



# More and Better Newsletter

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### More and Better activities

#### • Elisabeth Atangana represented More and Better at the Global Donor Platform Annual General Assembly

Elisabeth Atangana, president of Pan-African Farmers Forum (PAFFO), president of the Regional Platform of Farmers Organizations of Central Africa (PROPAC), and co-coordinator of More and Better, attended the Annual General Assembly of the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development that was held in Tunis, the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of January. The objectives of the Assembly were to identify options for improved networking among Platform members, to exchange on processes, activities and messages leading up to the 4<sup>th</sup> High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan and to help agree on key themes for the 2011 Work Programme.

On behalf of the More and Better network and PAFFO, Elisabeth Atangana underlined the need to increase support of small scale farmers' organizations, women and minorities working in rural areas of developing countries. She also stressed the importance to implement and evaluate policies, strategies and projects addressed to agriculture and rural development through an effective participation of the recipient communities. An adequate preparation is needed to enable rural people to better identify their needs and priorities, and also to translate them in relevant and sustainable proposals. Women, especially, constitute a key component that should be encouraged within rural communities. Representation of beneficiaries must take into account the different levels and reflect the principle of subsidiarity. On the other hand, Governments should increase funds for agriculture and rural development in order to preserve food security and sovereignty and facilitate the access to markets for local products and create local wealth.

#### **Link**

Global Donor Platform website: <http://www.donorplatform.org/>

## ●More and Better at the World Social Forum 2011

The World Social Forum (6<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> February 2011) brought together thousands of activists NGOs , trade unionists, academics, development thinkers and journalists from around the world at the University Cheikh Anta Diop, in Dakar, to debate and find strategies to oppose capitalism. For the More and Better network the Forum was an important occasion to share viewpoints and progress on the fight against hunger and poverty. In that framework, we focussed our activities on substantial topics such as support to small scale farmers, agro-ecology, food sovereignty, as we strongly believe they build on the paths we need to follow to push designing public policies that sustain the fight against hunger rather than the hunger for profit.

### **The Viable Food Future workshop**

The workshop, organized in cooperation with several organizations, was held the 8<sup>th</sup> of February at the Faculty of '*Sciences Techniques*' at the University Cheikh Anta Diop. *Ortense Kinkodila*, from La Via Campesina Congo Brazzaville, *Richard Pomba*, vice-president of PROPAC , and *Aksel Naerstad* , from the Development Fund and co-coordinator of the More and network were among the key speakers.

In particular, Ortense stressed out the need to support organic food production, preserve peasants local seeds and land, fertility of the soil and natural resources for future generations. She also identified a few good examples of sustainable farming methods aimed toward putting the principles of food sovereignty in practice.

*Richard Pomba* underlined the value of human work in ecological farming and the importance of local peasants knowledge in order to build a strong and sustainable alliance with land and cope with climate changes threats.

*Aksel Naerstad* underlined the need to bring high on the agenda of governments the support to small scale agriculture and rural development. This support registered a slight increase after the food crisis hit but it is still inadequate to the needs. A huge problem is that a lot of the support to agriculture, is going towards unsustainable agriculture and mostly benefitting the multinational companies, not the small scale food producers.

More and Better also co-organized the workshop « *Organisations paysannes et société civile : alliances et enjeux vers la souveraineté alimentaire* » in cooperation with: Terra Nuova, ROPPA, CNCR/FONGS, URGENCI, Coldiretti, that took place the 7<sup>th</sup> of February in the Rural Village at the University Cheikh Anta Diop.

### **Link**

Final declaration of the social movements Assembly in the WSF 2011:

[http://www.viacampesina.org/en/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=1034:final-declaration-of-the-social-movements-assembly-wsf-2011-february-10th-dakar-senegal&catid=25:world-social-forum&Itemid=34](http://www.viacampesina.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1034:final-declaration-of-the-social-movements-assembly-wsf-2011-february-10th-dakar-senegal&catid=25:world-social-forum&Itemid=34)

## ●Rio + 20: opportunities and challenges

by *Aksel Naerstad*

The Earth Summit on sustainable development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 was a very important event. The conference adopted the Climate Convention, the Convention on Biodiversity, and the Agenda 21. In 2012, in Rio, there will be another United Nation Conference on environment and development: the Rio+20 conference. More and Better is taking active part in the preparations and works together with other organizations and networks in order to get ecological small scale agriculture as a key issue at the conference.

The main issue for the Rio+20 conference will be "Green Economy in the Context of Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication". This theme opens up a lot of possibilities to discuss the most important issues in the world today. It gives us a good opportunity to promote ecological small scale agriculture. But there are also many concerns raised from civil society and some governments, especially from developing countries. So far, little emphasis has been put on the historic responsibilities of the industrialized countries, and on the need for changes in the global economy, trade rules and power balance. Yet, poverty eradication has not been discussed very much either and strong concerns are referring to the fact that the main focus will be on "green-washing" unsustainable policies and practices.

In the end of February 2011, a report on "green economy" will be published by the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP). A preview of the report and many other documents on this issue are available on their web page (see links below).

The other main issue for Rio+20 will be "Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development". The governance issues are also important, and organizations in More and Better should also discuss that.

### **The process leading up to Rio**

Three UN Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) meetings are foreseen before the Rio conference in 2012. The first was held last year, the second will take place in New York on March 7-8<sup>th</sup> this year, the third will be held on May 9-11<sup>th</sup> 2012. Intercessional meetings are organized in between the PrepComs; the first one took place in January 2011. Prior and during that meeting civil society organizations managed to gather in a number of meetings. In this framework, More and Better is actively engaged in an informal work group with a focus on agriculture and related issues in the Rio+20 process. This group met in February, during World Social Forum in Senegal, and will also meet before the second PrepCom, in New York.

From October to December 2011, there will be five regional conferences covering all parts of the world. What kind of civil society activities and participation there will be at or linked to these conferences is not yet clear.

The dates for the conference in Rio in 2012 are not decided, but it's most likely that the conference will be held in May 2012.

### **National activities**

Activities on national level will be very important for the outcome of the Rio-process and the conference itself. So far, very little has happened on the national level, but one of the members of More and Better, the Green Movement of Sri Lanka, has already taken the initiative to involve civil society in Sri Lanka. We encourage other organizations to do the same, and to share their viewpoints, experiences etc. with others, through the newsletter and the web page of More and Better.

### **Links**

[www.uncsd2012.org/](http://www.uncsd2012.org/)  
[www.earthsummit2012.org](http://www.earthsummit2012.org)  
[www.stakeholderforum.org/sf/outreach](http://www.stakeholderforum.org/sf/outreach)  
[www.unep.org/greeneconomy/](http://www.unep.org/greeneconomy/)

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### **Documents**

## • IFAD Rural Poverty Report 2011

Released on 6 December 2010, the report published by the International Fund for Agricultural Development contains updated estimates by IFAD regarding how many rural poor people there are in the developing world, poverty rates in rural areas, and the percentage of poor people residing in rural areas. According to the report global poverty remains a massive and predominantly rural phenomenon – with 70 per cent of the developing world's 1.4 billion extremely poor people living in rural areas.

Download the report: <http://www.ifad.org/rpr2011/report/e/rpr2011.pdf>

## • "Gender dimensions of agricultural and rural employment: differentiated pathways out of poverty" by IFAD, FAO, ILO

United Nations interagency report on the gender dimension of agricultural work says women still benefit less than men from rural employment and face new challenges due to the current economic and food crises and calls for policies enabling women to drive rural economic growth and poverty reduction.

The report shows that women face discrimination that limits both their economic productivity and their personal development. Women need access to education, training, credit, markets, technical assistance and labour protection. They need equal, secure access to land and other assets. And they need 'social capital', including the ability to participate equally with men in farmers' organizations.

With these advantages (long available to men), women can increase their contribution to national development and poverty reduction.

Download the report: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1638e/i1638e.pdf>

*If you have feedback on articles, suggestions of content for future issues or other thoughts please write to: [secretariat@moreandbetter.org](mailto:secretariat@moreandbetter.org)*