

A+FS Network Newsletter 02/2014

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Dear Agriculture & Food Security Network members

Please find below our first edition of the A+FS Newsletter of 2014. This Newsletter sets a focus on Family Farming due to the International Year of Family Farming and presents our latest news on food security and nutrition.

We very much appreciate your inputs on this issue or future newsletter. Please feel free to send us any ideas, news or documents that might be relevant to the network. Your feedbacks will help us to improve the newsletter and to make learning more effective.

With Best Wishes

Felix Fellmann & Simon Weidmann

Feature

Family Farming

"Around seventy percent of the world's poor live in rural areas and depend mostly on agriculture for their living. Smallholders produce at least 50% of the food worldwide."

[more information >>](#)

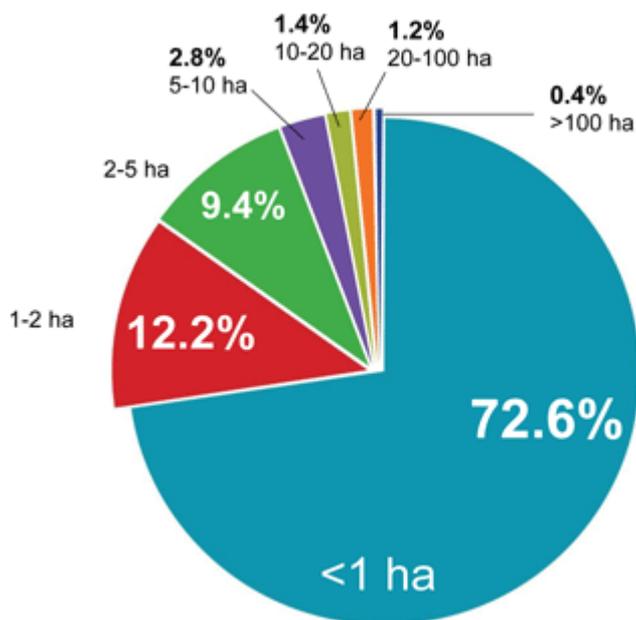
With the UN declared International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) and the same topic being our focus at our face to face meeting in June 2014, we will start this year's newsletter with exactly this topic. The goal of the IYFF is to raise the profile of smallholders and family farms by focusing world attention on their role in alleviating hunger and poverty. Improving conditions for smallholders and family farms are central goals of the IYFF.

According to the International Fund for Agricultural Development IFAD [1], there are an estimated 500 million smallholder farms in the developing world, supporting almost 2 billion people who depend on them for their livelihood, and these small farms produce about 80 per cent of the food consumed in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa [Hazell, 2011]. World Programme for the Census of Agriculture (WCA) data show that in the South the absolute number of smallholders has continued to grow over the decades. In most OECD countries, the number of smallholders is decreasing.

[1] [Viewpoint: Smallholders can feed the world. Kanayo F. Nwanze, President of IFAD](#)

[Hazell, P. 2011]. [Five Big Questions about Five Hundred Million Small Farms. Keynote Paper presented at the IFAD Conference on New Directions for Smallholder Agriculture, 24-25 January, 2011](#)

Repartition of holdings by class area in the 81-country subset of FAO-WCA



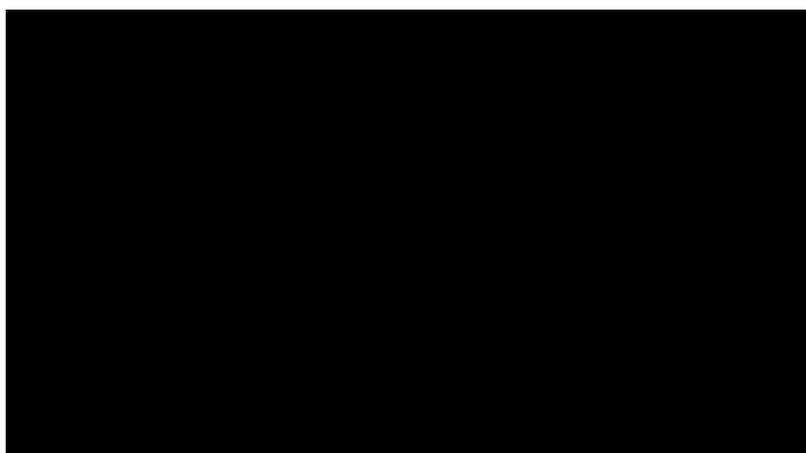
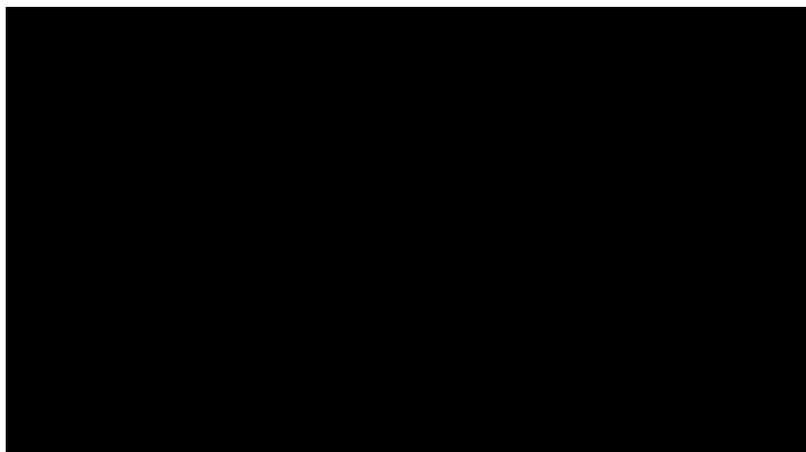
Source: Investing in Smallholder Agriculture for Food Security – A Report by the High Level Panel of Experts

As the figure above shows 73 percent of all farm units dispose of less than 1 ha of land, and this proportion rises to 85 percent if 2 ha are considered, the threshold mostly used in the literature. Holdings under 5 ha represent nearly 95 percent of the holdings' estimates. Access to land is therefore an issue to be considered when working with Family Farms and Smallholders.

The SDC identified that in order to stay in business, smallholders and family farms need stable markets, an infrastructure adapted to their needs, and access to education, training and to financial and information services.

[more information on SDCs engagement with Family Farms and Smallholders >>](#)

The following films try to display the challenges and potential of smallholder farming and show SDCs long-standing efforts on behalf of smallholder farmers:



[more Information on the films >>](#)

Global Programme Food Security



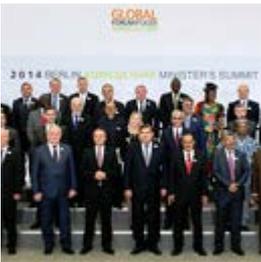
Switzerland signs post-harvest agreement

For the first time the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) have signed a joint agreement:

With support from the SDC's Global Programme Food Security they launched a project to tackle the global problem of food losses. The major output of the project will be a web-supported global community of practice on reducing postharvest losses to be

hosted and facilitated by the FAO. The project will also support field activities in Burkina Faso, DR Congo and Uganda..

[Rome-based UN agencies join forces on food losses >>](#)



Strong statement of agriculture ministers

"We, the Agriculture Ministers assembled at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture 2014 in Berlin, are taking on our responsibility and making our contribution towards eradicating hunger and malnutrition and are committed to promote this issue in international fora."

For further information on how they want to conserve and use diversity, ensure sustainability, increase productivity despite the challenges read the

[Final Communiqué of the GFFA 2014 >>](#)



Consultation by Committee on World Food Security (CFS)

The High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition of the CFS seeks inputs from the scientific community, knowledge holders and institutions around the world concerning actual critical and emerging issues for Food Security and Nutrition. Feel free to look at the following documents explaining the process in detail detail and participate in this important consultation.

[Your Inputs: Critical and Emerging Issues for Food Security and Nutrition >>](#)

Who is Who?

Some of the A+FS Network members are probably familiar to you, others are not.

In order to give a face to the names on the members list, every Newsletter shortly presents some of the A+FS Networkers:



Tseelei Enkh-Amgalan

who lives in Ulaanbaatar city (Mongolia) is an agricultural economist. She has over 15 years of experience in rural economic development issues starting in 1998 as an economist in the Ministry of Industry and Agriculture of Mongolia. After her MA degree study at the School of Economics of the University of Manchester, UK, she returned back to Mongolia and started working in the "Wild Horse" Reintroduction Project implemented by the Government of Netherlands in the "Hustai" National Park. She was employed as a social worker responsible for the implementation of small income

generation projects for herder households living in the buffer zone of the national park. With the completion of her assignment in the project, she continued her career working in the "Competitiveness Initiatives Project" implemented by the Ministry of Industry and Agriculture of Mongolia with the financial support of USAID as a partnership officer in charge of facilitating cooperation between public and private sector stakeholders in the

development of competitive capacity of key economic sectors of Mongolia: cashmere, meat and tourism.

Now Tseelei Enkh-Amgalan works with SDC as a Program Coordinator of the "Green Gold" Pastoral Ecosystem Management Project. The main objective of the Project is to contribute to sustainable management of rangelands which are the backbone of the rural economy of Mongolia and the basis of the livelihood of 180 000 nomadic herder families. The project has four components: applied research, demand driven extension services, marketing and collective organization of nomadic herders.

From the A&FS network she expects exchange of experience and best practices from SDC counterparts working in similar contexts as Mongolia, and access to new knowledge and tools developed in different parts of the world especially with regards to tackling rangeland degradation, desertification and land governance issues, as she works in the sustainable rangeland management issues in Mongolia.



Christina Grieder

started her agricultural engineering studies at the ETHZ (MSc) in plant production but then focused on agricultural marketing and economy.

Christina's previous jobs at SDC include the Bhutan country programme and agricultural projects in Far East Asia. Also she worked with the Agricultural Service (which now is replaced by the A&FS network) and was in charge of international agricultural research issues and agrobiodiversity. Then she joined the International Financial Institutions Division (does not exist anymore in this form). Before her job in

Rome she was based in Riga in charge of the Swiss Contribution in the three Baltic States.

Since 2011 she is heading the Swiss Mission to the UN Agencies in Rome (FAO, IFAD, WFP).

In principle, Christina and her team deal with three different types of activities: issues of humanitarian nature (WFP, FAO emergency), development issues and cooperation (IFAD, FAO, WFP) and issues that are of more normative nature (CFS, FAO, Codex Alimentarius). Currently Switzerland is represented in several bodies like the board of the WFP, the board of IFAD, the FAO Programme Committee and the Bureau of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS). In the CFS Bureau, Switzerland is in charge of preparing principles for responsible agricultural investments. The progress has gone well so far and hopes are high that these principles will be approved by the Committee in October this year. Christina is also co-chairing a network for gender issues in the three Rome-based Agencies (FAO, IFAD, WFP).

Regarding the A&FS network Christina is often too busy to actively participate in discussions since she also spends substantial time outside of office. Her hope is that the lessons learnt from these discussions will eventually flow into Swiss positions that she receives from Bern. Therefore she sees the network members as important parts of the inputs that later are compiled to a Swiss position by the GPFS team. She wishes that network participants may learn from the multilateral discussions. In her impression these discussions are not taken on board sufficiently by all her colleagues in bilateral cooperation and respective networks. She knows that multilateral processes take more time and results do not become visible instantly, but she is convinced that multilateral work is important. No progress in development cooperation takes place without international agreements that create a level playing field.

[A+FS Network members list >>](#)

Further Information

Organic vs. conventional Cotton

Researchers from FiBL and partners present results of a field trial in India with data on yield and economic performance of cotton-based farming systems compared to conventional ones. Results show 14% lower yields with organic cotton compared to conventional but also 38% lower costs of production inputs making the farmer less dependent on loans.

Upcoming Events

24-28 February 2014, Bern Switzerland

M4P training course

March 2014 (week 11/12), Biltine, Tchad

F2F régional du groupe thématique sécurité alimentaire et développement rural

Thèmes: 1. élevage pastoral; 2. chaîne de valeur; 3. maraîchage/irrigation; 4. Indicateurs/champs d'observation (préparation du F2F en Suisse); 5. GT SADR: planification activités 2014, valorisation travail Buco, draft stratégie SADR.

Thèmes transversales: structuration du monde rural, M4P, intégration du secteur privé

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2-6 June 2014, Thun, Switzerland
F2F Meeting of the A+ FS Network
register now!

SDC Agriculture & Food Security Network
