



Forest and Farm Facility

Forest and farm producer organizations Update on COVID-19



Highlights

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the lives and livelihoods of rural communities, indigenous peoples and family farmers around the world. The imposed quarantine and social distancing measures to contain the virus have delayed implementation of field activities; limited the transportation of food, agriculture inputs and products; closed local markets; and limited mobilization of workers, among others. To respond to these challenges, local communities, producer organizations and family farmers have come up with several initiatives and innovative solutions to help their members overcome the pandemic and provide tailored services to adapt their business activities to the current situation. These local initiatives and best practices were presented in [recent webinars](#) organized by FAO, the Forest and Farm Facility, and partner organizations to exchange experiences and enhance peer-to-peer learning among producer organizations, in addressing the COVID-19 health and economic crisis. This update presents a brief summary of three webinars, highlighting the most relevant elements addressed to the panelist and speakers.

Impacts, challenges and strategies of family farmers in Latin America to cope with COVID-19

Encuentros Virtuales

Hacia una Agricultura Familiar Resiliente
Soluciones desde las Organizaciones de Productores

Impactos, desafíos y estrategias frente al COVID-19 en la Agricultura Familiar

Miércoles 27 de mayo

Por : /OndaRural

Hora de Ecuador | 9.00 a.m. (GMT-5)

This webinar brought together regional organizations and platforms from Latin America and the Caribbean, and forest and farm producer organizations (FFPOs) from Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala and Uruguay. This webinar addressed how family farmers are facing the COVID-19 challenges and the actions they are taking to deliver solutions and services to their members during the pandemic. During the webinar, the speakers highlighted that the COVID-19 crisis has worsened the situation in Latin American countries where vulnerable populations are among the most affected, as was the case of family farmers who have been left unprotected. Family farmers experience additional challenges such as the lack of tenure rights, limited access to financial services, and the wave of migrants who have returned from cities to the countryside for lack of income-generating options. Speakers also shared successful experiences about how local FFPOs are facilitating access of financial and saving services to help their members address COVID-19 challenges. In Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala and Uruguay, credit unions and FFPOs have established communal savings, “in kind” credit programs, dedicated micro-finance programs for women, etc., to support family farmers to continue with their business activities, ensure food security and nutrition, and the acquisition of inputs for food production, among others.

More details of this webinar can be found [here](#).

South-South cooperation between produce organizations - Savings mechanism and financing solutions in Bolivia, Ecuador and Uruguay

Encuentros Virtuales

Hacia una Agricultura Familiar Resiliente
Soluciones desde las Organizaciones de Productores

Cooperación Sur-Sur entre Organizaciones de Productores: Mecanismos de ahorro y soluciones para el financiamiento

Viernes 29 de mayo

Por : /OndaRural

Hora de Ecuador | 9.00 a.m. (GMT-5)

In this webinar, organized by the Secretariat of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (UNOFF), the Forest and Farm Facility, FAO Strategic Objective 3 Reduce Rural Poverty, FAO Office for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (OSS), and the FAO Regional Office for Latin America; FFPOs from Bolivia, Ecuador and Uruguay shared their experiences on how they are adapting, designing and implementing financial services for their members during the pandemic.

In Bolivia, the **Union of Cooperatives El Ceibo** has been providing financial support to producers. During the pandemic, the cooperative has become an important buyer of famers' products and supported producers to get governmental permissions to operate and export during the pandemic. The Union also provides food supplies at a discounted rate. From the Union's perspective, the main challenge for farmers and producers is to assure that production chains and sales and exports to maintain cash flow continue with productive operations.

In Ecuador, the **Union of Peasant Organizations of Cotacachi –UNORCAC** explained how the organization has adapted its services to support famers. During the pandemic, the organization has deferred and restructured credits and extended the terms of the credits' payments to better support the producers and farmers. They have also developed new lines of credits that respond to the current clients' challenges. Finally, within the support of the Forest and Farm Facility, they are designing an associative marketing fund for family farmers. This fund will allow a fair price to producers and will involve 320 farmers, 90 per cent of which are women.

In Uruguay, the **National Cooperative of Milk Producers –CONAPROLE** is providing loans up to UYU 150 000 at a rate of 12 per cent to help farmers reactivate milk production. Compared with traditional banks' interest rates, the services of cooperatives are favorable alternatives. The cooperative reports 100 per cent loan repayment; one reason for this success is the strong relationship and coordinated work with milk producers' cooperatives. Similarly in Uruguay, the Cerro Pelado Microcredit Committee shared its experiences on micro-finance. Based on their experience, well-structured systems and procedures and tailored products are key in successfully delivering micro-finance to vulnerable people.

More details of this webinar can be found [here](#).

Global Conference on Multidimensional resilience – smallholder producers managing risks

International web consultation and conference

MULTIDIMENSIONAL RESILIENCE

SMALLHOLDER PRODUCERS AND FARMERS MANAGING RISKS

9-11 JUNE 2020

This three-day conference was co-organized by the Food and Forest Development Finland (FFD), AgriCord and the Forest and Farm Facility, in collaboration with the Asian Farmers' Association (AFA) and the Pan-African Farmers' Organization (PAFO). It included a series of webinars and interactive consultations, aimed to gain understanding of FFPO responses and strategies to greater resilience and to formulate common policy positions to promote pathways to resilience, both with specific focus on climate change and the COVID-19 context. This event combined a series of technical presentations, panel discussions and consultations on country and regional level findings from FFPO resilience consultations, formulation of policy positions and recommendations on climate change and COVID-19, resilience case studies from FFPOs, and technical toolkits to strengthen FFPOs' capacities to respond to climate change and access climate finance.

Results from preliminary survey in Asia shows that COVID-19 has adversely affected FFPOs in terms of marketing (82%), input supply (76%) and production (59%), access to finance (59%), and processing (53%) due to disruption of markets (82%) and lack of transportation (76%).

The most useful responses implemented by FFPOs to COVID-19 focus on hygiene and health, education and sensitization on preventive measures and main sanitary protocols, provision of masks, soap and other materials, supply of quality inputs to farmers, freedom of movement for extension services, and to access markets, improvement of storage facilities and technical and financial support to nurseries, support for production (seed distribution, provision of storage and processing), provide agri support services, access to finance, policy and advocacy, and support for marketing.

At the end of the conference, FFPOs recommended to international partners the need to mobilize direct investment and finance to support FFPOs. This will help deliver services to their constituencies, bring initiatives to the local level and to local institutions and ensure smallholders access to climate finance. FFPOs also recommended to re-build local and global food systems, innovative marketing mechanism and increase diversity and the need to highlight and recognize the multifunctional interlinkages between agriculture and forestry. Finally yet importantly, FFPOs requested more focus on science, research and technology led by farmers to ensure access to smallholder relevant technological innovations, and build on traditional knowledge and enhance local data collection and ownership by FFPOs.

More details of this webinar can be found [here](#).

Webinar Challenges and Opportunities for Smallholder/ Family Farmers in Africa during and post COVID-19

Webinar Invitation

Challenges and Opportunities for Smallholder/ Family Farmers in Africa during and post COVID-19

[CLICK TO REGISTER FOR WEBINAR](#)

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More details of this webinar can be found [here](#).

Media



[Women's empowerment through collective action: how can forest and farm producer organisations can make a difference](#)



[IIED briefing: Places to prosper: engaging with youth migration in forest landscapes](#)



[IIED Blog: Finding solutions in nature for climate change](#)

Events

- [COVID-19 Forestry Webinar Week: Solutions for Resilience, 23 June](#)
- [Challenges and Opportunities for Smallholder/ Family Farmers in Africa during and post COVID-19, 16 June](#)
- [Sustainable wood-fuel value chains for food security in Sub-Saharan Africa 3 June \(GLF Bonn Digital Conference 2020\).](#)
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