the Alliance. Many thanks to ICCO and Trocaire who facilitated submission of the following land cases:

i) Instituto Terramar: Territorial Rights of the Fishermen and Fisherwomen of the Coast of the State of Ceará, Land Settlement of Maceió. Visit www.terramar.org.br for more information.

ii) Andhra Pradesh Vyavasaya Vruthidarula Union-APVVU: APVVU submitted three cases on Tenancy Land Disputes, Government taking over temple land and delay in issue of land pattas cases. Email apvvu98@gmail.com for more information.

iii) Rede ba Rai Timor-Leste (The Timor-Leste Land Network): The need for land policies which safeguard communities Access to Land and the Right to Food. Email meabbcryan@gmail.com for more information.

EAA Facebook

Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance invites its members, friends and partners to join the Food for Life Campaign on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Food-for-Life-Campaign-Ecumenical-Advocacy-Alliance/226013162921?ref=ts#!> This space was created for members and partners to have dialogues on food issues. It also serves as a space for sharing resources and updating each other on ongoing activities. Please note that in order to be able to contribute to the web page, one needs to create a Facebook account first.

Resources

Training Guide for In Situ Conservation On-farm, Luigi Guarino, Jarvis, Myer et al, Global Crop Diversity Trust, Italy This manual is intended to provide a broad range of actors, including Ministries of Agriculture and the Environment, universities, research and extension institutions, non-government organizations (NGOs), and community-based groups, with a comprehensive view of factors involved in designing and implementing a programme to support the in situ conservation of crop genetic diversity on-farm.

Available at http://www.fao.org/SD/ERP/toolkit/BOOKS/A_training_guide_for_in_situ_conservation_on_farm.pdf

Fast for Change Companion, 7 weeks of finding the divine in dinner, Canadian Food Grains Bank, 2009.

This study guide is a companion to the popular prayer and reflection booklet 7 Days of Food for the Soul. The two books can be found at: <http://www.e-alliance.ch/en/s/food/sustainable-consumption/fast-for-life-resources/>

How low can we go? An assessment of greenhouse gas emissions from the UK food system and the scope to reduce them by 2050. WWF-UK. Audsley, E., Brander, M., Chatterton, J., Murphy-Bokern, D., Webster, C., and Williams, A. (2009)

This study was conducted for WWF-UK and the Food Climate Research Network. The study looks into approaches that are needed to reduce GHG emissions from food by 70%. The full report can be found at:

<http://www.e-alliance.ch/en/s/food/sustainable-consumption/fast-for-life-resources/>

Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security in a Changing Climate, Gunnel Axelsson Nycander and Anders Olund, Church of Sweden

This report details why there is hunger in the world of abundance and shares case studies from Ethiopia on sustainable agriculture. Available at http://www.e-alliance.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/docs/sustainable_agriculture_and_cc_CoS.pdf

**For past Action Alerts and Bulletins from the Food Campaign,
see www.e-alliance.ch/en/s/resources/**