



**A DECADE OF  
FAMILY FARMING**  
6th Global Conference

**CONCLUSIONS OF THE  
VI GLOBAL CONFERENCE:  
A DECADE OF  
FAMILY FARMING**





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## **CONCLUSIONS OF THE VI GLOBAL CONFERENCE: A DECADE OF FAMILY FARMING**

### **1. BACKGROUND**

#### **1.1. THE DECADE OF FAMILY FARMING**

Family farming has been gaining global attention since 2014, the year which was designated International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) by the United Nations. It was the first UN International Year proposed and promoted by civil society organizations. The IYFF repositioned family farming at the centre of agricultural, environmental and social policies on the national agendas and achieved a shift towards more equal and balanced development. The IYFF promoted a robust process of policy dialogue involving all relevant actors and resulting in national and regional policies, programmes, activities and institutional arrangements in support of family farming<sup>1</sup>. 50 National Committees on Family Farming (NCFs) were created for policy dialogue stimulating strong commitment in favour of family farming (high-level political declarations and civil society mobilization at national and regional levels).

Considering the achievements of the Year and as a result of the subsequent IYFF+10 campaign coordinated by the WRF and specially promoted by family farmers' organizations, the United Nations General Assembly, at its 72nd Session on 20 December 2017, proclaimed the **UN Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028**<sup>2</sup> (UNDF) to serve as a framework for countries to develop public policies and investments to support family farming, and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The draft Resolution was introduced (and led) by the government of Costa Rica, supported by 13 other countries. The final Resolution declaring the Decade was introduced with the support of 104 countries and was unanimously approved.

To oversee the implementation of the UNDF, an international steering committee was established composed of representatives of Member States representing the different regions and of family farmers' organisations (LVC, WRF, WFO and 5 Regional Family Farmers' Organizations). The International Steering Committee of the UN Decade of Family Farming (ISC UNDF) is supported by a joint FAO and IFAD secretariat.

The process of preparation of the Action Plan for the Decade of Family Farming started just after the Declaration of the Decade, when the civil society organizations defined their priorities and the specific objectives that the Decade should address. The process was intensified in October 2018, when FAO and IFAD made a commitment with the World Coordination Committee<sup>3</sup> to conduct a consultation process to define the Action Plan of the Decade.

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<sup>1</sup> Some significant examples include the Gambia's reformed seed policy (creation of a Seed Council, on which Civil Society Organizations have obtained three seats) and Argentina's Decree 1030/2014 (creation of a State Secretariat for Family Farming).

<sup>2</sup> United Nations General Assembly, 72<sup>nd</sup> session, [72/239. United Nations Decade of Family Farming \(2019–2028\)](#), (A/RES/72/239).

<sup>3</sup> The World Coordination Committee (WCC) is a Committee established by Civil Society Organizations to coordinate their positions and actions in the framework of the IYFF 2014, the campaign for the declaration of the Decade, and now the implementation of the Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028. The WCC gathers a significant part of Family farming FO's and CSOs and representatives of National Committees of Family Farming.



The VI Global Conference on Family Farming was officially part of this consultation process. The Conference held a broad discussion on draft 0 of the Action Plan of the Decade which resulted in the final version of the Global Action Framework approved by the International Steering Committee of the Decade of Family Farming (see Annex 5).

## 1.2. THE GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON FAMILY FARMING

The VI Global Conference on Family Farming (see Annex 1) took place in the Hotel Seminario, Derio, Basque Country, Spain, from 25 to 29 March 2019, and focused on defining the Action Plan of the Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028, declared by the UN General Assembly at global level, but also in each of the world's regions and countries. The capacity of the Decade to incentivise the definition and implementation of National Action Plans with concrete and solid commitments to improve public policies focusing on family farming will be the key element for achieving the objectives of the Decade and fulfilling the SDG). These national action plans will be developed in each country by the governments, farmers' organizations, National Committees for Family Farming and other relevant stakeholders.

Overall, 260 representatives from 66 countries participated actively over the 5 days of the VI Global Conference. It is worth noting that the majority of the participants (92) came from Family Farmers' Organizations. The VI Conference also had contributions from the main Regional Farmers' Organizations (AFA, COPROFAM, PDRR, PAFO, PROPAC, REFACOF, ROPPA, UMNAGRI) and active participation by representatives of the WFO and La Via Campesina.

Furthermore, there were 61 participants from civil society organizations represented by NGOs, trade unions and international networks and they played an active part in the working groups and in moderating.

The conference was also attended by around 27 government representatives (national and intergovernmental institutions): the President of the World Committee on Food Security (CFS); the Executive Secretariat of the CAC (*Consejo Agropecuario Centroamericano*); the Director General for Agriculture and Rural Development from Portugal; the Director General for Sustainable Development Policies of the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation (MAEUEC); the Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union (AU); the Agricultural Attaché, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the FAO, IFAD and the WFP; the Head of Unit C1, DG DEVCO, European Commission; the Director of the Global Engagement and Multilateral Relations Division, IFAD; the Director General for Rural Development, Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Uruguay; the Deputy Secretary for Agriculture of the Basque Government; the Head of the Rural Development, Food Security and Nutrition Area Department for Sectoral Cooperation, AECID, Government of Spain; the Director for Family Farming of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock of Costa Rica; the Technical Secretary of REAF-Mercosur; Spanish members of Parliament and promoters of the Spanish Alliance for the Right to Food.

Their presence is an important factor in involving the decision-makers in the implementation of the Decade at national and regional levels.



Finally, the private sector was also represented mainly by cooperatives and family businesses (around 14). The link with the research centres was constantly referred to in the discussions and indeed there were 12 representatives of this constituency.

Prior to the formal opening on 27 March, the VI Global Conference devoted two days to work on three strategic elements of the Decade of Family Farming: on the first day (25 March) there was an exchange session between Family Farming organizations and on the second day (26 March) there were two working sessions, one on Youth and the other on Women.

The programme was completed by several other relevant meetings: a meeting of the National Committees for Family Farming, a meeting of the IYFF+10 World Coordinating Committee, an Informal Breakfast meeting between Government Representatives and other institutional actors.

Besides the meetings listed above and the two-day plenary, a considerable number of working sessions were held to discuss inputs to the Action Plan (see Annex 1).

The two main characteristics of the Conference were the richness of discussions and the active participation of all participants at the many different meetings. In addition to the plenaries, a total of 18 working meetings took place:

- The exchange between indigenous people on Sunday
- The exchange session and the FF product fair on Monday, working on how to strengthen the FOs with around 80 participants
- The sessions on women and youth which discussed specific measures to be included in the Action Plan
- The meeting of National Committees for Family Farming with around 60 participants
- The IYFF+10 World Coordination Committee (WCC) meeting
- An informal breakfast with 19 representatives of governments, intergovernmental organizations, regional and international institutions (see Annex 2)
- An informal meeting between African regional farmers' organizations with Ms. Josefa Leonel Sacko, African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture
- ILC CBI2 working meeting
- Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) meeting
- Specific meetings among the NCFs of each region: African NCFs, Eastern Europe NCFs, American NCFs and Asiatic NCFs.
- Working group sessions on the Action Plan divided by regions: 4 groups from Africa (West, Central, South and East), 2 groups from America (Central and South), 1 group from Europe and 1 group from Asia.

This VI Conference also provided the opportunity to hold the WRF General Assembly and to set up the new WRF Board of Directors in which the regional farmers' organizations (AFA, COPROFAM, PDRR, PIFON and PROPAC) are taking a major role, thus consolidating WRF governance for Family Farming.



The Conference discussed the contents of the Action Plan of the Decade thoroughly, generating dozens of concrete proposals and inputs. The concrete proposals on the various Pillars of the action plan and on the various levels of action were shared with the FAO-IFAD Joint Secretariat of the Decade and formed the basis for drafting the final version of the Action Plan.

The following documents were produced:

- A document summarizing the content of the sessions
- Reports of the sessions on Farmers' Organizations exchange, on youth and on women
- Concrete inputs to the draft Action Plan, pillars 1-2-3-4
- Ideas for developing regional and national action plans in 6 regions and 40 countries
- Declaration by the family farming organizations and CSOs.

## 2. DISCUSSION OF THE ACTION PLAN OF THE DECADE OF FAMILY FARMING

The Action Plan of the Decade is designed to provide detailed guidance for the international community, including governments (both national and local), parliamentarians, specialized agencies and other relevant bodies of the United Nations, international financial institutions and other international mechanisms, regional bodies, farmers' and producers' organizations, academic and research institutes, civil society organizations, small and medium-sized enterprises and the private sector, in order to achieve the main objectives of the Decade, that is, to improve and focus public policies on family farming.

As stated earlier, the International Steering Committee of the Decade agreed to discuss draft 0 of the Action Plan of the Decade in detail during the Global Conference on Family Farming which provided a key opportunity to improve the draft and generate concrete proposals.

Draft 0 of the Action Plan was based on seven pillars (see below) and specific sessions were devoted to each of the pillars:

- Pillar 1. Develop enabling policy environment to strengthen family farming
- Pillar 2. Improve socio-economic inclusion, resilience and well-being in rural households and communities
- Pillar 3. Promote sustainability of agriculture, forestry and fisheries
- Pillar 4. Strengthen the multifunctionality of family farmers and their capacities to promote climate change mitigation and food systems that safeguard agricultural biodiversity, environment and culture
- Pillar 5. Strengthen family farmers' organizations and their capacities to generate knowledge and to provide inclusive services in rural areas
- Transversal Pillar 1. Support youth and ensure the generational sustainability of family farming



- Transversal Pillar 2. Promote gender equity in family farming and rural women's leadership role.

The participants started by stressing their clear commitment and setting out an ambitious scenario for the Decade. The importance of developing the national and regional levels of the action plan in order to break down the specific actions and to make the outputs and outcomes a reality was highlighted throughout the Conference. Commitments by the governments at both national and regional levels will be necessary in order to make the pillars and outcomes and outputs a reality.

These commitments in the form of new policies, laws, programmes, etc. will be the basis for the success of the Decade.

There are already some policy frameworks and initiatives for FF, youth and women in FF, rural entrepreneurship, etc. but they have not really been implemented and made operational. That will only be possible if there are enough funds allocated in the budgets to implement the policies. Furthermore monitoring mechanisms must be developed, to assess the implementation of these initiatives agreements in favour of FF. The FFOs and NCCFs should participate in the monitoring and the implementation of the Decade.

The spaces for dialogue, including the NCCFs and the role of family farmers' organizations in the full "cycle" of the public policies, were highlighted at all the sessions. It is therefore a real challenge to reinforce their capacities and services.

The Decade should also seek to facilitate the integration of livestock, fisheries, forestry, pastoralists and indigenous people as "family farmers" and there is a real need to stress this point in the action plan. Access to natural resources, especially access to and secure tenure of land, should also be emphasized in the Action Plan.

## 2.1. CONCRETE PROPOSALS ON EACH PILLAR OF THE ACTION PLAN OF THE DECADE

### Pillar 1. Develop enabling policy environment to strengthen family farming

Creating an enabling environment in which all the actors can implement the action plan requires financial resources, sharing of information and institutional development that will facilitate the work of the NCCFs and the Family Farmers' Organizations in order to create advocacy mechanisms to convince policy-makers of the importance of supporting family farming. Strong messages are needed to provide and share information on the role and the huge opportunities that family farming represents for the sustainable development of the land.

The plan should include specific Public Policies to promote and strengthen family farming with adequate funds for their implementation. Several countries have already approved specific regulations on family farming, but it needs to be pointed out that they have not yet been implemented. In such cases the challenge during the Decade will be the allocation of funds and implementation.



Participatory processes will be needed for the elaboration, implementation and monitoring of public policies that affect family farming. This means having permanent spaces for dialogue with the governments, where the FFOs participate and are heard and where all parties (government, FFOs and NCCFs) jointly develop public policies. In order to develop this role, it is really important to promote, facilitate, consolidate and recognize the NCCFs and other dialogue spaces to build public policies and to strengthen the FFOs. Therefore, it is important to generate the capacity and skills to participate in the dialogue and to have a real impact on advocacy.

It is really important to guarantee the integral consolidation of FF public policies at national, regional and subnational levels, ensuring not only inter-ministerial coordination but also supporting a higher position for family farming in the governments (State Policy), engagement with Presidents and Prime Ministers, and the participation of other key stakeholders such as parliamentarians, CSOs and universities. The importance of working not only with the government but also with the parliament was highlighted and there was a concrete proposal to develop a Parliamentary Front in favour of family farming in each country and also agri-based commodity councils or chambers. Representatives of FF must be an integral part of the steering committees about FF alongside politicians and also of the consultation spaces on Environment / Territorial Planning / Infrastructures.

Gender is a crosscutting issue that should also be targeted in the enabling policy environment. The policy framework on Family Farming should promote the representation of women in the governance and decision-making processes as well as in the design, implementation and monitoring of policies.

The need for mechanisms to monitor the implementation of policies and provide for preliminary analyses to ensure their positive impact on the family farmers was stressed.

It was deemed urgent to develop national registers with disaggregated data and to incorporate data on FF in the census and in surveys at national level. The data collected and analysed should be open, with free access for Family Farmers. It is also important to include, support and validate the data coming from farmers' organizations and also to guarantee freedom of access to information. Autonomous observatories should be promoted to provide methodologically validated data on FF and regularly liaise between the National Committees for FF and the public authorities.

The promotion of different types of associations and cooperatives specifically tailored to family farming should be considered as a key strategy for addressing some of the family farming issues including access to inputs, access to market, financial resources, etc.

Other ideas regarding the enabling environment related to the importance of labelling or marking the specificity of Family Farming products and generating added value, recognizing these products as products of national interest and public interest.

Access to land is a specific and really important issue and should have more prominence in the Action Plan. Moreover, an effort should be made to work on the specific situation of women regarding their access to and tenure of land, improving the legal frameworks.



## **Pillar 2. Improve socio-economic inclusion, resilience and well-being in rural households and communities**

In Pillar 2, the importance of recognizing and enhancing the visibility of FF as part of the sustainable development model was emphasized. That also means recognizing the diversity of the agricultural profession, bearing in mind the different agricultural assets so that there can be differentiated taxes for farmers adapted to reducing their vulnerability.

Access to land was also highlighted, as was the importance of developing policies that guarantee secure access to arable land. It was suggested that even the title of the Pillar should include a reference to **improving land tenure** and to the socio-economic inclusion of family farmers and their resilience.

One of the main conclusions was the need to improve family farmers' access to the markets and their effective participation in transformation activities that generate added value and generate the necessary mechanisms to implement a FF label (also mentioned by other participants in relation to pillars 1 and 3). The creation of fair and solidarity markets at all levels was mentioned, including short marketing circuits, FF cooperatives that can negotiate better prices and promote local markets, etc. On the other hand, access to credit and other financial services requires new rules to suit the circumstances of FF: credits not involving mortgages on land and having low interest rates with reasonable deadlines.

The social protection systems are also key elements for improving socio-economic inclusion.

In relation to climate change, different approaches are necessary:

- Alternative methods of fighting against climate change
- Knowledge (including traditional knowledge) for mitigation
- FF insurance to allow stability in the event of natural disasters, effects of climate change or other unforeseen circumstances affecting AF products
- Support for organic farming, agroecology and fair trade as key elements for improving family farmers' livelihood.

## **Pillar 3. Promote sustainability of agriculture, forestry and fisheries**

In the framework of this pillar several proposals were mentioned: investment in improving infrastructure in rural areas (roads, health, education, security, etc.); formal and informal education for farmers with an emphasis on youth and women; consumer awareness of the nutritional, environmental and social benefits of FF products; promotion of forms of sustainable production (mainly agroecology); guaranteed access for FF to technology and scientific research.

The discussion of the three dimensions of sustainability (social, environmental and economic) constantly referred to working with young people: among the proposals were inclusion policies focused on youth and women in extension services and technical assistance, creating a



strengthening platform for rural youth issues and connecting with consumers. The establishment of regulatory frameworks to make the market transparent and to avoid unfair practices for family farmers and other actors in the value chain was also emphasized.

A call was made to move away from the traditional understanding of productivity. Productivity needs to be re-defined according to multi-indicators such as environment services, employment, territorial development and landscape. Democratic and transparent alternative systems of price information need to be available to producers and consumers.

As was mentioned in connection with Pillar 1, the different family farming constituencies need specific measures for their sustainable development. That includes promotion of peaceful coexistence between pastoralists and crop farmers in communities in the interests of sustainable management of natural resources.

The services that FF and their organizations provide need to be recognized and strengthened: those services include community-based seed banks, farmer-led extension services and Family Farmers' cooperatives and other forms of association.

**Pillar 4. Strengthen the multifunctionality of family farmers and their capacities to promote climate change mitigation and food systems that safeguard agricultural biodiversity, environment and culture**

Family Farming is characterized by the different roles that it develops which include economic, social, cultural and environmental functions. It was emphasized that environmental practices to manage environmental goods (water, biodiversity, land) need to be recognized, investigated and promoted, making them efficient, viable and sustainable.

The pillar should be based on a holistic policy across all of agriculture, forestry, livestock and fisheries. It is crucial to work on intellectual property rights and the protection of traditional communities and FFs in relation to genetic resources (including seed banks), their products, their knowledge and their forms of production.

There is a clear need to make information available on local knowledge, its results in relation to adaptation to climate change and its consequences for cultivated ecosystems and possible solutions. In this connection there is a demand to strengthen the capacities of family farmers to adapt to climate change, mitigate it and demonstrate resilience. This could be translated into incentivizing the use of green technology, substituting renewable energies, regulating the use of agrochemicals and having access to and institutionalized participation in green financing.



### **Pillar 5. Strengthen family farmers' organizations and their capacities to generate knowledge and to provide inclusive services in rural areas**

The session on strengthening FFOs' capacities and services was a key event during this Conference. It was agreed that strengthening FFOs and their capacities was the cornerstone of defending Family Farming and ensuring the successful implementation of the Decade. Moreover, it would be essential to focus on the capacity of their leaders, of their young farmers and of women in order to reach important milestones and achieve changes for Family Farming.

The session was divided into two parts. The first part was an exchange between regional FFOs and the second was an exchange between national FFOs. Two main orientations emerged from the first exchange: i) the importance of strengthening the technical and political capacities of the family farmers' organizations to provide inclusive services to their members, giving priority to the development of sustainable family farming; ii) emphasis on the capacities that the organizations themselves have, or can have, through their exchange with other organizations, to offer all kinds of services.

The second part was divided into groups, each working on one of the following seven categories:

1. Organizational Capacity and Good Governance
2. Sustainable production
3. Climatic change and management of natural resources
4. Incubation of businesses and financial services
5. Social and cultural services
6. Collective Action and Political Processes
7. Communication, ICT, Knowledge Generation and Innovation Capacities.

The eleven points set out below reflect the main conclusions extracted from each group. They could be considered as the direction to take in order to improve capacity-building services and the form that actions to strengthen the FOs should take.

- Capacity building in political advocacy, with a special focus on young people, and not only on the productive and market aspect
- Training future leaders (young people and women) to improve the administrative, operational, political and institutional management of their organization, looking to strengthen their capacity as an organization and their representativeness in relation to their members, governments and society
- Access to land should be a specific point and should be differentiated from access to natural resources and there should be a special focus on women's rights to access and own land
- Work on the recognition of FF products and their own added value as a matter of national and public interest
- Promote exchange of experiences between FFOs based on their demands



- Another key topic to be promoted and implemented is monitoring , as well as FF observatory experiences
- Encourage two approaches to climate change: 1. Alternative ways to counteract it; 2 knowledge to be used for mitigation
- Promotion of associations and cooperatives in order to strengthen the FFOs' power
- Promote communication on FF both inside and outside the FFO network.
- Support the capacity of organizations to offer greater services to their members themselves: production techniques and models, adding value, transforming production, storage, marketing, establishing plans of business. Consideration was also given to the realization of rural extension services, working for the progressive autonomy of the organizations
- Organizations to be given training and knowledge on gender issues.

### **Transversal Pillar 1. Support youth and ensure the generational sustainability of family farming**

The youth meeting discussed actions by young farmers for the Action Plan for the Decade of Family Farming and made a list of proposals:

In order to improve the involvement of young people in family farming and the rural economy, the following actions are needed:

1. Full rural development plans including training, technical assistance and rural development
2. Actions to promote the involvement of young people in the agricultural sector through information, education and communication campaigns to motivate young people to become involved in family farming, particularly through existing legal and institutional provisions
3. Recognition of young people in decision-making bodies by giving them responsibility and in the FOs by setting quotas for their participation
4. Promotion of family farming for young people by taking them into account in the educational system (school programme, vocational training centres, etc.).

In order to improve access to natural resources for the next generation of family farmers, especially secure access to land, to productive assets, to information, to infrastructure, to financial services and to markets, it was proposed to:

5. Promote the development, availability and inclusion of financial services adjusted to the needs of young family farmers through mechanisms (such as directed funding, and grants), and terms accessible to the young (attractive interest rates, State guarantees).

In order to improve the generational transition in farming, fisheries and forestry, the following action was requested:



6. Action to raise awareness and provide training on questions relating to young people among traditional leaders, in the family system and among local authorities.

In order to improve young farmers' know-how on innovative practices linking local (traditional) knowledge to new solutions, it was proposed to:

7. Develop the skills of young family farmers so that they can access new opportunities for employment generated by diversification strategies, through technical training (in marketing, production, etc.) along the value chain, in cooperatives and in specific advisory services
8. Promote training centres and university courses focusing on agro-ecology
9. Train young people in leadership to give them greater responsibility in programme formulation and implementation and also in advocating land rights in particular.

### **Transversal Pillar 2. Promote gender equity in family farming and rural women's leadership role**

The women's session had the goal of making proposals about rural women to be incorporated in the Action Plan of the Decade and making the pillar a real transversal issue throughout the plan.

Around 40 women from different organizations from all continents participated in drafting the proposals. As a result of this work, it was concluded that the main actions to be developed during the Decade to significantly improve the situation of rural women are the following:

- Making Transversal Pillar 2 of the Action Plan of the Decade - "Promote gender equity in family farming and rural women's leadership role" - really crosscutting. That means that, in addition to having its own specific measures, it should be present in every Pillar as a public policy that allows the mainstreaming of actions aimed at gender equality in all institutions related to Family Farming
- Promoting a favourable context to generate cultural change designed to achieve gender equality and eliminate all forms of violence against women. Specific institutions and procedures to attend to women's problems and the various forms of discrimination and violence. Promoting educational programmes in both formal and informal education to raise awareness of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and to promote action to achieve gender equality.
- Visibility and valuation of the productive work of rural women, peasants and indigenous women so that they can achieve economic, political and social empowerment and autonomy. Promotion of mechanisms of appropriate financing, investment in training programmes for decision-making on production and marketing, and specific policies enabling women to have access to projects along the value chain.
- Access for women to public services such as health in general and reproductive health in particular, formal and informal education in their territories, transport, etc. In



addition, it is necessary to create services to allow women to have leisure and recreation time.

- Increase the political participation of women in spaces and decision-making processes both within their own organizations and in the scenarios of policy advocacy and in the different instances of participation, consolidation, management, monitoring and follow-up. Leadership schools, political education and good governance with school settings, workshops and exchanges. Leadership instruments specifically designed for women and the design of laws and specific policies for women globally.
- Possibility for women to access and control the fundamental natural resources for Family Farming production such as land, water and seeds. Prioritize the processes of allocation and formalization of land ownership for women in order to guarantee land tenure. Generate specific protection actions at all levels (local, regional and global) to make women's access to and control of water sources possible and effective.
- Promoting spaces for articulation at all levels (national, regional and global) permitting exchanges of successful experiences regarding the form in which women have succeeded in generating affirmative political, social, economic and cultural action for gender equality in their countries. Promoting international meetings of rural women throughout the decade which raise awareness of women's proposals, their contribution to production in Family Farming and the consolidation of global food security and sovereignty. Build a women's network at national, regional and global level to increase their political representation and incidence.

Creating permanent spaces for communication allowing virtual meeting places for women to follow up the action in this action plan and its specific indicators for crosscutting action relating to this pillar so that they can safeguard the implementation of their own proposals.

At the end of the session the women's representative for the WCC was elected. Four candidates were preselected, and they agreed to a rotation system.

## 2.2. ACTION PLAN OF THE DECADE AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS

The Decade of Family Farming needs to go beyond the global level to reach its objectives. The very first two discussions – both very different – on the implementation of the Decade at regional and national levels were held during the Global Conference on Family Farming:

- On 27 March, the participants from the different regions met to discuss the implementation of the Decade at regional and national levels.

At the regional level, the meeting identified a diversity of integration spaces that should be mobilized to get parties involved in the process of the Decade and to advocate for regional action plans of the Decade, as well as forums such as the Parliamentary Fronts and thematic conferences and international organizations and other civil society initiatives by the



organizations for the implementation of the UNDF. In Annex 3 there is a table bringing together ideas for the definition of regional Action Plans for the Decade.

The elaboration of National Action Plans of the Decade is both a milestone of the Decade (the concrete milestone is 100 National Action Plans) and a premise for a successful implementation of the Decade.

Before and during the Conference, specific proposals were collected on which concrete public policies need to be changed, improved and implemented in 30 countries as well as other actions/elements that need to be changed and improved in various countries. Concrete proposals are described in Annex 4.

On 28 March, there was an Informal Breakfast on the implementation of the Decade attended by 19 representatives of governments together with intergovernmental organizations, regional and international institutions. The different participants set out their proposals for the implementation of the Decade, especially at national level. See Annex 2.

### **3. THE ROLE OF NATIONAL COMMITTEES FOR FAMILY FARMING AND FAMILY FARMERS' ORGANIZATIONS**

The Conference undoubtedly highlighted the role of family farming organizations in achieving the objectives of the Decade. The Family Farming organizations and other civil society organizations drafted a Declaration that summarizes their aspirations within the framework of the Decade and affirms their leading role. This declaration was signed by 100 organizations. See Annex 7.

The National Committees for Family Farming met on 26 March. The existing 38 NCFs and the new NCFs to be set up are the drivers of the Decade of Family Farming on the ground. They acknowledge their key role in the development of National Action Plans, both in promoting and encouraging their own government and other stakeholders at national level and in setting up National Action Plans in a bottom-up approach with the participation of family farmers.

They discussed the following actions:

#### **3.1. PROMOTION OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PLANS FOR THE DECADE OF FAMILY FARMING**

The NCFs are committed to contributing to the elaboration of the National Action Plans on Family Farming on the basis of a wide consensus between the most relevant family farming stakeholders in their countries. The NCFs are the engine of the Decade.

To achieve this aim, the following actions need to be taken:

##### - Strengthening of the NCFs:

Mobilization of local and national resources by the NCFs:



- The NCFs need internal strengthening if they are to be recognized by the governments and to be able to attract the main family farming agents / sectors in the country from the local grassroots up to national level.
- To bring more family farming organizations and other actors into the NCFs, and to promote a leading role for farmers' organizations in the coordination of the NCFs.

#### - Elaboration of the National Action Plans:

- In order to boost the elaboration of National Action Plans, the NCFs should focus on the definition of proposals in a bottom-up process, and share these proposals in dialogue with governments, the FAO and IFAD country offices.
- While elaborating the National Action Plans, it is very important to work on the mobilization of resources to guarantee the implementation of the Plan.
- The FAO and IFAD are called upon to support NCFs in each country, contributing to their recognition by governments and working together to build and implement the National Action Plans.

#### - Effectiveness of the National Action Plans (See Annex 6):

- It is necessary to create an enabling environment for all the actors to implement the action plan. The enabling environment that will facilitate the work of the NCFs includes financial resources, sharing of information and institutional development.
- It is important to advocate for the development of systematic monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the implementation of the National Action Plans in each country, and to have the NCFs play an active role in these mechanisms. Review and feedback will help improve the implementation of the Action Plan.
- In addition, it is necessary to include in the Global Plan a monitoring and evaluation framework for National Action Plans in which the role of the National Committees is also recognized.

#### - Characterization of Family Farming for the elaboration of differentiated policies:

The characterization of Family Farming should be included in the National Action Plans. National Registry systems are essential to obtain more information on the number and current characteristics of the family farming sectors, so that differentiated public policies can be formulated in favour of Family Farming.



### 3.2. MULTI-ACTOR DIALOGUE SPACES AND INTERSECTORAL COORDINATION

#### Premise:

The NCFs consider that Multi-Actor Dialogue spaces and Intersectoral coordination are necessary in the formulation phase of the Action Plan, not only once these plans have been drawn up and are in the implementation phase. It is also important to ensure that there is equitable participation and representation of women and youth in the preparation of National Action Plans. Bearing this in mind,

- The interinstitutional articulation should involve high-level representatives.
- The NCFs will work to contribute and to ensure that no one is left behind in the process of formulating the National Action Plans. Governments must include all the relevant agents and sectors (agriculture, livestock, fisheries, forests, etc.), women and young people in a process of consultation from the bottom up.
- The NCFs will promote policy dialogue with other multi-actor and intersectoral spaces to set a common view and work together to boost the elaboration and implementation of the National Action Plan. The NCFs will develop a strategy to engage parliaments in this process.

### 3.3. LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND PUBLIC POLICIES RECOGNIZING FAMILY FARMERS

The NCFs plan the following actions to contribute to this goal:

- 1) Analyse national legal and policy instruments and regulations
- 2) Work with jurists and grassroots family farming organizations to construct proposals to improve the texts
- 3) Share the results of the analysis and the proposals with governmental bodies and parliaments
- 4) Hold policy dialogue meetings with decision-makers to take into account the proposals and concerns of family farmers in the reform and improvement of regulatory frameworks and policies.

Family Farmers' Organizations either lead the NCFs or play an active role in them. During the exchange session between family farmers' organizations, held on 25 March, the need to strengthen the capacity of dialogue and advocacy based on technical knowledge to defend FF within political areas was stressed. It was pointed out that it is essential to work on collective action and political processes through clear and strong representation of the NCFs and their FOs and through actions led by the actors themselves (FOs and NCFs).



#### 4. POINTING OUT THE PRIORITIES FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE DECADE OF FAMILY FARMING

One third of the world population is working in family farming and they provide the majority of the world's food, being the major investors in agriculture and the backbone of rural economies.

Through the IYFF 2014 Campaign and the Decade of Family Farming, family farmers have been placed at the top of the international agenda, and their fundamental role in achieving the SDG has been widely recognized. Their potential to feed the world in a sustainable way and to lead rural development is really enormous. But family farmers are also very exposed to climate change severely affecting family farming: reducing the harvests, displacing the most vulnerable population or threatening their livelihood. Access to natural resources, especially land, is a huge constraint in every region.

The leading issues discussed at the Conference included respect for and appreciation of the cultural identities of groups and communities and guaranteeing their rights; the centrality of the land and the territories; access to and management of natural resources, budgets and public investment in programmes and projects for generating income, adding value and accessing different markets; promotion of family farmers' cooperatives and associations; adjustment of the specific legal and institutional frameworks that guarantee social participation and mechanisms of coordination and transparency throughout the Public Policies cycle.

When the sun rises on 31 December 2028, millions of family farmers should be able to say that they want to be farmers, because being a family farmer will provide a decent life, and one that they love. The aim is that family farming will be both a profession with a future and a decent way of life. Family farmers want more policies, more recognition of their roles, representation in dialogue spaces to build public policies at national level, and allocation of more resources.

IYFF 2014 gave family farming the opportunity to reaffirm and build a series of proposals which we collated in order to construct the UN Decade of Family Farming.

The Decade of Family Farming is an opportunity for everyone to understand the SDG and to guarantee food sovereignty and food safety through policies. To guarantee successful implementation of the Decade, various key elements were identified:

1. Assure the coherence of the Decade. It will take a Decade to achieve public policies guaranteeing a dignified and sustainable future for family farmers. This focus must be maintained throughout all 10 years.
2. Focus on the implementation. Go beyond the discussions and provide specific commitments, in terms of public policies, allocation of budgets, etc. The IYFF was the time for raising awareness and putting the issue on the agenda; now is the time to act. That being the case, the National Action Plans are necessary to reach the ambitious objectives of the Decade. The objective of developing and implementing 100 National Action Plans is reachable and the organizations who took part in the conference are willing to participate in them.





**UN DECENIO PARA**  
LA AGRICULTURA FAMILIAR  
VI. Conferencia Global

**A DECADE OF**  
FAMILY FARMING  
6th Global Conference

**UNE DÉCENNIE POUR**  
L'AGRICULTURE FAMILIALE  
6ème Conférence Globale

**FAMILIA NEKAZARITZAREN**  
**HAMARKADA**  
6. Mundu Konferentzia

3. Strengthen the dialogue between governments, institutions, family farmers' organizations and National Committees for Family Farming, bearing in mind at all times that family farmers' organizations and the NCCFs are an essential part of building this dialogue.

4. The Decade will need to involve the various stakeholders, each with their own role but in permanent dialogue and cooperation: the family farmers and the organizations that represent their interests, including the NCCFs working with their farmers to build solid proposals; governments assuming concrete commitments; the FAO and IFAD strengthening political dialogue with governments, academia, consumers, etc.

5. There is a need to work with the family farmers' organizations and to strengthen them; they should be part of the process of building public policies, as was underlined throughout this document, but they are also key agents for ensuring family farmers have access to those policies. This redoubles their importance and the need to support their involvement in all processes of political construction. The role of parliaments was also widely highlighted.

5. The organizations participating in the Conference are willing to actively participate in the design, monitoring and implementation at the various levels of the Decade, ensuring the Decade maintains its ambition and its coherence.

6. We call for an ambitious monitoring and reporting system for the Decade that will keep track of the progress made on each pillar and at each level.

The aim is that in 10 years' time the world will be very different and very advanced in terms of public policies, recognizing family farming as key in sustainable development, with the coexistence of sustainable food systems and with family farmers visualizing a favourable future. That is the shared aspiration that emerges from the discussions in Bilbao, for which the different organizations have been working hard for several years, and for which the organizations participating in the Conference commit themselves to maintain their action, acting as guardians of the Decade for Family Farming.