



INTERNATIONAL DECLARATION OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE RURAL YOUTH OF BRAZIL

4TH NATIONAL RURAL YOUTH FESTIVAL (BRASILIA, 2023)

We, young representatives of family farmers', farmers' and indigenous organizations and land rights advocates, with the support and facilitation of the International Land Coalition (ILC), the Confederation of Family Farmers' Organizations of the Greater Mercosur (COPROFAM) and the World Rural Forum (WRF), met in Brasilia from April 25 to 27, 2023, on the occasion of the 4th National Rural Youth Festival "Rural Youth, Sowing Resistance and Cultivating a New World!". The festival is coordinated by the Confederation of Rural Workers and Family Farmers (CONTAG) and the Trade Union Movement of Rural Workers (MSTTR).

As members of the international delegation¹ participating in the Festival, we unite our voices from different countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Europe, North America, Latin America and the Caribbean to express our common priorities, as well as our support and solidarity with the thousands of rural youth who have gathered for this important festival. We greet and congratulate our Brazilian sisters and brothers for their achievements and presence, demonstrating the collective power, passion and struggle of the rural youth to generate solutions to the challenges related to rural development, family farming, access to land and other resources, sustainable food production, the climate crisis, democratic decision-making and the generation and implementation of specific public policies for rural youth.

In this context, and within the framework of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming, we recognize the need to work collectively across borders, as this is the only way to overcome challenges that affect us as well. Among such challenges, we highlight the following:

1 The international youth delegation is conformed by 1. Youth from COPROFAM organizations such as: Mucech (Chile), FAA (Argentina), CNFR (Uruguay) and ONAC (Paraguay); 2. Youth from WRF partners or member organizations, such as PDRR (Central America), AFA (Asia), AACARI (Caribbean), FRAQ (Canada), ROPPA (Western Africa), PROPAC (Central Africa), UPA (Spain), ESAFF (Southern and Eastern Africa), COPROFAM (Mercosur); 3. Youth from ILC member organizations, such as UVOC (Guatemala), UTT (Argentina), YPARD (Peru), Reconcile (Kenya), CARRD (Philippines), PARC (Palestine) and ADHD (Togo).





POOR LAND GOVERNANCE:

- Rural youth suffer from the lack of recognition and effectiveness of their right to land and to the management of their territories - especially young women-, by governments, their communities and their organizations.
- Rural youth are excluded from decision-making spaces at all levels, including the formulation and implementation of public land policies that affect them.
- Weak policy and regulatory frameworks and/or corruption, exacerbate the difficulties rural youth face in accessing individual or collective land and in participating effectively in land governance.
- The weakening of family farming, indigenous peoples and local community organizations threatens their viability, their power of advocacy and their ability to act on behalf of their members and communities.

INEQUALITIES:

- Economic, social and cultural inequalities, as well as injustices, limit the access of rural youth to land, natural resources, means of production, financial resources, democratic spaces, comprehensive health and school education services and the protection of traditional knowledge. All of which hinder income generation, generational renewal and the development of family farming, in a context already weakened by limited or deficient markets and storage facilities, demographic pressure on land, among others.
- Unequal access to formal and informal education, employment, information and technology render it challenging for young people to engage in family farming and to develop their potential to propose innovative solutions to the problems of rural areas.

CLIMATE CRISIS:

- Youth are particularly affected by the climate crisis. Not only do they lack the various necessary resources to address it, but they will also be affected by the long-term effects. This results in a more vulnerable and marginalized youth, often forced to leave their own territory.
- Family farmers, including young farmers, have very limited access to climate funds available for climate change mitigation and adaptation, despite their recognized potential to tackle its effects.





VIOLENCE AND SOCIAL PRESSURE :

- Rural youth, family farmers, indigenous and Afro-descendant populations, Quilombos, and local communities of the countryside, forests and fisheries, are subject to discrimination, racism, social conflict, persecution, and criminalization, in addition to suffering from the lack of protection of their communal lands and means of production.
- Conflicts over land and other resources endanger the lives of land and environmental defenders. Regulatory frameworks for the violence prevention and their protection are ineffective.
- Certain agricultural practices are subject to social pressure from the public, which generates tension and stress in the young farmers subjected to them.

In order to address the aforementioned challenges, we appeal to governments, international organizations, the private sector, academia and civil society organizations, and we demand:

- The recognition of the central role of the rural youth in the development of rural areas and sustainable food systems, and in addressing the climate crisis.
- The proclamation of an International Day of Rural Youth by the United Nations in support of the International Young Farmers' Summit Manifesto - SIJA² 2022 .
- The active and relevant participation of youth in policy dialogue and decision-making structures and processes, along with the abolition of discriminatory practices.
- The development and effective implementation of policies, programs and plans that guarantee the development of Family Farming for rural youth, including access to land. This includes the implementation of global and regional commitments made by States, such as the commitments of the UN Decade of Family Farming, through national action plans, and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Access to information, technology and innovation, as well as adequate training and technical and financial resources to enable the youth to play an active role in the development of resilient and sustainable food systems.
- Access to specific and adaptable financial services for rural youth.
- Capacity building of youth for effective leadership to enable generational succession and more democratic, sustainable and effective organizations for policy advocacy on behalf of youth in Family Farming.

² <https://www.pafo-africa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Manifiesto-2022-ENG.pdf>



- Urgent production and use of data on the status of rural youth for effective public policy.
- Investment in road, telecommunications and social infrastructures, such as health centers and schools, in rural areas to ensure the quality of life of youth.
- Investment in the training of rural youth to climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as production system transformation to increase their resilience, diversity and sustainability. This requires promoting practices such as agroecology, organic farming, regenerative livestock and agriculture, along with sustainable soil and water management practices.
- The urgent establishment and/or implementation of regulatory frameworks that guarantee protection and legal support for land and environmental defenders, as well as legal accompaniment in cases where necessary.

As young leaders in our organizations, we commit to:

- Generating and strengthening alliances with other organizations, networks and governments to amplify our voices in local, regional and global development processes, in addition to including rural youth priorities in decision-making spaces as a fundamental part of the solutions to the challenges aforementioned.
- Promoting dialogue and collaboration between generations as well as with key actors in order to ensure leadership renewal, economic stability and youth empowerment.
- Creating a group to follow up on the demands and fulfillment of the commitments proposed in this declaration.

We invite you to join this sowing of resistance and cultivate a new world.

