IFAD14 Replenishment Consultation

Intervention of the FAFO Steering Committee

for the informal consultation for IFAD 14th Replenishment

30 October 2026

Intervention by Ms. Tamisha Tamara Lee, President of the Jamaica Network of Rural Women Producers (JNRWP) on behalf of Farmers' Organisations and Farmers' Forum members

Excellencies, distinguished representatives of IFAD Member States, IFAD Senior Management,

Please accept the warm and hopeful greetings of the Farmers' Forum (FAFO) Steering Committee. We, the Farmers' Organizations members of the FAFO Steering Committee, are grateful for the invitation to participate in this informal consultation and would like to thank IFAD for its longstanding and fruitful partnership with us, at global, regional and national levels.

The Farmers' Forum (FAFO) is a unique mechanism that has made IFAD a preferred partner of the farmers' organizations. Moreover, we consider FAFO a participatory and inclusive platform for a tripartite partnership among Governments, IFAD and the Farmers' Organizations.

Collectively, FAFO represents more than 95 million family farmers globally. With our existing coordination mechanism from the local, national, regional and global, we can take lead in promoting climate resilient solutions and ensuring faster and better food systems transformation.

In the current context of geopolitical challenges and severe climate-related risks, which affect farming activities and livelihoods across regions, farmers and farmers' organizations play a key role in the adaptation of the food production to the numerous disruptions at supply chain level, as well as in building resilient rural communities who can absorb the shocks and continue to grow.

Farmers' Organizations can play a key role in supporting IFAD 14 priorities as they provide economic services at affordable terms to their members, including youth and women. Farmers' Organizations are key partners for IFAD in improving the livelihoods; offer easier access to markets for farmers; distribute key information and knowledge, technology, training, and extension services.

In the era of emergencies and unpredictability, Farmers are currently under threat by a number of challenges, among which is:

1) El Niño and the climate emergency. Droughts, frosts, heavy rains, floods, and power outages due to lack of water. El Niño and its impacts should be explicitly included in IFAD's priorities, complementing what the countries are already

doing, securing resources to farmers in order to address the most urgent needs in rural areas in the event of crises and disasters.

2) Land, water, forests and oceans are increasingly concentrated in the hands of corporations and financial actors, driving dispossession, inequality and ecological collapse. The ICARRD+20 outcomes should inform the programs and interventions of IFAD. Water harvesting, family reservoirs, and irrigation innovation methods require access to funding for investments at farm level. IFAD should establish finance mechanisms to support states that want to implement agrarian reform and rural development policies and programs ensuring equitable access to natural resources, securing collective rights to land and territories as well as democratic governance. Dedicated programs must be implemented to ensure that these policies and programmes truly benefit the farmers.
3) Many food producers have good production capacity but they face strong challenges to access markets and therefore they end up relying on intermediaries; Small- scale farmers and food producers need to be capacitated to increase access to local, national and regional markets and secure value addition to sell their products at prices that guarantee them a decent income and livelihood.
4) Public policies that are designed to meet the demands of large multinational corporations rather than the general interest of farmers and small-scale food producers.Taxation and agricultural insurance context are creating tremendous challenges to the Farmers' communities. Cuts in national support programs for family farming and agricultural insurance along with the rise in fuel and input costs are putting the Farmers in dangerous unpredictable future.

In this dynamic, we value IFAD's partnership with farmers' organisations and their role not only as project beneficiaries, but also as partners in identifying local priorities, contributing to programme design and implementation, and providing services to farmers, particularly at country level. When properly capacitated, farmers' organisations also serve as key partners for governments and IFAD in the design of effective and efficient value-chain policies at all levels. In this respect, we also encourage IFAD to include the national Farmers' Organizations as co-designers of IFAD COSOPs.

It is important to recognize Farmers' Organizations not only as representatives of farmers, but as key actors in rural development. When FOs are empowered to play this role effectively, the impact reaches millions of rural people and contributes to more inclusive and resilient rural economies.

Investing in strong, competent and inclusive farmers' organizations is therefore not simply an investment in farmers. It is also an investment in the future of rural communities and food systems.

We encourage IFAD14 to support these farmer-led solutions and local markets; to explore a mechanism channeling financing directly to farmers' organizations, building on the experience of the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility; and to provide longer-term institutional support that strengthens their governance, policy engagement and the participation of women and young farmers in decision-making.

In IFAD Strategic Documents and Communications channels, it is stated very clearly:

*In more than **90 countries**, IFAD works directly with small-scale producers to deliver stronger agri-food value chains, deeper market integration and greater employment opportunities and help communities build resilience and respond to multiple crises.*

As Farmers´ Organizations members of the FAFO Steering Committee, we are the representatives of those small-scale producers that IFAD aims to support!

Our organizations are the platforms created by the Farmers to liaise with Governments and Governmental Institutions. There is no other institution, may it be agri-food companies, organizations, SMEs that may have a direct experience and knowledge in supporting the farmers more than our Organizations. This is the lighthouse that we would like to offer to you, while IFAD designs its 14th Replenishment strategy.

We call on Member States to support these proposals and with deep respect, we wish to build on this unique relationship by taking it to a more strategic and effective level: we request that the Farmers' Organizations that form the Steering Committee of the FAFO be granted official observer status at the IFAD Executive Board.

While we are able to interact with the Governing Council every four years, we observed that such engagement will be deepened and made much more meaningful through our institutionalized engagement, as observers at IFAD-EB.

Granting FAFO observer status would bring three major added values to IFAD's governance:

- First, providing practical feedback and lessons learned from the direct involvement of our farmers in IFAD-supported country programmes;
- Second, strengthening the legitimacy and collective voice of FAFO through the representation of its members;
- Third, enabling FAFO member Organizations to play a leading role in promoting climate-resilient solutions, including agroecological and agroforestry approaches developed and tested by farmers themselves, and accelerating a more effective and inclusive transformation of food systems, drawing on our coordination mechanisms at local, national, regional and global levels.

Once again, on behalf of the FAFO Steering Committee, we thank IFAD and its Member States for the opportunity to contribute to the IFAD14 replenishment consultation, and we look forward to continuing our collaboration in support of farmers and sustainable rural development.