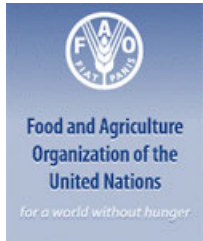


AU, FAO and Lula Institute join forces

ADDIS ABABA: The decision to end hunger needs to be taken by society as a whole, not by a single organisation or a single government, FAO director-general Jose Graziano da Silva told non-state actors at a meeting in Addis Ababa yesterday, 1 July 2013, that kicked off the discussions on the need for an unified approach and strengthened partnerships to guarantee food security in Africa.



Over 150 representatives of farmers associations, cooperatives social movements, civil society and non-governmental organizations and the private sector participated in the meeting that stressed the importance of the participation of all sectors in the fight against hunger and called on governments to commit to the eradication of hunger in Africa by 2025.

The high-level meeting is co-organised by the African Union, FAO and Lula Institute, who forged this partnership to act upon the political will existing in the region, transforming it into further and coordinated action to end hunger

"We hope that this meeting will help us to coordinate and mobilise further our common efforts to promote food security," explained Graziano da Silva. He added that FAO was committed to supporting African-led action against hunger, working within the framework of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Plan (CAADP).

A huge challenge that can be overcome

"The challenge of overcoming hunger in Africa is huge. Africa is the only region that saw hunger numbers go up after 1990," said Graziano da Silva. "But Africa also has many success stories. Just two weeks ago, at FAO Headquarters in Rome, we recognised 11 African countries for meeting internationally agreed targets for halving the proportion of hungry people well before the 2015 deadline established by the Millennium Development Goals," added the FAO director-general.

Looking beyond production

In his remarks, Graziano da Silva said that simply increasing production was not enough to end hunger because the main cause of food insecurity today is insufficient access to the resources needed to produce food or to income to buy it.

He noted that in Africa and worldwide, countries that were combining action to increase production by small-scale producing with social protection, cash-for-work programs and other similar initiatives were successfully managing to tackle hunger.

Joining forces

In his statement, Graziano da Silva stressed the many areas in which the participation of non-state actors were important in the fight against hunger and reaffirmed FAO's commitment to an "open door policy" with partners.

"This meeting is a starting point for a unified and united approach to end hunger in Africa. We are conscious that FAO cannot do it alone. You cannot do it alone. But, together, we can eradicate hunger in our lifetimes," concluded the director-general.

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