



High-Level Forum on Connecting Smallholders to Markets

25 June 2015 - 9.30-17.00 – Red Room, FAO

Chair's Summary

1. The objective of the Forum was to bring together a wide range of stakeholders to discuss policy implications, challenges and lessons learned from concrete examples of how farmers have found opportunities to engage in beneficial and sustainable linkages to markets. This contributed to reaching a common understanding of such opportunities and challenges and the potential contribution CFS could make in addressing them and identified broad recommendations on areas for priority action to strengthen smallholder access to markets.
2. During the day, a great variety of approaches and contexts were presented, introduced by panellists and key note speakers (see the attached agenda for the Forum) and discussed by the full plenary. These demonstrated different ways that smallholders operate and have been able to successfully establish and strengthen linkages to markets. The challenge is to draw lessons with broader applicability.
3. It was emphasized that smallholders are essential for achieving food security and nutrition but also that their contribution goes far beyond, to include rural poverty reduction, and the conservation of natural, social and cultural capital. It is important that they are considered as key actors for their contribution to food security and nutrition when dealing with access to markets.
4. The lessons that were presented, the key messages that were shared and the comments that were submitted during the day could be synthesized in the following points:
 - i. Collective action, smallholder organizations and cooperatives, have been stressed as a crucial link that facilitates access of smallholders to markets. They offer smallholders a way to overcome challenges linked to their size, to make economies of scale, be more inclusive with regards to youth and gender in processing, and make smallholders' voices heard when it comes to negotiating conditions and prices, both for buying and selling, with other actors of the value chain. Smallholders have also

- proven to be smart and practical interlocutors when it comes to partnerships with bigger businesses, or contributing to local, national or regional food security.
- ii. - Financial and non-financial services and linkages in value chains are particularly important for smallholders. The experience in developing Geographical Indications shows that such initiatives can offer high economic added value and additional and sustainable opportunities for smallholders, their communities, environment, and cultural heritage.
 - iii. Partnerships with the private sector can have positive impacts on smallholder families and communities, when they aim to give a “hand-up” instead of a “hand-out” through community-led initiatives towards self-sustainability. These partnerships must keep smallholder livelihoods at the centre of their strategies. They are an effective way of enhancing a direct producer-consumer relationship, for which there is growing demand globally. It is important to reiterate that these partnerships are more effective if implemented in a context where the public sector plays an active and constructive enabling role.
 - iv. The role of governments, and public governance, by investing in physical infrastructure, research and transfer of knowledge and technology directly applicable by farmers, and developing policy frameworks, has been stressed as a critical issue. Government’s decisions in the agricultural sector (policies, regulations and institutions) have a huge impact on the modalities of smallholders’ engagement in markets, and the benefits they eventually derive from it. National policies should consider and align carefully with smallholder production structures and chains, to support coherence, job creation, and collective benefits. And they should aim to foster capacity building. Public procurement and local food purchase from smallholders for instance can open up attractive markets for smallholders.

CONSTRAINTS TO BE ADDRESSED

5. However, there are still constraints standing in the way of enhanced smallholder integration to markets which were identified at the Forum with a view to setting out issues that may need further attention and discussion by the Committee:
 - i. There is a data gap regarding informal local food markets and how they function. It is crucial to provide greater visibility as well as to promote a better understanding of informal local markets to efficiently support improved smallholder livelihoods and food security.
 - ii. Investments (from public sector, other private business partners, or smallholders themselves) must be further channelled towards smallholders’ needs, including small scale fishermen.
 - iii. Access to financial and insurance services for smallholders and other actors should be improved.

- iv. There is still a need for more transfer of innovative technologies from research to smallholders.
- v. Smallholder farming must stay attractive for young generations, women and men.
- vi. Collective action and leadership is needed to increase effectiveness and address changing contexts and challenges.
- vii. Strengthening rural non-farm employment and income generating opportunities are crucial factors in order to face declining farm sizes stemming from demographic pressures and complement diversification and risk management practices.
- viii. The full implementation of existing CFS policies and decisions, needs further attention and action by all stakeholders at regional, national and local levels.

6. The audience was reminded that the High-Level Forum is supposed to be, pending the decision to be taken at the CFS Plenary in October 2015, the first step of a process that will lead to the approval of a set of policy recommendations and good practices by the Committee in 2016. It was reiterated that CFS had already undertaken significant work on this topic and future CFS work needed to clearly identify how it added value and avoided duplication. The technical task team would be requested to distil the information from the forum, its associated background documentation, and past CFS work to identify the practices and recommendations that could serve as the basis for CFS discussions.

7. The CFS Chair concluded by thanking the moderator of the Forum, Ms Zeinab Badawi, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for making the event possible through funding, the panellists and all participants that intervened in the course of the day as well as the members of the Task Team that was responsible for the organization of the Forum - Takis Karfakis (FAO), Florence Tartanac (FAO), Philipp Baumgartner (IFAD), Patricia Kennedy (WFP), Barbara Pfister (WFP), Andrea Ferrante (CSM) and Morgane Danielou (PSM).

Timetable of the CFS High-Level Forum on Connecting Smallholders to Markets

	Time	Session title	Panelists
Session 1	9.30 – 9.50	Opening	Welcoming by CFS Chair, Ms Gerda Verburg and HLF Moderator, Ms Zeinab Badawi , International Broadcaster
	9.50 – 10.30	Taking stock: Smallholders as market actors in a globalised food system	Keynote Mr Pierre-Marie Bosc , Agricultural Research Centre for International Development, CIRAD Discussant Ms Shi Yan , Vice-President of Urgenci and President of Chinese Network of over 500 Community Supported Agriculture organizations
	10.30 – 12.30	<u>Examples of good practice</u> : Showcasing what worked where Followed by Q&A session	Presentation of case studies and discussion with audience, facilitated by moderator: Mr Mamadou Goita , West African Peasants and Farmers Network, ROPPA Ms Andrea Polo Galante , Nutritionist, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, FAO Ms Penny Studholme , Vice-President of Corporate Affairs, Cargill Ms Ester Olivas Cáceres , Geographical Indications Senior Legal Specialist, SAMCERT (Strengthening Smallholders' Access to Markets for Certified Sustainable Products) project in Sao Tome and Principe Mr Prince Kamara , Director of Smallholder Commercialization Programme, Ministry of Agriculture, Sierra Leone
	12.30 – 14.00	<i>Lunch break</i>	
Session 2	14.00 – 16.30	<u>High Level Panel</u> : - Way forward on the agenda: Areas needing policy action; areas needing further debate Followed by Q&A session	High-level panel discussion with moderator: Mr Shenggen Fan , Director-General, International Food Policy Research Institute, IFPRI Ms Dessislava Dimitrova , President of the Association of Slow Food Convivia in Bulgaria Ms Chukki Nanjundaswamy , La Via Campesina, India Ms Cesarie Kantarama , Regional Vice-President, Eastern Africa Farmers Federation (EAFF), Rwanda Mr Christian John Adams , World Forum of Fisher Peoples (WFFP)
	16.30 – 17.00	Closure	CFS Chair, Ms Gerda Verburg to summarise the core points and implications for CFS, supported by the moderator's synthesis
	17.00	RECEPTION – Caracalla Roof Garden, 8th Floor, FAO Building	