

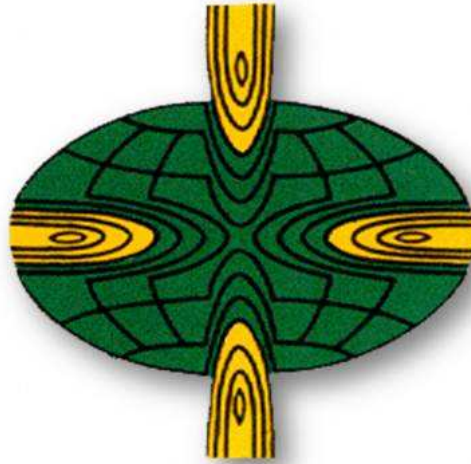


AHG OF INGOs
Representatives to FAO in Rome

FAO Conference 2011

June 25 – July 2

International Catholic Rural Association



Associazione Internazionale Cattolica Rurale

THE STATE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE 2010-11

**Women in agriculture:
Closing the gender gap for development**



The agricultural and rural economies of developing countries are underperforming, in part, because women lack the resources and opportunities they need to be more productive.

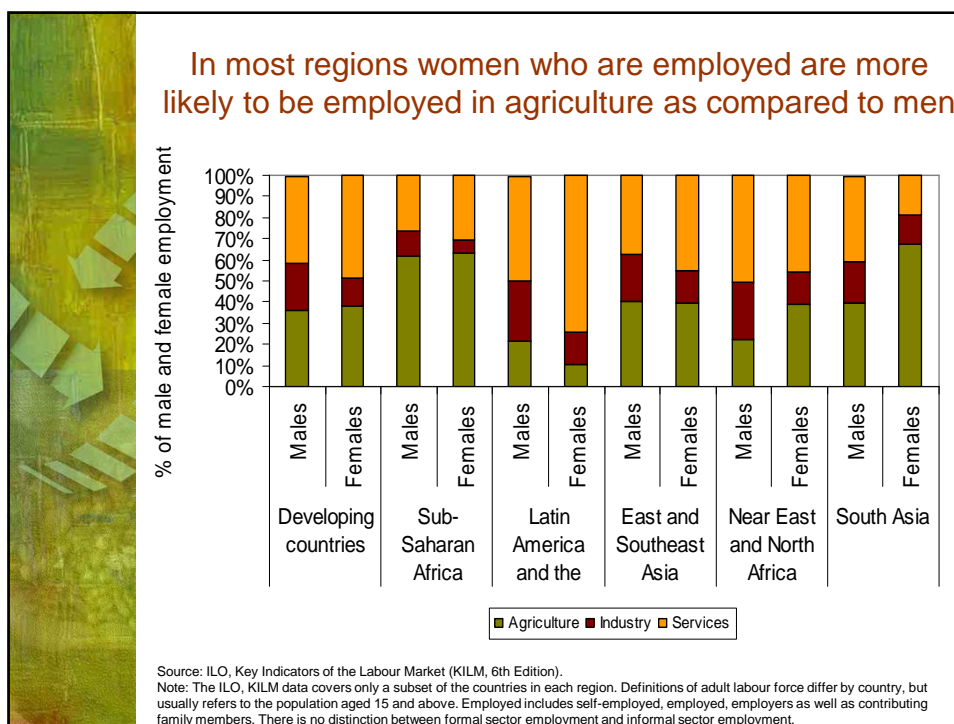
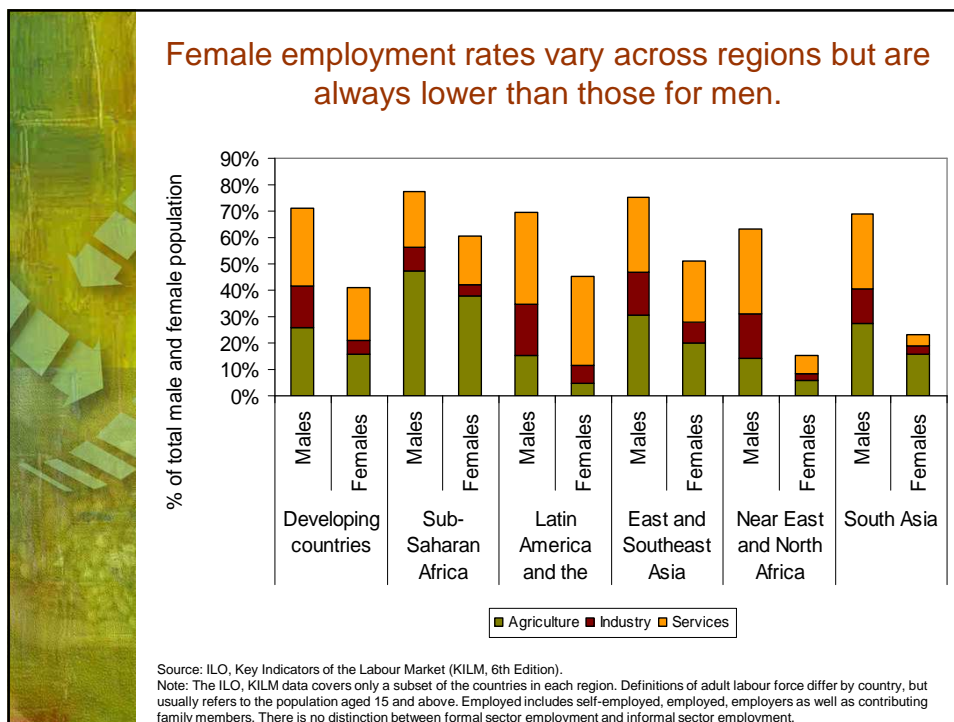


Economic and social gains from closing the gender gap

- Productivity gains
 - 20 to 30 percent increase on women's farms
 - 2.5 to 4 percent increase in agricultural output
- Food security gains
 - 12 to 17 percent reduction in number of hungry
 - 100 to 150 million people lifted out of hunger
- Broader economic and social gains
 - Better health, nutrition and education outcomes for children
 - Builds human capital which promotes economic growth

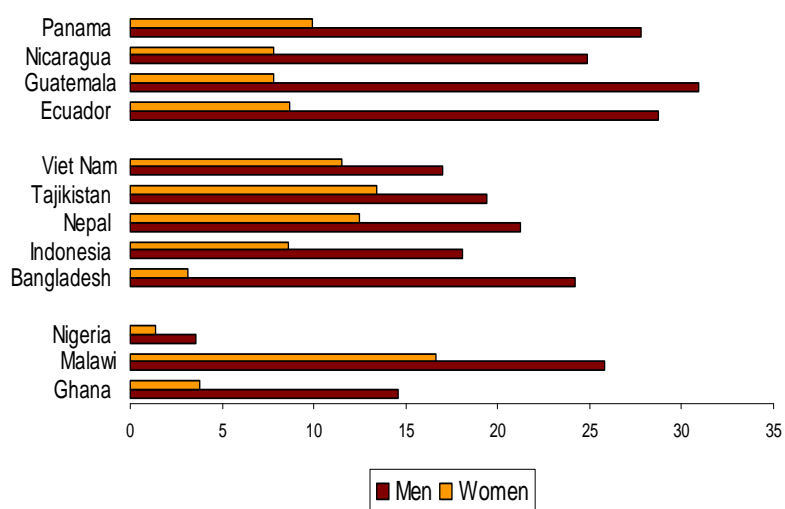


Women's participation and contribution to agriculture and rural economies

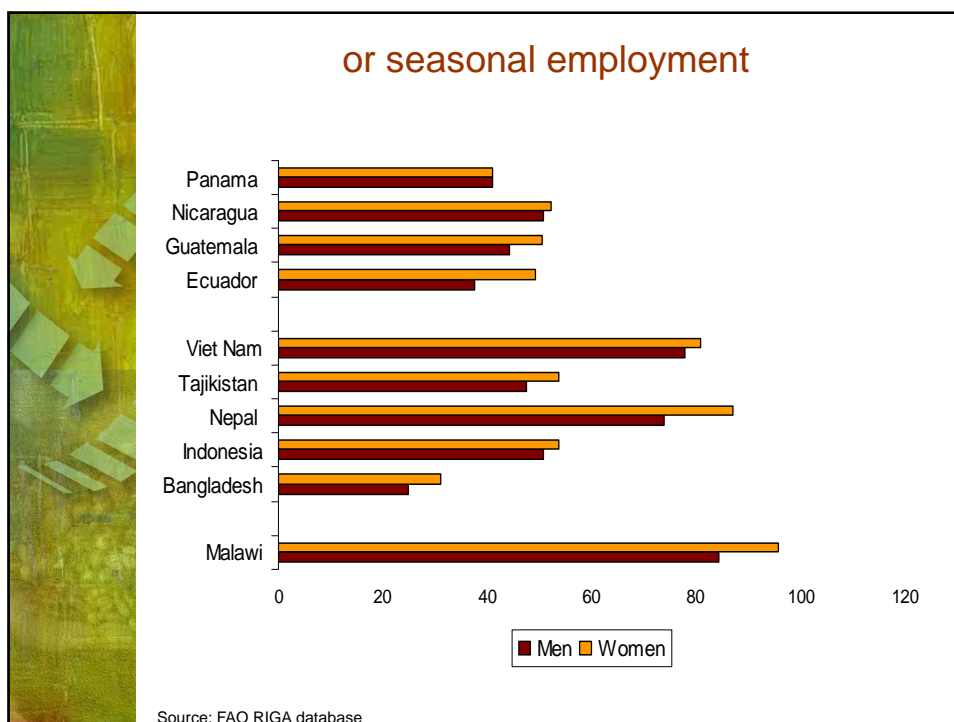
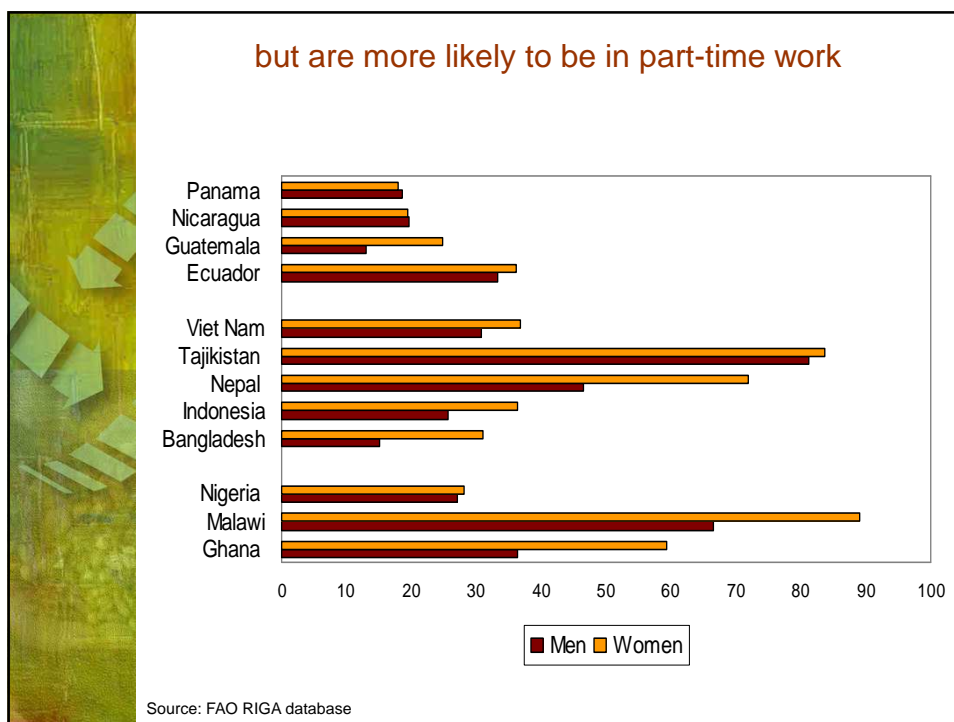


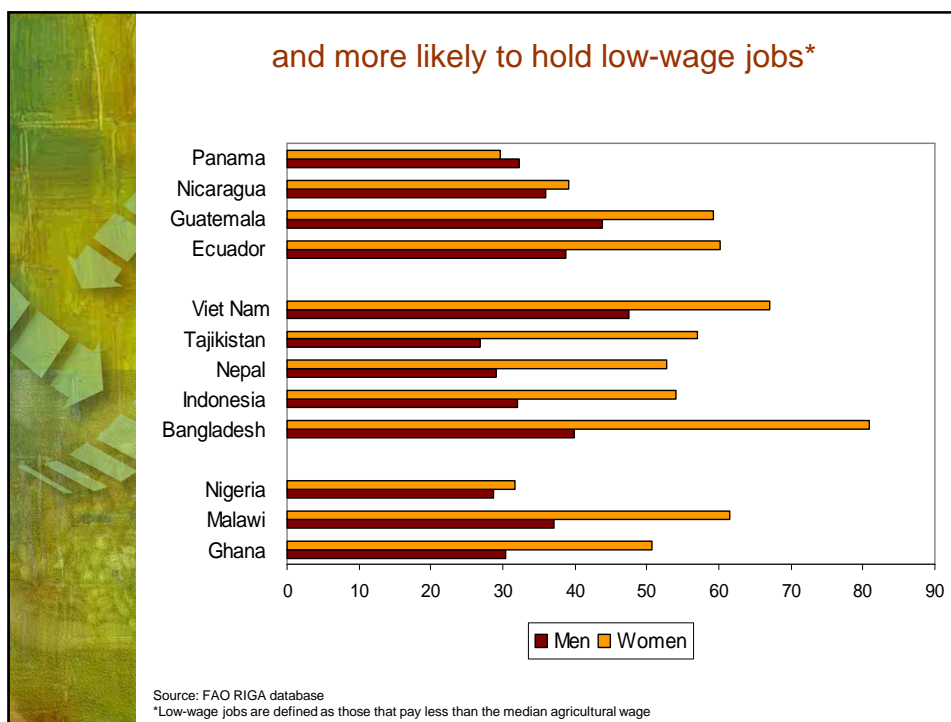
Women in rural labour markets

Women are less likely to participate in rural wage employment than men




Note: Refers to percentage of the adult population working for a wage.
Source: FAO RIGA database





Women in agriculture

- Own-account farmers
- Unpaid workers on family farms
- Paid or unpaid labourers on other farms
- Food and cash crops and mixed agricultural operations



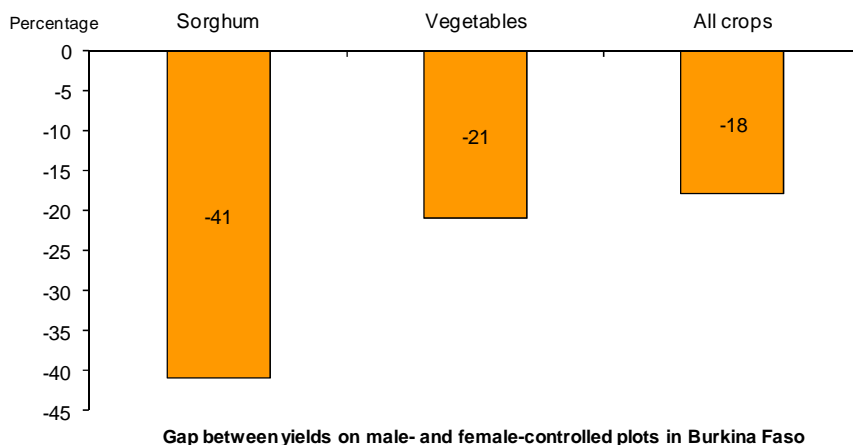
Women farmers are largely excluded from contract farming

- Because they lack control over land, family labour and other resources necessary to guarantee delivery of a reliable flow of produce.
- While men control the contracts women provide much of the family labour.
- The evidence of benefits and/or conflicts over resources due to contract farming to women is mixed.

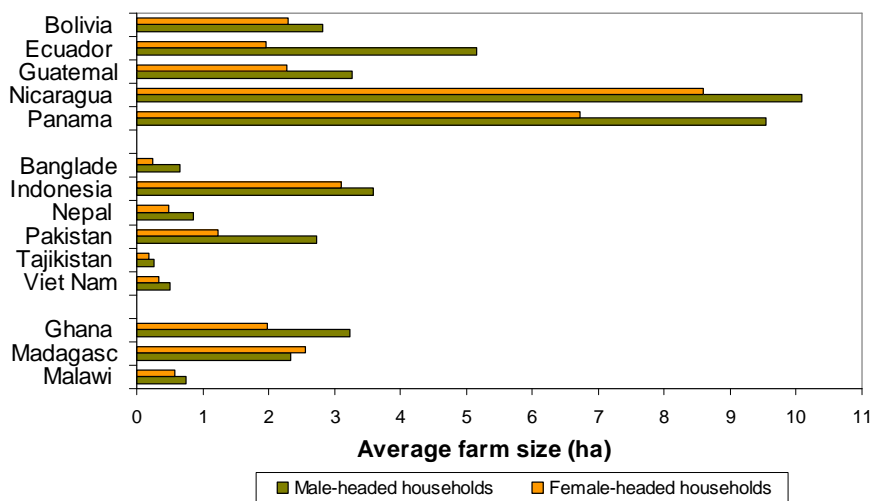


Gains from closing the gender gap

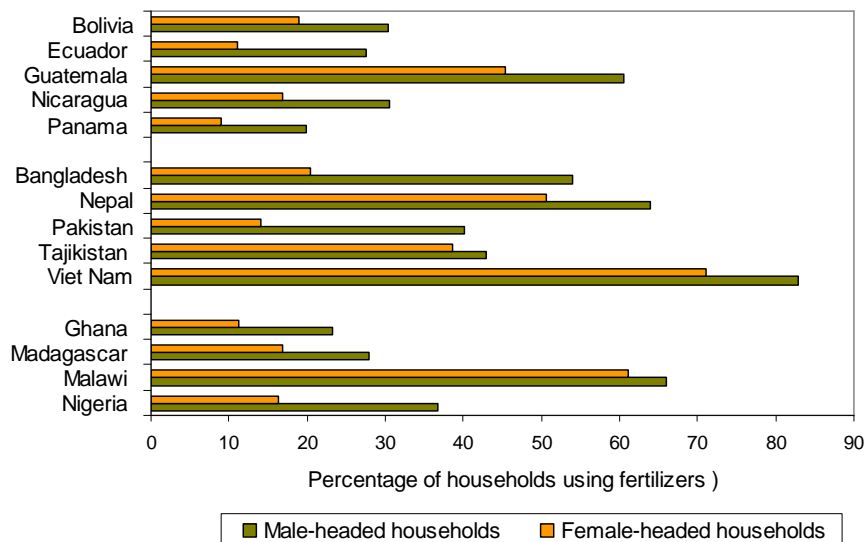
Women farmers produce less ...



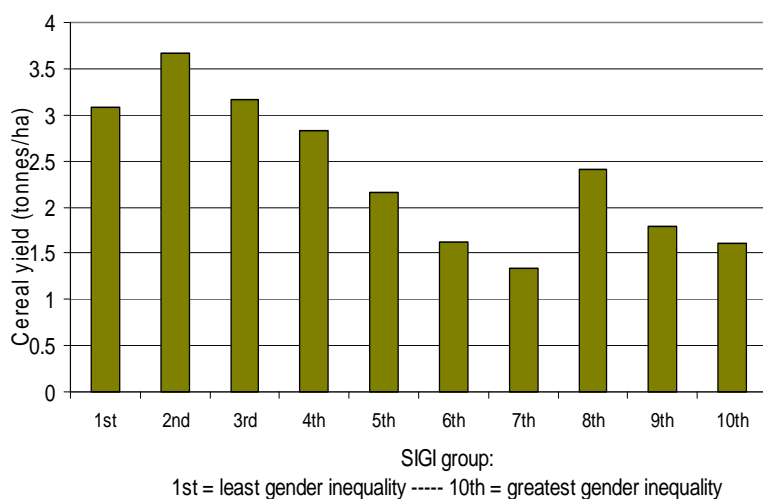
because they operate smaller farms...



and use less fertilizers and other technologies.



Lower levels of gender inequality are correlated with higher average cereal yields in developing countries



Source: Cereal yields are from FAOSTAT; Gender inequality is measured by the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), a composite measure of gender discrimination based on social institutions, constructed by the OECD Development centre



Gains from closing the gender gap for women farmers

- Closing a yield gap of 20-30% ...
- Could increase agricultural output in the developing countries by 2.5 to 4%
- The number of undernourished people Could decline by 12-17% or 100-150 million people.



Broader social and economic benefits

- Women's income and bargaining power within the family is linked to improved health, nutrition and education outcomes for children.
- Improved gender equality has a long lasting impact on economic growth by raising human capital in society.

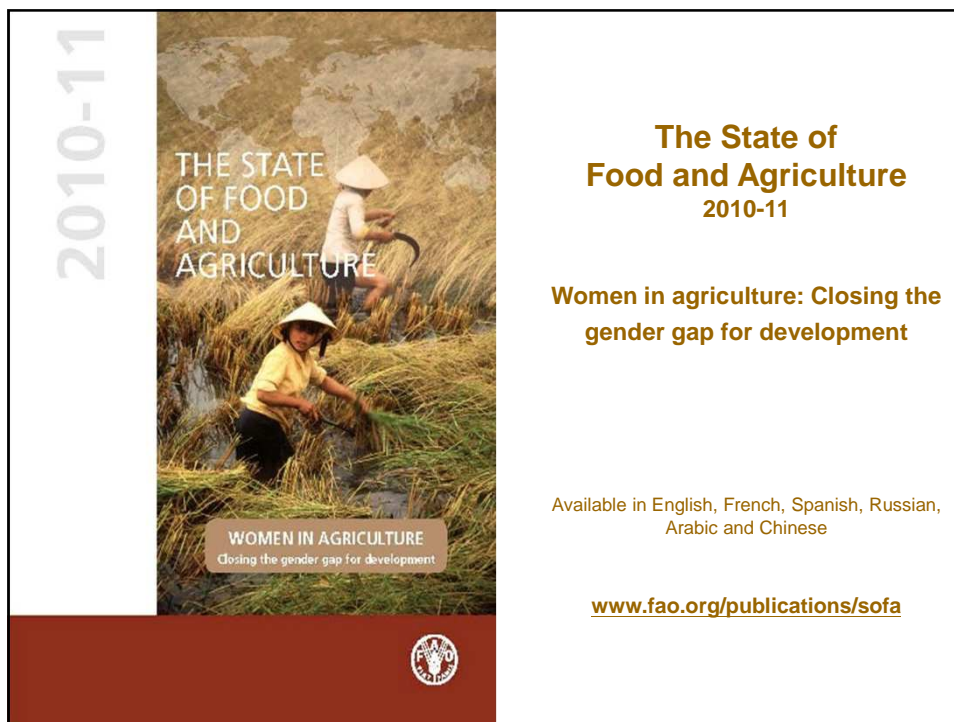


Closing the gender gap in agriculture and rural employment



Policies can make a difference

- Be aware that policies and institutions affect men and women differently
- Eliminate discrimination under the law
- Provide public services and technologies to free-up women's time
- Build the human capital of women and girls
- Address multiple constraints together



The image shows the front cover of a report. On the left, a vertical white bar contains the text '2010-11' in large, grey, sans-serif font. To the right of this bar is a photograph of two women in a rice paddy field, wearing traditional conical hats and working with rice plants. Overlaid on the top left of the photograph is the text 'THE STATE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE' in white, all-caps, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the photograph is a small, semi-transparent grey box with the text 'WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE' in white, all-caps, sans-serif font, and 'Closing the gender gap for development' in a smaller, white, sans-serif font below it. To the right of the photograph, the title 'The State of Food and Agriculture' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font, with '2010-11' in a smaller font below it. Below the title is the subtitle 'Women in agriculture: Closing the gender gap for development' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Further down, it says 'Available in English, French, Spanish, Russian, Arabic and Chinese' in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the cover is a dark red horizontal bar containing the FAO logo on the right side.

2010-11

THE STATE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE


WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE
Closing the gender gap for development

**The State of
Food and Agriculture**
2010-11

**Women in agriculture: Closing the
gender gap for development**

Available in English, French, Spanish, Russian,
Arabic and Chinese

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International Catholic Rural Association



The experience I here recall has seen as protagonists a group of Vercelli rice growers belonging to Coldiretti, the Italian agricultural organization co-founder of ICRA, a group of fifteen women from a village in Burkina Faso, members of a local and national agricultural organization that is member of ROPPA (Reseau des Organisations de Producteurs de l'Afrique Paysannes de l'Ouest), local institutions belonging to the two realities, in particular the Piedmont regional Authority, in addition to the coordination of the Terra Nuova NGO, belonging to the ItaliAfrica Network.

The meeting between Italian and African farmers, supported by the above mentioned institutions and organisations, has allowed to focus on the productive and organizational issues for the cultivation of rice in a plot of land of the African village. The collaboration developed over the years led to the establishment, by African women farmers, of a cooperative for the packaging and sale of rice in close-by local markets. From this, always thanks to the cooperative, the selection of seeds to improve the quality of production was developed. This was an experience of decentralized cooperation that required little funding, and that has directly involved the farmers working in realities where food security is really "the issue", through a particularly vulnerable segment of the population such as women, enabling them to feed themselves and others. It is not by chance that one of the ROPPA programmes is entitled "Africa can feed itself". It is an initiative that, while solving production problems, allows the strengthening of professional local, national and regional organizations that treasure the experience they made and transform it into the ability to represent the agricultural and rural world. This is a condition as important as the previously mentioned one, to transform the commitment to food safety into an essential step of the human development: as Catholics say, "an integral human development of the entire person, of all people". Another initiative, currently stalled for lack of regional funding (this time in the Lazio region), would allow a group of women from a village in Mali, who would associate themselves into a cooperative, to turn the milk into cheese by traditional means; this economic activity would enhance a freer and responsible participation of women in the life of their communities.

Contrary to popular belief, "adequate" positive signals do not need huge resources; the required resources are the capacity and will to invest in people, primarily in those small farmers, often women and mothers, who are confronted daily with the drama of food security, starting from their "knowledge" and then matching and comparing their competences with the challenges lying ahead. Considerable resources could multiply these "signs" and make them the engine of a really new and incisive bottom-up change, of an entrepreneurial approach that rediscovers people and relies on them. The FAO has demonstrated its ability to understand these needs with its program FAO / GCP/RAF/410/ITA Italian cooperation, launched in 2009 in Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal and Togo. It is necessary to implement and deploy its real (economic) and ideal (political) value. The ICRA is a network that includes agricultural organizations from the South and the North of the planet. Its experience has shown to farmers in small-medium enterprises tied to the food culture of their territories in developed countries how useful they can be if they believe in themselves and look ahead in the perspective of a local and sustainable agriculture that the challenges of our time indicate as the common, single destiny in the North as well as in the South.

Vincenzo Conso, Secretary General

Marco Foschini, Substitute Representative c/o FAO