



**FEEDING
THE WORLD,
CARING FOR
THE EARTH**

News of IYFF-2014 National Committees

Half-yearly progress reports

Introduction

We are already more than half way through the IYFF-2014 so the time has come to assess the first part of this global event. This can be summarised in two words: extremely positive!

This overall result is the fruit of remarkable efforts by civil society which has admirably organised itself in order to advocate for the rights of a sometimes significant proportion of their nation's population: family farmers. Civil society organisations have not stopped at just calling upon governments but often invited them to actively join this movement by taking part in the national committees which they have set up. Certain international organisations and research centres have also joined.

National Committees

There are currently over 600 different entities (NGOs, farmers' organisations, ministries, international organisations and research centres) organised at national level forming over 60 national committees in five continents. Despite their varying composition, size and level of progress in terms of activities underway all these national committees defend the same overarching vision: to enable their nations' family farmers to feed their inhabitants despite the wide-ranging diversity of local situations.

Intense efforts of organisation, consultation, reflection and negotiation within the national committees have resulted in the definition of national goals, the establishment of working plans and implementation of specific activities. Thus, in parallel to the dozen



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or so national committees being formed at present, 16 national committees in Africa, 16 in the Americas, 8 in Europe, 4 in Asia and 1 in Oceania have organised in barely six months more than 300 activities for promotion, political impact (in the case of two-thirds of them) and public awareness raising. In most cases requiring many consultation meetings, the results of this intensive work, emerged rapidly.

Promotion and political impact

To begin with, **declarations and roadmaps** restating proposals to improve national public policies emerging from exchanges between civil society actors were drawn up and presented to the competent authorities by amongst others the national committees of Mexico, The Philippines, Ivory Coast, USA, Paraguay and Costa Rica. Other highly pertinent position papers such as **manifestos or concept notes** were issued by the national committees of Burundi, Senegal, Indonesia and Zimbabwe. In France, the Association des Régions de France (Association of French regions) recently issued the **Déclaration de Rennes** (the Rennes Declaration) which recognised the importance of promoting local food production systems.

In South America, 15 national committees and 12 other organisations belonging to the Confederation of Family Farmers of MERCOUR issued the **Regional Montevideo Declaration** comprising some twenty concrete demands relating to family farming. At a more global level, the **Declaration of Abu Dhabi** approved by farmers' organisations from the five continents attracted broad support from farming and other agricultural organisations.

A number of governments have also issued official declarations in favour of family farming: the **Paris Ministerial Declaration**, the **Andean Parliament Declaration** and the very recent **Baku Declaration** of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

In parallel to the adoption of these various declarations in support of family farming, new and very specific **draft laws** have already emerged within the framework of IYYF-2014.



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This is the case in Paraguay with its **Decree 1056 including the Presidential Law on public procurement of food products from family farmers.**

Similarly in Colombia **Ministerial Resolution 267 provides for the launching of a Family Farming Programme**, officially establishing the family farming concept along with a technical committee for the sector. A budget of €217,240,000 will be allocated to the implementation of this programme.

In Argentina, the government has issued **Decree 1030/2014 providing for the establishment of a State Secretariat for Family Farming.**

In Burkina Faso, the Ministry of Agriculture has promised a **budget allocation** to strengthen family farming during the forthcoming growing season while the government of Nepal has allocated **subsidies** totaling €78.000 for the promotion of family farming in 2014.

In addition to these significant political commitments, the building of technical knowledge about the various dimensions of family farming is gradually progressing thanks to the involvement of research centres. **Scientific papers and publications** focusing on family farming have been issued in France, Spain and Cote d'Ivoire. Moreover, scientific conferences have been organised in France and Spain.

Together with this consolidation of knowledge, numerous national committees have already carried out **studies and issued reports focusing on the problems faced by rural areas** for example in India, Nigeria, Burundi and Cote d'Ivoire. The strengthening of knowledge concerning the broad range of economic, social, political and environmental problems confronting family farmers and restricting their rights to deriving a decent livelihood from their work serves to help orient policies in their favour.

Public awareness building

Numerous activities have focused on public opinion so as to raise awareness about the importance of family farming and about the multiple functions it fulfils as well as the



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challenges it faces. The national committees of Bolivia, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Costa Rica, Slovakia, Switzerland, Nepal, El Salvador, Senegal, Mexico, New Zealand, Indonesia,... have thus organised or participated in numerous **fairs, public fora or festivals** in their countries. Leisure activities such as **exhibitions or competitions** themed on family farming have also been organised in Canada, New Zealand, France and Mexico. In Brazil, Uganda and Nepal amongst others, national committees have organised **marches and rallies** attended by several hundred people. **Awareness raising materials** (banners, Posters, T-shirts) were on show to give high visibility to these social mobilisation events.

Numerous media – newspapers, magazines, TVs, radios – have also contributed to broadening the visibility of IYYF-2014 as well as national committee activities thus reaching and informing a good part of the population. To achieve this, national committees organised numerous **press conferences** so as to brief the media about IYYF-2014, raising their awareness about the reality and importance of family farming so that they in turn could project a positive and accurate image of it. This also enabled the creation of professional communication networks for the announcement of events throughout the year. Following press conferences, **articles** were often published and sometimes re-published in the print media in for example, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cote d'Ivoire, Spain, Belgium, Switzerland, New Zealand, Gambia, Nepal, El Salvador, Guatemala, Uruguay and Senegal.

Programmes and jingles relating to family farming were widely broadcast **on radio** for example in Nepal, DR Congo, Uganda, France and Costa Rica while **TV features** were filmed and frequently shown in Spain, India, Nepal, Cote reservoir, Burundi and DR Congo.

Conclusion

All these examples of activities are only the tip of the iceberg of the impressive dynamism underlying IYYF-2014. As reported above, concrete political improvements are emerging, foreshadowing a much more optimistic future for family farming in various countries. The



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global image of family farming is also being upgraded more or less everywhere and is attracting broadly based attention from governments and the public.

However, much remains to be done in order to recognise the true value of women and men family farmers as the worthy ambassadors of food security and sovereignty. Many awareness raising and political advocacy actions are still needed to permanently move away from certain paradigms which clearly work against family farmers, whatever their origin, specialisation, income levels or holding size. The coming months promise to be fruitful since numerous significant activities are already planned for the remainder of the year.

Minds are awakening and meeting, the global dynamic of IYFF-2014 proves this. Congratulations to all for the achievements so far and good luck for the next steps!

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