

56TH COMMISSION for SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Farmers of the Future: Building Resilience in Rural Areas

29 January 2018

1:15 - 2:30 pm, Conference Room 12
United Nations Headquarters, New York

HOST:

Ms. Daniela Bas

Director Division for Social Policy and Development/UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

OPENING REMARKS:

Ms. Elisabeth Pape

Minister Counsellor, EU Delegation to the United Nations

MODERATOR:

Mr. John Mathiason

Managing Director, Associates for International Management Services

PANELLIST:

Mr. Thomas Magnusson

President, COGECA - the voice of European Agri-Cooperatives

Mr. Aldo Cristiano

Head of Global Procurement Raw Materials and Sustainability, Ferrero

Ms. Carla Mucavi

Director, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Liaison Office to the United Nations

Mr. Paul Garnett

Senior Director, Microsoft Airband Initiative





TOPIC: Farmers of the future: Building resilience in rural areas

FORMAT: Moderated panel discussion followed by Q&A session

CONCEPT:

The 2030 Agenda recognizes the inter linkages among supporting sustainable agriculture, empowering small farmers, ending rural poverty and ensuring social inclusion and healthy lifestyles. Extreme poverty and hunger are predominantly rural, with smallholder farmers and their families making up a very sizable proportion of the poor and hungry.

Thus, eradicating poverty and hunger are integrally linked to boosting food production, agricultural productivity and rural incomes. Building resilience of local food systems will be critical to averting large-scale future shortages and to ensuring food security and good nutrition for all.

There are many elements of traditional farmer knowledge that, enriched by the latest scientific knowledge, can support productive food systems through sound and sustainable soil, land, water, nutrient and pest management. Therefore, transferring this knowledge to the new generation of farmers is an important task that requires the combined efforts of policy makers and the private sector.

Sustainable agricultural practices and food systems, must be pursued from a holistic and integrated perspective that considers both the needs of farmers and their families, and the consumers of their goods. Providing equal opportunities to rural communities, not only fosters social inclusion, but is also instrumental in reducing the widening gap between urban and rural areas.

The expected outcome of this event is to encourage multi-stakeholder partnerships in the field of agriculture to positively impact the wellbeing of vulnerable communities living in rural areas and contribute to poverty eradication.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What needs to be done to ensure that technological innovation is an empowering tool for farmers instead of additional competition? How can vulnerable groups in rural areas benefit from smart farming?
- How do cooperative enterprises help to eradicate poverty and promote prosperity?
- What can governments, civil society, and the UN system do to better support the needs of farmers and cooperatives in their pursuit of better practices and resilient communities?