



## **WORLD RURAL FORUM**

**FORO RURAL MUNDIAL  
FORUM RURAL MONDIAL  
MUNDUKO LANDAGUNEA**



### **IYFF REPORT. September 2010**

**TOWARDS THE CELEBRATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FAMILY FARMING-IYFF. A dream nearer each day.**

**José María Zeberio-Executive Secretary of the World Rural Forum-WRF**

We are updating and summarizing this report with the last events until September 2010.

#### **1. -RATIONAL OF THE IYFF CAMPAIGN. Brief introduction**

In the world today there are 3000 million people who live in the countryside. The greater part of these women and men, some 2500 million, are farmers. More than 1500 million work 404 million plots which are less than five acres in size, the majority are less than two and a half acres. The rural population involved in industrial agriculture is less than 20 million people.

Of the more that 1020 million people who suffer hunger in the world, a great number are peasant families, including fisherfolk communities, with little land, few resources and no public support. Neither do they have infrastructures, nor technical assistance, nor access to credit, nor markets close at hand, nor educational or sanitary installations, etc.

In this so significant, so dramatic context, at the end of 2007, a thought-provoking proposal arrived at the Executive Secretariat of the World Rural Forum: that of promoting the recognition and the support of family farming by means of the declaration by the United Nations of an International Year of Family Farming-IYFF.

After taking a positive decision, the ideal occasion to make known this idea came with the celebration of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Farmers' Forum in Rome, 11-12 February, 2008, a note-worthy meeting of agricultural organisations from all over the world. This meeting is organised periodically by International Fund for Agriculture Development-IFAD whose headquarters are in Rome. The WRF had been invited as an observer.

After the end of the Farmers' Forum, we launched the first pamphlet about the IYFF Campaign.

#### **2. Main support to the Campaign: Civil Society and Institutions**

From that time until now, more that 285 farmers and rural organisations etc. from the different continents have given their official support to the WRF Campaign in favour of the IYFF. (See up-dated list in the WRF web: [www.familyfarmingcampaign.net](http://www.familyfarmingcampaign.net)).



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Our great priority at this moment is the achieving of more government support which would lead to the introduction in the agenda of the General Assembly of the UN the proposal of the declaration of an International Year of Family Farming. At this moment we can count on the support of 6 Ministries and Divisions of Agriculture of Belize, Pakistan, Peru, El Salvador, Switzerland and Uganda. We confidently await the support of the governments of Spain, Brazil, Costa Rica, Philippines, India, Lesotho, Kenya, Luxemburg, Malawi, Mali, Nepal and Uruguay, and many others.

We have already taken the first steps to arrange political support in the UN headquarters in New York, as well as financial support to the IYFF activities from donor institutions.

On many occasions, linked to the participation in the diverse Forums in Rome, we have maintained contacts with the FAO and the IFAD as international organisations linked to agriculture in which we have explained everything in relation to the Campaign in favour of an IYFF.

We attended, as observers, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Farmers' Forum organized by IFAD, Rome, February 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> as well as the IFAD Governing Council, 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>. Several Farmers' organizations supporting the IYFF Campaign, AFA, COPROFAM, etc, raised the question about an official support from the III Farmers' Forum to the IYFF Campaign.

The Farmers' Forum Synthesis includes, at the end of the second paragraph, the following phrase: "We acknowledge in the significance of family agriculture in the world and we uphold the campaign for the UN declaration of the International Year of Family Farming".

This support represents magnificent encouragement from the associations involved in the Farmers' Forum to our common IYFF Campaign.

In addition to this, The Parliamentarian Front Against Hunger, of Latin America and the Caribbean, at the end of its First Forum, held in Sao Paulo, Brazil, 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> March, gave its support to the IYFF Campaign. The point 9 of the final Declaration states "To support the Civil Society initiative requesting the UN to declare an International Year of Family Farming".

Last June 2010 we received a message on behalf of the FAO Director General, Mr. Jacques Diouf, giving relevant advices and support to the Campaign. Last July an official letter of support was sent by the President of IFAD, Mr. Kanayo F. Nwanze.

On August 2010 the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Cooperation-IICA-, through an official letter of it is Director, Mr. Villalobos, adhered to the IYFF Campaign.



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### 3. Main events of the IYFF Campaign

Since February 2008 a substantial number of initiatives have been implemented by the WRF or by the many associations supporting the Campaign as they own initiative. The different events are included in the IYFF 's web. Among then, the most relevant are:

The first IYFF Asia continental Meeting took place, as expected, in New Delhi, 23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> March 2010. There were participants, reports and contributions from India, Nepal, Pakistan, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia, Vietnam, the Philippines, Taiwan and South Korea.

Two senior members of the Indian Central Administration participated in the Meeting, Mr. Sadamate, Adviser of Agriculture, Planning Commission, and Mr. Metha, Deputy Director of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research-ICAR. Both of them had a very positive approach to Family Farming and contributed in their own way to the success of the Meeting. Mr. David Kahan, from FAO Asia Regional office, and Ms. Judith de Souza, IFAD India office, gave also their valuable time and skills to the venue.

Apart from getting many valuable insights about the situation of Family Farming in Asia through the different national and regional reports, the participants identified the main tasks to be accomplished at national level in order to push ahead our IYFF Campaign and they made commitments to implement them. Two main areas were underlined: to get government support at every national level, and to further mobilize civil societies into the Campaign.

The participants elected Ms. Marlene Ramirez, Executive Secretary of the Asian Network for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia-AsiaDHRRA, and Mr. Chengal Reddy, Secretary General of the Consortium of Indian Farmers' Associations-CIFA, as the two Asian members of the future IYFF World Consultative Committee (one woman-one man, one rural NGO-one Farmers' association).

After the first preparatory meeting of the IYFF Africa Continental Meeting, held in Dakar, Senegal, on January 28<sup>th</sup> -29<sup>th</sup>, a last preparatory meeting has taken place in Lilongwe, Malawi, on July 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, with the participation of ROPPA, PELUM Regional, PELUM Malawi, INADES formation and WRF. The group met with the Foreign Affairs and Agriculture and Food Security Ministries.

After the agreement of the Farmers' Union of Malawi to host the event, with the help of NASFAM, the Continental Meeting will take place in Malawi, probably end of October 2010.

The Continental Meeting in America will take place in Brasilia, just before the XIV Specialized Meeting on Family Farming-REAF, Mercosur, on November 13th-14th 2010. This decision was taken between WRF, as worldwide Coordinator of the IYFF Campaign, the REAF national coordinators and COPROFAM, during the preparatory meeting held just before the XIII REAF, Mar de Plata, Argentina, last May 31<sup>rst</sup>.



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We do hope that the Continental Meeting in Europe will take place beginning 2011. Once these meetings have ended, the first World Consultative Committee of the IYFF Campaign will be organised with two representatives –our suggestion: to be elected, as in Asia, with gender approach and associative criteria: one woman-one man, one Farmers' association, one rural NGO- by each Continental meeting.

On May 27<sup>th</sup> 2010, The WRF met -at the kind initiative of Mr. Hans-Jörg Lehmann, head of the Swiss Mission, Rome-, the Permanent Representatives to FAO/IFAD/WFP of 9 countries: Argentina, Austria, Germany, Australia, Brazil, Spain, USA, Italy and Switzerland, as well as three FAO representatives. The informal meeting about the IYFF was a very relevant occasion to share about the initiative. The WRF received valuable suggestions about how to push ahead the Campaign.

We have also set in motion an IYFF Scientific Area which will be able to get diverse world experts together, women and men capable of laying the basis of all things relevant to Family Agriculture as the principal of food production and the preservation of environment-friendly conditions. The first preparatory meeting was held in Bilbao, Spain, on March 10<sup>th</sup> 2010.

After visiting Brussels from June 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> and meeting CTA, European Parliament and several NGO, a delegation of the WRF will travel soon to New York in order to meet several Embassies and International Institutions with the aim of promoting our IYFF Campaign and to get acquainted with the UN procedures.

On June 25<sup>th</sup>, the WRF Executive Secretary briefed the Central American Council of Land and Cattle-CAC, in Panama City, about the IYFF Campaign, requesting their official support. The CAC will decide about this matter during its next meeting, before the end of the year.

With the aim of getting more acquainted with the procedure to obtain the declaration of an International Year and to explore future supports in New York, the UN see, a delegation of the WRF visited the USA on July 3<sup>rd</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>.

Specially relevant were the meetings with the FAO and IFAD liaison offices to the UN, as well as the visits to the Permanent Missions to the UN of Pakistan, Switzerland, El Salvador and Peru.

The WRF delegation got the opportunity of introducing the IYFF Campaign to the World Bank Agriculture Department in Washington, and to several USA NGOs.



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### **4. IYFF Campaign priorities**

As a result of these last initiatives we have been able to review the IYFF Campaign priorities: Search for more governments' support, the active participation of the Permanent Missions to the UN and to the FAO/IFAD/WFP and the other specialized agencies in agriculture.

After the most outstanding support of the President of IFAD, we have requested an appointment in Rome with Mr. Kanayo F. Nwanze and with other IFAD senior officials. We will visit also several Permanent Missions to FAO/IFAD and WFP.

The new Web is a very effective tool to make known to the world the up to date evolution of all the activities of the IYFF Campaign. Visit it and use it as a sensitizing instrument with the existing diverse material to promote the Campaign.

Many millions are the peasant families throughout the world that will be able to get most benefit from the implementation of an International Year of Family Farming, sponsored by the United Nations Organisation.

We will give maximum possible projection and effectiveness to the official IYFF through the more than 285 organisations participating in the Campaign, in order to get more governments support and more associations adhering to the Campaign.

To make this dream a reality is in the hands of everyone. We need cooperation, support and help to make it come true.

September 2010