



COMMUNIQUE ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEASANTS' STRUGGLE

“We feed the world and build Food Sovereignty.”

#NoFutureWithoutFoodSovereignty

#17April2021

Noting that ESAFF Uganda held a Community Dialogue on 17th April 2021 in Apac Town Council in Apac district, northern Uganda. The Community Dialogue attended by men and women small-scale farmers was in commemoration of the International Day of Peasants' Struggle. The dialogue was organised under the theme "We feed the world and build Food Sovereignty", marking this year as the Festival of Food Sovereignty.

Noting that Small-Scale farmers play a crucial role in sustaining the economy of Uganda through providing produce and products for agriculture export, raw materials to the local industries, supplying the food basket of the country, custodians of Indigenous agriculture Knowledge, using agriculture approaches that protect the environment and promote equality among others. Through these actions, Small-Scale farmers have drastically contributed to the achievement of over 10 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

Further noting that Small-Scale farmers who participated in the Community Dialogue highlighted that peasants' repression had increased again. They stressed that in Uganda, the COVID-19 pandemic exposed the inequality faced by Small-Scale farmers in the quest for justice and fairness. Small-scale farmers further testified that they face different oppressive challenges, including Gender-Based Violence for women, land grabbing by investors, limited space to influence policy and unfavourable seed laws. These are inflicted on Small-Scale farmers even in the presence of the law. Small-scale farmers shared experiences of loss of land, limited access to productive resources, silenced from speaking, sexual abuse, limited access to health services, request for bribes by duty barrier and being denied information.

Recognising the need for solidarity with all those who are experiencing violent repression and criminalisation of their struggles today; ESAFF Uganda joins other members of La Via Campesina (LVC) from around the world on this day as LVC celebrates 25 years of building Food Sovereignty to highlight the oppression that women and men especially in rural areas face even in this generation;

we celebrate this as we remember the people of the landless workers' movement killed on 17th April 1996.

Reiterating the need to continue opposing the destructive Capitalist Industrial Model that is causing hunger, inequality, and the climate crisis. Further, the need to create public awareness of the oppressions that small-scale farmers, especially those in rural areas, face. ESAFF Uganda calls for the following actions to be taken;

1. Government should develop and implement a strategic plan for implementing the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas](#) that the Human Rights Council adopted on 28th September 2018. This will provide mechanisms for the protection of the rights of small-scale farmers.
2. Learning from the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, the government should protect the food system against corporate capture that is likely to increase food insecurity and further exploit Small-Scale farmers, especially women in rural areas.
3. The government should transition from 'commitments' to 'actions' on addressing challenges related to land, seed, gender, and access to finance, hence protecting citizens' rights, especially small-scale farmers, by developing a transformative strategy that engages all stakeholders.
4. Government should play a critical role in providing a safe space for small-scale farmers to express needs and grievances without fear of oppression or failure to be listened to.

It was made at Apac district on 17th April 2021.

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About Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) Uganda

ESAFF Uganda is the largest Small-Scale farmer-led advocacy movement in Uganda, with membership in over 54 districts. ESAFF Uganda brings together Small-Scale Farmers, Pastoralists, and Fisherfolk to advance Social and Economic Equality, Agroecology and Food Sovereignty. ESAFF Uganda is a member of La Via Campesina (LVC).

Learn more: www.esaffuganda.org

