



Eastern and Southern Africa
Small Scale Farmers' Forum
ESAFF - UGANDA



**Amplifying Small-scale
Farmers' Voices**



COP29
Baku
Azerbaijan
11th - 22nd November 2024

UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

SMALL-SCALE FARMERS' STATEMENT TO COP 29

INVEST IN SMALL-SCALE FARMERS; INVEST IN AGROECOLOGY. POLLUTER MUST PAY

INTRODUCTION

The COP 29 statement unites small-scale farmers on the climate crisis frontlines, calling for equitable climate justice, agroecological practices, and polluter accountability. As climate impacts worsen, a policy shift is urgently needed. Small-scale farmers advocate for agroecology as a sustainable alternative to industrial agriculture, emphasizing its benefits for biodiversity, resilience, and community well-being. Rooted in firsthand experience with changing climate patterns, agroecology represents a forward path centered on ecological harmony and social welfare. This statement positions agroecology as essential for climate justice, closely aligned with farmers' lived experiences and aspirations.

Impacts of Climate Change on Uganda's Small-Scale Farmers.

The following impacts have exacerbated their vulnerabilities:

- 1). Small-scale farmers are experiencing an unprecedented increase in extreme weather events. Between 2015 and 2022, the frequency of droughts rose by 36%, while intense floods displaced thousands and caused significant crop losses, leading to a food crisis for millions.
- 2). Farmers are experiencing increased soil degradation and reduced yields. Studies show that crop yields for maize and beans, Uganda's staples, are declining by over 10% annually due to climate-induced factors.
- 3). Small-scale farmers are losing an estimated \$500 million annually due to climate-related crop failures. This figure doesn't account for the indirect losses faced by our families and communities in terms of education, health, and overall well-being.
- 4). Small-scale farmers are experiencing malnutrition and stunting, particularly affecting women and children. In some regions, up to 30% of rural households report food insecurity, which has a direct correlation with increased poverty rates.

ESAFF Uganda's Position for COP 29;

1). Polluter Must Pay

The "*polluter pays*" principle must be formalized to ensure that high-emission countries and corporations compensate for the environmental and economic damage suffered by small-scale farmers. By holding polluters accountable, funds must be directed to communities bearing the heaviest climate burden. Therefore, this principle should be central to climate negotiations at COP 29.

2). Addressing Loss and Damage

COP 29 must establish a transparent and accessible funding mechanism for loss and damage. Uganda's farmers have lost crops, land, and infrastructure due to climate events, and they deserve compensation to rebuild their lives and livelihoods. Farmers also urge for shifting fund management away from the World Bank to a more climate-justice-oriented institution to ensure accessible and equitable

distribution for vulnerable communities. Farmers further insist that the fund must be offered as non-repayable aid, not loans, to avoid increasing debt burdens on already struggling nations.

3). Enhancing Equity in Climate Finance for Small-Scale Farmers and Rural Communities

In 2021, only 2% of international public climate finance—around USD 2 billion—reached small-scale family farmers and rural communities, representing a mere 0.3% of the total climate finance from both public and private sources. In Sub-Saharan Africa alone, the annual financial needs of smallholders are estimated to be approximately USD 170 billion. COP29 discussions highlight the need for financial mechanisms that prioritize resilience at the local level, agroecology, and food sovereignty. There is a strong call for climate funds to be channeled directly to communities most affected by climate shocks, empowering them to invest in resilience-building practices. Achieving equity in access to climate finance is crucial.

4). Technology Transfer and Capacity Building

To adapt and mitigate effectively, small-scale farmers need access to affordable technology and agricultural techniques. COP 29 must prioritize the transfer of climate-friendly technologies, supported by robust training programs that allow farmers to implement these solutions effectively or in other words build on their local knowledge.

5). Funding for Agroecology

Agroecology needs dedicated financial support. ESAFF Uganda calls for international funding specifically earmarked for agroecological projects that strengthen resilience, reduce emissions, and protect biodiversity. We urge governments to allocate at least 10% of climate adaptation funds toward agroecological initiatives. But this must be built on a well thought of structures like agroecology strategy or plans.

6). Securing Land Tenure Rights

Secure land rights are essential for farmers to invest in long-term agroecological practices. Without tenure security, farmers are hesitant to implement sustainable practices that may take years to yield benefits. Without secure tenure, farmers cannot conserve seeds and biodiversity. COP 29 should advocate for policies and programs for member countries that protect land rights for small-scale farmers especially women small scale farmers, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to climate action.

7). Amplifying Rural Voices through UNDROP Domestication

Support is requested for the domestication of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP), offering a platform for rural voices to be heard in addressing the multifaceted dimensions of climate change and human rights.

8). Empowering Youth for Sustainable Climate Action

There is a plea for the strengthening of youth capacity through skill development and fostering business opportunities that align with ecosystem protection and restoration, thereby supporting climate and sustainable development goals. Parties are called on to adopt models that involve the participation of the next generation, including schoolchildren, in COP discussions, recognizing them as the custodians of our shared future.

9). Time-bound Commitment for Emission Reduction

Small-scale farmers emphasize the urgency of climate action and call for time-bound commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We urge COP 29 to set clear and achievable targets for emission reduction, aligning with the global effort to limit temperature rise and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

CONCLUSION.

As the world convenes for COP 29, ESAFF Uganda calls upon global leaders to recognize the essential role of small-scale farmers in climate action. Addressing climate change equitably requires an inclusive approach that prioritizes the needs and contributions of those on the frontline. Through climate justice, support for agroecology, and policies grounded in resilience, we can build a future where small-scale farmers thrive alongside a stable climate.

To learn more about ESAFF Uganda, please visit:



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