

The “Farmers’ Forum Consensus”¹ of 2005

The participants share IFAD’s fundamental objective of overcoming rural poverty through the economic, social and political empowerment of rural poor people themselves and their organizations.

The Farmers’ Forum is:

- an ongoing, bottom-up process – not a periodic event – spanning IFAD-supported operations on the ground and policy dialogue
- a tripartite process involving farmers’ organizations, governments and IFAD
- a space for consultation and dialogue focused on rural poverty reduction and the centrality of smallholders and family farming development in this process²
- an instrument for accountability of development effectiveness, in particular in the area of empowerment of rural poor people and their organizations
- an interface between pro-poor rural development interventions and the process of enhancing the capacity of farmers’ and rural producers’ organizations (including organizations of artisanal fishers, pastoralists and landless rural workers³).

The Farmers’ Forum:

- is guided by the principles of inclusiveness, pluralism, openness and flexibility
- is built on existing forums where possible, avoiding duplication in these cases
- respects existing organizations and creates new spaces where needed

They agree with and support the overall project of creating a Farmers’ Forum for consultations and dialogue on ways to “enable the rural poor to overcome poverty” and on IFAD operations.

- The Farmers’ Forum joint dialogue platform is steered – at global and regional levels – by joint and inclusive steering committees of representative membership-driven producers’ organizations and IFAD. Steering committees have a clear mandate, rules of procedures and a code of conduct. The Farmers’ Forum process also includes autonomous spaces for consultation and preparation among producers’ organizations before meeting with IFAD.⁴

Conditions

- The Forum process starts with national-level consultations that feed into regional or sub-regional meetings. These meetings shape the content of, and participation in, the Farmers’ Forum at the IFAD Governing Council.
- The Forum process should feed into IFAD’s governing bodies.
- The Forum’s success depends on IFAD’s capacity to enhance country-level consultation with farmers’ organizations and contribute to their capacity-building needs.
- Participants recommend, in particular, institutionalizing engagement with farmers’ organizations in key IFAD operational processes (projects, and country and regional strategies).

Current members of the Farmers’ Forum Steering Committee

- Asian Farmers’ Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA)
- Coordination of Family Farms of MERCOSUR (COPROFAM)
- Intercontinental Network of Organic Farmers Organisations (INOFO)
- La Via Campesina (LVC)
- PanAfrican Farmers Organization (PAFO)
- Réseaux des Organisations Paysannes et Producteurs Agricoles de l’Afrique de l’Ouest (ROPPA)
- World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fish Workers (WFF)
- World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP)
- World Farmers’ Organisation (WFO)
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

1 From the concluding statement of the workshop “Towards a Farmers’ Forum at IFAD’s Governing Council”. Rome, February 2005, endorsed by IFAD and 34 representatives of farmers’ organizations from all continents, including the International Federation of Agricultural Producers, La Via Campesina and Réseau des Organisations Paysannes et Producteurs Agricoles de l’Afrique de l’ouest.

2 The second part of this defining point on “the centrality of smallholder and family farming development in this process” was added by decision of the FAFO Steering Committee in February 2016 at the sixth global meeting of the FAFO.

3 Initial reference to indigenous peoples in this list was withdrawn in February 2016 following the creation of the Indigenous Peoples Forum at IFAD in 2012.

4 This entire paragraph was added by decision of the FAFO Steering Committee in February 2016 at the sixth global meeting of the FAFO.