

relatively recent concept.

- The right to food falls under the general heading of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which were relegated to a lower status of rights in favour of Civil and Political Rights during the Cold War. As a result, an institutional capacity imbalance emerged in favour of the later.
- While Civil and Political Rights were categorised as negative rights (i.e., governments only need to refrain from certain acts to implement them), Economic, Social and Cultural Rights fell in the category of positive rights and were, therefore, assumed to involve significant financial resources.

Since the 1940's, the right to food has been established in several international instruments and binding treaties, including:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights [Article 25(1)],
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Article 11),
- Food Aid Conventions,
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 27), and
- The Rome Declaration on World Food Security and World Food Summit Plan of Action.

Buckingham pointed out that the right to adequate food imposes three levels of obligations on states: 1) to respect, 2) to protect and 3) to fulfill. Implementation of the right must necessarily begin at the national level. As Canada has signed and ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1976); it is bound to comply with the implementations requirements. (Canada is required to submit a report to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights every six years outlining progress in implementing the International Covenant). While findings show that there are some unresolved economic issues which adversely affect some Canadians' right to adequate food, the Government of Canada has maintained it has been a strong international advocate for the right (citing its strong presence at the World Food Summit in 1996 and its co-sponsorship of Resolution 1999/24 "The Right to Food" – adopted by the UN Commission on Human Rights). At home, the Canadian Government, in consultation with civil society, has adopted Canada's Action Plan For Food Security.

Buckingham encouraged a rights-based approach to advocacy, which entails:

- Seeing our own food policy through a right to food lens (i.e., making Canadian legislation "right to food" sensitive).
- Making our foreign policy objectives and programmes align with a right to food approach (i.e., CIDA programming that does not imperil food rights in recipient countries).
- Incorporating a right to food approach in our discourse at multilateral negotiations (i.e., examining the impact of trade policies on food security at the WTO).

A point was made during the discussion that the political choices and political will of African governments are key in ensuring access to food for Africans. Outside actors could help build the capacity of African countries to become self-sufficient in the production of food and to reduce their reliance on food imports. Technical assistance including water management or food