



COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY

Forty-eighth (Special) Session
"Making a Difference in Food Security and Nutrition"

4 June 2021

**STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF IFAD OR HIS
REPRESENTATIVE**

Excellencies,

Honourable Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to address you on behalf of IFAD's President. Both he and I regret that we are unable to join this important session in person.

In this year of unprecedented challenges, we are reminded of the importance of strong, united and effective multilateral cooperation.

I would like to extend my thanks and gratitude to **the Committee on World Food Security (CFS)** for its steadfast support in the promotion of food security, nutrition and innovative approaches to delivering on the 2030 agenda. The CFS has played a vital role over the years in promoting sustainable food systems and safeguarding global food supply chains. We are particularly glad to see that today's session will focus on agro-ecological approaches.

I would also like to take this opportunity to commend **H.E. Yaya Olaitan Olaniran** for leading the negotiation sessions on the Policy Recommendations on Agroecological and Other Innovative Approaches.

Furthermore, I would like to recognize the extensive work done by the High-level Panel of Experts (HLPE), in drafting the report on agro-ecological and innovative approaches. The HLPE report highlighted three important issues:

- the importance of policy context,
- the need for integrated approaches to food systems
- and the importance of mapping and analysing these approaches to gauge efficacy.

The report is an essential reference for all of us who seek to achieve the SDGs.

Excellencies, we have less than 10 years left to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The UN Decade of Action launched by the Secretary-General last year urges us all to rethink how we work and to come together and accelerate sustainable solutions to the world's biggest challenges. We need to move smarter, quicker and most importantly, together in order to achieve our shared goal of food security for all.

COVID-19 has exposed the inequities and inequalities within our current food systems. But even before Covid, our food systems were not sustainable. We are degrading our ecosystems, decreasing biodiversity, shrinking habitats and contributing to climatic shocks and stressors.

Those who have contributed the least to these issues are the ones suffering most. Smallholder farmers make an enormous contribution to global food security. They produce roughly 50 per cent of all food calories on 30 per cent of the world's agricultural land. They are also the key to preserving biodiversity. Despite this, rural smallholder producers and their families are often net buyers of food, and suffer from food insecurity and malnutrition when they cannot afford to buy what they cannot grow. This is unacceptable.

COVID-19 has underscored the need to think of the most vulnerable. As we step up our efforts to achieve the SDGs, we must think of innovative solutions that work for the most marginalized, including small-scale producers and workers. This is a responsibility for all -- governments and the private sector alike.

We need to invest in innovation and the scaling up of promising solutions at the local level to make food systems stronger and more resilient. In this regard, we would like to commend the CFS on developing recommendations that so closely align with IFAD's mandate to end rural poverty and hunger through agricultural development, and its efforts to further sustainability and innovation.

We recognize these recommendations as a useful tool alongside the existing CFS products -- including the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition -- in strengthening institutions and empowering the most marginalized populations -- including indigenous peoples, youth, women and small-scale farmers.

The CFS has created a space for researchers, agencies, governments, civil society and the private sector to come together and discuss how we can all collectively contribute to ensuring food security for current and future generations. IFAD looks forward to its continued engagement with the CFS to deliver on the ambitious 2030 agenda.

Thank you.