

Family farmers for sustainable food systems

A synthesis of reports by
African farmers' regional networks
on models of
food production, consumption and markets

a new report published by europafrica: towards food sovereignty

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Summary

Family farming is the basis for modern food provision in Africa, today and tomorrow. Its multi-functionality and sustainable productive potential is supported by extensive research evidence. Family farming and small-scale food production generates food and well-being for the majority of the population and the wealth of the region, and conserves its natural resources. It can ensure employment for young people within their territories, thus promoting social peace and attenuating migration. Innovative family farming, backed by appropriate research, supportive investments and adequate protection, can out-perform industrial commodity production. It provides the basis for the food sovereignty of communities, countries and sub-regions of Africa.

Key findings

- Investing in family farming and small-scale food production will improve food provision, social and environmental sustainability and safeguard livelihoods for the majority.
- Guaranteeing rights of access to and control over productive resources- land, water, agricultural biodiversity - is essential to support family farming and small-scale food production and resilient food systems.
- Sustainable sources of credit, social protection measures and grain reserves and livestock resources are needed to strengthen the resilience of family farming and local food systems.
- Strengthening and building agricultural and food markets, which are within the control of family farmers and small-scale food producers, support socially and environmentally sustainable production, and provide accessible quality food for consumers, is essential.
- Participatory research in support of, and determined by, family farmers and small-scale food producers is required to enhance the adaptive capacity and resilience of food provision.
- The public sector has an essential role to play by tailoring national investment frameworks, policies and programmes to support the needs of family farmers. With effective and decisive engagement in policy processes and practical implementation, family farmers and small-scale food producers will become architects of their own futures and those of their societies.
- To build a sustainable food system for the future, research and data collection need to prioritise the means by which the majority of people access food and thus to actively seek information on the informal and mostly 'invisible' production, processing and trade within the food system.

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EuropAfrica – Towards Food Sovereignty is a campaign that connects African farmers' platforms and European civil society organisations to reflect and act together on major current issues concerning food and agricultural policies, trade and development cooperation. EuropAfrica aims to raise awareness and advocate on shared issues and to promote sustainable small-scale family farming and local agri-food systems that bring consumers and producers closer together. The campaign supports the realisation of food sovereignty, i.e. the right for people and communities to define their own food and agricultural policies, both in Africa and in Europe, without impeding the food sovereignty of others.

EuropAfrica Partners in Europe

Terra Nuova (Campaign Coordinator)
www.terranuova.org

Glopolis
www.glopolis.org

Centro Internazionale Crocevia (CIC)
www.croceviaterra.it

Practical Action
www.practicalaction.org

Collectif Stratégies Alimentaires (CSA)
www.csa-be.org

Vredeseilanden
www.vredeseilanden.be

EuropAfrica Partners in Africa

ROPPA - Network of Peasant organisations and Producers in West Africa
www.roppa.info

EAFF - Eastern Africa Farmers Federation
www.eaffu.org

PROPAC – Regional Platform of Farmers Organisations in Central Africa
www.propac.org

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The reports are:

- Mamadou Goïta, *Système de production, de transformation et de commercialisation des produits en Afrique de l'Ouest: une illustration avec le cas du mil dans la région de Sikasso au Mali*. ROPPA, 2013.
- Patrice Abessolo Amougou, *Systèmes alimentaire durables dans l'Afrique de l'Ouest, de l'Est et Centrale*. PROPAC, 2013.
- Shem Mecheo, *Models of production and consumption and local markets: building on the experiences of African family farmers in their struggles to realize food sovereignty*. EAFF, 2013.

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