

Proceedings of the Governing Council High-Level Panel and Side Events

# Feeding future generations: Young rural people today – prosperous, productive farmers tomorrow

In conjunction with the Thirty-fourth Session  
of IFAD's Governing Council, February 2011



Enabling poor rural people to overcome poverty



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The Philippines  
The Rapid Food Production Enhancement Programme supports the government's efforts to respond to the food-price crisis that emerged in 2008 and to restore the country's rice self-sufficiency. IFAD's investment will help secure high-quality seed to boost rice production and will assist in improving irrigation systems.

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# Acronyms

AIDOS	Italian Association for Women in Development <i>(Associazione Italiana Donne per lo Sviluppo)</i>
ASOPECAM	Association of Small Coffee Growers <i>(Asociacion de Pequeños Caficultores de La Marina)</i>
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
NENA	Near East and North Africa
MORDI	Mainstreaming of Rural Development Innovations
PROCASUR	Regional Programme for Rural Development Training <i>(Programa Regional de Capacitación en Desarrollo Rural)</i>
PROSPERER	Programme of Support for Rural Microenterprises and Regional Economies <i>(Programme de Soutien aux Pôles de Micro-Entreprises Rurales et aux Économies Régionales)</i>
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

# I. Plenary panel discussion: Feeding future generations – young rural people today, prosperous farmers tomorrow

## Introduction

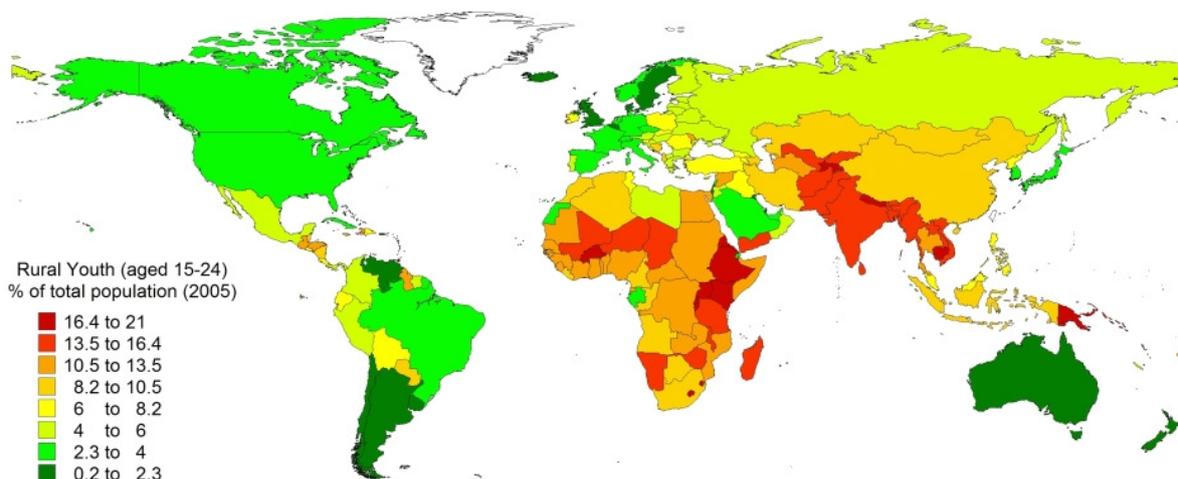
The global population is projected to rise from its present level of 6.9 billion to 9.2 billion by 2050. An estimated 1 billion people already are going hungry, and young rural people are increasingly disillusioned about working in the agricultural sector, which in many countries is stagnant and unproductive. So the question must be asked: Who is going to feed this growing world population?

Today's generation of young people is the largest in history. In developing countries, young people (defined by the United Nations as those aged 15 to 24) make up 20 per cent of the population on average. They represent a huge potential resource to their countries. Yet ironically, rural areas are not benefiting fully from this resource. In fact, many rural communities are ageing precisely because, in the absence of incentives to remain, young women and men are leaving rural areas to seek opportunities elsewhere.

Resolving this paradox and responding to the challenges of expanding agricultural productivity and rural economic growth demand at least three things: investment in social and economic infrastructure in rural areas; creation of remunerative economic opportunities for young people in agriculture and the rural non-farm economy; and expanded opportunities for young men and women to build the skills they need to take advantage of these opportunities.

For years young people have been underused and neglected by their communities, by governments and by international organizations. Globally, young people are three times more likely to be unemployed than adults. Equally worrying is the plight of the estimated 300 million young people classified as working poor. They earn less than US\$2 a day, outnumber young unemployed people by a factor of four and typically work in rural areas.

**Figure 1**  
Rural young people's share of population



Source: K. Van der Geest, Rural Youth Employment in Developing Countries: a global view (FAO, 2010).

Compared to their older peers, young rural people face particular constraints in gaining access to land, credit and new technologies. They also need wider educational opportunities and access to relevant vocational training programmes. They are a group who need and deserve special attention, support and follow-up. With their energy, their passion and their talents, they can help to solve many of the serious problems the world faces today. But first we must give them the tools they need.

With this background in mind, Tumi Makgabo, former co-producer and host of CNN International's award-winning programme *Inside Africa*, moderated a discussion with a distinguished panel during the thirty-fourth session of IFAD's Governing Council. The audience consisted of representatives from the 166 IFAD Member States, including new member Uzbekistan.

The panel discussed how to boost food security and reduce poverty by involving young rural people in a dynamic, modern agribusiness sector. The debate focused on three challenges:

### **1. Creating the environment and the incentives that encourage young rural women and men to choose agriculture**

*"In rural areas ... young people are the next generation of farmers, producers and workers. Give them the skills and confidence they need to run profitable farms or start businesses, and they will become the upstanding citizens and community leaders of tomorrow. Ignore them, and they will have little option but to leave their homes and families to search for work in the cities, seeking better lives but often finding only more misery."* – IFAD President Kanayo Nwanze in his Statement at the 2011 Governing Council

Agriculture is still the leading employer of young rural people in developing countries. However, agricultural jobs are frequently beset by low pay, low productivity, underemployment, lack of social protection and exposure to a variety of risks, including weather patterns and volatile markets. These are the reasons why young rural people are increasingly turning their backs on agriculture. Many prefer to migrate to urban centres or even to other countries in the hope of finding decent jobs. Too often they discover quickly that they lack the skills, training and networks to compete in already saturated job markets.

Governments should promote policies and programmes that result in real improvements in the quality of agricultural jobs, especially through adoption of modern technology. They should also ensure that mechanisms, institutions and support networks are in place so young people can advance in these jobs.

Because young people's situations vary from region to region, approaches must be flexible and sensitive to local socio-economic realities. But in general, young women and men need access to a range of assets (such as land, modern technology and credit) as well as opportunities to develop their capabilities. These consist of training in business and entrepreneurship; apprenticeships and voluntary work experience; vocational training; and career advice services.

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#### **Box 1**

##### **More attention needed to improve working conditions of young people**

It remains a regrettable consequence of insufficient data availability and lack of age-disaggregation for other indicators that so much attention is paid to the topic of youth unemployment, when equally, if not more important, is the topic of the quality of work made available to young men and women. Rarely is sufficient data tabulated and disseminated at the country level to provide the necessary truth that young people, especially young women, are particularly vulnerable to working under poor conditions.

*Global Employment Trends for Youth* (ILO, Geneva, 2008, p. 11).

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When young people begin to see that smallholder farms can be transformed into dynamic, innovative, modern businesses, they will be encouraged to choose agriculture as a career path. Their skills and talents will thus be harnessed in generating a vibrant rural economy that offers employment opportunities both in agriculture and off the farm.

## **2. Ensuring that young women contribute to the rural development process and share in the rewards**

Women play a crucial role in feeding the world. They represent a significant portion of the agricultural workforce in many developing countries. However, women are typically disadvantaged when it comes to education and training opportunities, access to land and credit, bargaining power within the household and, in some societies, freedom of movement. They also face time constraints due to cultural expectations that females, regardless of their other duties, are responsible for the time-consuming tasks of fetching water and fuel and taking care of the household.

Consequently, many women are extremely constrained in their employment opportunities. According to the latest estimates from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), women comprise an average of 43 per cent of the agricultural labour force in developing countries, ranging from 20 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean to 50 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa and Eastern Asia. But due to unequal access to assets, the yield gap between men and women averages 20 to 30 per cent.

However, the potential of women to contribute to rural economic growth and to provide livelihoods for themselves, their families and their communities is well established. According to FAO, if women had the same access as men to productive resources, the increase in their farm yields would bring a 2.5 to 4 per cent rise in agricultural production in developing countries.

## **3. Leveraging agricultural investments through rural education and training**

Despite the focus on improving access to education in Millennium Development Goal 2 and the Education for All initiative, rural areas continue to lag behind urban ones in access to primary and secondary education. Rural areas suffer from a lack of qualified teachers, as well as course curricula that are outdated and irrelevant to the needs of young rural people. Additionally, perhaps as a result of the focus on Goal 2 and Education for All, there has been a relative decline in the availability of vocational education and training courses. They are often irrelevant to the realities of the rural job market, taught by poorly qualified trainers and plagued by petty corruption, leading to mixed results.

Education, knowledge and skills must be the cornerstones of rural development. Improving access, quality and relevance of rural education is paramount. So is private sector involvement, to ensure that training initiatives lead to concrete job opportunities.

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### **Box 2**

#### **Empowering women increases production, reduces poverty**

In Sri Lanka, an IFAD-supported programme provided women access to vocational training, technologies and microcredit. The goal was to enable them to transform small subsistence farms into agribusinesses. The result was increased production, reduced risks and multiple pathways out of poverty.

The Employment and Livelihood for Adolescents programme, run by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, provides life skills training and credit facilities to rural women aged 14 to 25 in Africa and Asia. It helps young women to invest their loans in livestock, vegetable cultivation, poultry and other small businesses. When young women are empowered, the benefits are visible – not just for the women themselves, but also for their families (including male household members) and the broader community.

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## Highlights of the discussion

The panellists were:

- **Ms Agnes Matilda Kalibata**, *State Minister for Agriculture, Rwanda*
- **Mr Noel de Luna**, *Chairperson of the Committee on World Food Security and Alternate Permanent Representative of the Philippines to IFAD, FAO and World Food Programme*
- **Ms Simona Marinescu**, *Senior Economist and Programme Director for Economic Reforms, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Iraq*
- **Mr Carlo Petrini**, *Founder of the International Slow Food Movement*
- **Ms Leidy Dayana Rivera Rivas**, *a young leader in the field of rural development working for the Association of Small Coffee Growers in Colombia*
- **Mr Kevin Cleaver**, *Associate Vice President, Programmes, IFAD*

The discussion was conducted in a question and answer format, with Ms Makgabo addressing specific, focused questions to panel members. During this highly interactive session, audience members contributed views and experiences from their home countries. Selected young rural leaders in the audience also provided valuable inputs to the discussion (see Annex I for profiles of the panellists, and Annex II for those of the young rural leaders). Three videos were shown during the session to help outline the extent of the challenges facing smallholder agriculture and young rural people and to show successful examples of empowering young people.

During the session, IFAD's social reporting team sent out regular tweets, reaching a global online audience of over 400,000. Questions posted on IFAD's Facebook page were given to Ms Makgabo and integrated into the session. The session was streamed live online to an audience of approximately 10,000 people.

The panel discussion was based on the following key questions:

- What are the reasons and the solutions for the relative neglect of young people in national agricultural programmes, given their critical role in feeding the world tomorrow?
- What are the key steps required at the national level to advance the youth agenda?
- How can innovative and dynamic partnerships be created between local and international actors and between private and public actors to provide opportunities for the next generation of smallholder agriculturalists to participate at different levels of global value chains, and to promote a fairer global trading system?
- Can agricultural investments and training programmes be coordinated to create synergies and provide concrete economic opportunities and incentives to young smallholder farmers?
- What changes and initiatives are needed to enable young women to contribute to rural development and share in its rewards?

Following are highlights of the discussion.

## Getting young people interested in agriculture

Ms Kalibata, who has worked effectively with young people in Rwanda, said that young people in Africa have negative ideas about agriculture. They think they will be poor if they work in the sector, and they feel they have no reason to do so. We need to give them a reason; we need to create an enabling environment for young people to become involved in agriculture.

Ms Rivas stated that young people need more access to technology to make agriculture attractive. Without technology, as they have already seen from their parents, agricultural work is not profitable.

With modern technology, training, communication and information, agriculture becomes attractive to young people. Professor Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah, Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources of Nigeria, speaking from the audience, supported this point. He said that, firstly, there was a need to make agriculture more attractive to young people, and secondly, intensifying the level of technology was a crucial aspect of this.

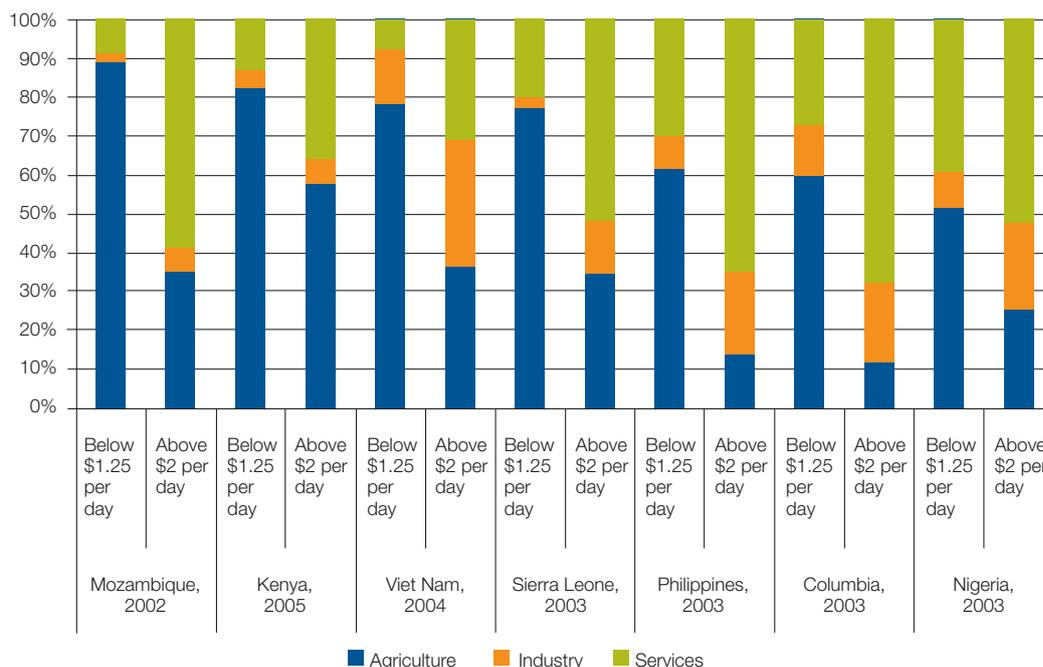
Mr Arefaine Berhe, Minister of Agriculture of Eritrea, speaking from the audience, pointed out that young people clearly will not be interested in subsistence farming. Young people will only be interested in agriculture if we can make the shift to small-scale commercial farming. There are many sub-sectors and value chains in agriculture, offering many potential opportunities for young women and men to become involved in commercial farming.

Mr Dasgupta, a young rural leader from India speaking from the audience, stated that while we are talking about markets, finance and so on, the problem is that agriculture is not viewed as a respectable activity. We need to improve the image of agriculture. Mr Dasgupta's organization does this by spending time with young farmers and letting them know how important their contribution is, both nationally and globally. When young farmers start getting the recognition they deserve at various levels, they become more passionate about farming.

*"We need to build up the image of agriculture. We need to build the image of a farmer.*

*It's the attitudinal change that needs to be brought."* – Arindam Dasgupta, speaking from the audience

**Graph 1**  
Share of employment for working poor young people (below \$1.25 per day) and working young people (above \$2 per day)



Source: ILO, *Global Employment Trends for Youth* (Geneva, 2010).

## Changing the way we view agriculture and farmers

*"Let's face it, farming has never been all that fashionable among economists or developing country politicians – airports, massive dams and factories have greater political caché. General economic growth and job creation were supposed to end hunger."* – Her Royal Highness Princess Haya Al-Hussein, United Nations Messenger of Peace, in her keynote address at the Governing Council

Mr Petrini stated that we will fail if we continue with the classical approach to agriculture that we have been following. Thinking of food only as a tradable commodity, equating the work of young farmers only with the product they produce, is an incredible error. Farmers' work is so much more than the product they produce; farmers defend the landscape, the soil fertility and the biodiversity. However, this work is not included in the prices of agricultural goods. A more holistic approach is required, recognizing the value of communities, the sacredness of food and its role in society. Commodities are not the essence of agriculture; it is the community that is important. Smallholder farmers should be respected, should be leaders in their communities and should be supported by politicians.

Mr Adel S. El-Beltagy, Counsellor to the Minister for Agriculture and Land Reclamation for Research and Development Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation of Egypt, speaking from the audience, added that when we talk about communities, we must bear in mind that they are dynamic, not static. Rural communities are highly diverse, even within the same country, and we must respect this when we design policies and programmes for them, finding commonalities and seeing where we can move forward.

Mr Jean Fulgence Mouangou, Director of the Office of the Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Congo, speaking from the audience, talked about the need to view successful young farmers as role models. We've had role models who are sportspeople, singers and young doctors. In the same way, we should be able to look up to young farmers. Successful young farmers provide examples to young people of what they can achieve in agriculture.

## Setting new paradigms

Mr Petrini argued that the present crisis is enormous, and we must respond by setting new paradigms. First, we have to deal with agriculture based on communities rather than commodities. Second, we should respect traditional knowledge. We need a dialogue between traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge, with the two being seen as equals. Third, we should stop talking about developed and developing countries. The concept of underdevelopment is outdated. Countries are developed differently; they're not developed and undeveloped.

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### Box 3

#### Involving young indigenous people in development

Mr Pheap Sochea attended the plenary session as a representative of young indigenous people, a group who have frequently been under-represented in public debates at all levels. Mr Pheap believes that indigenous knowledge, which has been so important in feeding people for so many years, is being ignored, with devastating consequences for the environment. Young indigenous people face particular difficulties in accessing public services. They also face challenges in participating in development initiatives due to language, culture and other factors. The special knowledge and needs of indigenous people are often neglected. Indigenous groups, as well as other members of rural communities, would benefit from a redirecting of the income-focused development agenda, towards a more inclusive, community-driven one that emphasizes self-determination.

*"Indigenous cultures fed people for generations. Now [traditional systems] have been ignored... this has sometimes been devastating for the forestry."* – Pheap Sochea, speaking from the audience

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## Prioritizing young rural women and men

Mr de Luna stated that for many years national planners have not been aware of the presence of the youth segment; they have simply assumed that young people are still in school. This may be true in urban areas, but not in rural ones. If national planners are ignorant of the contribution being made by young people, they cannot effectively plan for them. It is time that this sector was given greater recognition.

Ms Marinescu added that we cannot afford to continue to underutilize our young people as we are presently. Given the incentives that have been created to encourage people to move to urban areas, the power must also be there to give young people a reason to stay in their rural homes and contribute to their communities. If young people are presented as potential providers of solutions for rural development and global food security, they will eagerly contribute to solving these problems. There is no engine for social change stronger than the younger generation.

Ms Sandoval, a young rural businesswoman from El Salvador speaking from the audience, said that thanks to IFAD's policies and programmes, many young women in El Salvador have been able to join cooperatives and become involved in small rural enterprises. She was empowered by the training she received, which provided the opportunity to join (and eventually become director of) her local fishing cooperative. Just as IFAD has been able to target and create opportunities for women, so too can it help young people. She appreciates the opportunity she has been given and calls for similar opportunities to be created for other young people throughout the world to show that they can succeed.

*"I would ask that – not only in my country but across the world – opportunities are created for us [young people] to prove that, yes, we can do it."* – Sandra Sandoval, speaking from the audience

## Giving young people a voice

Ms Rivas asserted that if young people don't have access to public policies, they also will not have access to land, nor will they have their needs met. Young people need to be given a voice in decisions affecting their future.

Mr Petrini also argued that young people must be allowed to take a more active role in public debates. It is not right that older people have all the conversations about issues affecting young people. He proposed that at next year's Governing Council each Governor should bring two young farmers, one male and one female. We should allow these young people to speak and we should listen to them.

Ms Kalibata pointed out that some countries, including her own, are putting in place forums where young people are represented, all the way from villages up to Parliament. Ministries are being put in place to define youth issues, and young people are getting involved in institutions. Things are slowly beginning to change.

Mr Cleaver agreed that some governments were starting to implement policies to enable greater inclusiveness of young people, but he noted that progress in most countries was still slow.

## Creating opportunities for young women

*"Many smallholder farmers are women. We need policies which encourage them and remove the specific barriers they face – for example access to land and credit."* – Former United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan in his keynote address at the Governing Council

Ms Kalibata pointed out that women make up a significant portion of the people involved in farming in Africa. Access to finance and rights to land, however, remain extremely unequal. Because of their lack of land rights, women do not have the collateral needed to apply for

formal loans. This is not going to change by accident; we need deliberate programmes and initiatives to ensure that women receive access to land and finance and have the skills to use the land productively. For example, in Rwanda a law has been introduced requiring husbands to have their wife's permission before they can sell or mortgage land. These kinds of initiatives make a significant difference to women's standing in households and to their ability and willingness to invest in the land they farm.

Ms Rivas stated that in Colombia agricultural jobs tend to be carried out by men, while women are expected to occupy themselves with domestic tasks. When women go into agriculture it is mostly out of necessity. Promoting changes to empower women in agriculture is an extremely important issue, and addressing cultural and attitudinal norms is a key aspect of this.

Mr Cleaver remarked that it is not easy to find a balance between respecting cultural norms and empowering women. The first step is to understand women's constraints. The aid business is filled with examples of projects that have failed because of a lack of knowledge of their beneficiaries, especially women.

Mr Petrini added that women always focus on community. Because women's caregiving roles require them to spend a lot of time in the home, we often think of them as marginal in society; this is not accurate. Governments should look at the role of women, their focus on community, as an example to be followed. We must integrate this dimension of community into the modern economy.

Ms Nabiha Faraj Abu Zeid, a young Egyptian woman and rural entrepreneur speaking from the audience, told her story of setting up a rural non-farm business in Egypt. Ms Abu Zeid experienced many difficulties in obtaining a loan for her business, and when she eventually got one, it was for a much smaller sum than she had requested. In addition, the loan conditions were inflexible. As a result she has been unable to expand her business, buy a new machine or offer employment opportunities to local unemployed young people. In her opinion, it is difficult for people to accept a woman working in what would traditionally be a man's domain.

*"It's really hard to obtain a loan. There are extremely inflexible conditions, they want guarantees. Who is going to give me a guarantee?"* – Nabiha Faraj Abu Zeid, speaking from the audience

Ms Kalibata said that Ms Abu Zeid's story is one that many African women can relate to. We have to build capacities step by step. We have to build these capacities in the community, but also with respect to the banking sector. Support from IFAD and other institutions has helped women entrepreneurs with business development centres, providing training and access to finance. Banks have to be taught to view women as people, not just as women.

Ms Marinescu pointed out that in countries where microfinance schemes have targeted women, results have been positive. As a result, women have been able to overcome traditional constraints in starting rural microenterprises.

Ms Anita Derlek, a young organic farming entrepreneur from Bosnia and Herzegovina speaking from the audience, said that financing was not a problem for her, as she was granted a loan by IFAD. In her region of the country many farmers are women. Women farmers are recognized in Bosnia and Herzegovina and do not face the disadvantages they might in other sectors. Many women see working in agriculture as an attractive option.

### **Making funds available to young farmers**

The difficulties faced by young rural women and men in accessing funding, as already touched upon, were identified as a key barrier to establishing vibrant farm and non-farm enterprises.

Mr Nii Amasah Namaole, Deputy Minister of Fisheries of Ghana, speaking from the audience, explained that in his country young people want to work in agriculture, but obtaining credit is very difficult. Funds need to be made available to help young people enter agriculture. Too often, there are large delays between money being granted and being made accessible. Funds should be provided directly to non-governmental organizations specializing in agriculture and young people, thus making the money more easily and quickly accessible.

Ms Rivas suggested that IFAD set up a revolving agricultural fund to reduce the number of intermediaries needed to apply for a loan.

Mr Keith Muhakanizi, Deputy Secretary to the Treasury, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development of Uganda, speaking from the audience, underlined that commercial banks will not invest in agriculture unless it is profitable. We need to develop innovative ideas to leverage private investments into agriculture using public funds.

Professor Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah, speaking from the audience, remarked that the financial system should not use the normal return on investment to assess returns on agricultural investments. Agriculture should be recognized as a special sector, and young people as a special segment.

Mr Cleaver suggested that high prices for agricultural products, while creating difficulties for many people around the world, have the potential to push resources into rural areas and create investment in agriculture. This could create opportunities for young farmers to access funds and establish profitable agribusinesses.

Mr Muhakanizi, speaking from the audience, also expressed the view that higher agricultural product prices are the best thing to have happened to the sector, reducing rural poverty in some areas. Mr de Luna, on the other hand, doubted that high prices for agricultural products were reaching farmers.

## **The role of governments and development agencies**

Mr Cleaver suggested that one of the biggest problems is that policymakers consider agriculture only in terms of the food it produces. They don't look at the household or the community members involved, they don't consider their special opportunities, capacities and constraints. This is the same mistake that we have made with women (we have neglected their special constraints) and it is the fundamental mistake that we are making with young people. We have, in assuming a homogenous household and agricultural sector, simply ignored them.

Mr de Luna carried on from Mr Cleaver's point. If we don't understand the needs of individual household members, we can't design effective programmes and projects for them. If we can be gender sensitive, we can be youth sensitive too. For many years young people have been neglected and have not been included in decision-making processes. This is similar to the situation women have faced; their importance and value are only now beginning to be understood. Previously, women were neglected to the extent that young people are now. We have to promote inclusive and transparent governance.

Ms Marinescu made a number of points on the role of government. First, its role is primarily that of an enabler. It should be seen as a regulatory body, not as a creator of jobs. Second, there is a need for more government presence in rural areas. The opportunity to engage with government acts as an incentive to do business, therefore a greater role for decentralized rural governmental bodies should form part of an enabling rural business environment.

Third, we need to encourage governments to engage in financial partnerships. This helps with efficiency and with transparency of resource use. Fourth, governments should be more creative in engaging with informal businesses, accepting informality as a step on the way to formality. This is essential in allowing small, informal businesses to have the opportunity to grow into formal ones, something that will allow them to provide benefits for their employees such as a guaranteed income and pension schemes.

## Providing young rural women and men with high-quality, relevant education and training

Mr Dasgupta, speaking from the audience, said that in India the education system encourages young people to pursue non-agricultural careers. This has detrimental consequences for the image of the sector.

Mr Jeffrey Luhanga, Controller of Agricultural and Technical Services of Malawi, also speaking from the audience, made a similar point. He said that there must be pride in farming, and in order to achieve this, we must look at education curricula at all levels.

Professor Sheikh Ahmed Abdullah, speaking from the audience, suggested that the period of education should be elongated and interspersed, with more experiential learning in curricula.

Ms Agnes Van Ardenne-Van der Hoeven, Ambassador of the Netherlands, speaking from the audience, shared the successful experience of her country, where farmers send their children to agricultural universities. The young people take their practical experience to university and return to their family farms with scientific knowledge.

Ms Kalibata suggested that agricultural education should be started at a younger age than it is now. This could potentially aid efforts to improve the image of agriculture.

Ms Marinescu suggested that the private sector should be the training provider in rural areas. Governments have limited resources for addressing rural training and development needs, and they should look to the private sector to help them in this area. Incentives need to be in place to encourage private businesses to become involved in rural communities.

During the session, the audience was shown a video about the IFAD-funded project PROSPERER (Programme of Support for Rural Microenterprises and Regional Economies), which targets young people in rural Madagascar. An increasing youth population is putting pressure on the country's job market, which 300,000 young people enter every year. PROSPERER is addressing this by working with small businesses to assess how young people can help fill their labour needs. Under the project, small-scale entrepreneurs train young apprentices in trades such as pottery, agriculture tool-making, shopkeeping, shoemaking, farming and weaving. So far 800 young apprentices have been trained, and the goal is to reach 8,000. It is estimated that 54,000 small businesses will benefit from PROSPERER.

## Giving young women and men access to land

Access to land is important, Ms Rivas asserted. At present there are no clear policies on this; young people need to become old before they have rights to land. Young people need rights to land now.

Mr Oreeditse Molebatsi, Assistant Minister of Agriculture of Botswana, speaking from the audience, added that acquiring land is particularly difficult for both young people and women. In many cases elderly people don't want to pass their wealth on to young people, which makes it difficult for young people to get involved in agriculture. Governments must urgently address this.

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### Box 4

#### A neglected issue: training and employment for people with disabilities

An issue too often neglected is the difficulties faced by men and women with disabilities in rural communities. The audience listened to the story of Mr Sellu Njiawa, who founded an organization for rural disabled people to work in agriculture in Sierra Leone (the Polio Tegloma Association). Mr Njiawa had been granted land by his village chief for cultivating cassava, but he experienced many difficulties in attracting funding for the project. He has received support from IFAD, though more is needed to allow his organization to expand operations and provide training, shelter and employment opportunities. This will enable rural men and women with disabilities the chance to earn a living.

*"We came to the conclusion that instead of us going into the street to beg we just need to embark on cultivating land for ourselves so we can produce things for the market."* – Sellu Njiawa

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Ms Marinescu said by granting property rights to agricultural workers, along with better quality education and social protection schemes, governments would empower a large part of the youth population. Open discussions need to be held to address this political dimension.

### **Closing messages: Engaging young people in smallholder agriculture**

In closing, Ms Makgabo asked the panellists to provide a brief message with their key recommendations for involving young people in the agricultural sector.

- Mr Cleaver affirmed the need for policymakers to be more thoughtful in programming. Programmes must be disaggregated and targeted at different sub-sectors of the population, including disabled people.
- Ms Rivas reiterated that including young people in public decisions at all levels is the key to creating an environment where they can play an active role in developing a profitable agricultural sector.
- Mr Petrini stated that small-scale agriculture is the foundation of our future. We can't afford to underestimate its importance, and policymakers have a duty to protect it.
- Ms Kilabata said we must encourage farmers to join together and form cooperatives to make it easier for them to access extension, inputs, technology and information. As groups they would also be more attractive to banks. She would also like to place more emphasis on understanding how trade affects African agriculture.
- Mr de Luna commented that the prospects for smallholder agriculture will be bleak if governments don't provide the infrastructure necessary for it to thrive. He also said that we need to listen more to young people.
- Ms Marinescu outlined the need for older generations to trust young people. Agriculture, whether small or large scale, is no longer a low-skill industry. It needs innovation, and this is precisely what young people bring to the table.

## II. Proceedings of the Side Events

### Introduction

Four side events were held to provide an opportunity for discussion of issues affecting young rural people in specific regions: Asia and the Pacific; Near East, North Africa and Europe; sub-Saharan Africa; and Latin America and the Caribbean. These side events, continuing the theme of the high-level panel, promoted focused debates on the realities facing young rural people across diverse settings as well as the opportunity to share experiences, challenges, opportunities and success stories.

The topics were:

- Weathering the global economic crisis: Opportunities and challenges for rural young people in the Asia and Pacific region
- Unleashing the potential of young rural people in the Near East, North Africa and Europe
- Rural young people: Investing today for a better tomorrow in sub-Saharan Africa
- Supporting rural youth microenterprise initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean

Background papers were prepared in advance to inform the debate at each side event.

The sections that follow summarize the debates at each of these events.

## Side event 1

# Weathering the global economic crisis: Opportunities and challenges for rural young people in the Asia and Pacific region

**Moderator: Ms Christine Legault**, television journalist and independent conference moderator

**Panellists:**

- **Mr Harsha de Silva**, Member of Parliament, Government of Sri Lanka and Lead Economist, LIRNEAsia, Sri Lanka
- **Mr Soane Patolo**, General Manager, Mainstreaming of Rural Development Innovations (MORDI), Ma'ufanga, Nuku'alofa, Kingdom of Tonga
- **Mr Arindam Dasgupta**, Director, Microenterprise Development and Management Division, Dhriiti – The Courage Within, a partner organization of Sir Ratan Tata Trust, India
- **Ms Nguyen Thi Huong Nguyet**, Marketing Manager, Tan Trao Tea Joint Stock Company, Son Duong Town, Son Duong District, Tuyen Quang Province, Viet Nam
- **Ms Bernadette Manuel**, Proprietor, Seon Kris Food Products Company, Cagtinay, Malimono, Surigao del Norte, The Philippines

Background documentation: [www.ifad.org/gbdocs/gc/34/e/side\\_events.pdf](http://www.ifad.org/gbdocs/gc/34/e/side_events.pdf)

## Context

Young people in the Asia and Pacific region today are the largest and best-educated generation of youth in the region's history. Productivity improvements and some of the fastest-growing economies in the world point to a potentially bright future for young men and women. However, gaps in education quality (particularly between urban and rural centres), high dropout rates, health problems and exploitation of children through child labour are potential roadblocks. Poverty continues to be prevalent in rural areas, which are home to 70 per cent of the region's poor. There is a real risk that young rural men and women will be left behind in the development process. Concrete solutions are needed to ensure that they have the opportunity to realize their potential and contribute to the development of their societies.

The interactive talk-show style event, attended by around 150 people, provided a platform to discuss opportunities and challenges encountered by young rural people in the Asia and Pacific region. In particular, the discussion focused on:

- How to make rural areas more attractive by providing young people with incentives to remain there;
- Opportunities for rural employment in the agriculture and non-agriculture sectors;
- Challenges regarding unemployment and underemployment, starting and running businesses, and access to capital, skills and knowledge;
- Enabling conditions that can make a difference for young rural people in the future.

*“Let us first of all not forget that the 12-year-old secondary school girls and boys today will be the 52-year-old farmers in 2050, the time by which we have to be able to produce 70 per cent more food, with ever scarcer resources. If we do not secure productive rural succession, who will inhabit rural areas? Who will produce the 70 per cent more food we need by 2050?”* – Mr Thomas Elhaut, Director of the Asia and Pacific Division at IFAD

## **Making rural areas more attractive for young people**

Poverty forces many young rural people to flee their homes in search of opportunities in cities. Young rural people often believe that cities offer a higher probability of getting a good job. Both Ms Manuel and Ms Nguyen left their rural homes to study in the city, before eventually returning. Ms Manuel was attracted back by the potential of abundant raw materials, lower production costs and the opportunity to be near her family and friends. Ms Nguyen was unable to find a suitable job in the city after graduating from Hanoi National University. A saturated job market, lack of professional networks and the high cost of living persuaded her to return to her rural home.

Young rural people often have a romantic idea of city life. They imagine bountiful opportunities and sophisticated lifestyles that would be impossible in their rural homes. Many are driven to migrate by the belief that opportunities will be plentiful in the city. Reality quickly sets in. Job markets are extremely competitive, and young people from rural areas frequently lack the training and networks to compete for the limited number of decent jobs available.

It is important to recognize that rural areas can offer attractive livelihood opportunities for young people, particularly those with an entrepreneurial spirit. Mr Dasgupta spoke about taking field trips to rural India during his education and seeing the bountiful natural and human resources. He discovered an opportunity to develop the business sector in rural areas by engaging passionate, innovative young people. It was this experience that prompted him to found Dhriti, an organization that promotes the establishment of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises. The aim is to reduce unemployment and underemployment among young rural Indians.

## **Creating an enabling rural environment**

There is a particular need to provide opportunities for young rural people to develop entrepreneurial skills. Mr Patolo talked about the IFAD-supported MORDI programme, which provides young people in the Pacific with the training and support they need to establish businesses. Similarly, Ms Manuel gets support from her government and the Rural Micro-enterprise Promotion Programme, where she learns business and microenterprise management skills through workshops and seminars. Ms Nguyen’s organization has also received support from an IFAD-funded project providing vocational training for young people.

Cutting down on bottlenecks and bureaucracy must be a priority. In India for example, starting a rural enterprise is a complicated and lengthy process, Mr Dasgupta said. Prospective entrepreneurs must apply to different agencies for a licence, finance and equipment, requiring much travel, paperwork and waiting. If a single agency could handle all these preliminaries and if procedures were simplified and shortened, opening a business would be an easier and more accessible option for rural people.

There was general agreement that capital is an essential component for young people to succeed in rural areas. Mr de Silva called it the single most important factor in creating healthy rural economies. Ms Manuel explained that difficulty in accessing capital was her biggest constraint, preventing her from scaling up and entering export markets. Mr Dasgupta also nominated access to capital as one of the key components in creating a platform for young rural people to build upon with their creativity and innovativeness.

*"I hope that my small company gets support from the government in the form of a loan. This would enable us to widen my factory and production so that we employ more people, and they can have good jobs." – Nguyen Thi Huong Nguyet*

The lack of modern infrastructure was cited as a key barrier for young rural businesspeople. Ms Manuel explained that landslides often washed away wooden bridges in rural areas of the Philippines, leaving her unable to transport her products to customers on her motorcycle. Mr Patolo said that in the Pacific region rural business people were sometimes forced to travel for two to four days to deliver their products to markets. Going to the bank was also a time-consuming job, requiring many hours.

Governments need to provide support to help small farmers withstand shocks. Farming should also be made more interesting through introducing new technologies. In the context of difficult mobility in the Pacific, information should be made available on options for rural people to get their products to market.

We also need to learn from interesting examples of what is happening elsewhere. Thailand, for example, introduced economic stimulus packages to provide safety nets for returning migrants, to help them create jobs and develop rural economies. The Government of China implemented the 'new socialist countryside' policy, and is now making headway with the 'urban-rural integration' policy.

The Government of India has introduced some good policies, such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. It aims to enhance the livelihood security of rural people by guaranteeing 100 days of wage employment in a financial year to each rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

### **Boosting the image of agriculture**

There is a perception that farming is the last option, to be taken up only if one has nothing else to do. In the Pacific, Mr Patolo pointed out, people regard agricultural work as a penalty for not doing well in school. Mr de Silva said that even rich farmers may not feel accepted in society in Sri Lanka, such is the negative image of agriculture. This image must be changed before we can hope to motivate young people to work on creating a modern, profitable agricultural sector.

Traditional farming methods do not appeal to young people. Modern, scientific agriculture, on the other hand, can attract them. Mr Dasgupta explained that once young people start to view farming as a business, things start changing. It is possible to change the image of farming to make it a desirable choice for young people.

### **Promoting microentrepreneurship among young rural people**

Asia and the Pacific is home to around 60 per cent of the world's youth population. Among these young people, unemployment and underemployment are some of the biggest problems.

Promoting microentrepreneurship and microenterprises is the only way out of it, according to Mr Dasgupta. His organization approaches the problem in two ways:

- 'Preventive medicine for unemployment' – working with young people in high schools and colleges to promote the culture of entrepreneurship so they have an alternative option when they finish their education.
- Creating enterprises – working with young rural people to create businesses, focusing on the whole value chain to make these enterprises feasible at the rural level and to provide employment opportunities to a large number of young people.

Experience shows that we need to focus on small microenterprises, not on large corporations.

*“We need to focus on production by the masses and not mass production. We need to focus on those technologies which enable youth to take up small enterprises, prosper and get into value addition. We need to look at the farm and non-farm sectors together. Not commodity production in rural areas and value addition in cities. Value addition should take place in rural areas.”*

– Arindam Dasgupta

Non-farm activities can provide additional opportunities for young people. Development programmes and policies that promote rural enterprises and encourage business development are likely to have pronounced effects. Non-farm businesses help create dynamic rural economies and provide farmers with opportunities to diversify their income and protect themselves from risks. Unfortunately, the survival rate for these businesses is low. But failures provide as many lessons as successes, and we need to learn from them.

### **Creating public-private linkages**

Linking farmers with the private sector is crucial. Ms Nguyen’s company receives support from the Vietnamese government in training, finance and help in accessing national and international markets. The organization provides young farmers with seeds, seedlings and manure fertilizer. There are also opportunities to partner with larger private sector companies to scale up successes, helping more people. With continued government support, Ms Nguyen hopes that her company will increase its workforce from 320 to 600 in the coming years.

There are opportunities to build new skills. Governments can capitalize on the skills of returning migrants and support training and business education to create dynamic rural businesses. Ms Nguyen believes that governments should provide capital to companies so they can organize training directly, rather than provide it through government training centres, as is currently the case in her company. She finds that the training offered does not necessarily meet her needs. If companies could provide training directly, this would improve worker productivity.

Migration presents opportunities and challenges for the rural business sector. On the one hand, it can offer an opportunity for those left behind in rural areas. Remittances from migrant relatives can support secondary education, businesses and other livelihood opportunities for young rural people. On the other hand, the global economic crisis has cost many migrants their urban jobs and led them back home to their rural areas. In India, an organization called Aajeevika Bureau has been set up to provide services and security to seasonal migrants who leave their villages to find work in cities, factories and farms.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

To empower young people to lead development of the farm and non-farm rural sectors, the following conditions were identified during the session as indispensable:

- Availability of decent jobs and opportunities for young people to obtain them
- Modern infrastructure and transport systems
- Access to capital
- Skills training
- Help accessing national and international markets
- Support systems and networks to help young people if they decide to migrate to urban areas.

## Side event 2

# Unleashing the potential of young rural people in the Near East, North Africa and Europe

**Moderator: Ms Lenyara Fundukova**, Officer in the Near East, North Africa and Europe Division of IFAD

### Panellists:

- **Ms Nabiha Abu Zeid**, young entrepreneur from Egypt
- **Ms Abdulla Al Dani**, young entrepreneur from the Syrian Arab Republic
- **Ms Anita Djerlek**, young entrepreneur from Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Mr Milenko Trivunovic**, young entrepreneur from Bosnia and Herzegovina
- **Ms Hanan Mohammad Hazaa Al-Bsoul**, young entrepreneur from Jordan
- **Ms Simona Marinescu**, Senior Economist and Programme Director for Economic Reforms, UNDP Amman; former Minister for Labour and Senator of Romania
- **Ms Daniela Colombo**, President of AIDOS (Italian Association for Women in Development)
- **Ms Dorothea Schmidt**, Senior Employment Specialist, Decent Work Team for North Africa, International Labour Organization (ILO)

This event was attended by an estimated 150 people. Background documentation: [www.ifad.org/events/gc/34/nen/agenda/background\\_nen.pdf](http://www.ifad.org/events/gc/34/nen/agenda/background_nen.pdf)

### Questions to guide discussion

- Given that young people are an asset to society, what factors make their enterprises succeed?
- Is agriculture attractive to young people and is it still relevant for job creation for young rural people?
- What policies and programmes are needed to generate jobs for young rural women and men in the Near East and North Africa region as well as the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States?

### Young people in NENA and Central and Eastern Europe

Population growth in the Near East and North Africa (NENA) region is among the highest in the world. At present, two thirds of the population in NENA is under the age of 30. One hundred million new workers are expected to enter the labour market over the period 2000-2020, and as many jobs need to be created to absorb this labour force. The trend is reversed in Central and Eastern Europe, non-European Union and European Union countries and the Commonwealth of Independent States, where the share of young people in the population is expected to decline by 10 million between 2010 and 2030.

The unemployment rate for young people in NENA is 25 per cent, the highest rate in the world. Young people account for almost 50 per cent of the region's total unemployment. Central and Eastern Europe has the second highest youth unemployment rate in the world, currently at 20 per cent.

## The agricultural sector

Agriculture absorbs a significant share of the labour force in NENA and Central and Eastern Europe. In NENA 99 million workers depend on agriculture for their livelihoods, and in Central and Eastern Europe (non-European Union) 48 million depend on it. The agriculture sector is also where the majority of poor people are concentrated. In general, unemployed young people, women and small-scale farmers constitute the rural poor.

Underemployment, low productivity and working as a contributing family member are prevalent among young rural people. For this reason, the creation of decent employment opportunities in rural areas plays a crucial role in reducing poverty, decreasing the exodus to overcrowded cities and enhancing global food security.

In the last half of 2010, increasing food prices drove an estimated 44 million people into poverty worldwide. Global food markets are extremely volatile, increasing food insecurity. It is crucial to raise investments in environmentally sustainable agricultural productivity and improved living standards for poor rural people.

This can be achieved through development of the agricultural sector, the largest employer in rural areas. It can be boosted by developing non-farm activities that link directly or indirectly with agriculture. By increasing rural incomes, raising labour productivity and strengthening linkages with markets, non-farm activities help to raise the purchasing power of rural households. This in turn raises rural living standards and agricultural productivity.

Creating off-farm activities and enterprises offers attractive career opportunities for young rural people due to an abundant agricultural labour force, lack of certain services in rural areas and the limitations that water scarcity places on raising agricultural productivity. However, a distinction should be made between 'distress-push' factors and 'demand-pull' factors, both of which play an important role in creating rural off-farm work. Distress-push factors are a function of high agricultural unemployment and low access to infrastructure, markets and human capital. Demand-pull factors are a function of links with well-developed markets, high levels of technical innovation and households with access to capital to invest in profitable off-farm enterprises.

## Key points during the discussion

Young rural panellists highlighted the following issues as significant in their careers as entrepreneurs:

- **Access to training:** Quality training and education are hard to find in rural settings. Most young entrepreneurs had acquired the skills relevant for their business through close relatives or training provided by an association. Despite having started their enterprises successfully, they still needed training to improve their skills. Experience suggests that providing young people with practical training and apprenticeships is the best way to increase their employability. In particular, interventions targeted at low-income households or poorly educated young people help to increase young people's employability.
- **Credit terms:** Young rural entrepreneurs need credit at fair terms with reasonable repayment schedules to develop and expand their businesses. Some young entrepreneurs have initiated businesses with small loans obtained through an IFAD co-financed project. By expanding their enterprises, they have been able to provide work for other rural people as well. One of the entrepreneurs employs 250 people, having initially started his business with a loan of only US\$1,000.
- **Marketing constraints:** To expand, rural businesses need access to national and international markets, and they need timely payment for their goods.
- **Greater respect for agricultural work:** Despite the negative perception of their work, the panellists are rewarded by their sense of mission in providing people with nutritious food and caring for the environment.

- **Rural opportunities beyond farming:** Rural employment opportunities are not necessarily limited to agricultural activities. Panellists expressed the desire to continue their careers and expand their enterprises to realize their own dreams and improve living standards in their communities. They expressed optimism about the future.
- **Lack of associations:** A number of young entrepreneurs mentioned that their large social networks – such as family members, educators, sponsors – help to compensate for their lack of professional associations. They are considering establishing associations to provide technical support and marketing opportunities.
- **Need for reforms:** The experiences of these rural young entrepreneurs indicate that distress-push factors play a large role in creating employment opportunities in rural areas of NENA and Central and Eastern Europe. This highlights the necessity of government reforms to create an enabling environment and generate demand-pull factors to expand rural employment opportunities.

Policy experts highlighted the need for:

- Reforms to make the market more attractive to young entrepreneurs and allow the private sector to outsource its activities;
- Balance: between productivity increases and employment generation, and between competitiveness (of the agricultural sector and rural economy) and strengthening solidarity networks;
- Public works programmes, which not only provide a safety net in times of economic crisis, but can also generate employment during the agricultural off-season.

The experts recognize that many young rural people are engaged in the informal economy or work as contributing family workers. Policymakers are still not clear about the measures needed to formalize the informal economy. ILO has launched an apprenticeship programme that provides technical/financial support to enterprises that commit to improving working conditions for employees. ILO records a good response from enterprises.

## Conclusions and recommendations

Young entrepreneurs in NENA and Central and Eastern Europe occupy a vulnerable position in the rural labour market and they are taking a lot of risks. Mr Nadim Khouri, the NENA Division Director, summarized the discussion as follows:

- Young entrepreneurs rely on networks that support their ideas, made up of the family along with governments and other entities. Young entrepreneurs use these networks to share risk.
- For an entrepreneur to succeed, she/he needs capacity, willingness and empowerment.
- Young entrepreneurs need a favourable environment for self-employment, including infrastructure, incentives and access to decent jobs.

Mr Khouri also referred to a growing demand from government partners to address young rural people as part of agricultural and rural development initiatives. The discussion highlighted some of the pathways to do so and the collaborative efforts that will be required.

### Side event 3

# Rural young people: Investing today for a better tomorrow in sub-Saharan Africa

**Session objective:** Elevate and promote smallholder agribusiness and vocational training for rural young people to enhance future livelihood security in the rural economies of sub-Saharan Africa.

**Moderator:** Mr Alex Puissant, television journalist and independent conference moderator

**Panellists:**

- **Reverend Father Godfrey Nzamujo**, founder and director of Songhai Centre, Benin
- **Ms Césarie Kantarama**, farmer and farmers' organization representative, Rwanda
- **Mr Rigobert Maboundou**, Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Republic of Congo
- **Mr Sellu Njiawa**, Chairman of the Polio Tegloma Association, Sierra Leone
- **Mr Mordekai Chikambure Shumba**, President of Organization of African Youth, South Africa
- **Ms Agnes Matilda Kalibata**, Minister of Agriculture and Animal Resources, Rwanda
- **Mr Ali Neino**, farming leader, Dan Saga region, Niger
- **Mr Lucien Ranarivelo**, National Coordinator of PROSPERER, Madagascar

Background documentation: [www.ifad.org/events/gc/34/africa/index.htm](http://www.ifad.org/events/gc/34/africa/index.htm)

### Questions to guide the discussion

- How can we make rural areas more attractive for young people?
- To what extent do national policies and institutional environments promote youth development?
- How can we improve the quality of agricultural and vocational training to contribute to sustainable development in Africa?
- What are the challenges in providing effective and efficient training?
- What role should the private sector play?
- How can we give more voice and choice to youth organizations?
- How can inter-generational transfer of knowledge and skills be promoted?

### Introduction

This interactive panel discussion was jointly organized by the West and Central Africa and the East and Southern Africa Divisions of IFAD. The panel was intergenerational and diverse, including ministers of agriculture, rural youth leaders, farming community leaders, representatives of farmers' organizations and a coordinator of a rural youth employment programme.

The discussion was stimulating and passionate, which was reflected in the engagement of the approximately 300 audience members and the large global virtual audience that followed the discussion through social media. In fact, this side event contributed significantly to the 6,000-plus people who viewed the live webcast and partly to the 712 tweets, which reached more than 400,000 people (and many more through Facebook) during the Governing Council.

The questions from Facebook and Twitter were put to the panel. Two documentary videos were shown, highlighting the future challenges of youth and agricultural development in sub-Saharan Africa and the potential impact of integrated agribusiness training for a new generation of young agricultural entrepreneurs.

In his introductory remarks, Mr Ides de Willebois (Director of IFAD's East and Southern African Division) pointed out that people under the age of 15 constitute about 44 per cent of the population in sub-Saharan Africa, and young people aged 15 to 24 a further 20 per cent. These young people represent a tremendous opportunity and untapped resource for development for the continent. Mr de Willebois challenged the panellists and participants to focus the debate on: *How can we include young people: how can we make them a central part of a better and more successful agricultural and rural development programme to build a better future for all of us?*

At the beginning, panellists provided their views on the current situation for young rural people in Africa. There was general agreement that creating remunerative employment opportunities must be a high priority for government and its partners. Addressing rural-urban migration was also considered to be of utmost importance. Several panellists lauded the creativity, imagination, energy, motivation and dynamism of young people. Harnessing these qualities must be the first priority of governments.

### **Demographics of young African rural men and women**

To develop appropriate solutions for various categories of young women and men, it is important to understand who they are. This was underlined by Father Nzamujo, who talked about the importance of understanding the particular capacities and constraints of different groups of young people and creating opportunities for them to contribute to rural economies.

It was emphasized that young African people are not a homogenous group; they come from diverse backgrounds, ranging from those with university educations to those with little or no formal education, school dropouts, prisoners, children living on the street and former soldiers, among others. Different solutions must be presented for this heterogeneous group.

Other panellists and participants highlighted the need to consider vulnerable young people, including young women and young people with disabilities, in agricultural programmes. Mr Njiawa, representing farmers with disabilities from Sierra Leone, underlined that they can contribute to agricultural development if given an adequate chance. He encouraged governments to do more to support disabled people in rural areas.

Panellists also highlighted the need to empower young women in rural areas, especially those who are at risk of being marginalized, such as single mothers. Specifically, they need training and awareness-raising campaigns on issues such as HIV/AIDS, maternal mortality and child nutrition so they can address their own and their children's health needs.

### **Changing perceptions of African agriculture as a business for young people**

Several participants believed that, contrary to conventional wisdom, young rural people did not view agriculture as a 'dirty profession'.

*"I have been listening to a lot of speakers, and most of them seem to think that young people regard agriculture as a dirty profession. That is ill-informed, that is wrong, and it is so unfair. Agriculture is not only about tilling land, it is about marketing the product, surveying the land, it is about mechanical engineering: fixing those tractors and all those kind of things. So to say young people do not want opportunities such as agriculture is nonsense." – Mr Mordekai Chikambure Shumba*

Minister Sesay (Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security in Sierra Leone) discussed the perception in African schools that agricultural work is a form of punishment. Children grow up

with the mentality that agriculture is an unattractive profession. This suggests the need to change the misperception many people have of agriculture. This might take some form of rebranding. There was general consensus that agriculture should be promoted as a business. It was stressed that with the right enabling environment, including relevant skills training, young people can become successful business or agricultural entrepreneurs.

Father Nzamujo highlighted the need to give young people opportunities to build their capacities, providing them with skills and technical information to enable them to take the lead in agricultural development initiatives.

*“Songhai has seen the necessity to build around these young people a new type of capacities to enable them to become a part of the solution, to really be in the driver’s seat. They need an enabling environment and an innovative institution that will galvanize all those energies. So that is what Songhai is doing, making sure that the enabling environment is created and they are incubated to become real active forces to transform our society.”* – Father Godfrey Nzamujo

Mr Bakary (Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, the Gambia) stressed the need to prioritize agriculture. Many governments are renegeing on their commitments (made in the 2003 Maputo Declaration) to dedicate at least 10 per cent of their national budgets to agriculture. Therefore, the focus should be on changing attitudes so that farming is seen as a business to ensure it becomes attractive to young people. It was generally agreed that prioritizing youth development was a very smart investment that will be highly respected by all young people in Africa.

## Challenges

- **Access to land:** There was widespread agreement that access to land is the first key challenge to be overcome before concrete economic opportunities can be created for young rural people. Mr Ranarivelo mentioned that the project he directs (PROSPERER) was facilitating the installation of young farmers on four- to five-hectare plots, but he underlined that land preparation and start-up costs were very high. Facilitating access to land was crucial to promote agriculture as a viable profession among young people. The need to enable young people to access arable land was highlighted by panellists and members of the audience.
- **Access to finance:** A second key challenge is facilitating access to finance for young farmers. There was general agreement on the need to increase the availability of targeted loan facilities and to simplify the loan application process. The importance of developing policy on agricultural financing and mobilizing private sector financing in agriculture must be emphasized. If agriculture becomes productive and profitable, financial institutions will want to invest in it. Ms Kalibata urged those present to promote young farmers’ savings mechanisms, as capital is expensive and not always available.
- **Quality training:** The need to ensure the quality of training programmes was highlighted by the panel as another top priority. Mr Shumba stated that most vocational training programmes do not cover all the areas that young people need. It was emphasized that training was one of the key solutions to equip young people with the skills required to take advantage of opportunities in rural areas. The importance of promoting informal means of learning was also discussed.
- **Needs of people with disadvantages:** In addition, particular attention must be given to the specific needs of young people facing particular disadvantages. Mr Njiawa stressed the need to build permanent skills training centres for people with disabilities.
- **Farmers’ organizations:** Another important challenge was increasing youth participation in farmers’ organizations. Greater participation of young people in leadership positions was thought to be essential in developing partnerships with government and creating the enabling environment essential to harnessing the potential of young people.

- **Implementation of treaties:** It was revealed that most African governments are slow in both ratifying and implementing international treaties, conventions and charters that concern young people. Mr Shumba stated that after nearly a decade of effort by the African Union to promulgate the African Youth Charter, very few governments have signed or implemented it.

## Opportunities

The following opportunities were identified to promote the inclusion of young people in the development of rural centres:

- There was a general consensus that harnessing new technological solutions presented great potential for extending best agricultural practices to rural youth.
- Mr Shumba highlighted the need to make rural living more attractive for young people and encouraged governments to pay special attention to this aspect. Entertainment has the potential to improve the liveability of rural centres.
- Ms Kalibata believed that Facebook could be a valuable tool for governments to interact with young rural people.
- Ms Kantarama underlined the potential positive role of public works projects such as road construction and maintenance in creating employment opportunities. She encouraged governments and their partners to increase funding for these types of initiatives.
- Mr Neino cited the benefits to young farmers' groups from the establishment of private initiatives called *Appui Conseil Techniques* in Niger. These peer-to-peer advisory mechanisms promote the adoption of productivity-enhancing practices among young farmers.
- Other opportunities include developing agricultural video games that could both teach and entertain young people.

## Conclusions and the recommendations

There was general consensus that young people are willing to stay in rural areas if they are given opportunities and the necessary enabling environment. The concluding message of each panellist is highlighted below:

- **Father Nzamujo:** There is a need to create 'green rural cities' through an integrated system in which agricultural production triggers agro-industries and services to become economically viable and persuade young people to stay in rural areas.
- **Ms Kantarama:** Agriculture and farmers' organizations can become sustainable and effective only if young people are included in development initiatives.
- **Mr Maboundou:** We have to treat the specific conditions of young people by developing concrete actions for productive agriculture involving partnership with governments, the private sector and donors to build a critical network of young farmers.
- **Mr Njiawa:** Disability issues should be included in government development policies as well as in governance systems to ensure that the specific needs of people with disabilities are addressed.
- **Mr Ranarivelo:** There is a need to trust and believe in the potential of young people and expand their opportunities to enhance their entrepreneurial spirit.
- **Mr Neino:** Governments should support young people and farmers to give them better access to services including extension, research findings and training to improve their productivity.
- **Ms Kalibata:** Governments should embrace social media as an opportunity to reach out to many young people and provide them with information. Governments and donors should help create platforms for young people in agriculture. This is the way forward for engaging young people.
- **Mr Shumba:** The challenges in agriculture are huge and young people must take the driver's seat to reinvent and reinvigorate the sector.

## Side event 4

# Supporting rural youth microenterprise initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean – suggestions and recommendations from young entrepreneurs

**Moderator: Mr Juan Moreno**, Director of the Learning Routes Training Programme, PROCASUR, Chile

### Panellists:

- **Ms Gislane Angélica Dos Santos**, Process Management Technician, Vale do Rio Gavião Cooperative Network, Bahia, Brazil
- **Ms Isaura Mariela Quintero Melgara**, Treasurer of La Quinta Libre Cooperative, Estela, Nicaragua
- **Ms Alexandra Bohorquez**, Legal Representative, Ramiriqui Artisans' Associations (ARTERAMI), Boyacá, Colombia
- **Ms Leidy Dayana Rivera Rivas**, Rural Representative, Association of Small Coffee Growers (ASOPECAM), Colombia
- **Ms Sandra Guadalupe Sandoval**, local manager of an agricultural and fishery cooperative association in El Salvador

Background documentation: [www.ifad.org/events/gc/34/lac/brochure\\_e.pdf](http://www.ifad.org/events/gc/34/lac/brochure_e.pdf)

## Context

With the goal of broadening IFAD's support to young rural people involved in microenterprises and agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean, this well-attended event brought together five emerging rural youth leaders from across the region. They discussed the challenges and opportunities facing young rural entrepreneurs.

The event was a continuation of IFAD's ongoing dialogue with young farmers and entrepreneurs in Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2009, the PROCASUR Corporation's Global Learning Innovation and Young Talent in the Rural World Project (Young Rural Talents) was carried out with the support of IFAD's Innovation Mainstreaming Initiative. The objective was to develop a competition among young rural entrepreneurs involving their innovative strategies, for the purpose of identifying successful initiatives involving young people in Latin America. Two conferences on the subject of enterprising youth were also held in Colombia in 2010.

The side event, held in the style of a talk show before 120 people, built on the concepts and lessons from the Young Rural Talents Project and the Colombia conferences. It was moderated by Mr Juan Moreno, Director of the Learning Routes Training Programme. Ms Josefina Stubbs, Director of IFAD's Latin America and the Caribbean Division, introduced the side event, and Mr Jacobo Regalado, Honduran Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, provided the closing comments. A short video highlighting the various enterprises of the panellists was shown at the beginning.

The conversation centred on finding solutions to six challenges facing young rural people in Latin America (detailed below). The young panellists provided their recommendations and reflections on a range of topics, from venture capital and risk to asset creation and education.

## Engaging young people as key actors

*"We want to find a way for these young talents to find a future in rural areas... We want to listen to young people. We want to know how we can work better in our projects to engage with young people. We want to find a way to ensure that young people are direct beneficiaries of our funding."* – Josefina Stubbs, IFAD, Director of Latin America and the Caribbean Division

Mr Moreno, in outlining the details of the Young Rural Talents Project, highlighted one of the key problems in project design: While young people are involved in microenterprises and in the associations engaged by IFAD, they are not being engaged as key actors and agents in the development process.

He went on to outline three challenges facing young people: access to land, access to financial services and access to business services targeted at rural and microenterprise development. In confronting these challenges, Mr Moreno said, IFAD funding should be used to build capacities and the self-esteem of young people, strengthen pro-youth policy dialogue, engage youth in this dialogue and leverage South-South cooperation as a functional tool for learning.

*"Young people are especially sensitive to the issues of conservation and protection of natural resources... Youth is where the new rural society will be found."* – Juan Moreno, Director PROCASUR

## Defining the challenges

The side event was a panel discussion of the six main challenges facing young people in the region. Before each section, Mr Moreno outlined the challenges and then engaged a young entrepreneur in outlining solutions and examples from her experience.

The six main challenges confronting young rural entrepreneurs in Latin America and the Caribbean are:

1. There is little recognition of or attention paid to the potential, capacity and specificities of young rural people within institutions or communities.
2. The urban/rural dichotomy tends to limit economic activities in rural territories to farming activities, which does not reflect the diversity of productive interests among young people.
3. The scarcity or lack of assets – capital, property, technical expertise, infrastructure and fair pay – is a major constraint on productive activity and entrepreneurial initiatives.
4. There is little recognition of organizational diversity in the dynamics of production and microenterprise initiatives, which limits the integration of young people into rural development programmes.
5. Access to education and knowledge tends to be provided within formal school systems, which are not yet responsive to young people's labour conditions or needs (in terms of productive activities and vocational training) or the competencies required in their environment.
6. Limited market access seriously constrains the growth of youth enterprises.

### **Challenge 1: There is little recognition of or attention paid to the potential, capacity and specificities of young rural people within institutions or communities.**

Before engaging Ms Sandoval on this topic, Mr Moreno highlighted some potential obstacles, namely that youth is a transitional stage. Governments and international organizations pay little attention to young people because they become adults so quickly. In the rural context, young people are being asked to perform adult tasks (like taking on seasonal work), but they are not given the same rights, autonomy or opportunities as adults.

According to Ms Sandoval, there are few spaces for young people, and votes of confidence from adult counterparts are few and far between. Her suggestion was to follow the same strategy her association used to bring women into the mix, with each member asking a woman (or in this case a young person) to join the cooperative:

*“Adults don’t want us to take what they have built... But you need to give us space for this; we want to work with adults.”* – Sandra Sandoval

**Challenge 2: The urban/rural dichotomy tends to limit economic activities in rural territories to farming activities, which does not reflect the diversity of productive interests among young people.**

Before asking Ms Bohorquez to provide her recommendations on this topic, Mr Moreno highlighted the fact that farming holds little appeal for young people – it is hard work, low pay and high risk. The division between urban and rural spheres also leaves young people in a limbo of sorts. Many already live in intermediate cities of 20,000 to 50,000 inhabitants and work in marketing or processing produce while still maintaining links with their families in the countryside.

According to Ms Bohorquez, there needs to be a change in young people’s mentality, which calls for creation of more platforms for dialogue. Access to land and credit is challenging for young people in Colombia, thus Ms Bohorquez is working in crafts to diversify her income. Her organization is also building a website to promote its crafts as well as tourism opportunities.

**Challenge 3: The scarcity of assets – capital, property, technical expertise, infrastructure and fair pay – is a major constraint on productive activity and entrepreneurial initiatives by young people.**

**Challenge 4: There is little recognition of organizational diversity in the dynamics of production and microenterprise initiatives, which limits the integration of young people into rural development programmes.**

Some of the obstacles highlighted included lack of collateral, the limited number of programmes that facilitate young people’s access to the means of production and financial services, limited integration of young people into productive processes (young people tend to be labourers, not stakeholders) and territorial issues (most of the land is in the hands of people over 60, a major cause of outmigration by Latin American rural youth).

Few young people are members of associations, and youth associations tend to have short life spans, as young people are highly dynamic and mobile. This topic was tackled by Ms Rivas, who argued that ensuring access to credit and resources, especially venture capital, is crucial. This full integration of young people as key actors will help promote sustainability. But she underscored that young people want tangible indicators, they want to be partners in the process, and for that they need access to capital resources. This can be supported by promoting policy dialogue on issues like land access and financial services.

*“We want concrete actions, because being young lasts a short time.”* – Leidy Dayana Rivera Rivas

**Challenge 5: Access to education and knowledge for young rural people tends to be provided within formal school systems, which are not yet responsive to young people’s labour conditions or needs (in terms of production and vocational training) or the competencies required in their environment.**

Mr Moreno pointed out that education can be used as a tool to overcome this challenge. Ms Dos Santos responded to this obstacle, recommending the strengthening and promotion of

agro-technical schools. She pointed out that in Brazil there are schools where people can work in the field for half of the month, then attend classes for the other half.

More educational opportunities are essential, but they do not necessarily need to take place in a school setting. The countryside itself can be a wonderful laboratory, but young people need access to instruments of technical capacity-building to take full advantage of this open-air laboratory.

Also important is the recommendation that IFAD lift its requirement to channel investments through groups or associations. The organization should look towards investment in individual enterprises as a functional means to overcome this challenge.

#### **Challenge 6: Limited market access seriously constrains the growth of youth enterprises.**

Limited capital and productive infrastructure, quality control regulations and poor market knowledge all present stumbling blocks for young people to overcome this market challenge. Ms Melgara responded by noting that one of the principal problems is that mainly adults, not young people, have access to the best markets. Similarly, young people have little access to credit. While this could appear to be a lose-lose situation, she pointed out that value-added products may allow young innovators easier access to markets. By strengthening value chains and giving comprehensive backing to economic, social and cultural systems, there is an opportunity to engage young entrepreneurs as key links between farms and markets and between staple commodities and value-added products.

#### **Comments and reflections**

Mr Roberto Haudry, IFAD Country Programme Manager for Colombia and Peru, underlined the importance of providing venture capital for young people. This was followed by a question from the Argentinian Chargés d'affaires ad interim, Ms Maria del Carmen Squeff, who requested that conclusions from this debate be brought to IFAD's Executive Board.

Mr Manuel Oliva, Director of the Office of Rural Development from the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of El Salvador, said we need to see young women and men as business people. Ms Stubbs responded by underscoring that IFAD is already opening new opportunities for young people and exploring the possibilities of extending venture capital to both associations and individuals. A project under design in Honduras will include a venture-capital component.

To wrap up the meeting, the Minister of Agriculture of Honduras, Mr Jacobo Regalado, said this is a challenge not just for IFAD, but also for governments. He also said that knowledge is key to surmounting these challenges.

#### **Conclusions and recommendations**

Key themes of the event were the (1) willingness of young people to accept risk, (2) need for increased flows of venture capital to start-up entrepreneurs, (3) importance of ensuring market access and playing an active role in value chains, (4) potential benefits of better education and dialogue platforms and (5) need to extend project interventions beyond associations by targeting individuals.

Conclusions from the event are as follows:

- Young people need help to access knowledge, information, financial services and markets.
- Indifference and lack of empathy for young people has led to barriers to their participation in the economic, political and social life of their societies.
- Young people are open to new ideas and technologies. They can act as a bridge between rural communities and a globalized world.
- Modes of support that are effective for adults do not necessarily work for young people.
- Listening to and empathizing with young people is crucial. Only then will it be possible to assess the effectiveness of what has been done and decide what to do next.
- Young people should be seen as an opportunity to invest in the future.

## Annex I

# Profiles of panellists for main plenary session

**Ms Tumi Makgabo**, *Broadcaster, international producer and presenter*

Named a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum in 2008, Ms Makgabo has received numerous international broadcasting awards, including the African People's Intercontinental Broadcaster of the Year award. She has been a broadcaster for more than a decade, in South Africa and for the global network CNN International. There, as an anchor in Atlanta, Ms Makgabo co-produced and hosted the network's award-winning programme *Inside Africa*. It provided global viewers with a fresh look at economic, social and cultural affairs and trends on the continent. She has interviewed a number of world leaders, including President Nelson Mandela, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, President George W. Bush, Prime Minister Tony Blair and the Dalai Lama.

**Ms Agnes Matilda Kalibata**, *State Minister for Agriculture, Rwanda*

Ms Kalibata has a doctorate from the Department of Plants, Soils and Insect Science at the University of Massachusetts and a master of science from the Department of Crop Science at Makerere University, Kampala. After completing her doctorate she returned to Uganda and worked for seven years as a scientist for the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture. Next she managed a World Bank project in Uganda. She was appointed Secretary General of the Rwandan Ministry of Agriculture in June 2006, a job she held for two years until her promotion to her present position in March 2008.

**Mr Noel de Luna**, *Alternate Permanent Representative of the Philippines to IFAD*

Mr de Luna is the Deputy Permanent Representative to FAO and IFAD at the Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines in Rome. He has been Agricultural Attaché and Acting Alternate Governor for the Philippines to IFAD for the past 17 years. He also sits on the Executive Board of the World Food Programme. Mr De Luna has been extensively involved in land issues at FAO, playing an active role during the International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2007. He has also been active in the evaluation and reform process at FAO.

**Ms Simona Marinescu**, *Senior Economist and Programme Director for Economic Reforms, UNDP Iraq*

Before joining UNDP, Ms Marinescu was Secretary of State for Social Protection in her native Romania and a member of the Romanian Senate, where she served as President of the Labour and Social Affairs Committee. In that capacity she coordinated social reforms for labour market development, youth integration and social welfare and pension schemes. Earlier she was a social protection specialist with the Human Development Unit of the World Bank's Middle East and North Africa region.

**Mr Carlo Petrini**, *Founder of the International Slow Food Movement*

In 1986 Mr Petrini founded the International Slow Food Movement, which promotes sustainable foods, small-scale producers and environmentally friendly production techniques. He is a leader in the international debate about food ethics, advocating that food should be delicious, produced in an environmentally friendly way and provide fair prices for producers. He is an expert on food value chains, the international food trade and food production. He started a campaign in the United States advocating for every school to have a garden.

**Ms Leidy Dayana Rivera Rivas**, *Rural Youth Representative, Association of Small Coffee Growers (ASOPECAM), Colombia*

Ms Rivera Rivas, a young rural development leader, works as coordinator for quality certification for ASOPECAM. It provides economically viable and sustainable agro-business opportunities for rural people, with a particular focus on young people and women. Ms Rivera Rivas provides technical advice on the management of agroecological coffee using a knowledge-sharing approach. As a member of a local youth group for the past three years, she has taken part in events on various rural development issues.

**Mr Kevin Cleaver**, *Associate Vice-President, Programme Management, IFAD*

Mr Cleaver manages the department that handles IFAD's operations worldwide. Before joining IFAD in 2006, he worked for the World Bank as Director for Agriculture and Rural Development and Director of Sustainable Development in Europe and Central Asia. He has written many books and articles on agriculture and rural development and has lived and worked throughout sub-Saharan and northern Africa.

## Annex II

# Profiles of young rural leaders contributing to the main plenary session discussion

**Mr Arindam Dasgupta**, *Co-founder of Dhriiti, a training organization for young rural people in India*

Mr Dasgupta currently serves as Director of Dhriiti's Microenterprise Development and Management Division, which is working to set up clusters of small enterprises in rural and peri-urban areas. Dhriiti addresses unemployment and underemployment among young, rural Indians by promoting the establishment of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises. The organization trains young people in entrepreneurial skills, with a goal of creating employment for themselves and others. Dhriiti's services cover all aspects of enterprise start-up, development and expansion. It helps to set up the value chain and supply chains of new enterprises and create financial and market linkages, and it provides training and institutional development assistance. Mr Dasgupta holds a master's degree in business administration.

**Ms Anita Derlek**, *Organic farming entrepreneur from Bosnia and Herzegovina*

Ms Derlek, along with her mother, started and runs a successful agribusiness specializing in organic products. Started with limited funds, the business was inspired by Ms Derlek's observation of organic farming in Germany, where she and her family lived during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the 1990s. The business, which took five years to be established and converted from a conventional farm to an organic one, sells a range of products including vegetables, cereals and medicinal herbs. Microloans have enabled Ms Derlek to further diversify and expand operations by purchasing two cows and more land to launch raspberry production. The agribusiness rents agricultural machinery and sells its products directly to customers.

**Ms Nabiha Faraj Abu Zeid**, *Rural non-farm entrepreneur from Egypt*

Ms Abu Zeid, 28, took up woodworking, learned from her stepmother, after she and her young son took refuge with her father and stepmother following abandonment by her husband. Her stepmother had recently learned the trade from Ms Abu Zeid's father, a retired woodworker, and set up a successful microenterprise selling decorative wooden household objects and kitchen utensils. She was helped by a microloan from the Community Development Association of Al Ghanayem, which is partly funded by IFAD. Not wanting to be a burden, Ms Abu Zeid followed in her stepmother's footsteps, learning how to craft wood products and obtaining a micro-loan from the same association. She now earns a monthly income of around EGP 1600 (approximately \$182). She and her stepmother hope to employ young people to help them expand their business and access markets in Egypt and neighbouring countries.

**Mr Sellu Njiawa**, *Chairperson of agricultural cooperative for rural people with disabilities in Sierra Leone*

Mr Njiawa is the Chairperson of the Polio Teghloma Association in Kailahun District of Sierra Leone. The organization, formed in 2004, works with physically challenged people and their dependents. Its members, who are typically marginalized by society, are currently engaged in cassava production and processing. Because Kailahun District was the home district of anti-government rebels, it has seen much suffering and has the highest incidence of disability as a result of the war. Mr Njiawa's dream is to establish a cassava processing centre with modern packaging facilities.

**Ms Sandra Guadalupe Sandoval Orellana**, *Local manager of an agricultural and fishery cooperative association in El Salvador*

Ms Sandoval is the local director of the Tepemachines rural fishery cooperative. She joined the cooperative at age 17, working in production and marketing. She has wide knowledge of production techniques, marketing and business management. To operate her business, Ms Sandoval has had to overcome the obstacles of being both young and female. She also works as a youth group leader for her church and as secretary of the board of a group that manages community drinking water.

**Mr Pheap Sochea**, *President, Cambodia Indigenous Youth Association*

Mr Sochea, also a member of the United Nations Indigenous Youth Caucus, previously worked as a programme officer for the Southeast Asian Development Programme. There he focused on empowering indigenous populations through land rights and sustainable farming. He is also currently President of the ASPECA Student Centre, an organization that supports poor and vulnerable students to complete their studies. He has a degree in agricultural economics and rural development.

## Annex III

# Profiles of panellists for the Asia and Pacific side event

**Ms Christine Legault**, *Freelance television news correspondent/producer*

In recent years Ms Legault has reported on international topics such as the G8 Summit in L'Aquila and the World Food Summit. She has worked for international news networks in Canada, Europe and the Middle East. She is trained in applied communications and journalism and is a qualified teacher.

**Mr Arindam Dasgupta**, *Co-founder of Dhriiti, a training organization for young rural people in India*  
See Annex II

**Ms Bernadette Manuel**, *Rural entrepreneur from the Philippines*

This young entrepreneur from Cagtinae, Malimono, Surigao del Norte began in the food industry. A desire to pursue a career in business and difficulty finding a decent job led her to start her own enterprise. In May 2008 she started Seon Kris Food Products, which currently has seven employees, by selling peanut rolls while attending college. Ms Manuel, 26, studied at the Agusan Institute of Technology in Butuan City.

**Ms Nguyen Thi Huong Nguyet**, *Marketing Manager, Tan Trao Tea Joint Stock Company, Viet Nam*  
Ms Nguyen, 30 years old, has completed five business and management certificates from various institutions. The most recent one, from the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 2009, is focused on pro-poor farmers' markets. As Marketing Manager at Tan Trao Tea Joint Stock Company, she works with young people daily. She obtained a bachelor's degree in English from Hanoi National University in 1999.

**Mr Soane Patolo**, *General Manager of the IFAD-funded MORDI programme in Tonga*

Passionate about rural development issues, Mr Patolo earned a bachelor's degree in resource studies from New Zealand's Lincoln University, where he majored in environmental studies, policy and planning and social development. His professional experience includes various positions in education and administration. He has been General Manager of the IFAD-funded MORDI programme since 2007.

**Mr Harsha de Silva**, *Development economist, entrepreneur and Member of Parliament in Sri Lanka*

Mr de Silva has professional experience as a university professor, an information and communications technology consultant for international agencies and a popular talk-show host. Since 2004 he has been Lead Economist at LIRNEAsia, which runs information and communications technology research projects in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Mr de Silva holds a doctorate from the University of Missouri and has completed executive training at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

## Annex IV

# Profiles of panellists for the Near East, North Africa and Europe side event

**Ms Lenyara Fundukova**, *Moderator*

Ms Fundukova joined IFAD in 2003 as Gender Programme Coordinator and is presently Grants and Systems Coordinator for the Near East, North Africa and Europe Division. Previously, she was an Operations Manager for the United Nations Office for Project Services in Bangladesh and worked for UNDP in Ukraine. She is currently pursuing a doctorate in business administration, focusing her research on organizational change.

**Ms Hanan Mohammad Hazaa Al-Bsoul**, *Young entrepreneur from Jordan*

Ms Hazaa Al-Bsoul has a small shop in her rural village selling women's clothes and accessories. She received training through AIDOS, which is supported by IFAD.

**Mr Abdulla Al Dani**, *Young entrepreneur from the Syrian Arab Republic*

Mr Al Dani owns a thriving mosaic and stone artwork business, having learned the skills for his business from his mother. He started his business with a \$1,000 loan from an IFAD-supported programme, and the company now employs 250 workers. Around 50 families have been trained and employed by the Al Dani Company.

**Ms Daniela Colombo**, *President, AIDOS, Italy*

In 1981 Ms Colombo founded AIDOS, an international non-governmental organization that works to improve the lives of women in the developing world. She has been both President and a Member of the Executive Board of UN INSTRAW, the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and has worked for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (both of which are now part of UN-Women). She is considered an expert on the status of women in developing countries. She completed postgraduate studies in economic development at the University of California after obtaining a degree in political science from Padova University in Italy.

**Ms Anita Djerlek**, *Agribusiness owner from Bosnia and Herzegovina*

See Annex II

**Ms Nabiha Faraj Abu Zeid**, *Young entrepreneur from Egypt*

See Annex II

**Ms Simona Marinescu**, *Senior Economist and Programme Director for Economic Reforms, UNDP Iraq*

See Annex I

**Ms Dorothea Schmidt**, *Senior Employment Specialist, Decent Work Team for North Africa, ILO*

Before her career at ILO, Ms Schmidt was a research assistant at the University of Freiburg, Faculty of Economics. Since 2001 she has worked for the ILO's Employment and Labour Market Analysis Department. She co-authored the World Employment Report 2004-2005, Employment, Productivity and Poverty Reduction. Her contribution focused on the regional analysis of labour markets as well as the role of agriculture in development. She is also one of the main authors of the ILO's yearly publication Global Employment Trends.

**Mr Milenko Trivunovic**, *Young entrepreneur from Bosnia and Herzegovina*

Mr Trivunovic received a loan of \$2,000 from IFAD, which he used to buy a tractor for ploughing, cultivating and collecting hay. He currently owns 10 milk cows, 2 female calves (which he intends to keep for reproduction), 1 sow and 130 sheep. The milk cows produce over 200 litres of milk daily. He also owns a mower, truck, milking machines and fodder mill. Mr Trivunovic cultivates around five hectares of land per year, mostly for hay, and grows vegetables for his family's consumption.

## Annex V

# Profiles of panellists for the sub-Saharan Africa side event

**Mr Alex Puissant**, *Television journalist and independent conference moderator*

A multilingual communications professional, Mr Puissant has extensive experience as a news anchorman and European affairs correspondent. He worked with the public broadcasting company VRT in Belgium from 1989 to 2007, conducting interviews with well-known personalities such as President Pervez Musharraf, President Nicolas Sarkozy, Colonel Muammar el-Qaddafi, Umberto Eco and Mohamed ElBaradei. Mr Puissant has also moderated sessions and organized interactive debates at conferences held by leading global corporations and international organizations, including the European Union and the United Nations. He has chaired sessions that included diverse speakers as President Václav Havel, Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and Bill Gates.

**Ms Agnes Matilda Kalibata**, *State Minister for Agriculture, Rwanda*

See Annex I.

**Ms Cesaire Kantarama**, *Farmer and rural leader in Rwanda*

Ms Kantarama is a farmer specializing in development of new agricultural practices in cassava and maize production, in collaboration with the Rwandan Institute of Agriculture Research. She has been active in agricultural leadership and promotion of farmer groups and cooperatives and in representing the interests of women farmers. Ms Kantarama has been Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Board Member and women's representative on a range of farmers' organizations and associations over the past decade. She has also won prizes at international agricultural competitions in Canada and Belgium.

**Mr Rigobert Maboundou**, *Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Republic of Congo*

Before his appointment as Minister in 2007, Mr Maboundou was Assistant Professor of Economics at Marien Ngouabi University (Republic of Congo). He also served as Director of Cabinet for both the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (2003-2007) and the National Council of Transition (1998-2002). He has been a Cabinet Member at the Ministry of Economics, Finance and Budget. He holds a doctorate in economics from the University of Grenoble in France.

**Mr Ali Neino**, *Young farmer and leader in rural Nigeria*

Mr Neino represents the interests of villagers and farmers in various capacities. He trains and mentors farmers, helps them to introduce new production strategies and monitors and evaluates local development projects. He is also General Secretary of the Advocacy Committee of villages in Dan Saga (covering six villages) and president of the peasant group supporting the targeting of the village development programmes.

**Mr Sellu Njiawa**, *Chairperson of agricultural cooperative for disabled rural people in Sierra Leone*

See Annex II

**Father Godfrey Nzamujo**, *Director of the Training Centre for Agri-entrepreneurs in Benin*

Father Nzamujo founded and directs the Songhai Regional Centre, a training centre for young agricultural entrepreneurs. Songhai has been promoted as a Centre for Excellence for Africa by the United Nations and is being replicated in various countries across the continent. He has worked in numerous fields relating to agricultural development, including integrated farming systems, biological sciences in African sub-systems and engineering. He holds several degrees, including a doctorate in economic philosophy.

**Mr Lucien Ranarivelo**, *National coordinator of training and apprenticeship programme for rural young people in Madagascar*

Mr Ranarivelo is National Programme Coordinator of the IFAD-funded PROSPERER project in Madagascar. He was trained as an agronomist at the Graduate School of Agricultural Sciences in Madagascar and completed a postgraduate degree in marine resource management at the University of Quebec in Canada. He has worked in various capacities with agricultural research bodies, private institutions and development agencies in rural Madagascar.

**Mr Moderkai Chikambure Shumba**, *Youth activist in South Africa*

Mr Shumba currently divides his time between studies for an economics degree at the University of South Africa; engagements with the Organisation of African Youth (OAYouth), Human Rights Education Centre of Southern Africa, Anti-Corruption Trust of Southern Africa and Southern African Women's Association; and his position as line manager at a major supply-chain service provider. Originally from Zimbabwe, he was forced to flee to South Africa, where he has worked for various forums and associations supporting Zimbabwean people living in South Africa.

## Annex VI

# Profiles of panellists for the Latin America and Caribbean side event

**Mr Juan Moreno**, *Moderator*

Mr Moreno is currently Director of PROCASUR, where he has been in charge of learning on topics such as innovations in rural microfinance and learning and innovating from local talents. He has served as a consultant for IFAD, UNDP, the Andean Development Corporation and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture. He focuses on the design, implementation and evaluation of projects targeted at poor rural populations, especially farmers and indigenous people.

**Ms Yanni Alexandra Bohorquez Moreno**, *Legal Representative, Association of Craftspeople*

After graduating from high school in rural Colombia, Ms Bohorquez moved to the city to study tourism and communication systems. She then returned to her home to work for the municipality's Office of Culture and Tourism. There she became involved with local artisans and came up with the idea of forming the Association of Craftspeople. Since then she has continued to expand her knowledge by attending courses in diverse subjects such as public management, product design and marketing. She takes part in the IFAD-sponsored *Oportunidades Rurales* programme, attending workshops and forums on topics pertaining to rural leadership.

**Ms Isaura Mariela Quintero Melgara**, *Treasurer, Cooperative of Free La Quinta*

Despite limited previous experience in accounting and finance, Ms Melgara has assumed responsibility for the bookkeeping of a rural Nicaraguan cooperative. She is also gaining practical knowledge about production and marketing of beans. Ms Melgara is active in her community, participating in regional citizen meetings and taking part in decision-making processes. She also works in local preschools and teaches classes in dance, drama and singing to children.

**Ms Leidy Dayana Rivera Rivas**, *Rural Youth Representative, Association of Small Coffee Growers, Colombia (ASOPECAM)*

See Annex I

**Ms Sandra Guadalupe Sandoval Orellana**, *Local Manager, Agricultural and Fishery Cooperative Association, the Tepemechines, El Salvador*

See Annex II

**Ms Gislane Angelica dos Santos**, *Process Management Technician, Cooperative Network of Vale Do Rio*

Ms dos Santos works for a network of agricultural cooperatives in the rural community of Boa Sorte in Brazil's Bahia State. She develops new projects and promotes the inclusion of young people and women. As a child, Ms dos Santos worked in the fields with her parents and had difficulty attending school regularly. In 2006 she served as an intern with the Cooperative Network of Vale Do Rio, learning management and administration as well as technical production techniques. This experience provided the skills she needed to rise to her present position.



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