



HUNGER  
~~WORLD FOOD DAY STATEMENT~~  
THE ANNUAL NATIONAL ORGANIC WEEK (NOW) 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
16<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Kampala, Uganda

Today, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2020 is the World Food Day. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), over 2 billion people do not have regular access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food while the global population is expected to reach almost 10 billion by 2050. With the world hit with COVID-19 pandemic, hunger has plagued the world at an unprecedented scale. COVID-19 has uncovered the fragility and unsustainability of the neoliberal framework in the current food systems. It is no secret that agro-corporations have either been hijacking calls for radical shifts in policy, or using food security issues highlighted by the pandemic to further consolidate their control over food and agriculture.

This year's World Food Day comes at a time when it estimates that many households in Uganda will suffer from poverty and hunger as a result of the impact of the pandemic and other calamities like locusts, floods, drought among other. On that note, we join other organizations around the world to commemorate it as the World Hunger Day and use it to call to action the duty bearers and highlight the need to develop a real systemic solutions to combat and reverse the rise in hunger.

“To address the current food insufficiency in Uganda and protect the food system, the government should upscale agroecology which is grounded in the integration of science with local and indigenous knowledge and practice, emphasizes farming in harmony with natural cycles and processes” Ms. Beatrice Katsigazi, Member, LVC Regional Coordination Commission (RCC).

Agroecology is an economically viable and socially just approach to sustainable agriculture and food systems for which the energies of the rural youth can be harnessed. Agroecology makes food systems more resilient and robust so they can withstand increasing volatility and climate shocks, deliver affordable and sustainable healthy diets for all.

Furthermore, it's vital to acknowledge that organic agriculture offers an approach for sustainability because the organic practices are less harmful to the environment, fosters social well-being and leads to economic resilience. Organic food is safer and healthier than conventionally produced food as well as better for a healthy environment, climate protection and animal welfare.

“We are calling for funding and operationalization of the recently passed National Organic Agriculture Policy (NOAP) in order to position organic agriculture to achieve food sovereignty and contribute to ending hunger” Mr. Hakim Baliraine, Chairperson, ESAFF.

To produce enough food, small-scale farmers' rights to land and seed should be protected. This can be assured when the government desists from passing laws and policies that hinder such rights but rather domesticates the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas that was passed in 2018.

On that note, to further highlight these key issues, ESAFF Uganda will hold radio talk shows and an online small-scale farmers' conference to depict the contribution of small-scale farmers especially women to making sustainable and healthy diets affordable and available to all and achieving Zero Hunger amidst COVID-19 through agroecology.

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#### ***About ESAFF Uganda***

Eastern and Southern Africa Small-scale Farmers' Forum (ESAFF) Uganda is the largest small-scale farmer-led policy influencing movement in Uganda. ESAFF Uganda was established to bring together small-scale farmers into a social movement to build common aspirations, learnings and linkages. ESAFF Uganda which is a membership organization with members in 54 districts works to enhance the small-scale farmers' ability to make informed decisions and participate meaningfully in development processes at local, national and regional/global level. ESAFF Uganda is also part of a bigger network of small-scale farmers' organisations (ESAFF) in other 15 countries in eastern and southern Africa.

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