



FEEDING THE WORLD, CARING FOR THE EARTH

DEMANDS OF FAMILY FARMING ORGANISATIONS DURING THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FAMILY FARMING IYFF-2014

Following the declaration of the IYFF- 2014 by the United Nations General Assembly, 22nd December 2011, and the creation of more than 50 National Committees, representatives of Farmers' Organisations from five continents -Africa, America, Asia, Europe and Oceania– met in Abu Dhabi on January 21st-22nd 2014, with the intention of updating and approving the main demands which will be the subject of negotiations with governments and international institutions throughout the Year.

Family Farming can and must become the cornerstone of solid sustainable rural development, conceived of as an integral part of the global and harmonised development of each nation and each people while preserving the environment and natural resources.

However, for this to be achieved Family Farming requires genuine public support which is non-existent today in most countries. A support which ensures the access to and control of land, water and other natural resources, to nearby markets, credit, investment and agricultural extension as well as equitable responses to the specific needs of rural women and youth.

In the face of the aggressive attempts by a handful of multinational companies to control and design world food production what is at stake is no less than the right of peoples to produce a substantial part of their own food, thus guaranteeing their Food Security on the way towards achieving Food Sovereignty in this matter of vital importance.

Convinced of this, we, women and men farmers' organisations – the true protagonists of the IYFF-2014– are going to lead Civil Society processes at national, regional and international levels so that this event will become a great opportunity to advance our individual and collective family farming rights.

IYFF-2014 must prove to be a significant milestone in the improvement of the quality of life of hundreds of millions of family farmers, peasants, traditional fishers, pastoralists, indigenous communities etc. -frequently abandoned or marginalised – who in addition to producing food for humanity are prepared to care for our environment. The most efficient way to defeat hunger and malnutrition is to produce food near consumers, the exclusive achievement of Family Farming and not of major itinerant large-scale investors.

Family farming organisations present in Abu Dhabi strongly recommend that distinct policies should be designed and implemented for their sector, with a specific set of laws governing family farming; more flexible and enable family farmers to use traditional and small-scale methods.



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Our demands

- Demand 1. Each nation should have the right to develop its own food production as the basis for Food Security on the way to achieving Food Sovereignty, taking into account climate change as one of the serious threats to Family Farming.

The World Trade Organisation-WTO promotes generalised free trade in food products. In the present context of huge inequalities in levels of development and productivity, this policy perpetuates the actual division of the world countries between food exporters and importers.

The consensus view of Family Farming organisations present in Abu Dhabi is to recommend:

- Support to capacity building including local knowledge for family producers as well as their organisations, especially within the framework of value chains, so as to limit the role of intermediaries. In this respect, family producers should be encouraged to regroup into cooperatives in order to increase their own bargaining capacity, their efficiency and their effectiveness. Equitable access to financing, appropriate technology, primary processing and basic infrastructure are also required.
- At the level of seeds, Family farmers' choices and methods of production should be preserved in all countries and no single production method should be forced upon any family farmer. In all cases, policies relating to seeds must take into account cultural traditions and not be imposed. All governments should endeavour to protect and save traditional seeds and to facilitate their sharing. The role of Family Farming organisations is key in this context, both to guarantee the appropriate establishment of legislation and policies relating to seeds and to work with the research sector and public authorities in order to establish seed banks for local strains. These seed banks will ensure the multiplication of local seeds and facilitate their distribution among producers.
- At the production level, planning and diversification should be encouraged, always in collaboration with Family Farming organisations. Adding value to local production and reducing food waste should also be prioritized.
- At the marketing level, equitable market access to family farmers' produce should be guaranteed while prioritising local over national markets. Agriculture should be excluded from WTO negotiations and bilateral free trade agreements. A specific negotiation for agricultural products should be instituted under the aegis of the FAO. In addition, with the aim of guaranteeing fairer trade, all types of dumping must be prohibited and the principle of national or community preference be established by use of customs duties. With respect to food stocks and public purchases, we urge the institution of a system of supply management and regulation and at international level the establishment of a transparent statistics enabling proper control.



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- Demand 2. Governments must assume as an urgent priority the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests which they themselves approved within the Committee on Food Security -CFS-.

The implementation of these guidelines will guarantee equitable access to land, forests and fisheries by family farmers, indigenous communities and artisanal fishers amongst others, while clear and equality-based criteria on access to water should be established in the guidelines. These must become a real and effective standard. Civil Society will conduct the monitoring and evaluation of their implementation.

Equitable access to land is basic to the wellbeing of rural households, to the stimulation of economic growth in agriculture and livestock' rising, to the reduction of poverty in rural areas and to the achievement and guaranteeing of the Food Sovereignty of nations. As such it should be a priority for governments.

Injustice and the unequal distribution of land must be brought to an end.

To achieve this:

- Transparency must be exercised by governments when instituting mechanisms to effectively prevent actual land grabbing.
- The way of life of indigenous peoples must be respected (tradition, culture, use of land) as well as their right to land, protecting with special emphasis communal or territorial properties from threats such as those from foreign investors.
- Specific policies and programmes must be created for the equitable access of vulnerable groups and communities, rural workers and landless family farmers to land and other natural resources.
- Agricultural land should be protected from excessive urbanisation and industrialization. In addition, land property rights should include the shared ownership of husband and wife as well as the protection of the inheritance rights of minors. All this requires the establishment of the corresponding registries for of public and private land which should be accessible and transparent to Civil Society.
- In the specific case of youth and new men and women family farmers, equitable access to land is limited due to its scarcity or high price or to the absence of adequate enabling policies. Such equitable access must be facilitated while the legislative framework of each country must be adjusted in relation to such access for young men and women farmers.
- National and international regulations for water resources management must be established, with real participation of family farmers' organisations.



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- Demand 3: In order to promote Family Farming, nations the majority of whose population is active in agriculture must proceed with the transparent and adequate allocation of financial resources to national agriculture budgets. The same criteria should apply to development aid and public investments on the basis of the meaningful participation of family farmers' organisations as well as other Civil Society entities.

- The financial resources mentioned above should be used to promote: The implementation of broad agrarian reforms, lower-interest credit schemes, promotion of sustainable farming models, implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation measures, increased market access, as well as enhanced decision-making powers and visibility of family farmers, especially women and youth. In order to increase the agricultural sector's performance and the Food Sovereignty, such resources, including lower-interest credit schemes, should significantly address the broad implementation of agrarian reforms.
- Similar measures should be applied to the promotion of sustainable farming models, the implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation measures, increased market access as well as the enhanced decision-making powers and visibility of family farmers, especially women and youth.
- Participatory budget monitoring and evaluation mechanisms must be put in place to ensure greater public accountability, aid effectiveness and efficient service delivery.
- Bilateral and multilateral donors must greatly increase their support to Family Farming in developing nations.
- In this context we note with interest the decisions of the 40th meeting of the Committee on Food Security -CFS-, October 2013, relating to Investing in Smallholder Agriculture for Food Security and Nutrition. We urge governments to implement these decisions while continuing to improve this initial framework in line with the goals and outcomes of IYYF-2014.

- Demand 4: Institute the equality of rights between men and women family farmers. Women who live and work in rural areas are frequently discriminated against in terms of equitable access to productive resources such as land, water, credit and extension services.

Family Farming is a way of life, a culture as well as a professional job which involves the entire family. Women, men and young adults all play an extremely important role in the development of local economies, food production and local markets.

The many struggles within Family Farming are compounded by the inequalities imposed upon women.

- Women are the backbone of agriculture production, the supply chain, marketing and all other aspects though their degree of involvement varies from country to country. We all agree women are crucial to the success of the family farm. Wage discrimination between men and women is tremendous and should disappear.



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- Often women do most of the work relating to food production but are not recognized by their families, organisations, nor by local/regional/national/international governments as farmers. We recommend that a campaign involving the International Labour Organisation-ILO be launched in order to recognise farming as a profession and to extend labour rights to all family farm members and even more so to women who do the most of the farm work in developing countries.
- Women and their families will continue to struggle for the foreseeable future unless family farmers are allowed to own the land, unless women have the right to sole or joint ownership and families collectively give men and women equal rights, responsibility, shared profit and risk management tools.
- Many countries have already instituted the protection for family farms and women, but frequently cultural factors impede the enforcement of these laws aimed to correct existing inequalities. In conclusion, women and family farms are the centre of agriculture around the world but women farmers are in desperate need to organise themselves locally, nationally and internationally. They additionally need to advance their education, increase the use of good farming practices and resolve inequalities between genders, while gaining recognition as professional farmers.

- Demand 5: Policies in favour of the insertion of youth in agriculture must be approved, taking into account that only genuine public support to Family Farming will make this profession attractive to them.

Young people frequently do not have sufficient financial, educational and political support to motivate them to stay in rural areas so they opt to migrate from their homes, unable to realise their desire to continue living, creating and producing in the countryside.

- Youth, women and men, should be involved in the formulation and implementation of public policy relating to Family Farming, being given facilities and motivation to take up leadership positions within family farmers' organisations. A change in mindset and perception should be initiated giving prominence to agriculture as a viable and important career path. There is a need to integrate agriculture throughout the school curriculum making farming relevant and important.
- Social issues around inheritance matters and the future of Family Farming need urgent attention in all countries. Rural areas are not attractive enough to retain youth so investment is needed to provide lifestyle benefits in farming areas. Special youth networks and associations to provide support, development and exchange programmes are critical to encouraging more urban-based youth to commit to the Family Farming sector.
- Equitable access to credit and natural resources (such as land, water, fisheries and forests) must be made available to allow youth to take over family farms or create new family farms allowing generational change to increase the scope of agriculture. This includes tax incentives, marketing and business training as well as equitable access to newer technologies.



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Our commitments

As national, regional and international farmers' organisations we will seek every opportunity to establish special dialogues with our governments during IYYF-2014 in order to advance the demands set out above.

Within our organisations we will strengthen those governance instruments which guarantee the legitimacy, representativity, democracy and inclusion of women, youth and the marginalised. We will strengthen our capacity to operate professionally and train our members in economic, social and political issues. We commit to supporting the efforts of our women members to improve their position by means of creating spaces for their collective action and participation in leadership, as well as helping to strengthen their capacity to claim their rights to land, financial, technical etc.

In solidarity we jointly undertake to strongly promote these demands with urgency and dedication during IYYF-2014 and subsequently

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INTERNATIONAL

Sr. Mathew John Member of IFOAM Board of Directors. Keystone Foundation.

Sr. José María Ceberio Secretario Ejecutivo. Foro Rural Mundial.

Sr. José Antonio Osaba AIAF-2104 Civil Society World Coordinator.

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