

Statement of the 2020 Farmers' Forum to the IFAD Governing Council

Honourable Governors of the International Fund for Agricultural Development,

We, the delegates of farmers, fishers and pastoralists organisations to the seventh Global Meeting of the Farmers' Forum at IFAD wish to bring the following statement to your attention.

The 2020 Forum took place during the second year of the UN Decade of Family Farming, which represents a unique opportunity to implement policies in favour of small-scale food producers and to contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and more specifically to SDGs 1, 2, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17.

The adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and other Peoples working in Rural Areas by the UN General Assembly in December 2018 is a timely and significant contribution to the Decade and to the 2030 Agenda, as it provides a rights-based framework to our actions.

The global context for the development of sustainable food production by hundreds of millions of small-scale family farmers, fishers and pastoralists around the world requires urgent and massive global action. The effects of Climate Change on the degradation of land, waters, forests and all our eco-systems are deeply affecting the resilience of rural communities and of their livelihoods, putting at risk the food systems on which they depend.

We urge IFAD and the Governments of IFAD Member States to strengthen their support to small-scale food producer's initiatives based on agroecological, organic and other sustainable food production systems and practices on lands, waters and forests. We also call for the promotion of the use of traditional genetic resources (seeds and livestock).

On partnership with IFAD and the Farmers' Forum process

We, the delegates to the global meeting of the Farmers' Forum, reiterate our request for an observer status in the IFAD Executive Board and our commitment to use it for contributing to the achievement of the mandate of the Fund, in the interest of our constituencies. We are ready to pursue the dialogue with IFAD and its member States in that regard.

We, small-scale food producers' organizations (POs), further value the process of decentralization of the Farmers Forum, in line with the decentralization of IFAD itself, which should further promote the inclusion of a broader range of regional, national and local organizations representative of small-scale food producers.

We acknowledge the diverse stages of collaboration at regional and national levels and we urge to:

- promote the involvement of POs representatives in IFAD's Sub-regional Hub yearly planning meeting wherever possible;
- work towards formal cooperation agreements with national POs by signing Memorandum of Understanding / Declaration of Commitment between IFAD (including IFAD Country Directors) and national POs which contribute to the achievement of the FAFO agenda;

- ensure that all COSOP formulation processes are fully inclusive of organizations representative of small scale food producers in each country;
- ensure that IFAD funded programmes at country and regional levels involve POs in the design, implementation, mid-term reviews, monitoring and evaluation processes.
- ensure that the design and loan agreements for IFAD-funded agricultural development projects implemented by our governments include clear provision for the effective transfer of equipment and infrastructures allocated to local food producer’s organizations before project completion in order to ensure sustainability;
- organize the regional FAFO in the NEN region in line with IFAD's decentralised structure, hence one in Cairo for North Africa and the Middle East and one in Istanbul for Central Asia;
- strengthen the effective monitoring of FAFO processes at all levels by the respective FAFO steering mechanisms and consider the possibility of a stocktaking at global level in 2022;
- ensure inclusion of fisher folks and pastoralists constituencies in the FAFO governance and decision-making committees at all levels, including the access to existing and new funding instruments;
- increase the visibility of IFAD-funded rural development initiatives and ensure the integration of IFAD decentralized staff in each of the sub-regions in the relevant formal instances of current public policy dialogue;
- IFAD to actively integrate the Voluntary Guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries, the Voluntary Guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and other Peoples working in Rural Areas into internal safeguards and procedures;
- Ensure the participation of IFAD country directors in the formal spaces of public policy dialogues (such as REAF in MERCOSUR area, ECOWAP in West Africa) and promote the participation of POs in at least one priority policy process as identified in the COSOP.

On thematic issues

Following the rich discussions during the thematic working groups, we invite IFAD to support the implementation of the following recommendations:

Rural Youth

- more investments in off-farm and post-harvest activities for creating attractive opportunities for the rural youth;
- more investments on services and infrastructure (energy, sustainable mechanization, education, training, etc.) to keep and attract young people to rural areas;
- more training and leadership/mentoring programs for young people so to ensure intergenerational transfer of leadership on the farms and in small-scale food producers’ organizations.

Gender and Women’s POs leadership

We note with satisfaction that this year, women delegates represents 40% of FAFO participants and we plea for a joint commitment by IFAD and POs of having at least 50% women participants during all future regional and global FAFO meetings.

- to design and implement programmes promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in small-scale food production and rural livelihoods;
- to develop long term support plans to women's organizations or women's wings within small-scale food producers' organizations;
- to intensify involvement of women POs leaders in the implementation, supervision and monitoring of IFAD-funded programmes.

Climate change

- to invest massively in land rehabilitation and agroforestry/vegetation for carbon sequestration by small-scale food producers and rural communities;
- to invest in building livelihoods of the small-scale food producers displaced by climate change;
- to acknowledge agroecology, organic, and other climate-resilient sustainable food production models as key approaches for both adaptation to and mitigation of climate change;
- to work with governments and small-scale food producers organizations for public policies and related incentive mechanisms to promote agroecology and other sustainable models ensuring healthy, nutritious food in sufficient quantities for all, including the disadvantaged populations;
- to support the dissemination of good practices and technologies promoted by small-scale food producers' organizations and jointly developed with the agricultural research community.
- To recognize the role of producers as solutions to the climate change and support producers led actions that help the global fight against climate change.
- To facilitate and support farmer-to-farmer exchange to foster farmers' capacity building by knowledge sharing of best practices on climate change adaptation and mitigation that can be replicated elsewhere.

UN Decade of Family Farming

- to foster multi-stakeholder processes for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Decade on Family Farming at all levels
- to provide financial and technical support to organizations of small-scale food producers for taking the lead in the setting up and in the steering of the National Committees on Family Farming;
- to work with governments to ensure that national and regional policies on agriculture and rural development are coherent with the orientations and principles arising from the Decade on Family Farming.

World Food Systems Summit

In relation to the 2021 World Food Systems Summit, we, the delegates of the Farmers' Forum condition our involvement on the provision of sufficient information about the Summit in order to collectively assess within our constituencies the pros and cons for our engagement.

We are requesting IFAD to support effective and self-organized civil society participation to the WFSS, built on existing small-scale food producers' spaces such as the Civil Society Mechanism in the CFS, the FAFO process at IFAD.

If the above approaches are considered, we ask support to POs for the organization of a small-scale food producers' pre-Summit to consolidate our voices.

IFAD 12 new instruments

We, the delegates to the Farmers Forum express our great interest in ASAP+ and PSFP as new instruments submitted to the IFAD 12 consultation. These financial instruments should be directly accessible to our constituencies that are ready to scale up good practices in climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as business plans for our cooperatives and farmers driven investments in value chains. In addition, we:

- ask IFAD for designing both instruments jointly with us;
- offer to work with IFAD to design, implement and monitor mechanisms for earmarking resources specifically for Community base organizations, POs and cooperatives, and to ensure effective inclusion of fishery and livestock constituencies;
- Request to include POs' representatives into the governance structure for both instruments.

Concluding Statement

We have been partners of IFAD for the last 14 years and we consider the Farmers' Forum process as a unique space for dialogue and partnership with an International Financing Institution dedicated to the development of our constituency. We are confident that IFAD will work with us for implementing the recommendations arising from this global meeting of the Farmers Forum.

We are aware that IFAD and its member states are starting the consultation for the 12th replenishment of its resources and we are eager to join the Fund in the mobilisation and efforts to be deployed for a successful replenishment.

We specifically affirm our support to IFAD in promoting broad-based financing for the two new instruments proposed to the IFAD 12 consultation process.

Addendum:

The World Farmers Organization (WFO), member of the FAFO Steering Committee, endorses the final statement of 2020 Global Farmers Forum with the following exceptions:

1) WFO's global mandates commit it to all solutions to the climate change challenge, including the climate smart agriculture, beyond the ambit of this statement.

2) WFO supports the 2021 Food Systems Summit and is committed to take part in the design, preparation and implementation of the process, to secure an opportunity for the voice of family farmers to participate through platforms that are more inclusive than the CFS, such as the multi stakeholder mechanisms of the UN major groups and all the other UN mechanisms for representation.