

# THE RESA INTERVENTION MODEL: Towards overcoming hunger in rural areas

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## PRESENTATION

This document is part of a series of studies of the Programa Red de Seguridad Alimentaria -RESA-, sponsored by the Presidential Agency for Social Action and International Cooperation (in Spanish, Agencia Presidencial para la Accion Social y la Cooperación Internacional -ACCION SOCIAL-), in order to evaluate the different impacts of the program. Notwithstanding, I must emphasize that this study especially responds to the interest of the National Government, of certain international entities and neighboring countries, in establishing the characteristics of the RESA intervention model and the way it works, in order to grant this experience as a model to be followed by other Latin American countries.

The Red de Seguridad Alimentaria -RESA- intervention model, analyzed by the -Foundation for Superior Education and Development (in Spanish, Fundación Para la Educación Superior y el Desarrollo -FEDESARROLLO-), shows its application in the first phase of the agricultural transformation process, proposed by Timmer (Staatzan and Eicher, 1988) which describes events lacking vigorous development and growth processes and where the costs of productive factors, especially labor and land, are low. This description fits properly into the rural economy of the small agricultural producers in Latin America.

Due to the above, Acción Social of the Presidency of the Republic of Colombia places the ReSA model at the disposal of those countries which may consider that it may be useful to them, so that, adjusted to the social and economic characteristics of each region, they may help our countries attain the objective proposed by the Latin America and the Caribbean Free of Hunger initiative (in Spanish América Latina y el Caribe Sin Hambre -ALCSH-) of totally eradicating hunger from Latin America before the year 2019.

Due to the fact that they may prove to be very useful, please allow me to highlight only two of the achievements of the program:

- The first achievement is of institutional character, for in spite of the nature of the program, it was conceived as co-financer and not as executor, thus having two important implications. The first is that the structure of the program is small and does not require a new institution system for its

operation. The second is that the program strengthens the regions and their institutions by having the opportunity to execute the resources, thus supporting and promoting the decentralization of the central Government in the national territory.

- The second achievement to be highlighted in the model is its operational and organizational system, for it is characterized by being flexible, efficient, agile, effective and participative. Said system achieved its most important objectives: creating a minimum production base which guarantees access to food and a permanent flow of food in the households, guaranteeing also that food provision is maintained through time.

*Luis Alfonso Hoyos Aristizabal*  
*High Presidential Advisor*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Colombia is not detached from the problems of hunger and food insecurity suffered by a great percentage of rural population in the world. The conjunction of the problems of poverty and forceful displacement motivated by the violence generating factors in the country, have determined that an important part of Colombian rural population is affected by food and nutrition problems. In order to face these problems, a series of initiatives have been executed, many of which have limited scope. However, from the beginning of the first administration of President Alvaro Uribe Velez, the government agency of Acción Social has been performing a food security program directed to the households of the small rural producers. This program is called *RESA*, from Spanish Red De Seguridad Alimentaria (Food Security Network).

The general objective of the *RESA* program, created towards the middle of 2003, consists in "generating a change of attitude in vulnerable and/or families already affected by violence, promoting productive programs for generation of food for self reliance<sup>1</sup>, in order to encourage the population at risk of being displaced to stay in the rural areas and/or allow displaced population to return to their lands. These actions seek to strengthen the main economic activity and improve the quality of life of the more vulnerable population."

Action, achievements and results, the dynamics as well as the institutional and organizational development generated with the performance of the *RESA* program, allow considering said program as a true model of social intervention. *RESA*, as intervention model, seeks to solve the food<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Self reliance is a term which refers to building individuals' abilities to provide for their own food needs. The term "auto-consumo" in Spanish refers to the consumption by the family of the foods they produce. Therefore, the term self reliance shall be used to indicate the capacity of the families to produce their own food to be consumed by them.

<sup>2</sup> The term "food" in this report is used not only as the concept of food as food supply per se, but rather is used also to imply that food is also a nutritional complement. The concept of the word "alimentación" in Spanish differentiates the fact of simply having a supply of food to eat from the fact of consuming food which, aside from diminishing hunger, in turn improves the nutritional diet of the people. This way, in this case, the word "food" shall refer to food which, besides feeding the rural population, improves the nutrition of said population.

and nutritional problem situation faced by population of the Colombian rural areas through promoting change in social and economic systems or structures of the households of the small rural producers of the country. For this, the reSA Program has been composed as a qualified group of people seeking said change with their intervention. As social intervention model, the work of the qualified reSA group must produce improvements in the wellbeing and life conditions of those intervened, that is, the rural households. This presumption of the improvement of the personal and group situation responds to the underlying idea within the concept of social intervention that it is possible to achieve determined objectives by means of systematic action based on the knowledge and capabilities of those performing the intervention. In this frame of mind, the reSA constitutes a directed social intervention.

In order to reach its objective, the reSA model turns to an intervention strategy which is inherent to the economic conditions in rural households and in which economic and social incentives are combined. The reSA intervention model is intended to give way to the creation and development of real processes in the households, processes with which a permanent flow of food for self reliance is guaranteed. Being an intervention which combines actions of production and consumption inside the home, its working nucleus is constituted by the different members of the household. Furthermore, the ReSA model is characterized by not being a paternalist model or a model for assistance, for it acts only once, does not create significant bureaucracy, because for the intervention one recurs to the existing institutions, and the projects are applied with the participation of agents of the regions themselves. Finally, when promoting greater use of the productive resources of the households, the conditions are created to generate a greater sense of belonging.

This way, the reSA Intervention Model seeks to contribute to the improvement of the living conditions of the Colombian rural population by increasing the food and nutrition levels of the different members of the households of the small rural producers. With this, besides reaching greater individual and group wellbeing as well as an increase in the capabilities and opportunities of individuals, a reduction is achieved of both the food and nutritional risk to which the rural population is exposed, especially those belonging to the poor sectors, and the risk of displacement caused

for these reasons. With greater internal availability of food and with greater access to this food by the rural households, the *RESA* Model favors obtaining greater levels of food security within said households.

In order to reach the proposed objectives, the *RESA* Intervention Model is ordered around two fundamental elements: the intervention strategy and the components of the model. The intervention strategy constitutes the central core of the intervention at the same time it is the element which gives sense to said intervention. Through the intervention strategy, a model of internal production of food for self reliance by the rural households is put into practice. This model is promoted by the promotion of a change of attitude of the producers and their households towards production for self reliance, together with the performance of projects for food production for self reliance. Because of the direct relationship between the intervention strategy and the achievement of the ultimate objective of the *RESA*, the intervention is supported by this strategy.

On its behalf, the set of components of the *RESA* intervention model explains the form of intervention. Likewise, through said components the intervention strategy is applied in order to reach the desired social change. The components of the intervention model are: the institutional component, the organizational component, the operative and logistic component, the contents and follow up and evaluation. The first three components may be seen as the condition of efficiency in the use of the resources of the Program, while the two last ones form the condition of effectiveness in the sense that with these components the achievement of the goals of said program is guaranteed.

One of the purposes of putting into action a model for internal production of food for self reliance is to achieve better assignment of the productive resources available to the households of small rural producers, in an environment characterized by sub-utilization of the main productive factors such as labor and land, and by the low costs of opportunity that said factors have. For this, the necessary incentives are instituted to guarantee effective re-accommodation of said resources. The ideal goal is to provide a set of incentives so as to assure optimal use of the resources available to rural households from total agricultural production; that assigned to the markets as well as the production for self reliance.

By achieving a readjustment and better utilization of the productive resources within the households themselves, real processes are generated which allow said households to have access to a permanent supply of food for self reliance. This way, a greater base for internal food production, as well as greater flow of products produced by the household itself for self reliance, is created, permanently and in a sustained manner.

In this frame of mind, by privileging the RESA Intervention Model, through the intervention strategy, the development and consolidation of one of the processes for access to food which the households of small agricultural producers have available to them, said strategy is embedded in the economic logic of operation and functioning of the households. In other words, instead of creating artificial situations within the households or altering the logic of operation of said households, the intervention strategy strengthens and promotes the internal logic of the households, permanently achieving a better assignment of the available resources, at the same time it increases the internal supply of food for self-reliance. This confers to the RESA, as intervention model seeking improvement of the food and nutrition situation of the households, the character of a very special endogenous model, for, different from what happens with many other initiatives of this type, in which the solution to said problems arrives from outside and is given as assistance, the RESA model recurs, in this case, to the use of the households' own resources. Additionally, the close and symbiotic relationship present in the RESA Intervention model within the households between food production and consumption, assures greater effectiveness in achieving the ultimate objective of the RESA.

Another special characteristic of the RESA Model, and which differentiates it from other types of interventions in the rural sector, is that said model does not attempt to modify the economic restrictions and conditions faced by households. That is, the model does not promote or induce situations in which, for the performance of the intervention, it is necessary to turn to previous interventions in supplying a certain factor, such as land, or in the change in conditions such as access to other factors such as the financial factor. The central proposal of the RESA is that, through better use or optimization of the productive resources of the household, an effective increase of the wellbeing of these households is obtained.

Furthermore, in its quest to comply as effectively as possible with its objectives, the *RESA* Program has structured an organizational and operational diagram characterized for being flexible, efficient, agile, effective, and participative. Additionally, it achieves not only the objectives for which it was created, but it generates a series of institutional external elements and development elements which go beyond its central objective. Among the first is the support to decentralization and to strengthening of local and regional specialized organizations, and among the second, contribution to the formation of human and social capital.

The *RESA* Program only acts as co-financer of the projects; under no circumstance the Program is the executor or executor of said projects. The co-financing plan promoted by the Program is not a closed plan in the sense that it only accepts money contributions of the different co-financers. On the contrary, the plan is open, for it also allows that different organizations join the covenants, contributing goods and services.

The *RESA* Intervention Model does not constitute one only inflexible model which, as a prototype, may apply in any environment without considering the particular circumstances and needs of each region or location. On the contrary, the *RESA* is a model which serves as framework to carry out an intervention which has common objectives, purposes, and directions, but which is flexible enough so as to adapt to the particular circumstances of each region and social group. This leads to the fact that, in many cases, each new project has particular characteristics which make it unique.

Due to the fact that internal food production for self-reliance constitutes one of the channels through which rural households can have access effectively to food for their consumption, the *RESA* Model guarantees that the objective of achieving "greater levels of food security" may be reached. This way, regardless of the type of definition for food security to be considered, the approach suggested by *RESA* is legitimated, in practice, as an internal process of the rural households through which they can have access to a permanent flow of supply of food for their own consumption, thus assuring that they may reach further levels of food security. In this frame of mind, *RESA* can be considered as an intervention model which, focusing on the problem of hunger and nutrition, is framed within food security. This determines that the *RESA*, even though it concentrates on a specific aspect

of food security, it attacks the main manifestation of food insecurity and at the same time, within the frame of budget restrictions from the central government, it privileges coverage of beneficiaries concerning the extension of the objectives and the components of the Program.

When considering the RESA Intervention Model under a more comprehensive optic such as that offered by the transformation process to which agriculture is inexorably exposed, and taking into account that the RESA intervention in many agricultural regions of the country is made within the framework of a rural set of problems characterized by very high levels of poverty, low economic growth and a reduced social development, said model is thus perceived as an intervention which is characterized by being effective in solving the specific problems it must overcome, capable of complying with the established objectives, limited because it helps in coping with structural and sudden situations which affect the capabilities or rights of the families, but which does not attempt to solve the set of difficulties and restrictions of different kinds faced by rural households of the small producers. Additionally, RESA has a very distinct temporary character in the sense that it only is valid when certain types of circumstances prevail in the rural sector.

In April, 2007, the RESA program had performed a total of 181 rural projects of food security in 31 departments of the country and 832 municipalities. With these projects, close to 420,000 households and approximately 2,100,600 people, have been beneficiated. The average number of participating families per project is of 2,320, the average value of each project is 715 million pesos and the average value invested in the development of the RESA program per family is 308,041 pesos which equals approximately one minimum monthly salary or 20 current rural daily wages. In August, 2006, 86 projects had been performed and 205,439 families had beneficiated from them. This means that, at that time, the Program was covering 9.25% of the total number of rural inhabitants, 13.5% of the poorer rural inhabitants and 27.9% of the rural families performing agricultural activities. Likewise, it was possible to involve 86 performing and co-financing entities and 46 adhering and contributing organizations. Furthermore, in development of these projects, 98,330 motivation events had been performed with average attendance per workshop of 38 people. Finally, through the Program, in August, 2006,



1,878 tons of seed, 4.1 million plantlets of 83 different vegetable species and 6,258,806 animals of 15 species had been delivered.

The different external evaluations of the Program indicate that indeed the RESA has had a positive impact on production and consumption of goods produced in the family units, on the rebirth of this culture in rural households and on motivation to continue these practices.

According to the study performed by Econometría, the RESA Program boosts the culture of production for self reliance, it makes households dedicate more hours a week to activities of production for self reliance, offers small rural producers the opportunity to have access to goods which otherwise could only be purchased by a limited number of households, and increases their possibility to expand the nutritional diet of the members of the household. Finally, it is established that the approach given to the Program is, in general, adequate, well received by rural households and effectively generates significant benefits in the households of its beneficiaries.

## CHAPTER ONE

# Introduction

During the last years in Colombia, a set of programs for food security have been performed in rural areas. In many cases, these programs have been a product of the answers that different regional and local entities have wanted to find to the serious displacement issues motivated by internal conflict. In this sense, President Alvaro Uribe Velez has been implementing among small rural producers an interesting and effective program for food security called RESA.

The object of the RESA Program is to promote projects for food production for self reliance. Among the specific objectives of the Program are: to legitimate the fundamental right of every human being to food, promote a change of attitude in small rural producers, and support the productive project or main economic axis of the rural premises. The philosophy of the Program relates to the change of attitude of the small producers and their families towards the use of their resources, to make them learn to plant what is consumed in their households, while generating more sense of belonging to the land. The RESA Program aspires to making the issue of food security in rural areas transcend the concept of being a policy of one government in particular thus becoming a policy of the State.

The results shown up to now by the different partial evaluations performed to the RESA Program as well as by the information of the performances of the Program itself reveal that said Program has been successful. Furthermore, the concept approach used by the Program as well as the performance plan implemented represents innovations which not only make it more effective but also generate a series of dynamics and institutional external and developmental factors for the benefit of the different regions of the country and its population.

The directed interventions, as is the case of the RESA Program, do not intend a transformation of the society as a whole, but rather seek to act and attack concrete aspects in certain social groups and which are perceived as problematic. This type of intervention is characterized as being planned,

performed and evaluated by a team or organization which is authorized to do so. Likewise, these interventions seek to influence the spaces and groups facing a particular group of problems. Finally, in the way it performs the intervention, the perspective of the intervening group prevails.

Because of the results obtained, of the importance that the RESA Program has been acquiring at a national and regional level, and due to the projection which it may come to have internationally, the directive organisms of the Program hired Fedesarrollo in order to make advances in the formulation and formalization of the Program as a social intervention model.

In this frame of mind, the fundamental purpose of this consultancy is the formulation of the social intervention model contained in the RESA program. Although up to now the Program has available a series of official documents describing the conceptual and operative elements supporting the operation of RESA, and that, furthermore, there is a set of external evaluations of said program, the RESA has not been looked at nor has it been formulated as an effective model of social intervention which outstands for its unique approach, its efficient operative structure and its innovating capacity. This study seeks to remedy this situation while allowing the directives of the Program to present the RESA as intervention model, which opens the doors for it to reach a greater audience as well as to achieve greater support at a national, regional and international level.

The report is developed in 8 chapters, this introduction being the first. The second chapter deals with the food problems from two current perspectives: hunger and food security. In this chapter, a brief revision of the food situation in Colombia is also performed. Chapter three reviews the concept of social intervention. Chapter four deals with the presentation of the RESA Program. Chapter five exposes the discussion and characteristics of the RESA Intervention Model. Chapter six looks at RESA from a perspective of Food Security. Chapter seven faces the RESA in the perspective of the transformation of agriculture. Finally, chapter eight presents and discusses the results of the RESA as well as those of the different evaluations of the Program.

## CHAPTER TWO

# Nutrition Problems: Hunger and Food Security

The nutritional problems currently faced by several countries in the world such as Colombia may be considered from two different approaches although interconnected with one another. The first approach is the worrying problem of hunger in the world. A very high percentage of the world population, which is mostly located in a vast number of developing countries, lives with this crude and harsh reality. A reality which takes human lives daily, especially those of children and young people, or which is revealed in persons with serious health problems limiting their life opportunities. Even though during the last few years the absolute number and the proportion of persons affected by hunger have been decreasing, the magnitude of the problem continues to be disproportionate. The efforts coordinated by the different countries in the world through commitments acquired in the so called Millennium Goals have had to do with said reduction. Likewise, several countries have promoted initiatives tending to solve this phenomenon, as is the case of Brazil in Latin America.

The other approach to the nutritional problem is that of food security. Strictly, this approach goes beyond the problem of hunger and engages other spheres of life of the countries, such as socio economic and political context of each nation and the behavior of the national food economy. Within the framework of food security, even though hunger is considered a problem of great importance, what is pursued is that different people be able to have access permanently to enough kinds of innocuous and nutritious foods in order to lead an active and healthy life. The foregoing implies that food security implies coordinated work among the different agencies and sectors and its goal is dynamic and undergoes constant change. In other words, it is a broad and comprehensive approach to the food problem of a society.

## 1. The Problem of Hunger

The figures of hunger throughout the world indicate that currently there are 852 million people suffering from severe or chronic hunger. Among these, a high percentage is found in Asia; 221 million in India and 142 in China. In African countries located south of the Sahara there are 204 million people. The rest is found in other Asian countries and in Latin America (UNDP, 2005) (Wiesmann, 2007). This situation contrasts with the aggregated data concerning food production and consumption at a world level. According to these figures, consumption per capita at world level would theoretically be satisfied with the current level of production (UNDP, 2005). These two pieces of information make it clear that the world hunger problem is not a result of the production capacity of the different agricultures but rather that it responds to the lack of consumption capacity of a large group of people, lack of capacity which, in turn, reveals the problem of inequality and poverty ruling in most countries.

According to studies performed by different international entities, there is a clear relationship between hunger and poverty (IFPRI, 2003) (UNDP, 2005). Hunger is, at the same time, cause and effect of poverty; hunger stops economic growth and limits the possibility to reduce poverty. For Sen "hunger is not only related to food production and expansion of agriculture, but rather also to the functioning of the whole economy -including in more general terms- to the functioning of political and social institutions which may directly or indirectly influence the capacity of individuals to purchase food and to be healthy and nourish themselves" (Sen, 1999). Finally, and rendering the situation still more complex and paradoxical at the same time, most people suffering hunger live in rural areas and they belong to social groups related to small agricultural producers and to people living in rural areas without land.

### 1.1. *Initiatives and Programs*<sup>1</sup>

At world level there are different initiatives and programs tending to face and definitely overcome the hunger problem in the world. This way, some societies, especially the richer ones, perform different food programs in

favor of the poorer groups of the population in order to guarantee these groups minimum access to food. In some developing countries, this type of initiatives also exists but at a very limited level, for the government resources are scarce and restricted, and, contrary to what happens in developed countries where, people needing nutritional help constitute a minority, the number of persons with nutritional and food problems is very high. In developing countries, where poverty and hunger problems are concentrated, the richer countries sponsor, directly or through specialized international organizations, campaigns and programs for donation of food or for support to groups mostly affected by these phenomena.

In the Nutrition World Summit in 1996 called by the FAO the Declaration of Rome concerning World Food security was approved, in which the participants agreed to apply, supervise and follow up on the Action Plan on all levels, with the cooperation of the international community, in order to reduce to half the number of malnourished people before 2015. This commitment was renewed in the World Food Summit of 2002, and is incorporated as one of the Objectives for Development of the Millennium.<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, the FAO has undergone various initiatives in order to contribute to the eradication of hunger in the world. Among them are the fight against hunger Program, the International Alliance against hunger and the intergovernmental work Group for the voluntary directorships for the right to food. The Program consists of a method to accelerate the action plan of the World Food Summit and is based on two components directed to the poorer and most needy groups of the field: sustainable agricultural and rural development, and programs for access to food and nutrition. The Alliance, on its behalf, has the mission of strengthening the political will in the fight against hunger and poverty.<sup>3</sup> In the Program against hunger

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<sup>1</sup> In this section, some of the main initiatives followed at world level to fight and eradicate hunger are presented in a very general manner.

<sup>2</sup> This section is based on a document called "10 questions concerning the right to food" which is found in the following e-mail address: <http://www.prosalus.es/derechoAl/dApreguntasClave.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> What refers to the inter-governmental Work Group is explained in the following section which refers to the right to food.

the investment necessary to make feasible the objective of reducing the number of hungry people to one half by 2015 was quantified. Implementing national and international action directed to reduce hunger through agricultural and rural development and more access to food would have an annual cost of nearly \$24 billion dollars. From this total, \$5.2 billion shall be directed to financing programs for urgent access to food of the more vulnerable population.

In development of these initiatives, the General Secretary of the United Nations put into place an independent body of advisors with the purpose of proposing the best strategies to reach the so called Millennium Development Goals. The group is called "Task Force-Hunger" and has the motto of "Halving Hunger: it can be done" (UNDP, 2005). The director of the project is the renowned American professor, Jeffrey D. Sachs.

The report of the Task Force defines a set of priority interventions so that the world faces immediately the goal of reducing, hunger to one half by 2015. The idea is for the report to serve as guide for the poorer countries to formulate action plans and put them into practice. The recommendations of this report are based on approaches, policies and technologies which characterize by being scientifically coherent, proven and effective, as well as on the opinion of experts which are part of Task Force.

The recommendations of this group are seven:

- Move from political commitment to action.
- Perform a political reform and create an adequate environment.
- Increase the productivity of farmers which is in a situation of food insecurity.<sup>4</sup>
- Improve the nutritional condition of the chronically undernourished and that of the vulnerable population.

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<sup>4</sup> As it shall be seen later, these two recommendations, increasing productivity of farmers and improving the nutritional condition of the vulnerable population, are in line with the objectives of the RESA Program.

- ❑ Reduce the vulnerability of those suffering acute hunger through social security networks.
- ❑ Increase income and make markets operate for the poor.
- ❑ The principles of the implementation are: identify priority interventions, develop a national strategy, strengthen capacities and adopt a multi-sector approach.

On their part, the countries of Latin America have been concerned by the food and nutritional situation of the region. Particularly, according to several analysis and according to the revision performed by experts of the progresses made in matter of hunger reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean as well as the examination of the possibility that countries of the region comply with the goal of the World Food Summit of reducing hunger to half by the year 2015, it is concluded that said objective may only be reached by some of the countries. Furthermore, these analyses reveal that for year 2015, around 31 million people shall continue to suffer sub-nutrition. In view of the perspective of an unacceptable level of sub-nutrition in a region which, like Latin America, possesses the economic, technical, productive and natural resource capacity to overcome said problems, the governments of Guatemala and Brazil launched in September, 2005, the initiative called "Latin America Free from Hunger 2025," during the Latin American Summit concerning Chronic Hunger held in Guatemala.

The objective of this initiative is to encourage the countries in the region to put into practice the public policies promoting eradication of hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean by year 2025. According to experts, the achievement of this goal requires a decisive political commitment, not only of the governments but also of the society as a whole, in each and every one of the countries of the region. Likewise, it is essential to translate this commitment into public policies and programs geared towards the solution of the main problems identified.

The FAO has stated that, within the framework of this initiative, it is capable of contributing to the actions resulting from the political commitment of the countries through five supporting axis: strengthening | of institu-



tionalization of food security and nutrition of each country, south-south cooperation among countries of the region and between these countries and countries of other continents, the formation in food security and sensitizing and communication concerning the problem of hunger, support to Ibero-American networks and a regional political frame, and monitoring and applied investigation to be able to follow up on food security. Likewise, this institution indicates that, taking the foregoing into account, the goal established for the initiative of "Latin America Free from Hunger in 2025" could be attainable through the adoption of a strategic framework for action which includes the following complementary axis: increase access to food consumption, increase of production and productivity of family agriculture or of the small and medium rural units,<sup>5</sup> and policies for urban food security.

## ***1.2. Food as Moral Right and Duty***

Food, together with health, is a vital element for individual and collective survival of humanity. During the last few years, much has been said about access to nutrition as an economic and social right of people. The right to food, different from the rights known as first generation rights such as civil and political rights, is considered as part of the second generation rights, a category which includes economic, social and cultural rights.<sup>6</sup>

Notwithstanding that the relationship which exists between food and life is not expressed as explicitly as one would wish in this type of discussions, it is inconceivable to think that, in extreme survival situations, the right to life has full practical sense if people cannot have access to at least a minimum level of food.<sup>7</sup> Nutrition provides people with the basic capacity

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<sup>5</sup> These two first axes are fundamental part of the resa Program.

<sup>6</sup> There are those who see in these rights an excuse to achieve expansion of the State. Additionally, they consider that with them, a radical turn was given to the concept of rights that was had in the past, especially in what refers to individual responsibility (see Rodríguez, 2000).

<sup>7</sup> In some passages of the book "Life and Times of Michael K" by Nobel Prize winner J.M. Coetzee, this point is made evident in a society where, such as that of South Africa, was forced to see how the black population was pushed to the limit of its possibilities for survival.

to be able to perform as full individuals who, besides working to assure their own survival, are socially productive.

From the academy, economics Nobel Prize winner, Amartya Sen, has been giving vigorous technical support to the need for different countries to see food as a right, the right not to be hungry. From the political point of view, and regardless of the fact that the right to food is acknowledged as a fundamental human right since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, until the year 2004 there was no orientation whatsoever concerning its application (FAO, 2007). In the World Food Summit of 2002 a work group coordinated by the FAO as a practical instrument for the realization of the right to food. In 2004, the Council of the FAO approved the Voluntary Directions. The purpose of these directions is to propose concrete measures in different environments in order to be aware of the complex character of the drama of hunger and to create favorable long term conditions to guarantee national food security. Said directions propose an approach based on rights and reaffirm principles such as equality and non discrimination, active participation and cooperation, submission of accounts and state of right, as well as universality, indivisibility and interdependence of human rights.

According to the FAO, the right to food may be defined as the physical or economic, regular, permanent and free right to adequate and sufficient food, in quantity as well as quality (FAO, 2007). It does not mean the right to be fed but to feed oneself with dignity. The elements constituting the right to food are: sufficient nutrition, adaptation, sustainability, harmlessness, respect for cultures, availability, and economic and physical accessibility. The States, on their part, have the following obligations with respect to the right to food: the obligation to respect the existing access to an adequate food, to protect access to said food, facilitate that access and the obligation of making effective said right in the cases in which an individual or group is incapable to enjoy the right to adequate food for reasons outside its control.

The concept of food sovereignty is related to the right to food. It is defined as the right of the people to define their own sustainable policies and strategies for production, distribution, and consumption of food which guarantee the right to food to all the population, based on the small and

medium production, respecting their own cultures and diversity.<sup>8</sup> Food sovereignty requires: giving priority to production of food for domestic and local markets, guaranteeing fair prices to farmers, access to the productive resources through genuine redistribution, acknowledgement and promotion of the role of women in food production, and control of the community over the productive resources.

Regarding enforceability of the right to food, Sen<sup>9</sup> considers that "the guarantee of social rights starts from the need to integrate them as social objectives within the legal system". For this it "suggests to fill the regulation system with moral content so that the moral principles ruling the system are enforceable by the mechanisms, legal or political, that this system has available." The novelty suggested is to "articulate the content of each social right with the possibility of enforcing its progressive performance by means of public policies."

An alternative approach to the right to food is constituted by the approach based on moral duty. This approach is promoted by several philosophers, and, in particular, by Peter Singer (Singer, 1972). This approach seeks the revision and change of the concept outline of our morals, revision which should lead to an alteration of the form in which life is conceived in current society.

This position originates from the difficult situation faced by some underdeveloped countries in Africa and Asia at the beginning of the seventies, especially the region of West Bengal. The state of poverty and continuous war conflicts had driven the inhabitants of this region to endure deplorable life conditions characterized by hunger and lack of shelter and health; the mortality rates skyrocketed, to the point that in developed countries, the need to carry out emergency programs for humanitarian aid was considered.

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<sup>8</sup> The reSA program not only values the issue of food sovereignty as a fundamental element of its action, but rather in this sense there is an agreement with Corpoica tending to promote among small rural producers, the production of seeds. This seeks to create an internal capacity of seed production while also placing the issue of food sovereignty on the agenda of national debate. Corpoica is a mixed entity united to the Ministry of Agriculture in charge of investigation and technological development activities in the Colombian agricultural sector.

<sup>9</sup> These comments are based on a document called "About the right to food, the right not to be hungry by Amartya Sen and other documents" which is found in the following e-mail address: <http://plataforma-colombiana.org/conversatorios.php>

Singer starts out based on the premise that suffering and dying because of lack of food, shelter and medical care is bad. Then he establishes that if it is in our power to prevent something wrong from happening without sacrificing anything of comparable moral importance, we, morally must do it. This principle requires that we prevent what is wrong, and promote what is right, and this is demanded from us when we can do it without sacrificing anything of equal moral value.

The principle of moral duty proposed by Singer does not consider a difference with respect to closeness or distance; morally there is no difference if the person we can help is close to us or thousands of miles away. The principle does not differentiate either if it is only one person who can do something or if that person is part of millions in the same position. This principle applied to the problem of the hunger situation experienced at the time in Bengal implied that, for any citizen of a developed country such as the United States, as an example, distance with respect to Bengal and the level of richness relative to the richest of its own country, did not excuse him from his moral duty. Morally, none of these two aspects mitigated or exempted the duty of this citizen towards the people of Bengal.

To Singer, the result of this argument upsets the traditional moral categories, for the regular distinction between duty and charity stops having any sense. In the traditional approach, the fact that the citizen of the previous paragraph decides to contribute to a support fund for the inhabitants of Bengal would be perceived as an act of charity, and the citizen would be regarded as generous, and therefore, he should receive acknowledgement and thanks from the rest of society. On the other hand, following the thought established by Singer's principle of moral duty, said contribution, which should not cause any physical or moral damage to the person making it, is an obligation. Moreover, Singer considers that, for that person, not doing it is a mistake.

The previous argument is taken even further by the author in another publication (Singer, 1995). In it, it is stated that "to live ethically is to reflect in a determined way about the way we live and try to be consequent with the results of said reflection (...) we cannot lead a life lacking ethics and remain indifferent to the great deal of unnecessary suffering existing in the world today."

As it can be seen, the perspective of certain rights as well as enforceability of said rights as a new moral position which establishes certain rights

which go beyond what had been considered as correct until now, brings as a result the fact that nowadays people and societies cannot be indifferent to the hunger problem. Furthermore, both approaches require a legal and moral commitment from countries tending to achieve permanent eradication of this phenomenon from the face of the earth.

To inquire about the possibilities that the different societies have to overcome the problem of hunger in their respective countries, it is not necessary to investigate the deepest level of the nature of existence and human condition.<sup>10</sup> The economics Nobel prize winner Amartya Sen, who has also studied the problem of famines at an international level in depth, says that "there are few founded reasons to feel pessimistic, and there are also no convincing motives to suppose that hunger and shortages are unchangeable. The adoption of accurate measures may eradicate the terrible problems of hunger in the modern world. Based on recent economic, political, and social analyses, we think it is possible to identify the measures which can eradicate famine and radically reduce chronic malnutrition" (Sen, 1999).

According to Sen, to definitely solve the problem of hunger in the world, the different governments are in need to undergo a series of transformations which go beyond the merely economic aspect. This way, the degree of political, social and ethical commitment that this achievement implies for the countries is such that, given the magnitude and complexity of the current problems, it is difficult to be able to suppose that hunger shall be effectively eradicated from the earth in the next decades. However, if rapid advances are made in the materialization of the statements made from the perspective of food as moral right and duty, the results in this matter may accelerate importantly.

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<sup>10</sup> If the problem of hunger were looked at only based on the relationship between avarice, inequality and hunger, as Natalia Springer does in her column in *El Tiempo* "El hambre del alma" (Hunger of the soul) of January 21, 2007, there would be little hope to finding a solution to one of the most serious problems faced not only by Colombia but by the rest of humanity. One of these would be appealing to mercy, charity, compassion and solidarity understood as the will to do good. To turn to, in a society as materialistic as society today, these feelings and ethical positions as a way to solve the hunger problem, constitutes a task which, going beyond the possibilities which the makers of policies have, would leave us with no further options towards the actions which each country must take concerning hunger reduction and eradication. Actions which, however, at the end shall respond to an ethical and moral position of society towards said phenomenon.

## **2. Food Security as Concept and Source of Action**

One of the concepts which mostly have changed during the last five decades concerning its scope and meaning at world level is the concept of food security. Today it is said that there are three generations of definitions of food security (Maxwell, 1996).

As a consequence of the two world wars, and especially of the Second World War, the different countries of the world, particularly those countries involved directly in said war such as the United States, Japan and the European countries, decided to put into practice a series of profound reforms in their agricultural productive structures by putting into practice broad and effective policies of sectors whose fundamental purpose was to assure sufficient production and storage levels, so that, in the event of a new confrontation, their population could have available a minimum level of food supply. These circumstances originated the much criticized agricultural policies of developed countries.

The above led to the fact that in those countries as well as in the rest of the world, the concept of food security was similar to that of self supply to satisfy the internal needs for food and food raw materials. In this context, the growing surpluses generated with the implementation of the even more aggressive policies for promotion of internal production, instead of constituting a reason for concern, were an expected result of said policies. Besides this criterion, developed countries understood that, in a world at risk of entering into a new planetary conflagration, the production of food becomes a powerful war strategy.

Following these tendencies, many developing countries also adopted a set of initiatives which sought to reach agricultural self supply. These measures sought, besides solving the nutrition and poverty problems of the rural and urban population, to deal with the burdening difficulties they faced with the availability of currency, which constituted, for the majority of these countries, the main restriction to be able to promote economic growth of their economies. Unfortunately, experience showed that reaching high levels of self supply was not sufficient condition to solve the problems of food and nutrition of the population. This led to a new visualization of food security, in which, besides assuring the supply of food, it was necessary

to guarantee the effective access of the population to said supply (Staz and Eicher, 1998).

With this new definition, there were many programs of food security which implemented different plans of access of the poorer population to highly nutritional food, in order for these groups to reach minimum levels of food and nutrition. In time, these plans started relaxing the assumption of self supply as a guaranteed source of food security, for it was seen that in order to reach said minimum levels, the supply of food necessarily had to have a component of importation of food or of food raw materials.

Implied in the foregoing definitions was the concept that the rural problem of food supply was automatically solved by self-reliance. However, experience in several countries of the world showed that said assumption was false, for rural producers destined an important part of their production to be sold in the market and also, they were net food buyers. Thus, the food and nutrition problem of rural producers, especially of small producers, found a place in the agenda of international entities and in the policies of sectors of the developing countries.

According to the FAO (SICIAV, 2007) "food security exists when all people have at all times physical and economic access to enough harmless and nutritious food to satisfy their nutritional needs and their preferences concerning food in order to lead an active and healthy life." Food security in households consists of the application of this concept at the family level and in which attention is concentrated on the persons composing the household.

As counterpart to the concept of food security, the FAO says that "there is food insecurity when people are malnourished because of material unavailability of food, lack of social or economic access to and/or insufficient consumption of food. People exposed to food insecurity are those whose ingestion of food is under their minimum caloric (energetic) needs, as well as those who show physical symptoms caused by lack of energy and nutrients as a result of insufficient or unbalanced nutrition, or of the incapability of the body to use food efficiently due to an infection or illness."

Likewise, this entity applies a restricted concept of food insecurity which refers only to the consequences of insufficient consumption of nutritious food, considering that the physiological use of food by the body is included in the nutrition and health aspect.

Furthermore, the FAO defines vulnerability as "all the range of factors causing persons to be exposed to food insecurity." The degree of vulnerability to which a person, household or social group is exposed, is determined by the person's exposure to risk factors and his capacity to face or resist problematic situations.

In its broadest interpretation, food insecurity is conceived as a complex phenomenon which depends on a series of factors classified by the FAO in four main groups which, in turn, represent four potential vulnerability spheres (SICIAV, 2007). The four groups are:

- ❑ Socio-economic and political context
- ❑ Behavior of the agricultural -food economy
- ❑ Practices related to assistance
- ❑ Health and cure

Based on this, a conceptual frame is stated which helps understand the possible causes for low food consumption and a deficient nutritional state. This frame is based on the socio economic and political context which considers two levels. This frame determines the care practices, the health and sanitation conditions, food availability, stability in food supply and access to food. These last three elements, interrelating closely among each other, determine, together with the care practices, the conditions of food consumption. This consumption, in its relationship to the capacity of the body to use the food, which in turn depends of the health and sanitation conditions, determines the nutritional condition of the people.

Based on this frame, the FAO considers that the strategies oriented towards overcoming or eliminating food insecurity must contemplate the need to unite efforts of different sectors such as agriculture, nutrition, health, education, social wellbeing, economy, public works and environment. At the government level, the above requires common action of several ministries and specialized agencies which must formulate and apply policies, programs and projects which are characterized by their high level of coordination and completeness.



### 3. Food Situation in Colombia<sup>11</sup>

According to the National Plan of Food and Nutritional Security (from Spanish Plan Nacional de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional - PNSAN) several recent studies coincide in the affirmation that the increase in poverty is explained mainly by the phenomenon of rural-urban migration caused by forceful displacement and weak commercial and productive structure at rural level, which derives, among other causes, from scarce supply of social goods and of basic public utilities as well as insufficient access to productive factors. It is also affirmed that although public policies have shown a recent effort to concentrate on the poor and / or vulnerable population, have not been able to impact the high poverty levels.

Some figures evidence the seriousness of the problem of rural poverty. This way, for the whole country, the proportion of people with Unsatisfied Basic Needs was, in 2003, 26.99%, figure equal to 17.49% of the urban population and to 51.54% of the rural population. The proportion of persons living in misery, for the national total, is 9.05%, which corresponds to 3.72% of urban population and 22.82% of rural population. In terms of income, the data show that inequality in rural areas is greater than in urban areas. In 2004, the Gini coefficient of concentration of income among urban households was 0.495 and in rural areas was 0.532.

Furthermore, the Quality of Life Survey performed by the DANE in 2003, when asking the question, "Did any of the members of the household not consume the three daily meals one or more days per week due to lack of money?" finds that 8.3% of the total households of the country answered affirmatively; this corresponds to some 3.5 million inhabitants. Within this total, in the portion of lowest income, 32% of the population answers affirmatively, and at urban level, 16% answers the same. This shows that the most serious food problems are located in the rural sector and that, therefore, the same can be said about food and nutritional risks of rural population.

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<sup>11</sup> This section is based on document numbers 4, 6 and 11 made as support in the statement of the National Food Security Plan-PNSAN. For said statement, through the FAO- Acción Social agreement, the Administration Unit for Strengthening Food Security in Colombia was created.

Colombia, thanks to its great natural richness and to the diversity of agro-ecological regions, has been able to regularly produce the amount of food necessary to meet the nutritional requirements of all its inhabitants. However, even today in the country the presence of malnutrition and sub-nutrition is still registered among several groups of its population, especially among the poorer groups, which, in turn, live in rural areas. The foregoing shows that the food and nutritional problem of these groups relies on access to the food.

In the ENSIN of year 2005 the question was asked about how the households perceived food security. The results of this question indicate that 59.2% of the households feel assured, 26.1% with feel at slight risk, 11.2% feel moderate food insecurity and 3.6% feels severe insecurity. When the perception of food insecurity is differentiated among sectors, it is found that it is much greater in rural areas (58.2%) than in urban areas (36.5%).

With respect to displacement, the PNSAN indicates that one of the most serious problems which Colombian society has had to face has been that of forced displacement. This situation has given way to a humanitarian crisis of great proportions and its handling has overwhelmed institutional capacity and the policies designed to assist the affected population. According to statistical data obtained from sources such as the Consultation for Human Rights and Displacement (Codhes) and the Social Solidarity Network (from Spanish Red de Solidaridad Social (RSS)), the phenomenon of displacement due to armed conflict in Colombia has grown permanently during the last few years.

The statistics of the Codhes indicate that from 1999 to 2005, the total number of displaced persons, distributed in all the country, was 2,108,287. The Only Registry System (from Spanish Sistema Único de Registro (SUR)) of the Social Solidarity Network, with closing date of December 31, 2005, registers that during the period between 1999 and 2005 the total number of expelled persons was 1,732,551. Regardless of the difference observed between the two sources, according to statistics, displacement continues to be proof of a humanitarian crisis caused by the internal conflict suffered by the country. It is clear that these circumstances further aggravate the economic situation of rural households, and particularly, the food and nutrition problems of the most defenseless rural groups.

Within the frame of the new concept of food security referred to before, during the last few years in Colombia different programs have been implemented in rural areas. These programs, in many cases, have been a product of the answers that several regional and local entities have had to give to the serious problems of displacement motivated by armed conflict. However, the national Government has not remained inactive, and particularly, the Uribe administration has been implementing an interesting and effective program for food security among small rural producers. This initiative is called RESA, (from Spanish Red de Seguridad Alimentaria- Nutritional Safety Network). This way, the country is trying to solve the problem of food security of the rural population through various initiatives<sup>12</sup>, from an approach more adjusted to the problems suffered there and from a more current point of view of the food problem in said areas.

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<sup>12</sup> Document number 14 of the National Plan of Food Security of January, 2006, shows a detailed inventory of the different initiatives which are being performed in Colombia concerning food and nutrition issues.

# Social Intervention as a Concept

Facing necessity or will, social intervention is presented as the means by which social change as well as personal change is sought. Generally, the intervened objects are the social systems or structures. Therefore, intervention is performed in social systems and structures to resolve social problems through social change (San Juan, 1993).

The underlying idea in social intervention<sup>13</sup> is that, when facing social problems or social demand, the action of a qualified group of persons shall produce the desired social change. Normally, those intervened are social groups expressing a basic lack or an unsatisfied basic necessity, or which are isolated from the development processes of a society. In Montenegro's words, "social intervention transforms small parcels of reality". The work of a qualified group should produce improvements in the wellbeing and life conditions of those intervened. This presumption of improvement of the personal and group situation responds to the idea underlying in the concept of social intervention that it is possible to achieve certain goals by means of systematic actions based on knowledge and the capabilities of those who perform the intervention.

In the concept of intervention it is assumed that there are two differentiated elements which are interrelated. The first element, he who intervenes interferes in the issues of the other, the intervened, in order to achieve transformation and change of the situation which the latter has to face. The object of social intervention is to provide to the group or individual the instruments, the means and the competencies which allow for development of the capacity for control, management and resolution of the problem circumstances affecting it. This is done for improving wellbeing, opportunities and life conditions, as well as promoting personal and social development.

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<sup>13</sup> A good part of the discussion which is written in this section is based on the work of Marisela Montenegro called "Conocimientos, agentes y articulaciones: una mirada situada a la intervención social" (Montenegro, 2004).

Social intervention is based on theoretical models seeking to explain the social aspect and its problems, as well as on practical models which are in charge of establishing the best ways to act on said problems. This causes the social intervention models to help us understand the scientific theories as well as to reach a better understanding of the world. This characteristic of the models, their character as autonomous and partially independent agents of theory and reality, allows them to act as exploration instruments in both environments (Morgan and Morrison, 1999).

According to Morgan and Morrison, the four basic elements of the models are: construction, functionality, being able to be represented (representativity) and learning. Autonomy of the models comes from their construction, and this is due to the fact that the models are not only theory and are not only data. On the contrary, the models incorporate both, and sometimes, other external elements. This allows them to be good mediators between these two fields of knowledge. In order for a model to function or operate autonomously it is necessary for it to act as a tool or an instrument, this is, it is independent from things but mediates between them. Models typically represent certain aspects of the world or of the theories or of both at the same time. This causes that the power of representation of a model does not rely only on its functionality, but rather also in teaching us about the things that it represents. Finally, the power of a model is only discovered in the context in which it is used. The models not only function as an intervention means; they also function as representation. Only when a model is manipulated and operated, these two characteristics allow learning about how and why an intervention works.

Social intervention, seen from the framework of social services of the State, services which in turn are based on the realization of the rights of the people, intends to satisfy the different human needs in situations of deficiency, contributing in this manner to the wellbeing and development of the individuals and social groups. In this context, the concept of necessities has to do with the social problems, and particularly, refers to things that are necessary for the life of people in current societies<sup>14</sup>. In general, social services of the State have to do with: the need for access to certain resources, for cohabitation, social integration as a means to overcome social alienation, and the need for social solidarity to prevent social inequality and discrimination. In this order of ideas, the social problems related to

alienation and poverty do not allow certain social groups to cover part of their basic needs, as is the case of most of the rural population of the country, thus forcing the State to intervene in order to cover and satisfy the needs of these groups. This intervention is thus caused by social policies of the State whose objective is to improve situations affecting social groups and on which there is a consensus that they imply collective responsibilities.

Montenegro establishes four fundamental characteristics of social intervention. They are:

- ❑ It has an intention; with intervention, explicit objectives are pursued,
- ❑ It makes social processes dynamic among groups or individuals,
- ❑ It uses or operates external elements which not necessarily are part of the systems. This is done in order to produce a change in the current situation,
- ❑ It is based on a posture of authority, which generally is based on the power of the intervening party, the expert.

An additional characteristic indicated by Marín (San Juan, 1993) is that it is essential to design interventions which are sensitive to cultural characteristics of the members of a social group. According to this approach, a culturally appropriate intervention is the set of strategies which promote social change in which intervention is based on the cultural values of the group, the strategies which form part of the intervention reflect the characteristics of the subjective culture of the group members, and the components forming the strategy reflect the behavioral preferences and the expectations of the members of the group.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> For the case of the *reSA* Intervention Model, it is necessary to guarantee better food and nutritional levels of rural population, especially, small rural producers. As a complement to the foregoing, the Program incorporates, in the human resource formation programs, the issues related to good handling of food and adequate cooking in order to maximize nutritional benefit.

<sup>15</sup> According to Marín, "the use of specific cultural values in the creation of interventions produces very significant social and behavior changes." As we shall see further along, one of the main characteristics of the *reSA* Intervention Model is acknowledgement and importance given to the conditions and necessities belonging to the different social groups living in the Colombian rural areas.

Based on different analysis and works of conceptual and theoretical order as well as practical, Montenegro states some elements common to different social intervention models. The first of said elements is diagnosis. The purpose of diagnosis is the identification of a problem. Generally, said problem has to do with social inequality; in particular, the groups of interest are those which, because they are in a situation of scarcity, are at a disadvantage with respect to other social groups. Regularly these situations give way to certain demands which are made by some social entity such as the affected social groups, the State or other social organizations. These demands are made in order to implement processes for intervention capable of positively influencing the social problem situations.

The second element has to do with the solution promoted from the model of intervention. Through the intervention, persons and social groups facing particular problems are assisted, in the understanding that, through the systematic intervention of social organizations, it is possible to obtain the desired social change. This change implies greater levels of social well being and of distributive justice. Through intervention, the supply of resources<sup>16</sup> to those who do not have access to them by their own means or without recurring to this type of aid, is sought. Supply of said resources allows beneficiaries of the intervention to advance towards a state of realization more similar to that which is enjoyed by other members of society.

The relevant entities for solution constitute the third element. In Montenegro's words, "the intervention defines its actors." On one side are the social groups facing problems which must be resolved, and on the other, the agent introducing a systematic action in order to produce the desired transformation. The latter, through its knowledge, capacities and resources, intervenes the social processes affecting the lives of those intervened. This interaction between both agents generates responsibilities for both. An effective intervention pre-supposes that one and other agent integrally assume their responsibilities. However, it is important to indicate that the intervening agent is that which possesses the necessary knowledge to

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<sup>16</sup> These resources are of different kinds: informative, economic, social support, cultural, formative, organizational, etc.

establish the objectives of the intervention, the forms of said intervention, the tools and techniques for intervention and the goals to be reached. The intervened parties shall be capable of administrating the change based on the resources and tools of the agent performing the intervention.

All these elements and concepts serve as analytical frame for the formulation of the *RESA* in its condition as social intervention model. In particular, it shall be seen how small rural producers in Colombia deal with a series of problems which affect their nutritional levels and put at risk the possibility to reach minimum levels. In front of this situation and nutrition being a transcendental element for human life, the need for the State to get involved and correct this state of affairs is imperative. This motivates the national government to implement an initiative directed exclusively to overcome this situation. Here is where the *RESA* Program of *Acción Social* is originated. The intervention of the *RESA* is structured around the production model for self reliance by rural households, which allows tending to fundamental factors of food security, access to food and food consumption. To take this model to the communities, a decentralized and participated plan of organizations is made institutional, at the same time that methodologies and contents are designed so that, through the processes of formation of human capital, achievement of the desired transformation is possible. The dynamic relationship generated with all these elements, instances and actors, together with the external elements which are produced, form what we shall call the *RESA* Intervention Model.

In this order of ideas, the *RESA* Intervention Model overflows the Program.<sup>17</sup> The Model has elements which, even though they are created through the action of the Program, go much further than what interests the Program and corresponds to it. For the Program, these elements are functional for its purposes; for the Model, they are important in what refers to their capacity to generate systemic dynamics of social change. This allows seeing that the Intervention Model is perceived from a wider and more globalizing perspective, which is not necessarily present in the Program which is more interested in obtaining concrete results.

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<sup>17</sup> This differentiation between Intervention Model and Program is not only important from the concept point of view but rather its differentiation is vital to understand the contexts and meanings given to each one of these concepts.





# The RESA Program

From what has been discussed in the previous chapters, it is clear that the food issue acquires more and more relevance at the level of public policies, ethical positions of societies and the institutional and legal frames. Likewise, it is of vital importance, given the high levels of poverty and the precarious and deplorable life conditions in which most of the rural population lives, and taking into account the close relationship existing between poverty and hunger, that the countries, especially those less developed like Colombia, implement intervention strategies which, as part of the frame of food security, fight the problem of hunger and reduce the food risk in rural households as a priority.

In this order of ideas, the Colombian government, through the Acción Social government agency, has been performing a novel program for food security in the rural areas of the country. This program is called RESA.<sup>18</sup>

The general objective of the RESA Program, created in the middle of 2003, consists of "generating a change of attitude in vulnerable families and/or families already affected by violence, promoting productive programs for generation of food for self reliance, in order to encourage the population at risk of being displaced to stay and/or allow the return of the displaced population to their lands. These actions seek to strengthen the main economic activity of the land and improvement of the quality of life of the more vulnerable population".

Among the specific objectives of the RESA are:

- Promote production for self-reliance through a change of attitude in the object population concerning the use of their resources,

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<sup>18</sup> It is important to remember that RESA is the abbreviation for Red de Seguridad Alimentaria (Food Security Network).

- ❑ Tend to give food security to the small agricultural producers and their families, in the short, medium and long term,
- ❑ Contribute to create attachment, strengthening, sustainability of food security and strengthening of the productive sector,
- ❑ Lead a set of alliances with institutions interested in giving financial and technical support to the Program towards improvement of the quality of life of the most vulnerable population of the country,
- ❑ Validate the right of every human being to food, partially covering the necessities of the family nucleus.

The RESA Program centers its efforts in the search for a change of attitude of farmers through promotion of food production programs for self-reliance. Through this, it seeks to motivate the people at risk of being displaced to stay in the rural areas and /or allow the return of displaced population to their lands and to recover their productive capacity.

The objective population of RESA consists of small vulnerable agricultural producers or agricultural producers already affected by violence. RESA is performed in the different regions through agreements entered into with entities which have knowledge of the problems faced in the specific territory and which must act as co-financers of the projects.

Action, the achievements and results, the dynamics, as well as the institutional development which has been generated from the performance of the RESA Program allow considering the RESA as a social intervention model. The RESA, as intervention model, constitutes a directed social intervention<sup>19</sup>, which recurs to an intervention strategy which belongs to the economic conditions of the rural households and in which economic stimuli are combined with social stimuli. The intervention model seeks the

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<sup>19</sup> Directed intervention is used as counterpart to participative intervention. In directed intervention, the intervention is done from outside, and in participative intervention, the affected people participate in the solution of the problems affecting them.

creation and development of real processes in the households, processes with which a permanent flow of food for self reliance is assured. Being an intervention which combines actions of production and consumption within the household, its nucleus of work is thus constituted by the different members of the household. Finally, the RESA model is characterized by not being a paternalist or assistance plan, for it only acts once, does not create much bureaucracy, because one recurs to the existing institutions for the intervention, and the projects are applied with the participation of agents of the regions themselves. Finally, since it induces greater use of the productive resources of the households, the conditions are created to generate the will to settle.



# The *reSA* as Social Intercession Model

## 1. The *reSA* Intervention Model

As it has been said, the *reSA* Intervention Model seeks to contribute to the improvement of the life conditions of the rural population in Colombia by increasing the food levels of the different members of the households of small rural producers. This reduces the food and nutritional risk to which the inhabitants in rural areas are exposed, especially those belonging to the poor sectors, as well as the risk of displacement for these reasons, besides reaching greater individual and group wellbeing as well as an increase in the capacities and opportunities of individuals. By making the rural households have more internal availability of food and greater access to said food, the *reSA* Model favors reaching higher levels of food security within said households.

In order to reach the proposed objectives, The *reSA* Intervention Model is ordered around two fundamental elements: the intervention strategy and the components of the model.

The strategy of intervention constitutes the central nucleus of the intervention and at the same time is the element giving sense to said intervention. Through the intervention strategy, a model of internal food production for self reliance is put into practice in rural households. This model is encouraged by promoting a change of attitude of producers and their households regarding production for self reliance together with the performance of programs for food production for self reliance. Because of the direct relationship between the intervention strategy and the achievement of the ultimate goal of the *reSA*, such as the increase of the food levels of the different members of the households of the small rural producers, the intervention finds support in this strategy.

On their part, the set of components of the *reSA* Intervention model explains the form of intervention. Likewise, the intervention strategy is applied through said components in order to achieve the desired social change. The

components of the intervention model are: the institutional component, the organizational component, the operative and logistic component, the contents and the follow up and evaluation component. The first three components may be seen as the condition for efficiency in the use of the resources of the Program, while the two last ones are the effectiveness condition in the sense that with these components the objectives of the Program are achieved.

## **2. The Intervention Strategy**

### *2.1. The Concept of Self reliance*

Self reliance does not constitute a concept apart from the life of the rural inhabitants and much less for the small rural producers. Traditionally, this component has been a fundamental source of food supply to be consumed by the household. In all cultures and through history, this phenomenon has been present in the lives of rural households. Likewise, this element, inherent to rural life, has been incorporated into different theoretical models of very different traditions and conceptual approaches.

According to the National Plan for Food security (from Spanish Plan Nacional de Seguridad Alimentaria-PNSA) (Carrillo, 2006), self reliance can be defined as "the part of agricultural production, performed in the family establishment, destined to feed the members of these families and animals and to productive consumption of the surplus, deducting from this production the items relating to commercialization, donation or loss." According to the Plan, self reliance corresponds to the concept of cultivation for picking and is similar in many instances to the term economy for subsistence.

The previous definition states that self reliance does not imply that productive units at the charge of small producers are not related to the market of goods and services. On the contrary, in said concept the idea is implied that households of the small producers, besides producing for self reliance, direct part of the total agricultural production towards the markets. This leads PNSA to indicate that "today, when one talks about self reliance, one refers to family economies which are monetized and united to the market, and the notion of subsistence being equal to production only for self reliance has disappeared." In this sense, in the same document it is stated that the

small agricultural producer "specializes relatively in one or several goods- the principal good- and assigns only a portion of the production for family consumption. Thus he complements his activity with the development of vegetable gardens or farms where he raises certain domestic animals, fish ponds, harvests goods of traditional character which require very few monetary raw materials- corn, beans, yucca, potatoes, cilantro- seeds and highly nutritious food for the animals. Also, in some cases he recurs to a job outside his land to complete or earn income."

According to the foregoing, self reliance is a fundamental part of the economic strategy for the rural households of the small producers and with it these households assure a permanent supply of food for their consumption, while they reduce the food and nutritional risk of the members of the household. These characteristics, besides others which shall be dealt with later, make this concept an essential element for the implementation of any food strategy in rural areas.

Finally, and in order to corroborate what has been said concerning the importance of self reliance for rural households, it was found in the evaluation performed by Econometría of the RESA (Econometría, 2005) that, indeed, "in the studied municipalities there exists the custom or culture of dedicating exclusive areas for planting fields, of which the products are assigned for consumption by the household itself. This conclusion is based on the fact that a relatively high percentage of RESA beneficiary and non beneficiary households somewhat more than 67% (...of the sample...), dedicated areas exclusively for this purpose, before the intervention of the Program."

In this sense, and as it shall be seen later, the RESA not only rescues that tradition but rather increases it, promotes it and orders it as an option of life for rural households. Additionally, it gives it an economic sense as survival strategy and strategy for assignment of resources inside the households.

## **2.2. Characteristics and Effects of the Internal Food Production Model<sup>20</sup> for Self reliance<sup>21</sup>**

One of the purposes of the implementation of an internal food production model for self reliance is to achieve better assignment of the productive resources available to the households of small rural producers, in an envi-



ronment characterized by sub-utilization of the main productive factors, such as labor and land, and the low opportunity costs of said factors. For this, the incentives necessary to guarantee effective re-accommodation of said resources must be established. The ideal goal is to provide a set of incentives so as to assure optimal utilization of the resources available to rural households in the total agricultural production, the production which is directed towards the market as well as that established for self reliance.

In achieving a readjustment and a better utilization of the productive resources inside the households themselves, real<sup>22</sup> processes are generated allowing them to have available a permanent supply of food for self reliance. This way, a greater base for internal food production and greater flow of food produced by the household itself for self reliance is created, permanently and in a sustained manner.

As it was said above, the RESA Intervention Model provides two types of incentives: economic and cultural. The first has to do with the performance of food production for self reliance through the delivery of raw materials for agricultural production. With the delivery of these raw materials, which as it was seen before constitute the only external resources used by households in production for self reliance, the production is made viable, for said raw materials, as they complement the internal supply of the different productive resources, make it possible for said resources to be directed to food production. By training and teaching the members of the household, RESA promotes a change of attitude of the producers and their households regarding production for self -reliance. This element of human capital de-

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<sup>20</sup> The term internal production refers to the fact that this production model uses the resources of the household in the specific food production processes for internal household consumption. Except for seeds and several other raw materials, the rest of the factors come from inside the household.

<sup>21</sup> Internal food production is done in order to increase the supply of food for household consumption. This way, in this model the resources of the household are used to produce goods which are consumed by the household itself.

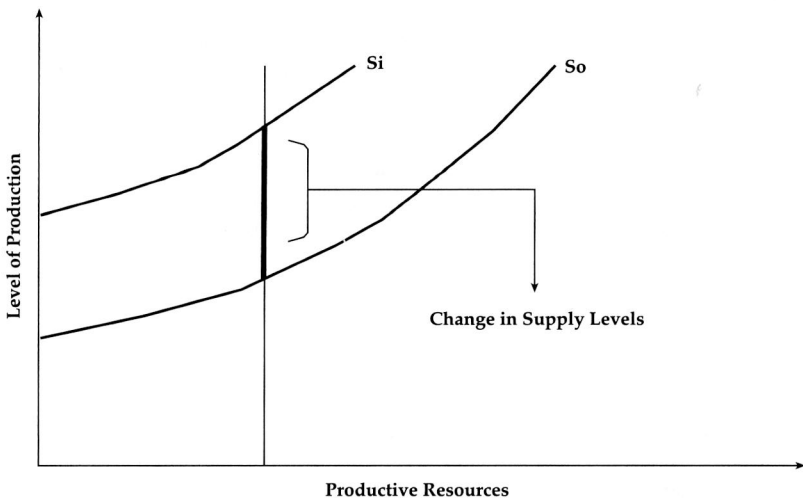
<sup>22</sup> The reference made to generation of real processes of production responds to the fact that, as RESA does it, with the implementation of due economic incentives and the training and motivation of the members of the household, they organize and dedicate part or their resources to the production of food for self reliance, thus establishing and consolidating internally those processes which guarantee said production.

velopment inside the households, together with the delivery of external resources for production, encourage and facilitate the re-accommodation of household agricultural production, thus assuring the increase of internal supply of food for self reliance. The leap resulting in production and internal supply of food for self reliance operates as a technical change induced through the *RESA* incentives, but adopted and acquired by the producer and the members of his household. Graph 1 shows this effect of *RESA*.

Indeed, in Graph 1 it is observed how, given the productive resources of the household, which do not undergo any modification with the intervention of *RESA*, the levels of internal food production go from an initial supply, before the intervention  $S_0$  to greater levels,  $S_1$ , after the intervention. This increase in the supply of food, which may be similar to a technical change, is induced by *RESA*.

As it has been seen, with the conformation of the corresponding productive processes and the assignment of part of the resources of the households to the production of food for self reliance, a greater level of food production as well as a stable flow of the internal supply of said products is assured. The conformation of this model of internal food production for self reliance not only causes permanent improvement in the food levels of the different members of the household, but also reduces the food vulnerability (or risk) of

**Graph 1. Change in the Internal Supply of Food**



said members. For populations under constant economic, social or political risk such as small and poor producers of the Colombian countryside, this result has fundamental importance for the model for internal food production may act as instrument to decrease the risk of inanition or to avoid it<sup>23</sup>. In order to understand the above, it is only necessary to remember what Amartya Sen says (Sen, 1999) with respect to this point: "the minimum level of purchasing power necessary to prevent inanition may be quite small".

In this order of ideas, when privileging the RESA Intervention Model, through the intervention strategy, the development and consolidation of one of the processes of access to food at the disposal of the households of small agricultural producers, said strategy introduces itself in the economic logic of household operation and functioning. In other words, the intervention strategy, instead of creating artificial situations inside the households or disrupting the operation logic of said households, strengthens and promotes the internal logic of the households, permanently achieving a better assignment of the available resources, while it increases internal supply of food for self reliance. This confers RESA as intervention model seeking improvement of the food and nutritional situation of the households, a character of very special endogenous model because, different from what happens with many other initiatives of this type, in which the solution to the problems arrives from outside and is made in an assistance manner, the RESA model recurs, in this case, to the use of the households' own resources.

Additionally, the close and symbiotic relationship produced inside the households in the RESA Intervention Model between food production and consumption, assures<sup>24</sup> greater effectiveness in achieving the ultimate RESA objective.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> According to the study performed by Econometría, production for self reliance guarantees the beneficiaries of the RESA Program up to more than 2 months without having to turn to external purchases.

<sup>24</sup> Even though it deals with processes which are easily differentiated, in the case of production for self reliance there is a common factor, which is family labor, which guarantees the occurrence of said relationship. The quality and intensity of said relationship is determined by labor, a fundamental factor in both processes.

<sup>25</sup> This close relationship which must occur between production and consumption of food is highlighted in the literature concerning this issue, as one of the important aspects which must be taken into account in the strategies for reducing hunger (UNDP, 2005)

Another special characteristic of the *RESA* Model, and which differentiates it from other interventions in the rural sector, is that it does not intend to modify the economic restrictions and conditions faced by households. That is, the model does not promote or induce situations in which, for the performance of the intervention, it is necessary to recur to previous interventions to supply a factor, such as land, or the change of conditions such as the access to other factors such as the financial factor.<sup>26</sup> The central proposal of the *RESA* is that, through better use or optimization of the productive resources<sup>27</sup> of the household, an effective increase in the wellbeing of said households is achieved.

According to different studies, it is known that in many regions of the country where small agricultural production predominates, the economic situation prevailing there is characterized by the "weak commercial and productive structure, which is derived, among others, from a scarce supply of social goods and basic public services as well as scarce access to productive factors" (Espinal *et. al.*, 2005). Likewise, these authors indicate that "in terms of access, the different studies conclude that there is evident difficulty for small farmers to be legal owners." This has determined that land in Colombia shows a clear tendency towards increasing its concentration<sup>28</sup>. This, together with other factors, has determined the very rural character of poverty in Colombia. (CRECE, 2006b).

For this reason, small rural property is distinguished, among other things, by the sub-utilization of the different productive resources of the household and especially labor and land, low specialization of agricultural production, and the lack of access to different productive resources and factors such as credit, water for irrigation, education, health, etc. All this determines that the areas where small properties are predominant, the

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<sup>26</sup> This responds to the fact that *RESA* understands that the food problems of the households of small rural producers can be addressed, searching for a definite solution, without having to turn to previous interventions which create favorable conditions for its adequate performance.

<sup>27</sup> These resources are labor, land, time and knowledge.

<sup>28</sup> According to the National Plan of Food security, citing a study of the year 2002 of Darío Fajardo, it is indicated that the Gini Coefficient of land property in the rural sector went from .85 in 1984 to .88 in 1996.

different productive factors and, particularly labor and agricultural land have a low cost of opportunity.

This leads to think that the situation faced by small rural producers may be characterized in Graph 2, by point Z which represents the current combination of productions<sup>29</sup> and which, at the same time, reflects the use of resources. Point Z is inside the curve of production possibilities, which means there is sub-utilization of said resources. Additionally, the graph illustrates how the level of wellbeing which is achieved ( $B_0$ ) is under the optimum possible level ( $B_1$ ). When reSA intervenes and implements the corresponding economic and cultural incentives, the household moves to point Y, which represents optimization of the use of resources given the restrictions present and where maximum possible level of wellbeing is achieved. However, any point located within the shaded area forming an angle of 90 degrees with point Z, represents an improvement of the situation with respect to initial point Z.

Movement from Z, motivated by the implementation of the reSA, necessarily implies greater use of the productive resources of the households, which derives in an increase in production of both groups of goods, production for the market and production for self reliance. Given the set of prices of said goods, the increase of production for the market necessarily brings an increase in the monetary income of the household. This result, together with the increase in internal supply of food, assures that the households of the small rural producers may reach higher levels of wellbeing.<sup>30</sup> Monetarily, production for self reliance assumes the form of savings in the purchase of food, and therefore, greater net income.

Besides the most generalized situation and which is typified in point Z of Graph 2, it can be expected to find situations in which a household is located on point X of the same Graph. This situation occurs because, in spite of using all the resources available in total agricultural production, the household cannot maximize its wellbeing. The combination of productions of point X

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<sup>29</sup> This combination refers to production for the market and for self reliance.

<sup>30</sup> These greater levels of wellbeing are represented by the wellbeing curves included between  $B_0$  and  $B_1$ .

**Graph 2. Adjustments of Reources, Production and Wellbeing**



indicates that the household can increase its wellbeing level having a better combination. This new combination is characterized because in it a greater amount of food is produced for self reliance. In this case, the implementation of the *RESA* induces the household to move from point X to Y thus achieving a new combination of productions which assures greater levels of wellbeing when it passes from curve  $B_0$  to curve  $B_1$ . This movement from point X to Y illustrates how it is possible to improve the conditions of wellbeing of the household with the decision of the household of increasing the production of food sacrificing part of the production for the market<sup>31</sup>.

### 3. Strengths and Limitations of the *RESA* Intervention Strategy

The analysis performed up to now of the *RESA* Intervention Model shows that it evidences a set of strengths and limitations of different kinds, seen from its strategic conception and from its conceptual base.

<sup>31</sup> Movement from point X to point Y evidences the bounty of the intervention strategy characterizing the *RESA* model, for in a situation of full use of productive resources, and thanks to the change of combination of production, it is possible to reach a higher level of wellbeing.

### 3.1. Strengths

The main strengths of the RESA Intervention Strategy are the following:

- ❑ *The internal production of food is performed using the resources of the rural households.* The main virtue of the RESA relies in the fact that to improve the food and nutritional situation of the rural households, it recurs to the mobilization of resources belonging to the household itself. In other words, the solution to the food problem of the households is found within the households themselves. This leads to talking about internal generation of food.
- ❑ While leveraging and promoting the economic strategy of rural households and making the internal processes of production and access to food more dynamic, the RESA *submerges in the economic logic of operation (or functioning) of the rural households.* Consequently, the model of internal food production for self reliance does not constitute a strange implant in the economic rationality of the rural households.
- ❑ *The Strategy centers its attention in a real process, the internal production of food, which in turn allows households to be able to certainly and permanently have access to food.* This contrasts with other programs of food support, such as donations, in which access to food is produced through a source which is external to the households, with the characteristic that its continuation through time cannot be guaranteed permanently.
- ❑ By implementing the process of internal food production for self reliance, the RESA *helps create a minimum base for production with which it guarantees a permanent flow of food in the households.* This minimum base, besides constituting the practical way of reducing food risk in households, is greater than that which occurs in the households where RESA does not intervene.
- ❑ When dedicating part of the resources of the household, especially labor and land, to internal production of a greater amount of food for self -

reliance, the RESA may be seen, at a limited level, as a plan for the generation of family productive employment, labor which, furthermore, dedicates itself to the production of a vital good for survival of the members of the household: food.

- The close relationship which occurs inside the rural households intervened by RESA between agricultural production and food consumption, not only allows greater effectiveness in the achievement of the ultimate objective of RESA, but also guarantees that said achievement is maintained through time.
- In populations with high economic, social or political risk, as is the case in Colombia of a high percentage of rural households, the RESA may be an effective instrument for reduction of the risk of inanition, or even more, to avoid it totally. This occurs because "the minimum level of purchasing power necessary to prevent inanition may be quite small," according to Amartya Sen, as it has already been said, and on the other hand, the RESA activates real processes of food production for self reliance permanently in the households.
- The promotion of self reliance through the internal supply of food has evident effects on the food and nutritional levels of rural households and at the same time it becomes a protection, at this level, against the risk of hunger or malnutrition. Both things contribute to a safer and more satisfactory life for the different members of the household, which, in other words, represents an improvement in opportunities of the household as well as of each one of its members.
- The monetary savings or the greater net income represented by the permanent flow of food for self reliance, is a means through which the RESA helps alleviate the situation of poverty in the rural environment. Additionally, and as it has been said before, this contribution is made in terms of a vital element for the life of people, which is food and nutrition.



### 3.2. Limitations

The main limitations of the RESA based on the conceptual analysis are listed below.

- The RESA does not approach the food problem of rural households from a broad and comprehensive perspective of food security or of rural development, but it deliberately approaches it *from a limited and specific optic: internal supply of food for self reliance*. This happens because the approach given to food security from the RESA is very specific, for it concentrates on only one aspect of the access to food by the rural population.
- The condition of being limited and specific in its scope and objectives makes the RESA *not able to definitely solve the problem of food security of rural population*. In order to achieve this goal, said problem must be approached from very different angles and perspectives which not only compromise the problems of the sector. Before a restriction of public resources, the foregoing states the division between coverage and definite solutions. Because of said restrictions, the RESA privileges more coverage sacrificing the global goal of food security of the rural population.
- The RESA, through promoting internal reassignment of the productive resources of the households, leverages, tangentially, the main productive project of the households or other alternatives for generation of income that the households may have. This way, *its contribution to the growth of the agricultural sector, and the development of the rural sector, if it exists, is very marginal*, and it is the product of re-accommodation of internal factors, and does not result from a direct stimulus to growth and to generation of employment in rural areas.
- The RESA, different from a compensating rural employment program tending to alleviate the problems of income, poverty and nutrition, *does not immediately generate a flow of income for the household*. Its effect lies in the generation, in the medium term and permanently, of a food flow for the household, which becomes a savings in the purchase of food, or in greater net income.

- ❑ The transformation processes of agriculture and of the dynamics of sector growth may lead to the collapse of the culture of self reliance due to incentives and costs of opportunity of the different production factors during the stage of productive specialization at the land level and high diversification in consumption and aggregated sector production. This gives the RESA a character of *transitory program in time and with a specific purpose concerning the problems it intends to challenge*.
- ❑ *The internal production of food for self reliance is not exempt from the risks inherent to agricultural production, such as plagues of different kinds, and the damaging effects of the weather such as droughts or floods. Even though these risks are less than the risks faced by specialized crops, they still exist. This type of circumstances may affect internal food production sporadically and randomly.*

## 4. Components of the RESA Model

### 4.1. Institutional

As it has been mentioned, the RESA Program- Red de Seguridad Alimentaria is a social investment program of the Presidential Agency for Social Action and International Cooperation- Acción Social. The Program started working in June, 2003, as a part of the Social Solidarity Network (Red de Solidaridad Social) of the Presidency. When the Network disappeared and Acción Social was created, at the end of 2005, the performance of the RESA Program was authorized and its operating regulations were adopted within the framework of the new organization.<sup>32</sup>

The activities of Acción Social are oriented towards improving the quality of life of the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of Colombian population as well as towards improving their productive and organizational capacities.

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<sup>32</sup> In resolution 0637 of 2005 two new responsibilities are defined in the RESA Program: perform actions tending to achieve improvement in the life conditions in rural areas and carry out actions of food security in the subnormal areas of urban centers.

The Programs of Acción Social are framed within the National Development Plan (from Spanish Plan Nacional de Desarrollo) "Towards a Community State"-("Hacia un Estado Comunitario"). One of the strategies of said Plan, social management of rural areas, works for the regional focalization of investments as a function of the reduction of inequality and taking advantage of the strategic potential of the rural areas through diverse alternatives among which is food security.

Within the organizational diagram of Acción Social, the management and performance of the RESA Program is at the charge of the so-called Work Group of which the Technical Direction of Presidential Programs for Social Action is a part, which in turn depends on the General Direction. The Work Group is formed by a coordinator who is designated by the General Direction, and by a reduced interdisciplinary group of professionals.

Currently, the RESA Work Group at national level is composed of the coordinator and 13 professionals belonging to different disciplines. These professionals perform several functions among which are administrative functions and those of project planning and follow up. The supervision of the agreements and/or contracts for performance of the RESA projects is controlled by the Coordinator of the corresponding Territorial Unit<sup>33</sup> of Acción Social, where each one of the projects is performed. Additionally, support from persons specialized in rural issues in certain territorial units of Acción Social is available, and depending on the nature and on the available resources in the different performance agreements, professionals can be hired to perform as evaluating administrators in the territorial units. The main function of these evaluating administrators is to accompany the corresponding Territorial Unit of Acción Social in the administration and follow up of projects, as well as in the evaluation of processes, results and impact of said projects.

The operation of the RESA responds to the strategic guidelines and objectives defined by Program Direction and by the General Direction of Acción Social. The performance of the Program is done in close coordination with

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<sup>33</sup> Acción Social has 35 Territorial Units in the country, one for each department and 3 in special zones: Bogota, Magdalena Medio and Uraba.

the support areas and the territorial units of Acción Social. The resources of the Program are part of the budget assigned to Acción Social by the National Department of Planning and the Ministry of Treasury and Public Credit.

The activities which must be held in each one of the projects of the RESA are established according to the characteristics and particularities of said projects. These activities respond to an operative plan which is accompanied by its respective schedule and by an investment plan. These elements are part of the terms of the contract entered into by the Program with the performing entities and other contributors of each one of the projects of the RESA. The specificity of the different activities of the projects is defined and coordinates with the corresponding Territorial Unit of Acción Social, which acts as supervisor of the agreements, as well as with the Local Technical Operative Committee which constitutes the directing and coordination instance of each project. This Committee is formed by the National Coordinator of the RESA Program or its delegate, who presides it, by the performing entity of the project, by the other co-financers and by a representative of the cooperating entities or entities which have joined the project. In this Committee, follow up is performed to the performance of each project at the same time that it has the authority to determine the changes or adjustments, technical or budget, which must be adopted in order to assure adequate development of the projects.

The beneficiaries or users of the RESA projects do not participate directly in any government or decision instance of the Program or of the corresponding projects. Its participation is restricted to the opinion they express through a consultation performed, before the initiation of the projects, by the executors. This consultation is performed in order for each one of the projects to answer, where possible, to the likes, habits and traditions of each one of the groups as well as to their set ideas about food plans and food production. Additionally, the directors of the RESA consider it is of great importance to know the observations, comments and suggestions of the beneficiaries concerning the Program. In this sense, surveys of client satisfaction have been implemented, which are designed to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the different projects. The evaluation made of the opinions of the users shall be taken into account for the direction in which the Program will move through the improvement plans which incorporate actions focused on continuous improvement of the quality of

the services or products provided. Likewise, in each one of the Territorial Units of Acción Social there is a box for complaints, suggestions and claims. Additionally, and according to legal regulations of the country, the users of the Program may have access to different legal mechanisms of citizen participation such as injunction, petition rights, etc.

Finally, and as a fact of great importance, it is necessary to point out that in certain projects the users of the reSA Program are also co-financers of the projects.<sup>34</sup> This allows them to get involved directly in planning, organization, development and supervision of the projects.

In order to perform his tasks, the National Coordinator of the reSA Program has the support of experts in rural issues and eventually with evaluating administrators of projects. These people are qualified professionals who know the different areas, the customs of the population as well as the economic, social, and political context of the territory where they perform their activities. The evaluating administrators support the activities of supervision and accompaniment of the projects, see to their adequate development, guarantee successful performance of the different projects in the region, besides being in charge of socializing and diffusing the operative performance plan of the Program and support the performing entities in managing the different information tools established by the reSA.

The rural administrators and/or experts have a close relationship with the Work Group at national level through the area advisors and with the coordination of the Program, which guarantees flow of information and feedback between the national and territorial level, thus guaranteeing adequate follow up of the policy and operational guidelines as well as greater surveillance of the development of the projects.

#### **4.2. Organizational**

The reSA Program participates in the food production projects for self reliance as partial co-financer of said projects. This leads to the need to perform, in different

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<sup>34</sup> For example in the projects directed to benefit families inscribed in the Programa de Familias Guardabosques de Acción Social (Program of Rangers of Acción Social).

regions of the country, several activities tending to join to the RESA projects the greatest possible number of organizations to support its development.

To participate in the performance of a project, any organization or entity shall contribute resources for the financing plan is based on the principle that all contribute, that is, all participants act as co-financers of the projects. Notwithstanding the foregoing, four organizations can be differentiated among them according to their degree of participation, their capacities and their resources. These four types are: executors or executors, other co-financers, adhering parties and cooperators.

The **executors**, although they also act as co-financers of the projects, are in charge of the performance of said projects. Generally, executors are regional entities of renowned technical and administrative experience in the execution of social projects and which have a mechanism demonstrating transparency in management of the resources.<sup>35</sup> Additionally, they shall be recognized in the territory and generate trust among the community. The executors contribute resources in cash, assume legalization costs of the agreement and in many cases contribute other additional goods and services. The executors of the projects are selected by the Program from the start, with the previous result of the analysis of adequacy.<sup>36</sup>

The entities subscribing the initial agreement contributing resources in cash are called **other co-financers**. This group of entities does not perform any activity whatsoever in the projects. Their interest relies in being able to obtain maximum possible coverage in number of families assisted by the project with their contributions.

In an agreement already subscribed and/or on its way, any public or private entity may contribute resources in cash and participate in a RESA project as an **adhering party**. Adherence to the agreement is legalized by the execution of an Amendment or of a new contract between the executor

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<sup>35</sup> The adequacy as executor is defined through a detailed study of the aspiring entity, which includes revision of the financial statements of the last three years, its experience in the performance of social projects, its knowledge of the territory, among others. This study is backed up by the Contract Management and Liquidation Office of Acción Social.

<sup>36</sup> As executors of the RESA projects there are different types of organizations such as private groups, universities, territorial entities, religious groups, etc.

and the adhering party, assuring its participation in the coverage of families, proportional to its contribution.

The *cooperators* are the entities which contribute resources to the project in goods and services. The goods and services contributed (labor, technical assistance, etc.) constitute a greater value for the agreement but do not contribute to expand coverage of the population of the project.

### *4.3. Operative and Logistic*

As it has been indicated, the operation and performance of the different activities incorporating the RESA projects are direct responsibility of the performing entities. However, said performance is carried out following the directions from the corresponding Local Operative Technical Committee and respond, finally, to the policies and guidelines established by the directing entities of the Program.

In development of the food production projects for self reliance, the RESA has established three basic stages of project development, which are motivation, diffusion and raw materials. Follow up of the projects has been established to complement these stages.

Through *motivation*, it is sought that the beneficiaries of the RESA develop the capacities, competencies and skills necessary to adequately perform the different tasks implied by the productive projects. In the center of these activities is the interest to motivate a change of attitude in the beneficiaries and their families to facilitate sustained development of the projects. This motivation element is put into practice through conferences, workshops, field days, beneficiary get-togethers, agro-nutritional fairs and game activities, among others.

In order to reinforce the messages and knowledge transmitted in the motivation activities to achieve the necessary change in attitude as well as to achieve appropriation and identity of the communities with the project, in the diffusion one recurs to massive campaigns through local communication media such as newspapers, radio and television. Likewise, other more direct means are used such as signs, pickets and posters. It should be noted that the *diffusion* activities are carried out during the whole period of performance of the projects.

The other stage of the *reSA* projects is the stage of delivery of raw materials. Raw materials are basic components of the productive projects such as seeds, vegetable materials, and minor species, and which are delivered to the users for implementation and startup of the productive unit of food for self reliance. As it was mentioned, the delivery of said elements responds to the preferences, customs, habits and needs of the beneficiaries. The delivery of raw materials is performed only when the beneficiary community has actively participated in the motivation and diffusion activities.

It should be highlighted that, even though the Program seeks the implementation of productive projects, it is established that the value of raw materials should not exceed 60% of the total resources of the investment plan. Due to the nature of the *reSA* Program, the goods purchased in development of the projects, and which are expressly directed towards the beneficiaries, are of fungible nature.

In order to assure adequate development of the projects, each one of them incorporates follow up and operability activities. Depending on the nature of the agreements and on the available budget, the program reserves 5% of the resources contributed by *Acción Social* in order to support the accompaniment, monitoring, measurement of results and logistic support. These activities generally are performed by the evaluating administrators.

For performance of the different activities of the projects, hiring specialized personnel in areas related to the activities of the project such as nutritionists, agricultural professionals and/or technicians, sociologists, etc., is eventually contemplated. The amount of personnel hired for each project varies according to the particularities<sup>37</sup> of the project.

In the selection process of the beneficiaries of the *reSA* Program, five basic requirements for access are established. However, and due to the co-financing plan with which the Program operates, many times it is required to adjust and/or add selection criteria, in order to assure confluence of the interests and objectives of all entities participating in the projects.

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<sup>37</sup> Some of these particularities are size of the population to be cared for, number of participating municipalities, distances between municipalities, towns or villages, available budget for the projects, goods and services which local entities such as *UMATAS*, *SENA*, Mayor's Office, etc. can contribute.



The five general criteria established by the Program are:

- ❑ *To have access to land.* Because RESA is directed towards the performance of agricultural productive projects, it is a fundamental requirement to have a piece of land where the project can be performed. This piece of land may be in possession of the beneficiary under any form of holding (owned, in commodatum, leased, etc.), of a territorial entity (location, municipality, department of Nation), of a group, of an NGO or of a legal entity or individual contributing it at any legal title for the time the project lasts.
- ❑ *To produce for the family.* Since it is sought that users produce food for self reliance, the beneficiaries must know that the supply of seeds, plantlets or minor species delivered shall be only the necessary amount in order to supply the family group.
- ❑ *Participation of the family group.* It is required that the family group of the rural households be committed to the Program. For this, it seeks that all its members actively participate in the activities related to the performance of the project as well as in the productive activities themselves.
- ❑ *Access.* The users of the RESA projects are required to be aware of the fact that they only have access once to this type of projects.
- ❑ *Exception.* Producers whose lands contain illicit crops or which are found in invasion lands may not be users of the Program.

Furthermore, other particular criteria are used in the different agreements, such as the fact that beneficiaries have to belong to level 1 of Sisben, they have to be part of the Families in Action Program (Spanish- Programa Familias en Acción)(as strategy for articulation with the Social Protection Network- Red de Protección Social against Extreme Poverty) and that they are at a determined level of food insecurity, among others.

The time of duration assigned to the RESA projects is maximum one year. During the first month, the executor carries out the socialization of the pro-

ject among beneficiaries, the objective is explained, as well as the contents of the project and the requirements for access to it; the components are detailed and the consultation with the community concerning the general preferences to define the prototype of raw materials to be delivered is performed. During this time, the executor shall execute the necessary moves and gather adherences from municipalities and other entities interested in contributing resources to the project. Starting on the second month, the activities inherent to the project are initiated, such as motivation, diffusion, and once the community is adequately motivated towards a change of attitude, the raw materials are delivered.

Through workshops and the other activities, in the motivation stage the beneficiary and his family expand and reinforce their knowledge concerning the production of food, handling of the food and its nutritional components. Additionally, strengthening of community relationships, leadership and solidarity are promoted.

Once the training has advanced and the first manifestations of motivation and change of attitude appear in the population assisted, the agricultural and grazing raw materials are delivered. This is done this way because what actually guarantees adequate use of the raw materials by the beneficiaries is closely related to the interest and consciousness concerning the benefits of the internal food production model for self reliance. These raw materials constitute the initial core for establishing the crops or the grazing activities for self reliance, thus giving the user of the *reSA* the opportunity to implement what he has learned in the previous activities. The raw materials are delivered in the amounts and varieties established by the population in the consultation held at the beginning of the project. Usually the delivery is made massively as part of the events programmed in development of the project. Once the corresponding raw materials have been delivered, periodical visits are established for accompanying the families and supervise the correct use of said raw materials.

#### **4.4. Contents**

The general methodology suggested by the *reSA* Program for the formation courses is that of learning hands on. For this, it is necessary to take advantage

of the resources available in the territory as well as to rescue the ancestral customs and local savvy; all this within a frame of respect for cultural differences of each one of the areas. One of the principles ruling the development of the different motivation and diffusion activities is that said activities should be held as dynamically as possible. Due to the fact that the intervention of the RESA is limited in time and that what is ultimately sought is a change on the inside of households, the purpose of the formation is to motivate the population, developing and boosting their capacities besides training.

In particular, the contents of the workshops, as well as the motivation activities vary depending on the projects. However, they can be grouped into subjects such as organic agriculture, production techniques, seed recovery, farm planning and accounts, human development, nutrition, and healthy life habits, among others. Depending on the availability of personnel in each project, these activities generally are performed by the extended personnel assigned to the projects. For very specific subjects or complementing activities, these professionals can be backed up by entities specialized in the subjects to be developed or the performance of said activities is left directly to these organizations.

Generally, these workshops are held in public areas of easy access for the benefited communities, such as schools, community centers, sporting facilities, farms, among others. In these places the professional or technical personnel develops game activities, group or demonstrative classes, where the community actively participates while learning. These are the most common ways to transfer knowledge to the users and their families. In the workshops, a total of 30 or 40 beneficiaries participate. According to the subject to be dealt with, any member of the household may participate in these events in representation of his family, or if possible, all the family may attend. The frequency of said activities varies according to the total number of beneficiaries of the project, the number of municipalities joined, distances, etc.

#### ***4.5. Follow-up and Evaluation***

From its initiation, the RESA Program has counted on several tools for follow-up of the performance of the projects. In this frame of mind, the Territorial

Unit of Acción Social is in charge of the supervision of the projects. According to the procedures established, the supervisors of the Program must validate the information reported by the performing entities. This information is reported at different times of advancement of the project. Currently, the implementation of monthly record of a physical- financial report of each project is under way. This report is validated with the presentation of a report by the evaluating administrators of the Territorial Unit.

The Program also has an application of characterization of the beneficiaries. This application allows continuous follow-up of the statistic information concerning assistance and coverage of the Program while it allows establishing the corresponding controls.

Additionally, the program has the Survey of User Satisfaction, of the contributors and the beneficiaries, with which the relationships with the co-financers and the perceptions of the final users concerning the positive or negative aspects of the project are evaluated. The survey to the contributing users is circumscribed to two large issues which are: administration and performance or operation of the project. The satisfaction form is periodically sent to all the executors of the RESA projects, contributing entities and to a representative sample of the adhering municipalities.

As far as the satisfaction surveys for beneficiaries are concerned, they are applied<sup>38</sup> by the evaluating administrators, the rural experts of the consultants at national level in the projects which have 50% to 100% performance of activities. This assures that the raw materials' component may be evaluated.

Finally, each year evaluations of the impact of the RESA Program are performed. These evaluations are contracted through mechanisms of public callings. In the year 2005, an evaluation was made by Econometría and in 2006, the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana was hired.

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<sup>38</sup> Based on the projects identified, the number of families of each one and the existence or not of an administrator in the area, the RESA program determines the minimum number of surveys which must be performed. The RESA Program delivers to the administrators and advisors of the Program a list with the minimum number of surveys which must be performed at the beginning of each quarter. The representativity of the sample is established taking into account the beneficiaries of the projects characterized at the time of defining the sample.

## **5. Characterization of the Components of the RESA Intervention Model**

The previous description of the components of the RESA model establishes that the RESA does not constitute one more plan seeking to solve the food and nutritional problems of the poor small rural producers of Colombia, but rather, in order to reach in the most efficient way possible compliance with its objectives, the RESA Program has structured an organizational and operational plan which is characterized by being flexible, efficient, agile, effective and participative. Additionally, this achieves not only the objectives for which it was created, but it generates a series of institutional and developmental external factors which go beyond its central objective. Among the first is the support to decentralization and strengthening of the local and regional specialized organizations, and among the second, the contribution to the formation of human and social capital.

As a conclusion to this chapter and in order to characterize said plan, below are the main characteristics. For this, the order which has been used up to now in the presentation of the components of the Model is followed.

With respect to the institutional structure of the Program, it must be indicated that for the performance of the RESA one does not turn to the conformation of a new independent organizational structure or to the creation of a new specialized governmental institution. On the contrary, the Program becomes integral part of an already established institutional organization, *Acción Social*, which is at the highest level of the State, the Presidency of the Republic. The Program, even being a part of *Acción Social*, does not turn self-sufficient nor does it ignore the other dependencies of the institution, but rather, it turns to other instances and processes of the entity for the execution of the agreements and the projects.

Likewise, the RESA Work Group, even though it is part of the Technical Direction of Presidential Programs for Social Action, cannot be seen as a dependency embedded into said structure for the fact of being a program confers it a limited character in time. This, together with the reduced group of professionals forming it, gives the Program certain very desirable attributes of effective organizations: flexibility, hierarchical horizontal structure, capacity for initiative and innovation and team work.

Notwithstanding that the RESA constitutes an initiative of Acción Social, its action and framework of policies not only responds to the objectives and guidelines of this institutions but rather it also is in line with the policies of the national development plan and the policies of the national government for the rural sector.

In what has to do with the operation of the institutional plan of the RESA, the flexibility existing for the performance of the different activities of the agreements and the projects must be highlighted, for although they adjust to a general frame and to certain guidelines originated from the Program itself, said activities adapt to the needs and characteristics of the different areas and of the producers themselves.

Furthermore, for the performance of the agreements the Program does not impose itself over the other participating entities but rather there are established government and coordination mechanisms in which, besides the RESA, the different contributing entities participate, including the executor. Although the participative condition of the Program refers to the fact explained above, it must be noted that the beneficiaries only participate in the Local Technical-Operative Committee for they are co-financers of the projects. Otherwise, the voice of the beneficiaries is only listened through the client satisfaction surveys.

The work plan established in the RESA allows continuous dialogue and a process of feedback between the national level and the regions. Since there are no rigid and hierarchical structures in no cases, but rather work is done based on small work teams, the information flows easily and rapidly, facilitating decision making.

All the above makes it clear that the RESA is a directed intervention model in which the role of the beneficiaries is limited for them to be receptors of the action of the State and that the planning and performance of the projects relies on the group of professionals of the Program. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the RESA has established mechanisms which allow it to "listen and tend to" the suggestions and comments of the beneficiaries and the executors.

At the time of structuring and implementing the Program an important and strategic decision was adopted for it: that the RESA would only act as co-financer of the projects and therefore would not by the executor of the

projects. This decision has, at least, two important implications. One, that the operation structure of the Program is duly aligned with the institutional decisions adopted inside *Acción Social* and that were explained before. Two, that with this, the regions and specialized institutions are given the opportunity of developing and strengthening even further their project execution capacities. Additionally, the *RESA* allows other organizations and entities, national as well as regional and local, to participate as co-financers of the project. This way, the Program adds efforts and does not act as centripetal force as it occurs traditionally with national institutions. Without a doubt, all these circumstances motivate the participation of various local entities in the projects, thus generating a culture of cooperation between institutions. This factor constitutes a serious fault in the institutional development of the country.

About the co-financing plan promoted by the *RESA* Program it can be said that it is not a closed plan in the sense that it only admits money contributions from the different co-financers. On the contrary, the plan is open, for it also allows that different organizations join the agreements contributing goods and services.

Although the responsibility for the performance of the projects relies on one sole entity, the executor, the governing organs of the projects, the Local Technical Operative Committee, is collegiate, for the entities and organizations participating in the agreements are represented there. This causes the composition of each Committee and the participations of institutions and organizations in the agreements to be very heterogeneous. However, this does not lead to disregarding the guidelines and the policies promoted by the Program, for the text of the agreements as well as the participation of the *RESA* in each one of the Committees assures that the different projects follow certain common directions and guidelines.

Even though the Program has established certain general criteria for access, it has been determined that, in order to allow the different interests of the partners to converge inside the agreements, a certain degree of flexibility is necessary in the definition of said criteria.

Finally, the beneficiary is not, exclusively, a member of the household, for example, the head of the household. On the contrary, the beneficiaries are all the members of the household. This constitutes a differentiating

element of the reSA with respect to other rural programs in which usually the beneficiary is only one member of the household. Additionally, this characteristic goes in line with the purpose of creating a culture for self-reliance and food security, an aspect which necessarily involves all the household members and not only one of them.

The learning methodology, learning hands on, applied by the reSA in its formation activities adapts adequately to the conditions and circumstances of the small producers and to their learning needs. With this, greater effectiveness in terms or results is assured.

For the Program, even though the delivery of raw materials plays an important role because it constitutes the economic incentive which initiates the internal production for self reliance, the sole delivery is not enough. The formation component is required. This is why in the development of reSA projects, great emphasis is given to the formation of human capital through the generation of capacities, skills and competencies in the different environments related to food security. This causes the formation program to include issues such as nutrition and food, food preparation, human development and health life habits, among others.

An aspect which must be highlighted from the reSA Program is that the interest of said Program is not essentially productive. The interest is to create a collective culture concerning the importance of internal food production for the life of the members of the household. These two elements, conscience and culture, are the bases which shall allow the households to continue the practice of production for self reliance once the intervention of the Program is over.

Finally, the Program has established a series of procedures and tools which allow for follow-up and development of the different projects, at the same time that it has available the mechanisms of evaluation for each agreement which provide continuous feedback.

As general conclusion, it can be ascertained that the reSA Intervention Model cannot be considered a sole inflexible model which, as a prototype, can be applied to any environment without considering the circumstances and particular needs of each region or location. On the contrary, the reSA is a model which serves as frame to carry out an intervention with common objectives, purposes, and destinations, but that is flexible enough to adapt



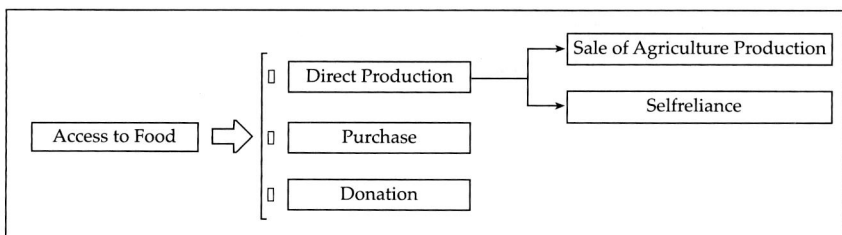
to the particular circumstances of each region and social group. This causes each new project to have particular characteristics in many cases, which makes it unique.

## The RESA and Food Security

As it has been indicated, the RESA Intervention Model seeks to contribute, through implementation of different economic and cultural incentives, to the improvement of the life conditions of the Colombian rural population through an increase in the food and nutritional level of the members of the households of the small rural producers. With this, RESA favors obtaining greater levels of food security inside these households.

Because internal food production for self reliance constitutes one of the channels through which rural households may have access effectively to food for their consumption, the RESA Model guarantees that the objective of obtaining "greater levels of food security" can be reached. As illustrated in Graph 3, the different ways in which rural households have access to food are; direct production of food, purchase of food as a result of the sale of labor force, and the donation of food to households by third parties. In food production, there are two ways of access. The first is the sale of agricultural produce including food in the markets, with which the producer receives the monetary resources necessary to purchase the basic nutritional elements. The second is production for self reliance. Since the RESA puts into action the productive processes which permanently assure the generation of an internal supply of food for self reliance, this channel of access to food is validated to the households of small rural producers, and therefore, it is possible to achieve greater food and nutritional levels for the different members of the households.

**Graph 3. Adjustments of Resources, Production and Wellbeing**



In the previous discussion of the concept of food security, it was made clear that one of the characteristic elements of this concept is access to food. Although it is evident that access does not deplete said concept, it does play an important role in the practical way that persons, households and countries reach adequate levels of food security. This way, and regardless of the type of definition of food security considered, the approach proposed by the RESA is legitimated, in practice, as an internal process of the rural households through which they can have access to a permanent flow of food supply for their own consumption in the household, thus assuring that greater levels of food security can be obtained.

The definitions of food security discussed in chapter 2, and especially the restricted definition, allow to affirm that the RESA effectively acts within the frame of food security for the Program wants to attack hunger as one of the manifestations of insufficient consumption of nutritious food. Likewise, the RESA wishes to reduce the vulnerability of food security through reduction of the nutritional risk. In this frame of mind, the RESA can be conceived as an intervention model which, is clearly framed in the restricted definition of food security, as it concentrates on the problem of hunger and food. This determines that the RESA, even though it concentrates on a specific aspect of the problem of food security -defined in its broader sense- attacks the main manifestation of food insecurity, at the same time it privileges coverage of beneficiaries with expansion of the objectives and the components of the Program, within the frame of budget restrictions by the central government.

This broad conception of the definition of food security and the frame and dimensions derived from it, make it clear that the effort made by the RESA with respect to food security is limited and circumscribes a very concrete aspect of this set of problems, but, when revising the restricted definition of food security, it can be seen that said aspect is the fundamental aspect of the food problem because it is related to the conditions of the supply and availability of food, and the access and the stability of said access.

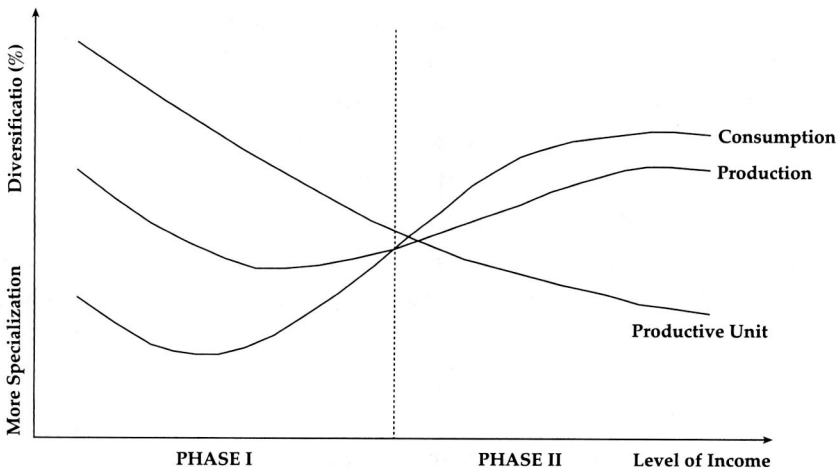
# The RESA and the Transformation of Agriculture

One of the important aspects to consider with respect to the RESA Intervention Model is related to the validity it has under the different conditions of development of the agricultural sector. Particularly, it is important to discuss how the processes of transformation of the sector affect or favor the intervention of the RESA.

To analyze this aspect, it is convenient to turn to the model of transformation of agriculture proposed by Timmer (Staatz and Eicher, 1998). This author indicates that "the transformation of agriculture is an outstanding process which is characterized by its uniformity. This process is characterized by the fall in participation of agriculture in the labor force of countries and in the total product as the per capita income increases."

From Timmer's transformation model, two grand phases can be identified broadly in the process of development of agriculture (see Graph 4).

**Graph 4. Phases of the Agricultural Transformation**



The first one of them is characterized by the fact that at the level of the agricultural productive units there is high diversification of food production and consumption. Additionally, a tendency to food self supply by rural households is registered, which makes them not have close ties with the markets of factors and products. Likewise, and because in this phase many regions lack the vigorous processes of growth and development, and because the dynamics of the regions is centered on agricultural activity, the relative cost of the productive factors, especially that of labor and land, is low. The ruling conditions in this phase respond to a relatively closed economy and which is found in the first stages of the process of economic development.

On its part, phase II is characterized by high specialization of production at the level of agricultural productive units and by the diversification of the production and consumption at the level of economy in general and of the agricultural sector as a whole. The relative specialization at the agricultural level causes the households and production units to maintain close ties to the markets where foods, factors and materials are transacted. The economic dynamic, derived from an open economy and with close ties with external markets, leads to high relative cost of the productive factors in the rural environment, and that said factors result to be very competitive in the markets. In this phase, different from what is observed in the first stage where a very basic base for production and consumption of agricultural goods predominated, the agro-industrial processes and processes of agricultural production transformation are abundant, which leads not only to have interchange of merchandise with the rest of the world, but that the consumption of agricultural goods is very diversified. All this is product of an economy characterized by its dynamism and high levels of income.

According to the transformation model proposed by Timmer one can think that the *ReSA* Intervention Model has high possibility to adequately operate and to reach its objectives in conditions similar to those ruling in Phase I, where low cost of opportunity shown by the productive factors in the rural sector together with the sub-utilization of said resources facilitates, inside the rural households themselves, the assignment of resources to food production activities for self reliance. Likewise, during Phase II and under special conditions of acute economic and social crises in certain particular

agricultural activity in which small farming production predominates, the RESA Model can be considered a pertinent model, but temporary, to support small rural producers. The foregoing is because, in acute crises like the one suffered by the Colombian coffee production sector during the nineties and notwithstanding that Colombian agriculture as economic sector can be characterized as transiting through Phase II, the conditions of development of small producers and coffee regions were affected in such a way that the conditions ruling during Phase I were reproduced.

In the economic conditions ruling in Phase I and in the cases of crisis of Phase II, changes of attitude and culture promoted by the RESA Model in rural households for food production for self reliance are facilitated and prosper. In other words, internal incentives as well as those provided by the market make possible and promote the new assignment of resources towards internal food production.

It must be remembered that in Phase II of the agricultural transformation model, the economic dynamics ruling in the rural sector, particularly in the different agricultural activities, increases the cost of opportunity of the different productive factors and causes a tendency towards full use and socialization of said factors in the main productive activities. Even child and juvenile labor increases their cost of opportunity with respect to what prevailed in Phase I.<sup>39</sup> This way, the market incentives lead to the fact that the productive resources of the households are not directed towards food production for self reliance, for it is cheaper to turn to the market as a source for food supply. In some way it could be thought that Phase II states, inside the Intervention Strategy of the RESA Model, a tension between the culture of self reliance and the processes of growth and development. This originating from the greater cost of opportunity of the factors, which is a result of the dynamics of the sector.

In this state of affairs, one could consider that Phase II does not constitute an appropriate field for the RESA Intervention Model to prosper. Only a very powerful and very interiorized "culture of self reliance" shall be capable of

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<sup>39</sup> Greater human capital makes it very expensive for parents to pull their children out of school in order to dedicate them to household productive activities.

sustaining this activity in the households, for the forces of development, expressed in the ruling economic incentives, conspire against it.

When considering the RESA Intervention Model under a more comprehensive optic like the one offered by Timmer's model concerning the development of agriculture, and, particularly, of the transformation process to which this sector is inexorably faced against, and taking into account that the intervention of the RESA in many agricultural regions of the country is performed within a frame of a rural set of problems characterized by very high poverty levels, low economic growth and reduced social development, said model is thus perceived as an intervention which is efficient in solving the specific problem it must overcome, capable of reaching the established objectives, limited because it helps to cope with structural and sudden situations which affect the capacities or rights of the families, but which does not intend to solve the set of different difficulties and restrictions faced by rural households of the small producers, and with a very clear temporary character, for it only has validity while certain circumstances prevail in the rural sector.

An alternative conception of the RESA Model, supported in the interpretation that the Colombian rural sector inexorably moves towards consolidation in a state similar to that suggested by Phase II of Timmer's model, which implies an agriculture characterized by high growth, greater development and substantial reduction of rural poverty, is that intervention itself may be considered as a first step towards a broader and more integral social intervention of the State in rural zones. This intervention shall consider aspects related to the issues of nutrition, health, housing and basic remediation. This type of expanded intervention responds to a restricted conception of food security. A broader and more ambitious conception of this concept would suppose that it is imperative to intervene in the processes of sector and general growth and development.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### Results of the RESA

In April, 2007 the RESA Program had performed a total of 181 rural projects of food security in 31 departments of the country and 832 municipalities. With these projects, close to 420,000 households, and approximately 2,100,600 people have been benefited. The total value of these 181 projects is 129 billion pesos, of which Acción Social has contributed 42.8%, that is 55.4 billion; the remaining 57.2% has been contributed by different entities and organizations participating in the projects (See Table 1).

According to the figures in Table 1, the average number of participating families per project is 2.320, the average value of each product is 715 million pesos and the average value invested in the development of the RESA Program per family is \$308.041 pesos which equals approximately one minimum monthly salary or 20 current rural daily wages.

In a report of the results of the RESA Program in August, 2006, (Carrillo, 2007), it is indicated that at that time 86 projects had been performed and 205,439 families had benefited. These results mean that the Program, as of August, 2006, was covering 9.25% of the total number of rural inhabitants, 13.5% of the poorer rural inhabitants and 27.9% of rural families which perform agricultural activities. Likewise, it had been possible to involve 86 executor and co-financing entities and 46 adherent and contributing organizations.

Furthermore, in developing these projects, 98,330 motivation events had been performed with average attendance per workshop of 38 people. The satisfaction evaluation of the users which was at this time performed on a sample of 15 projects resulted in an average grade of 4.6 over 5.0.

Finally, through the Program, as at August 2006, 1,878 tons of seeds, 4.1 million plantlets of 83 different vegetable species and 6,258,806 animals of 15 species had been delivered.

In 2005 the consultant firm Econometría S.A. performed for the International Organization for Migration (Spanish Organización Internacional para la Migración- OIM) the project "Measurement of the Impacts of the



**Cuadro 1. Results of the ResA Program**

Territorial Unit	Number Projects	Families	Value Project (\$ Thousand)	Contributions Accion Social (\$ Thousand)	Contributions Cofinancin	% Contribution Accion Social	% Contributions Cofinancin
Amazonas	4	1.540	479,20	248,40	230,80	51,8	48,2
Antioquia	17	42.548	14.746,30	5.617,90	9.128,40	38,1	61,9
Arauca	1	400	144,20	65,20	79,00	45,2	54,8
Atlántico	0	0	0,00	0,00	0,00	-	-
Bogotá	1	1.500	503,30	200,00	303,30	39,7	60,3
Bolívar	2	5.018	1.402,90	442,90	960,00	31,6	68,4
Boyacá	11	14.624	4.615,10	1.703,20	2.911,90	36,9	63,1
Cundinamarca	8	23.094	7.698,20	2.959,00	4.739,20	38,4	61,6
Caldas	16	27.415	8.012,50	2.935,00	5.077,40	36,6	63,4
Caquetá	3	2.279	1.498,40	583,00	915,40	38,9	61,1
Casanare	1	8.475	2.825,00	1.100,00	1.725,00	38,9	61,1
Cauca	18	30.982	9.642,00	4.056,10	5.585,80	42,1	57,9
Cesar	1	9.600	3.200,00	1.000,00	2.200,00	31,3	68,8
Chocó	6	944	534,70	226,60	308,20	42,4	57,6
Córdoba	1	4.000	1.000,00	600,00	400,00	60,0	40,0
Guajira	4	11.810	3.121,80	1.901,90	1.219,90	60,9	39,1
Guanía	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Guaviare	5	5.214	1.444,30	733,00	711,30	50,8	49,2
Huila	5	16.538	5.043,10	2.456,60	2.586,50	48,7	51,3
Magdalena	5	7.827	2.069,40	1.380,40	689,00	66,7	33,3
Magdalena Medio	3	8.092	2.276,70	1.017,20	1.259,50	44,7	55,3
Meta	2	4.830	1.615,20	620,00	995,20	38,4	61,6
Norte de Santander	6	21.172	5.884,20	2.366,20	3.518,00	40,2	59,8
Nariño	13	35.029	10.742,30	5.299,80	5.442,50	49,3	50,7
Putumayo	8	4.284	1.590,00	776,50	813,50	48,8	51,2
Quindio	3	5.350	1.339,00	614,00	725,00	45,9	54,1
Risaralda	7	33.317	8.316,60	4.265,00	4.051,60	51,3	48,7
San Andrés	2	520	120,00	60,00	60,00	50,0	50,0
Santander	7	31.335	9.438,30	3.679,00	5.759,30	39,0	61,0
Sucre	4	15.053	3.785,70	1.865,60	1.920,10	49,3	50,7
Tolima	7	21.440	6.221,90	2.194,00	4.027,90	53,3	64,7
Urabá	3	5.875	1.430,90	669,30	761,60	46,8	53,2
Valle	4	19.402	8.437,60	3.652,50	4.785,10	43,3	56,7
Vaupés	1	372	124,70	96,00	28,70	77,0	23,0
Vichada	2	139	110,00	48,00	62,00	43,6	56,4
<b>Total</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>420,118</b>	<b>129,413,50</b>	<b>55,432,30</b>	<b>73,981,00</b>	<b>42,8</b>	<b>57,2</b>

Source: ResA (Accrued April 2007).

Food security Network Program -RESA".<sup>40</sup> The objective of the project was to verify the existence of benefits in the beneficiary population of the RESA Program as a consequence of the modification of their customs concerning self reliance (Econometría, 2005).

The impacts identified as the best indicators of the changes brought by the Program were three: change of attitude of the households concerning production for self reliance, the effect on savings and greater food availability and the effects on the sense of settling or belonging.

According to Econometría, and in relation to the three impact indicators, it was found that "acceptance of the RESA philosophy by the beneficiaries of the Program is indeed evidenced in changes of attitude and customs, especially in the production of vegetable foods, (...) the Program achieves real changes of attitude towards self reliance and even though this does not show significant impact over savings, it does show impact on the quantity and variety of food to which small producers have access, and (...) the results obtained do not allow confirmation of the existence of an impact of the RESA Program over settling and sense of belonging, even though in the quantitative and qualitative analysis some evidence was found that this may exist".

The study performed by Econometría further concludes that:

- ❑ The RESA Program boosts the culture of production for self reliance.
- ❑ The households of the RESA beneficiaries dedicate a larger number of hours per week to the activities of production for self reliance.
- ❑ The Program offers the small rural producers the opportunity to have access to goods which otherwise could only be purchased by a limited number of households.
- ❑ The Program, rather than substituting consumption, offers the possibility of expanding them, thus complementing the food diet of the household members.

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<sup>40</sup> The work of Econometría was a case study of 420 farming households of which one half were beneficiaries of the RESA Program. This population was elected in six municipalities and qualitative as well as quantitative investigation techniques were applied.

- The access to training is significantly greater in reSA beneficiaries, which tends to make the Program more sustainable and to expand the human capital of beneficiaries.
- The greater amount of food produced by the reSA households corresponds to 11% of the monetary resources that the farming households assign monthly to purchase their groceries.
- The approach given to the Program is, in general, adequate, well received by the farming households and indeed generates significant benefits in the households of its beneficiaries.<sup>41</sup>

Furthermore, in the frame of the National Plan of Food security (Plan Nacional de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional-PNSAN) different experiences which have been developed in Colombia concerning food security were gathered (Ribero, 2006). One of the experiences analyzed was that of the reSA Program. The methodology used for this job consisted of the systematization of experiences. In the case of the reSA, this job found out about two experiences: Fedepanela in La Peña, Cundinamarca and that of the Comité de Cafeteros de Caldas (Caldas Coffee Committee). Several of the main conclusions of these analyses, especially those of Caldas, are in line with those obtained in the study performed by Econometría. This is especially true in what has to do with the effective production and consumption of goods produced in the family units, the resurging of this culture in rural households, the existing motivation to continue these practices and the importance that the issue of food security has brought in different fields of the rural sector, such as the case of schools and local administrations.

Furthermore, there are other two evaluations of the reSA. These are Phases I and II of the reSA in the department of Caldas. Both evaluations have been performed by the Crece.

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<sup>41</sup> According to a study performed by Carlos Jaramillo in March, 2007 for the National Coffee Federation (Federación Nacional de Cafeteros) concerning the nutritional evaluation performed on children less than 10 years old in the department of Cauca, it is found that "the results obtained in this first follow-up show improvement in the nutritional situation between 2005 and 2006, in children less than 10, children of the beneficiaries of the reSA program Phase II in the department of Cauca."

The first one of them (Crece, 2004), concludes that "the systemation of the experience and the evaluation of the results of the Project for Food security for Small Producers allow concluding that during the time of performance of the first phase of the Project, it has generated important achievements concerning not only compliance with the goals established in each one of the stages of the first activity, but also has started to generate favorable effects on the beneficiary population." Particularly, Crece, in this first phase, finds that "in relation to the Consumption variable, the results of the evaluation evidence that the Project achieved its goals which had been set in this sense. More than 89% of the families which implemented the raw materials assigned the production obtained for household consumption" (...) of the families who received raw materials, 86% expresses having diminished expenses for the purchase of food due to consuming the production generated by the project (...) the project has contributed to active participation of the household members in its performance, for the results show that in training as well as in production, high participation of the members such as the spouse and children was achieved.

In the evaluation of the second phase of Caldas (Crece, 2006a) it is found that "the high number of benefited families reaching a High level in the general competition of Food Security, eight out of ten shows how the RESA Program in Caldas reaches one of its main goals generating competencies in the production of food for household consumption (...) Another interesting result of the Program is its contribution to the use of a greater number of nutritional products in the diet. This greater variety of food included in their diet is related to a greater number of products obtained in the farms assigned to family consumption. Self reliance in the benefited households is significantly greater in products such as chicken, beans, corn, cilantro and carrots, precisely those which are promoted by the Program (...) Some benefited households have been able to be self sufficient in the production of certain foods such as chicken, beans, carrots and cilantro, among others, for which they do not have to spend money to buy them. From here arises the generalized perception of the families of saving money in the purchase of food".



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