



## Press Release on the International Day of Peasants' Struggle

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

17<sup>th</sup> April 2021  
Kampala, Uganda

On this 17<sup>th</sup> April, ESAFF Uganda joins other members of La Via Campesina (LVC) from around the world in commemorating the International Day of Peasant Struggles. This is in memory of the people of the Landless Workers' Movement killed on 17th April 1996 and in solidarity with all those who are experiencing violent repression and criminalisation of their struggles today.

It is also unique that this year La Via Campesina is celebrating 25 years of building Food Sovereignty since its formulation in 1996 at the World Food Summit with a vision to oppose the destructive capitalist industrial model that is causing hunger, inequality and the climate crisis. Together with La Via Campesina, we are marking this year as the year of the festival of Food Sovereignty under the theme "We feed the world and build Food Sovereignty".

In Uganda, Small-Scale farmers in the different regions have been at the forefront of influencing policies and laws to protect the country's Food Sovereignty. This has come with enormous challenges that have created tension and fear among some Small-Scale farmers in the rural areas of Uganda. COVID-19 has also exposed the inequalities that small-scale farmers face and the challenges experienced while influencing policy process at different levels.

"Recently, when we were documenting cases of small-scale farmers who were affected by Large scale Land-based investors. Some Small-Scale farmers in the community feared to speak in front of the camera because the investor was believed to be so "powerful"; such incidences have limited small-scale farmers' actions toward protecting their rights. It is even worse for women given the cultural structures in our rural communities". Nancy Mugimba, National Coordinator.

"Small-scale farmers, especially women in rural areas, still face preventable abuses on their rights even with the presence of legal principles in the country. This day allows us to highlight such challenges and call on the government to be proactive towards protecting rights, especially against the powerful cooperation taking over the Agriculture Sector". Beatrice Katsigazi, LVC Women Articulation Committee.

“For long, governments have not listened to voices of Small-Scale farmers hence keeping them in poverty. We all know that poverty is an abuse of Human Rights; we use this day to challenge the government to respect the rights of small-scale farmers and promote the comprehensive inclusion of small-scale farmers in policy processes at all levels because our voices matter”. Hakim Baliraine, National and Regional Chairperson, ESAFF.

ESAFF Uganda is organising a Community Dialogue to create awareness of the challenges that small-scale farmers, especially those in rural areas face in the struggle to dismantle inequality. ESAFF Uganda will also use the Community Dialogue to highlight the impact of solidarity and collective efforts in realising Food Sovereignty at local, national, regional and global levels. The dialogue will discuss oppressions on Small-Scale farmers by the current Capitalistic System, especially regarding seed and land. ESAFF Uganda will also organise a groundbreaking ceremony for constructing the Community Seed Bank in Apac district to strengthen Small-Scale farmers’ Seed Sovereignty further. A communique will be developed to highlight the issues raised by small-scale farmers.

Join the discussion on the Social Media pages of LVC (Facebook: @ViaCampesinaOfficial and Twitter: @via\_campesina) and ESAFF Uganda (Facebook: @ESAFFUganda and Twitter: @ESAFFUG) using hashtags like #17April2021 #FutureIsFoodSovereignty #NoFutureWithoutFoodSovereignty.

“We feed the world and build Food Sovereignty!”

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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](http://www.esaffuganda.org)

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