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Implementation of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (2019–2028)

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report on the implementation of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (2019–2028), prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, pursuant to Assembly resolution [72/239](#).

* [A/78/150](#).



Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution [72/239](#), in which the Assembly proclaimed the period 2019–2028 as the United Nations Decade of Family Farming, called upon Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to lead the implementation of the Decade and invited the Secretary-General to inform the Assembly about its implementation on the basis of biennial reports compiled jointly by FAO and IFAD.

During the biennium 2021–2022, four countries approved national action plans on family farming, bringing the total number of countries to have approved such plans since 2019 to 12. The drafting phase of national action plans was reached in another 14 countries, and considerable progress was made in mobilizing actors to draft such plans in 28 more. In addition, three regional and subregional action plans were developed. More than 2,625 relevant actors were involved in dialogue processes or platforms, including 1,853 family farmers' organizations and federations. At least 80 intersectoral coordination mechanisms, including 45 national committees for family farming and other multi-stakeholder platforms for policy dialogue, have been established or reinforced to achieve coherent objectives and targets. Since the launch of the Decade in 2019, a total of 262 policies, laws and regulations have been developed and approved to support family farming and the transformation to more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems, including 122 such laws and policies in 2021 and 2022. Overall, the Decade has triggered policy changes in at least 77 countries.

Numerous processes and activities have favoured the active engagement of rural women and young people in family farming and rural economies, their access to productive resources and services and their participation in policy dialogue processes. Several global knowledge products have been released or developed to support more effective design and implementation of policies.

In 2023 and 2024, effective implementation should be promoted through increased financial resources and renewed political commitment. Policy dialogues and intersectoral approaches that maximize the social, economic and sustainable contributions of family farming should be fostered, recognizing and valuing the role of family farmers in the elaboration and implementation of public policies.

I. Introduction

1. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) defines family farming as a means of organizing agricultural, forestry, fisheries, pastoral and aquaculture production that is managed and operated by a family and is predominantly reliant on family capital and labour, including that of women and men. The family and the farm are linked; they co-evolve and combine economic, environmental, social and cultural functions.¹

2. The aim of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (2019–2028)² is to provide a framework for Member States to develop, improve and implement public policies and investments supporting family farming, with a view to accelerating efforts and fostering additional commitments in line with the transformative ambitions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016–2025) to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as leveraging the existing international tools and guidelines in support of family farmers and their organizations.

3. During the biennium 2021–2022, family farmers have faced increasing challenges from interconnected, mutually reinforcing drivers such as economic downturns, gender inequalities, conflicts, biodiversity loss, drought, and the adverse effects of climate change, including more frequent and extreme weather events. This notwithstanding, family farmers have developed innovative, tailored and locally adapted solutions that can address global challenges and help in transitioning to more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems that leave no one behind.

4. The present report has been prepared by FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), jointly serving as the secretariat for the Decade. It incorporates an inclusive, voluntary consultative process involving global, regional and national actors, collecting information on the activities and results of the biennium. The process was complemented by a desk review of the relevant policies, laws, regulations and programmes of the biennium.

5. In total, 240 inputs from 72 countries representing all regions were collected through questionnaires, online semi-structured interviews, online group discussions and the desk review. In addition, 133 successful experiences were collected and assessed to identify lessons learned from regional, global and thematic discussions. Participants included United Nations entities, Member States, family farmers' organizations, national committees for family farming, civil society organizations, representatives of academia and other relevant stakeholders.

II. Main policy processes triggered by the Decade, and national highlights

6. Governments, national committees for family farming, family farmers' organizations, FAO, IFAD and other stakeholders at the national and international levels collaborated to develop and implement national action plans on family farming. During the biennium, four countries – Kyrgyzstan, the Philippines, Sierra Leone and Tunisia – approved such plans, bringing the total number of national action plans

¹ See www.fao.org/world-agriculture-watch/tools-and-methodologies/definitions-and-operational-perspectives/family-farms/en.

² See General Assembly resolution 72/239.

adopted to 12.³ Another 14 countries are currently drafting plans, while 28 countries are in the initial mobilization stages.

7. Through the 45 national committees for family farming, at least 2,625 relevant actors engaged in dialogue processes or platforms, including 1,853 family farmers' organizations and federations.

8. In Kyrgyzstan, the National Civil Society Committee on Family Farming initiated a broad, multi-stakeholder policy dialogue that garnered the engagement and leadership of government authorities. This led to the establishment of a national inter-agency working group by the Ministry of Agriculture in December 2021, to serve as a multi-stakeholder platform for policy dialogue, and to the official approval of the national action plan on family farming in 2022.

9. In the Philippines, the Government, family farmers' organizations, civil society organizations, academia, FAO and IFAD promoted the process. The national action plan on family farming was officially adopted by the Government in May 2021, under the coordination of the Department of Agriculture Training Institute. A road map for its elaboration was defined, and a national consultation process was conducted to draft the plan. FAO and IFAD provided technical and financial support during the drafting.

10. Sierra Leone initiated the drafting of a national action plan on family farming in 2020 under the guidance of the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Committee for Family Farming. Other relevant national actors, FAO and IFAD were also involved. A subnational consultation process was conducted with the participation of NGOs, family farmers' organizations, the private sector and public authorities. The plan was validated during a national workshop in July 2021, and the official launch event was held in December 2022.

11. Tunisia established a national coordination committee in 2021, bringing together the Ministry of Agriculture, additional ministries, the National Committee for Family Farming and other relevant actors. The national action plan on family farming was drafted using a bottom-up approach, with consultation processes in the regions conducted in close collaboration with civil society organizations, FAO and ministries. The final adoption workshop was held in June 2022 and ensured the integration of the plan into the Three-Year Development Plan (2023–2025) of Tunisia. Subnational coalitions will be created to implement the plan.

12. This intersectoral approach, connecting action plans to other national priorities such as social protection, food security, health, gender equality, support for young people and environment protection, was also observed in other countries where national action plans on family farming are being drafted or adopted, such as Gabon and Sierra Leone. In Spain, the national committee for family farming presented a proposal for discussion to five relevant ministries, as a basis for policy dialogue and to improve frameworks supporting family farming in the country.

13. In countries including Costa Rica, Indonesia, Nepal, the Philippines and Tunisia, national action plans on family farming have been built through partnerships, agreements and the development of district and local plans, stimulating the participation of and public funding by provinces and municipalities in initiatives to strengthen family farming and food security.

14. Gender issues must be addressed across all Decade activities. Among the many results, tailored strategies have been developed in Costa Rica to support the implementation of the national action plan on family farming, with the production of

³ Between 2019 and 2020, national action plans on family farming were developed and approved in Brazil, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, the Gambia, Indonesia, Nepal, Panama and Peru.

a manual for government technicians and community leaders,⁴ as well as a marketing guide for women farmers.⁵ The national action plan in Sierra Leone provided a specific cross-cutting focus on gender issues and on ensuring that actions support gender equality, with a focus on establishing a participatory, transparent, accountable and gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation mechanism. Among the countries where national action plans are under development or have been approved, Paraguay and Peru⁶ have improved legislation to support rural and Indigenous women.

15. In countries where national action plans were approved in 2019 and 2020, efforts have been concentrated on creating the necessary initial conditions and developing tools to proceed with effective implementation. One of the main emerging needs was accessing reliable and relevant data about family farming to inform policymaking, monitoring and evaluation. In 2022, national committees for family farming in Indonesia and the Philippines developed baseline studies on family farmers and fishers in collaboration with Governments, to generate reliable data and help track progress on the outcomes of national plans.

16. Communication efforts played an important role in positioning the Decade on national agendas and raising awareness among the public, thus supporting the development of policy frameworks and fostering commitment for their effective implementation. National committees for family farming in Ecuador, Indonesia, the Philippines and Sierra Leone developed communication campaigns to disseminate national action plans or inform national stakeholders about the mobilization process and foster advocacy initiatives for the adoption and implementation of the plans.

17. In various countries, the adoption of a national action plan on family farming was accompanied by the definition of priority actions to be implemented and funded. In Costa Rica, a project portfolio to mobilize resources for the implementation of the priority actions was developed with the aim of coordinating actions and mobilizing resources from a range of stakeholders.

18. The same approach was observed in some countries in which national action plans on family farming are at an advanced stage of drafting. In Togo, the national committee for family farming identified initiatives related to small-scale irrigation and agroecology on which to focus future implementation. In Côte d'Ivoire, the proposed national action plan is focused on extending social protection to family farmers and including agroecology in the curricula of agricultural training. In Madagascar, priority actions are focused on farmers' access to land, the professionalization of family farmers' organizations and the promotion of the rights of women and their access to productive inputs.

19. In several countries, established processes of policy dialogue to develop national action plans have fostered other improvements in the legislative and policy environment for family farming. In Madagascar, the national committee for family farming is contributing on different fronts, including by participating in a review of the Law on Land Ownership, a law project on cooperatives, the formulation of a strategy of services for rural producers and the establishment of a national agriculture observatory.

20. In the Dominican Republic, new proposed laws on family farming, public procurement and school feeding have been developed in the wake of the adoption of the national action plan. Advocacy, education and awareness-raising activities conducted during the biennium have promoted specific criteria to identify family

⁴ Available at www.micitt.go.cr/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/E51-11136.pdf.

⁵ Available at www.mag.go.cr/bibliotecavirtual/E70-11133.pdf.

⁶ See <https://busquedas.elperuano.pe/download/url/ley-que-promueve-el-empoderamiento-de-las-mujeres-rurales-e-ley-n-31168-1943530-3>.

farmers and their inclusion in government and private sector procurement processes. The legal framework supports the development of a comprehensive strategy to implement coordinated policies to improve family farmers' connections to markets and foster their inclusion in new markets related to agritourism and recreation. These efforts included an initiative involving a rural community of 24 families to link their production to tourism and the private sector, resulting in an increase in revenues from \$25,000 in 2021 to more than \$150,000 in 2022.

21. In Panama, a new regulation has been adopted to establish the characterization and registration of family farming and facilitate public purchases, in particular for school feeding programmes.⁷ In addition, a fund has been created to support the implementation of the law and other related initiatives.

22. Significant advancements in policy dialogue and policy change in support of family farmers have been also observed in countries without an ongoing process to develop a national action plan. In Uganda, a regulatory impact assessment was developed in 2021, and an interministerial and multi-actor working group was established in 2022 to select policies and propose a road map for mainstreaming family farming into selected policies.

23. Similarly, several European countries, such as Germany, Hungary, Netherlands (Kingdom of the) and Spain, have supported young farmers to promote successful farm succession and ensure more equitable access to land. The initiatives are aimed at enabling young farmers to contribute to local food production and rural development.

24. After two bienniums of implementation, a great deal of knowledge and experience has already been accumulated on the elaboration and implementation of national action plans on family farming and other relevant policy frameworks, with innovative methodologies and tools that can be applied in similar processes in other countries and regions.

III. Regional and subregional policy processes triggered by the Decade

25. During the biennium, significant progress was made towards the development of new regional and subregional action plans and towards the official approval and implementation of those developed in the previous biennium. These processes provided guidance and stimulated implementation of the Decade at the country level, highlighting the important role of intergovernmental organizations in its implementation, including the development of policy frameworks and guidelines to support the formulation of national action plans and other national policies, and the renewed commitment to make advances in priority policy areas, including by facilitating focused exchanges on priority topics.

26. Regional family farmers' organizations held forums and events and launched communication campaigns in order to stimulate policy dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders to implement the Decade in their regions. In addition, they played an active role in the promotion of regional policy dialogues and the development of subregional action plans, often participating in the drafting committees and stimulating the engagement of Governments and other relevant stakeholders in their adoption and implementation.

27. The Council of Ministries of the Central American Agricultural Council of the Central American Integration System approved the Decade action plan for the System

⁷ See <https://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/pan203984.pdf>.

region in March 2022. The plan was the result of a multi-stakeholder process involving, among others, the Regional Rural Dialogue Programme, FAO and IFAD. A series of encounters was organized in the fourth quarter of 2022, which brought together representatives of the agriculture ministries and other relevant stakeholders in the region. A regional encounter on family farming was held in the Dominican Republic in November 2022 to review the progress on the implementation of the Decade at the regional and national levels.

28. The regional action plan for South Asia, led by the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, was finalized after a multi-stakeholder consultation process involving actors including the Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development, FAO and the International Cooperative Alliance. The regional plan was published in March 2022, and a consultation with national partners will be organized in 2023 by family farmers' organizations in order to continue to stimulate national action plan processes in the region of the South Asian Association.

29. In 2021, at the Specialized Meeting on Family Farming of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), a steering committee for the Decade was established that includes government representatives, family farmers' organizations such as the Confederation of Family Producers Organizations of the expanded MERCOSUR, and FAO, with the aim of developing a subregional action plan. In December 2022, at the thirty-seventh Specialized Meeting, government representatives of the expanded MERCOSUR countries signed the Charter of Santiago⁸ to advance implementation of the Decade, including with the development of national action plans.

30. Mobilization efforts around the development of regional action plans in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) were relaunched in 2022. A West African task force on the Decade, bringing together major regional farmers' networks, was established by the Network of Peasant Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organizations of West Africa with the goal of developing a strategy to engage with ECOWAS. Dialogue between ECCAS and the Subregional Platform of Peasant Organizations of Central Africa led to an agreement to review the road map of the regional action plan as a first step to resuming the process.

IV. Family farmers' organizations: highlights of the global policy action taken to implement the Decade

31. The three global family farmers networks that are members of the International Steering Committee for the Decade, namely La Via Campesina, the World Rural Forum and the World Farmers' Organisation, are good examples of the kind of comprehensive work carried out by family farmers' organizations to contribute to the Global Action Plan of the Decade, for example in their efforts to foster policy change and in their support of their member national organizations, which are often active within national committees for family farming and other multi-stakeholder platforms for policy dialogue.

32. La Via Campesina, through many of its national organizations, conducted numerous initiatives focused on young family farmers, with the aim of providing young people with a range of training sessions. These initiatives were crucial as they allowed young family farmers to acquire advocacy capacities and skills for participating effectively in policymaking processes. Different youth divisions within

⁸ See <https://coprofam.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/001-Carta-de-Santiago-Decenio-de-la-AF-Mercosur-Version-incluye-las-oficinas-Coprofam.pdf>.

national organizations were encouraged and equipped to participate in policy dialogue and policy activities with governmental and local institutions, with training sessions also focused on productive capacities and accompanied by the provision of productive assets that would otherwise have been difficult for young farmers to access.

33. Among the most relevant actions implemented by La Via Campesina organizations is their work on seed management and reproduction carried out through seed banks.⁹ Community-based initiatives have been reported in several countries; they are particularly relevant not only for their productive potential but also in terms of the contribution of family farmers to environmental and cultural preservation, community-building and territorial development. These production specificities, and their related qualities, have increasingly proved to offer added value in the market, with informed consumers orienting their daily purchases towards products that support quality, health, community development and environmental protection.

34. The World Rural Forum, in collaboration with the Directorate-General for International Partnerships of the European Commission and other partners, provided technical and financial support to 18 national committees for family farming, contributing to the initiation, drafting, adoption and implementation of national action plans and other policy frameworks in support of family farming.

35. In 2021, the World Rural Forum organized a series of regional and global exchanges in collaboration with FAO to strengthen women's capacities and their leadership role in the development of national action plans and other policies and programmes as part of the Decade. In 2022, a participatory process to identify and address women's capacity-building needs and priorities was conducted. Also that year, an online global exchange was held, bringing together women leaders, government agencies and international organizations, to strengthen multi-stakeholder collaboration, knowledge-sharing and coordination to advance gender equality in the framework of the Decade.¹⁰

36. In 2021, with the support of the Directorate-General for International Partnerships of the European Commission and other partners, the World Rural Forum conducted a global conference on family farming at the core of sustainable food systems,¹¹ aimed at fostering the implementation of the Decade as a pathway to sustainable, resilient, inclusive and viable food systems.

37. The contribution of the World Farmers' Organisation helped to put the spotlight on the fundamental role of family farming in promoting sustainable innovation for change. Through the Climakers initiative,¹² the Organisation has been collecting game-changing solutions and best practices to showcase the active engagement of family farmers in the transition towards more sustainable, resilient and inclusive agrifood systems. Experiences and stories were collected on activities conducted and solutions implemented by producers' organizations at the national level to contribute to the sustainability of food systems.

38. The World Farmers' Organisation Gymnasium¹³ is a high-level capacity-building programme aimed at training young farmers to be future leaders in the agricultural sector, helping to create a network connecting young farmers and international experts. The Organisation has worked to establish this global young

⁹ See <https://viacampesina.org/en/what-are-we-fighting-for/biodiversity-and-genetic-resources/seed-campaign/>.

¹⁰ See www.familyfarmingcampaign.org/en/mas-de-100-mujeres-de-la-agricultura-familiar-identifican-necesidades-de-formacion-para-reforzar-su-papel-de-liderazgo-en-la-agricultura-familiar/.

¹¹ See www.ruralforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/EN_Conclusions-Global-Conference-1.pdf.

¹² See www.theclimakers.org/.

¹³ See www.wfo-oma.org/the-gymnasium.

farmers' platform with the aim of strengthening the voice and advocacy power of the next generation of farmer leaders across the world. Consultations are ongoing with World Farmers' Organisation members and partners, and the official launch of the platform is scheduled for the network's general assembly in 2024.

V. Overall contribution of the Decade to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and possible synergies with ongoing processes

39. The support provided to family farmers through the framework of the Decade touched on many of the Sustainable Development Goals. It included securing family farmers' access to natural resources, productive inputs and tailored services (Sustainable Development Goal 2); supporting family farmers in coping with crises and creating income generation opportunities (Goals 1 and 10) and decent jobs, in particular for young people (Goals 8 and 9); promoting sustainable territorial development that integrates urban and rural areas (Goal 11) and climate-resilient agrifood systems (Goals 2, 12, 13, 14 and 15); ensuring a voice, recognition and an enabling environment for family farmers through extensive dialogue, awareness-raising and capacity development (Goals 5, 10, 16 and 17); and reinforcing family farmers' organizations to deliver tailored and inclusive rural services (Goals 3, 4 and 6).

40. National multi-actor dialogues to develop and approve national action plans and other policy frameworks related to family farming played a crucial role in contextualizing international tools and guidelines in support of family farmers and their organizations.

41. An example can be seen in the mutually reinforcing activities related to the implementation of the Decade and of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication. The linkages identified in 2021 were reinforced in 2022 as part of the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture. In Togo, small scale fishers' organizations have been supported by FAO in building synergies between the Decade, the International Year and the Guidelines. The Decade was identified as a mechanism for the contextualization and implementation of the Guidelines, which offers opportunities to parties, including small-scale fishers, to participate in relevant policy processes and increase their visibility and recognition.¹⁴

42. The Decade has coordinated with the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021–2030) to build common key messages on the role of smallholders and family farmers in ecosystem conservation and restoration. At the national level, topics related to ecosystems are being integrated into the broader policy dialogue fostered by the national committees for family farming and the other multi-stakeholder platforms for policy dialogue.

43. As a follow-up to the United Nations Food Systems Summit of 2021, a Coalition on Family Farming and on Strengthening Actions in Support of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming was launched,¹⁵ which aims to scale up and extend the results for the Decade by creating and strengthening international, national and local cooperations and partnerships.

¹⁴ See www.fao.org/3/cc5034en/cc5034en.pdf.

¹⁵ Launched by Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Spain and Switzerland. The Islamic Republic of Iran and the Philippines have expressed their interest in joining, as have the World Rural Forum, the World Farmers' Organisation, the Confederation of Family Farmer Producer Organisations of the Expanded MERCOSUR, and the Asian Farmers' Association for Sustainable Rural Development.

44. The conversations between the secretariats for the Decade and the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme¹⁶ led to the Programme's latest call for proposals, which was launched in January 2023 to fund projects led by producers' organizations, providing a minimum of \$30 million in funding. The main objectives of the projects are to provide dedicated funding to actors traditionally excluded from funding opportunities and to strengthen the institutional capacities of producers' organizations as key economic actors in their local agricultural and food systems. In doing so, the projects will serve to enhance the livelihoods of family farmers and promoting sustainable agriculture practices in their region.

VI. Strategy and activities of the joint secretariat for the Decade

45. Under the overall guidance of the International Steering Committee for the Decade, composed of representatives of Member States and family farmers' organizations, the joint secretariat developed and implemented a comprehensive strategy to support the implementation of the Decade on the basis of three mutually reinforcing areas of action, outlined in subsections A, B and C below.

A. Promoting and facilitating the implementation of the Decade at the regional and national levels

46. In addition to the contributions made at the global level, the joint secretariat, in coordination with FAO regional and country offices, directly supported 19 countries in multiple regions in mobilizing stakeholders and in developing and reviewing relevant legislation and policies. Support was also provided to strengthen subregional processes in Central America, in the Near East and North Africa and in South Asia.

47. To mention just a few of the activities related to such support, the joint secretariat collaborated with the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific to support Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Philippines, resulting in a strategic plan on the implementation of national action plans in Indonesia, a road map to strengthen family farming in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the publication of a national action plan for the Philippines in May 2022.

48. The joint secretariat coordinated with the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia to support Kyrgyzstan in the process that led to the adoption of its national action plan and facilitated consultations with government representatives and national and local stakeholders in Albania and in the Republic of Moldova.¹⁷ In Tunisia, the secretariat collaborated with the FAO Subregional Office for North Africa and national stakeholders to facilitate the development and adoption of the country's national action plan. In collaboration with other relevant FAO teams, the secretariat supported national consultations for the development of relevant policy frameworks and a road map and implementation plan for the Decade in Mali, Sierra Leone and Uganda.

¹⁶ The Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme is a financing platform launched by the G7 and G20 in response to the 2007–08 food crisis which supports medium to long-term investment in agriculture and food security in the world's poorest countries.

¹⁷ See www.fao.org/europe/news/detail/National-action-plans-to-provide-a-road-map-for-advancing-family-farming/en.

B. Development of global knowledge products for technical support

49. Emerging needs identified while supporting the implementation of the Decade helped to tailor and adjust existing knowledge products and inspired the production of new tools. Those products are aimed at strengthening capacities for the more effective design and implementation of national action plans and other legislative and regulatory frameworks and for a more effective application of international tools and guidelines in support of family farmers.

50. The following capacity development tools were developed by the joint secretariat and have already been published or are forthcoming:

- (a) A legislative and regulatory analysis¹⁸ and a legal brief¹⁹ on family farming;
- (b) A learning guide on empowering farmers through enhancing social capital;²⁰
- (c) A learning framework for inclusive, integrated and innovative public policy cycles for family farming, for policymakers and other relevant stakeholders;²¹
- (d) A methodology to develop data on family farming, including in the context of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, using statistically valid samples to provide knowledge to inform policymaking processes;
- (e) A mapping of existing sets of policy and legal frameworks relevant to family farming in different regions, and a collection of 40 country cases focused on good practices in family farming;
- (f) Training on reframing leadership for gender equality in family farming and guidelines for mainstreaming gender in national action plans and public policies.

51. Capacity development activities to tailor those tools have been conducted by FAO at both the national and regional levels, involving government representatives, family farmers' organizations, civil society organizations, women-led organizations and other relevant actors in the framework of national committees for family farming. The training events offered important occasions to foster informal networks and build trust between stakeholders from and within different countries and to strengthen their capacities. The resulting relationships facilitated the implementation of the Decade and paved the way for further collaborations on other topics relevant to family farming.

C. Increasing the outreach and visibility of the Decade

52. Participatory communication plans have been developed and implemented on a yearly basis in Asia, Africa and Latin America in collaboration with three regional communication initiatives promoted by FAO,²² alongside family farmers' organizations, community media and rural institutions. Three awareness-raising and information campaigns have been implemented on the role of family farming and the progress of the Decade, with a view to giving a louder voice to farmers and their organizations.

¹⁸ See www.fao.org/3/cb6922en/cb6922en.pdf.

¹⁹ See www.fao.org/legal-services/news/news-detail/en/c/1504772/.

²⁰ Available at www.fao.org/3/cb1423en/cb1423en.pdf.

²¹ Available at www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cc5968en.

²² The three initiatives are ComDev Asia (see <https://comdevasia.org>), YenKasa Africa (see <https://yenkasa.org>) and Onda Rural (see <https://ondarural.org>).

53. The campaigns included the production of 34 radio magazine programmes in local languages and in English or French across Asia and Africa in 2021, with a potential audience of 8 million listeners. In 2022, in the same geographical area, the number of such programmes increased to 66.

54. In Latin America, 104 radio programmes and 13 situational analyses regarding the status of family farming in countries or regions were produced in 2021 and 2022 and broadcast by 324 radio stations, with an estimated reach of 3 million listeners.

55. The Family Farming Knowledge Platform²³ has been visited by more than 1.29 million users. The global and regional family farming and agroecology communities of practice have been expanded and have hosted online discussions and conversations. In 2022, a digital compilation of success stories, entitled *Stories of Change: Connecting Traditional Knowledge and Innovations for Fair and Sustainable Food Systems*, was released by the Platform, in collaboration with the Barefoot Guide Connection.²⁴

56. The first global forum of the Decade,²⁵ held online from 19 to 22 September 2022, was the culminating event of a process that brought together more than 3,000 participants to discuss 133 experiences from all over the world. It was preceded by regional and thematic dialogues, held between May and September 2022 and organized in collaboration with FAO and IFAD regional offices.

D. Overall contribution by the Organization and the Fund to the implementation of the Decade

57. In 2022, the FAO Committee on Agriculture recognized the strong thematic linkages of the Decade with the FAO Strategic Framework 2022–2031 and its potential to act as a catalyst to support the work done by FAO at the national level to leverage national platforms and policy frameworks.²⁶

58. Emergency and resilience work carried out by FAO contributed to the management of multiple risks and impacts affecting the most disadvantaged groups in rural communities and helped to address the root causes of those risks. In the biennium 2021–2022, beneficiaries included 10 million family farms, with 3,112 projects implemented in 97 countries.

59. Various initiatives contributed to an enabling policy environment for family farming. In Latin America and the Caribbean, activities were focused on facilitating the establishment of dialogue spaces to develop specific policy and legal frameworks. The Regional Technical Platform for Family Farming,²⁷ a network that brings together the most successful experiences, technical knowledge and innovations, was launched in December 2021.²⁸ The Pastoralist Knowledge Hub²⁹ fostered global policy discussions on pastoralism and informed evidence-based decision-making at all levels.

60. FAO action to address generational gaps in rural areas was focused on improving livelihoods and employment opportunities for young people and on providing sustainable alternatives to migration, thus contributing to the

²³ See www.fao.org/family-farming.

²⁴ See www.fao.org/family-farming/detail/en/c/1632444/.

²⁵ See www.fao.org/events/detail/first-global-forum-of-the-un-decade-of-family-farming/en.

²⁶ See www.fao.org/3/ni949en/ni949en.pdf.

²⁷ See www.fao.org/platforms/family-farming/en.

²⁸ See www.fao.org/americas/eventos/ver/en/c/1457291.

²⁹ See www.fao.org/pastoralist-knowledge-hub/en/.

implementation of the FAO Rural Youth Action Plan 2021–2025.³⁰ To achieve gender equality, FAO promoted gender-sensitive value chains; enhanced women's participation through improved access to resources, inputs and services; and promoted gender-responsive policies, strategies and initiatives based on solid gender and intersectionality analyses.

61. The Forest and Farm Facility,³¹ which provides direct financial support and technical assistance to forest and farm producer organizations, is a relevant example of FAO initiatives aimed at strengthening family farmers' organizations by generating knowledge and coordinating and facilitating regional and global partnerships with relevant stakeholders, with a focus on enabling climate-resilient landscapes and improved livelihoods.

62. Action by FAO to improve the socioeconomic inclusion, the resilience and the well-being of family farmers has been focused on improving rural institutions to facilitate access by family farmers to finance, marketing and other rural services, on promoting their access to agricultural finance and on promoting the financial inclusion of young people.

63. The FAO Strategy on Climate Change 2022–2031³² builds on empowering and engaging family farmers, by embracing both traditional good practices and innovations and building on science-based evidence. The 2022 FAO Science and Innovation Strategy³³ highlights the importance of securing access for family farmers to sustainable, affordable and context-specific innovations and technologies, through activities specifically aimed at empowering farmers and local communities.

64. FAO has played an important role in facilitating global and regional dialogues on agroecology, scaling up agroecological approaches through providing technical support for policy formulation and implementation; developing and disseminating scientific evidence and best practices; and strengthening family farmers' capacities on agroecology and on other sustainable production practices.

65. The approach of the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems initiative leverages the multidimensionality of family farming as a key feature for preserving identity and landscapes and developing tailored innovation. During the biennium, 10 new Heritage Systems sites were recognized, bringing the worldwide agricultural heritage network of FAO to 72 systems in 23 countries.³⁴ Two international symposiums on the Heritage Systems and family farming, held in 2021 and 2022, gave visibility to successful experiences that promoted innovative approaches and emerging markets.

66. IFAD investments in resilient and sustainable small-scale farming and in empowering rural people have been instrumental for the implementation of the Decade. In 2021 and 2022, IFAD worked together with Governments, family farmers' organizations and other relevant stakeholders to support multi-stakeholder platforms, aimed at formulating policies in support of family farming. IFAD also sought to provide technical assistance and resource mobilization to increase family farmers' sustainable production and income, through the establishment of and support for purchase programmes and other marketing opportunities.

67. All IFAD-financed projects implemented a targeting strategy to empower rural communities, with a special focus on young people, women and marginalized groups, such as people with disabilities. In addition, particular attention was paid to creating

³⁰ Available at www.fao.org/3/cc0583en/cc0583en.pdf.

³¹ See www.fao.org/forest-farm-facility/en/.

³² Available at www.fao.org/3/cc2274en/cc2274en.pdf.

³³ Available at www.fao.org/3/ni707en/ni707en.pdf.

³⁴ See www.fao.org/giahs/giahsaroundtheworld/en/.

more and better employment opportunities for vulnerable young people and to promoting integrated strategies for their meaningful inclusion in value chains and in policy dialogues.

68. Key topics that guided IFAD support to family farming were strengthening family farmers' organizations; empowering women and supporting specific strategies for their economic inclusion in agrifood systems and in value chains; supporting the development of tailored and accessible technology for small-scale food producers; and supporting local integrated development plans focused on the sustainable management of water resources, seeds and infrastructure.

69. Afforestation, the rehabilitation of degraded forests, erosion control, the provision of livestock water and shelter facilities in rangelands, support for crop and livestock production and capacity-building for public institutions and local users have been supported as relevant responses, not only with regard to rural poverty alleviation, but also with regard to the sustainable management of natural resources and the mitigation of climate change.

VII. Assessment of the main national results with regard to the pillars of the Global Action Plan

A. Pillar 1: develop an enabling policy environment to strengthen family farming

70. Beyond the development of national action plans, much has been done at the national level, with 56 countries issuing policies, laws or regulations. A total of 260 laws, policies and regulations addressing family farming-related topics have been developed and approved since 2019, including 122 during the biennium 2021–2022, with a focus on improving family farming resilience to environmental and human-made shocks.

71. In addition to the issuance of legal and policy instruments, a number of other key activities were carried out, including:

- (a) Conducting advocacy campaigns to improve public understanding of the characteristics and contributions of family farming;
- (b) Organizing awareness-raising meetings to facilitate a better appropriation of the framework for the Decade;
- (c) Mobilizing parliamentarians, government agencies, local government and other key actors to discuss the importance of improving the institutional environment for family farming;
- (d) Conducting research and collecting new data on the socioeconomic characteristics and roles of family farmers, institutional and legal issues and successful policies;
- (e) Reviewing existing policy frameworks and developing new strategies to promote the socioeconomic development of rural territories and communities and their integration into the national economy;
- (f) Developing intersectoral coordination and social control mechanisms, in order to improve policymaking processes and the monitoring and evaluation of the various activities that target family farmers.

72. Overall, 80 inclusive coordination and accountability mechanisms, including national committees for family farming and other multi-stakeholder platforms for policy dialogue, have been developed or reinforced.

B. Pillar 2 (transversal): support youth and ensure the generational sustainability of family farming

73. The second biennium of the Decade has seen renewed emphasis on the participation of young people in rural areas, who are gradually becoming a fundamental part of the design of policies, programmes and projects. Policies addressing rural youth have promoted greater intergovernmental collaboration, involving other ministries beyond the field of agriculture.

74. In connection with pillar 2, 40 countries undertook actions, including:

(a) The promotion of youth engagement in food systems, with better access by young people to natural resources, financial services, productive inputs and assets and technical assistance;

(b) Training and capacity-building offered in agricultural technical skills, market and value chains, involving not only young farmers, but also students and graduates of professional faculties related to agriculture;

(c) The promotion of political dialogues and exchanges and of increasing the social participation of young people, including through advocacy platforms, round tables and regional dialogues with young people from rural areas, in order to strengthen their voices and advocacy power;

(d) Increased membership and participation of young people in cooperatives and on the boards of family farmers' organizations; in some cases, support was provided for the formalization of new producers' organizations led by young people;

(e) The promotion of sustainable alternatives to migration for young people in rural areas, including programmes linking them to the promotion of agroecology and digital innovations in agricultural value chains and rural territories.

C. Pillar 3 (transversal): promote gender equity in family farming and the leadership role of rural women

75. Over the past two years, several initiatives have been implemented that address rural women or promote gender equality and women's leadership in rural communities and agrifood value chains. Several Governments have made progress on national and intersectoral gender strategies involving ministries and government bodies responsible for women's issues, the environment, social protection, employment and early childhood policies.

76. In that regard, 40 countries undertook actions under pillar 3, with reported initiatives that included:

(a) The promotion of policy engagement, recognition and awareness-raising to foster the participation of rural women in multi-stakeholder forums;

(b) The implementation of income-generating projects for women farmers, through loans, revolving funds, cash transfers, training programmes and technical assistance for the adoption of agroecological and sustainable production practices, contributes to increased household food security and income and reduced workloads for women;

(c) The strengthening of rural women's organizations by providing access to financial and productive assets, training and capacity-building and by increasing female membership and leadership in various family farmers' organizations, thus strengthening the productive and entrepreneurial capacities of women;

(d) Contributions to the development of gender-sensitive agrifood value chains at the local, regional and national levels by raising awareness of and recognizing the roles and importance of women.

D. Pillar 4: strengthen family farmers' organizations and capacities to generate knowledge, represent farmers and provide inclusive services in the urban-rural continuum

77. Challenges in managing family farmers' organizations owing to limited professional managerial expertise, financial resources and adequate governance make it difficult to provide support and achieve competitive insertion into profitable agriculture value chains. As part of efforts to address those challenges, 38 countries undertook actions through initiatives focused on:

(a) The promotion of technical and financial support to strengthen the productive, legal, organizational and management capacities of family farmers' organizations, with capacity-building activities on improved agricultural practices, business management, entrepreneurship and other technical skills;

(b) Support for the elaboration of diagnoses and business plans, for the acquisition of inputs, equipment and productive assets, for new multi-stakeholder partnerships and for improved access to markets and public purchase initiatives;

(c) The expansion and improvement of goods and services offered to members of family farmers' organizations, allowing easier access to financial services, technical assistance and support in commercialization;

(d) Improved efficiency of family farmers' organizations in production, productive diversification, the adoption of more sustainable agriculture practices, better commercial negotiations, increased sales and increased competitiveness;

(e) The promotion of advocacy and policy dialogue, thereby increasing visibility and political leverage, which ultimately strengthened leaders of family farmers' organizations, improved their capacity for political influence and promoted knowledge management and the exchange of experiences;

(f) The involvement of family farmers' organizations in global efforts to combat climate change by fostering the adoption of more sustainable production practices as an environmental sustainability strategy and as a means to gain access to new markets.

78. Family farmers' organizations emerged as fundamental vehicles for strengthening the capacities of and increasing opportunities for rural women and young people by supporting their participation and collective organization in expanding the production and sale of their products. That was done in several ways, such as by supporting specific productive projects, providing differentiated technical assistance, introducing labelled products and fostering the inclusion of women and young people in technical, managerial and directive roles within family farmers' organizations.

E. Pillar 5: improve socioeconomic inclusion, resilience and well-being of family farmers, rural households and communities

79. The vulnerability of family farmers increased in 2021 and 2022 as a result of multiple interconnected crises. In that context, 55 countries reported having undertaken actions under pillar 5. The related initiatives included:

(a) The promotion of access to resources, assets, land and services, through the provision of agricultural inputs and equipment at subsidized prices and specific lines of credit, and capacity-building to improve entrepreneurship, management and advocacy skills;

(b) The improvement of social protection schemes in rural areas and the provision of access to rural insurance to low-income farmers or those in vulnerable situations who lack access to formal credit markets; in many cases, countries provided short-term incentives as a direct and immediate response to the crises;

(c) The dissemination of modern and climate-related agricultural techniques, technical assistance to increase the productivity and sustainability of production activities, irrigation schemes and specialized training;

(d) The provision of tailored support projects for Indigenous Peoples and traditional communities to improve production and integration in value chains, taking into account their culture and their relationship with nature;

(e) The development of complementary and non-agricultural alternative income sources in rural areas through small businesses, such as food and farm shops, handicrafts and tourism.

F. Pillar 6: promote sustainability of family farming for climate-resilient food systems

80. In the context of pillar 6, 47 countries undertook actions to promote the transition towards more sustainable agrifood systems, leveraging the potential of family farmers to manage natural resources and care for the land and environment. Initiatives were focused on:

(a) Promoting strategies aimed at agroecology, environmentally friendly technologies, the adoption of energy-efficient equipment, the conservation of natural resources, integrated farming and conservation agriculture;

(b) Livelihood diversification to strengthen the sustainability and resilience of family farmers' productive systems;

(c) Developing capacity-building programmes for the use of modernized, digitalized and climate-resilient technologies, such as water-saving technologies and solar-powered systems;

(d) Promoting environmentally friendly investments and resilient interventions, such as ecosystem restoration, afforestation, agroforestry, forest management, the use of native, improved and certified seeds, the use of drought and pest-resistant varieties and the incentivized use of biofertilizers;

(e) Providing farmers with access to timely information on climate and disaster risk reduction measures;

(f) Capacitating farmer leaders in agroecology and creating spaces for dialogue and advocacy to include family farming in specific public policies on climate change, environmental sustainability and ecosystem benefits and services.

81. The results of those initiatives show their potential to enhance productivity and create sustainable value chains adapted to climate change in agriculture, forestry and fisheries. They are also proving to be important vehicles for the socioproductive inclusion of women farmers and young farmers.

G. Pillar 7: strengthen the multidimensionality of family farming to promote social innovations contributing to territorial development and food systems that safeguard biodiversity, environment and culture

82. Respondents in 39 countries reported actions aimed at strengthening the social, environmental and cultural dimensions of family farming, reinforcing its complexity beyond strict food production and income generation, promoting social innovations and safeguarding agrobiodiversity and the cultural identity of rural communities. Initiatives were focused on:

(a) The design, implementation and financing of integrated territorial rural development plans, through investments in community public goods and the reinforcement of rural-urban linkages;

(b) Territorial development projects to guarantee and expand the livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, with profitable production and conservation models;

(c) The enhancement of synergies and the promotion of sustainable agricultural practices such as regenerative agriculture, the use of biotechnology in organic farming and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, to improve the productivity of key crops for food security and reinforce the role of family farmers in achieving that;

(d) Partnership with municipalities and the promotion of local government support for family farming; in some cases, activities involved support for rural families in non-agricultural activities, such as agritourism, recreation, sporting activities and cultural events.

VIII. Conclusions and observations

83. In order to achieve effective and inclusive policy interventions, it is necessary to develop the appropriate conceptualization of family farmers as a policy target group in a given context and to develop a national definition of family farming with established criteria that takes into account the multiple roles of family farmers. Several experiences showed the relevance of establishing family farming registries based on collaborative and voluntary support from farmers that go beyond statistical surveys and that help to envisage the creation of observatories.

84. In order to simultaneously target different challenges and needs, it is essential to create solid interconnections between seemingly disparate topics and increase coordination between traditionally independent and sectoral family farming-related policies. It is necessary to improve intragovernmental coordination mechanisms, involving government agencies beyond the agricultural sector.

85. Gender equality and support for the next generation of family farmers should be mainstreamed when developing and implementing public policies and regulations for supporting family farming. Strengthening the intersectoral

approach and supporting countries in developing or improving mechanisms of intragovernmental coordination will also contribute to mainstreaming gender and youth effectively in family farming-related policies. Additional attention could be paid to leveraging the potential for innovation among young family farmers in connecting local knowledge with new solutions, with particular reference to innovative digital solutions to connect producers and consumers.

86. Greater attention should be paid to promoting innovative economic opportunities and market solutions that build on the multifunctionality of family farming. Product characterization systems that can help to preserve and promote traditional products, while also recognizing the important role that family farmers play in maintaining local culture and vibrant social networks in rural areas, should be expanded.

87. To increase resilience to shocks and promote the economic inclusion of the most vulnerable groups, improving the productive capacity and market integration of family farmers should be complemented by social protection schemes that target rural territories and communities. Member States should reinforce their commitment to promoting social protection as a key tool for reducing poverty, encouraging inclusive development and ensuring the well-being of family farmers and rural populations.

88. Although the key role of family farmers in achieving global food security has been fully recognized in recent years, their strategic role in environmental protection, especially through payment for ecosystem services, must be recognized, and their increased involvement in national and global mechanisms for combating climate change and decreasing biodiversity loss must be supported.

89. Promoting experience-sharing and networking among family farmers is an effective way of developing their capacities to contribute to the processes and activities associated with the Decade. Likewise, capacity development for national and local authorities is important, in order to ensure that family farmers are adequately supported and that Decade-related activities are effectively designed and implemented.

90. Given the successful results of the Decade, especially with regard to overcoming the combined impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the crisis related to the rising cost of living, the war in Ukraine and the immediate effects of the food and energy crises, as well as the triple planetary emergency of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, it is essential to maintain government engagement and to allocate appropriate financing from all sources to support family farming.

91. Financial resources should be mobilized to ensure the adequate implementation of the Decade, including through the provision of specific budget lines. In the case of adopted national action plans, it is essential for Member States to increase their commitment to gradually funding established initiatives, ensuring prioritization in their national budgets and supporting regional and local Governments and the active participation of family farmers' organizations in implementation processes.

92. For the effective implementation of the Decade, collaboration and cooperation among partners, including resource partners, international organizations and development agencies, should be encouraged, and innovative and equitable public-private partnerships should be promoted.

93. Regional and international organizations should continue to assist Governments, national committees for family farming and other multi-

stakeholder platforms in structuring the implementation phase. As part of that expansion process, it is crucial to reinforce the leading role of FAO and IFAD regional and country offices.

94. Governments should continue to engage with family farmers' organizations, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academia and other relevant actors, involving them in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national action plans. It is important that national processes adopt a bottom-up approach and recognize representatives of family farming in national dialogues. Strong commitment is necessary to mobilize stakeholders, with particular reference to countries in which the participation of family farmers' organizations in the formulation of public policies and in dialogue with Governments has not been promoted.

95. The critical role of family farmers' organizations, national committees for family farming and other multi-stakeholder platforms in the promotion, design and implementation of national action plans and other legal frameworks, and their role in channelling proposals from the field to Governments, should be further promoted.

96. To maximize the social, economic and sustainable contributions of family farming to sustainable development, the promotion of synergies between different family farming-relevant initiatives at the national level is recommended, including in national strategies to transform agrifood systems, with a systems approach underscoring the multidimensional contributions of family farming.

97. It is instrumental to promote the agency of family farmers and the unique potential of the Decade, in order to advance interconnected solutions to multiple and interconnected crises and to advance their capacity to accelerate the transformation to more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems.

98. Through the development, improvement and implementation of policy and regulatory frameworks supporting family farming and the elaboration of national action plans, efforts should continue to be dedicated to the progressive implementation and use of relevant international tools and guidelines.³⁵

99. Member States, FAO, IFAD and other relevant stakeholders are invited to develop and implement comprehensive resource mobilization plans aimed at scaling up priority areas of work under the pillars; to provide a framework to support the development of national action plans and relevant global knowledge products for technical support; and to identify projects on the basis of country demands and of dialogues with family farmers' organizations.

³⁵ See A/76/233; and www.fao.org/3/ni949en/ni949en.pdf.