



WORLD FARMERS'
ORGANISATION

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ROLE OF COOPERATIVES TO THE SUSTAINABILITY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SYSTEMS

WFO Policy adopted by WFO General Assembly

June 9, 2022

THE BIGGEST INDEPENDENT
GLOBAL FARMERS' VOICE



POLICY STRUCTURE

The policy has been structured as follows:

- ❖ Preamble
- ❖ Guiding Principles
- ❖ Main Pillars
- ❖ Recommendations



PREAMBLE

Agricultural cooperatives play a key role in shaping the farming sector in different Countries by organizing farmers, empowering them both economically and socially.

Cooperatives also help in boosting gender equality in family farming as farmers, including women, get easier (and equal) access to i.e. markets, services, resources, training, technology, decision-making processes, support while negotiating with other stakeholders like (i.e. suppliers, retailers, banks, insurers).

Cooperatives can help strengthen farmers and raise awareness on the role family farmers play, as well as play as an intermediary between farmers and governments in negotiations and decision-making processes.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Voluntary and open membership. The membership of a cooperative is open to all those who have a common interest, who commit to share the benefits and responsibilities that it implies.

Democratic member control. Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who use the services of the cooperative and are equally and actively engaged in the decision-making processes of the organisation.

Economic and social benefits. Cooperatives can boost social inclusion, political and economic empowerment of their members. Farmers in agricultural cooperatives can get access to markets, value chains, opportunities that would otherwise be beyond their reach.



MAIN PILLARS

Recognising the role of agricultural cooperatives. They play a crucial role in the implementation of a **farmer driven approach towards sustainable development and more sustainable and resilient food systems.**

Fostering youth empowerment and generational shift. Agricultural cooperatives can boost rural youth empowerment by providing i.e. networks, job, capacity building, engagement in decision-making processes, easier access to financial and non-financial services.

Boosting women empowerment. Cooperatives provide support and network, strengthening women's self-confidence, increasing women's power in negotiating prices and contract terms and in the decision-making processes.

Increasing farmers' resilience. In cooperatives, risks and benefits are shared among the members and this decrease farmers' vulnerability to risks and challenges i.e. food insecurity, resource scarcity, climate change related disasters.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Investments should be encouraged to strengthen organised agriculture. Agricultural coops play a **key role in shaping the farming sector by organizing farmers**, including women and youth, empowering them both economically and socially, creating jobs and bringing farmers into business models that are resilient to both economic and environmental shocks.

Cooperatives should be recognised as an innovative business model which contributes to boosting food security, fostering social development, achieving sustainability in food systems, boost the use of renewable energy. They embody the principles of the **2030 Agenda**: leaving no one behind and strengthening partnerships to succeed.

Strengthening cooperatives is key to facilitating farmers' access to resources, including land, technology, information education, funds, insurances, and social services, that individual farmers may otherwise not be able to access alone, thus **fostering the development of rural communities**.



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