



SMALL SCALE family farms

Why are they sustainable?

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BELARUS - online

Eco Ruralis in Romania



Organization of Peasants Small Scale Agroecological Family Farmers in Romania

- Over 17 000 members
- Works at national level

Our work:

- **Political and practical training and education** for peasants
- Participation in **policy processes** at national level
- **Alliance building** at national and regional level

Our demands:

- **Peasants Rights to SEEDS and LAND**
- Support for **Agroecology** as model of production

Via Campesina in Europe



Our work:

- Influencing **The Common Agriculture Policy** in support of Small Scale Sustainable producers
- Influencing the **FAO Regional Process** in support of Peasants
- Participating in the governance of the **UN Decade for Family Farming**

Our demands:

- Defending **Food Sovereignty**
- Defending the role of small food producers and workers on the **market**
- Promoting and Defending **Peasant Rights to Land and Seeds**



European Movement of *Peasants Small Scale Agroecological Family Farmers*

- 31 local and national organisations
- 21 countries from Eastern Europe and Western Europe

What is La Via Campesina?



Global Movement of *Peasants Small Scale Agroecological Family Farmers*

- 182 local and national organisations
- 81 countries from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas
- The largest social movement in the world – over 200 million peasant families members



Our Struggles:

- Defending **Food Sovereignty**, Struggle for **Land and Agrarian Reforms**
 - Promoting **Agroecology** and Defending **Local Seeds**
- Promoting **Peasant Rights** and Struggle **Against Criminalization of Peasants**

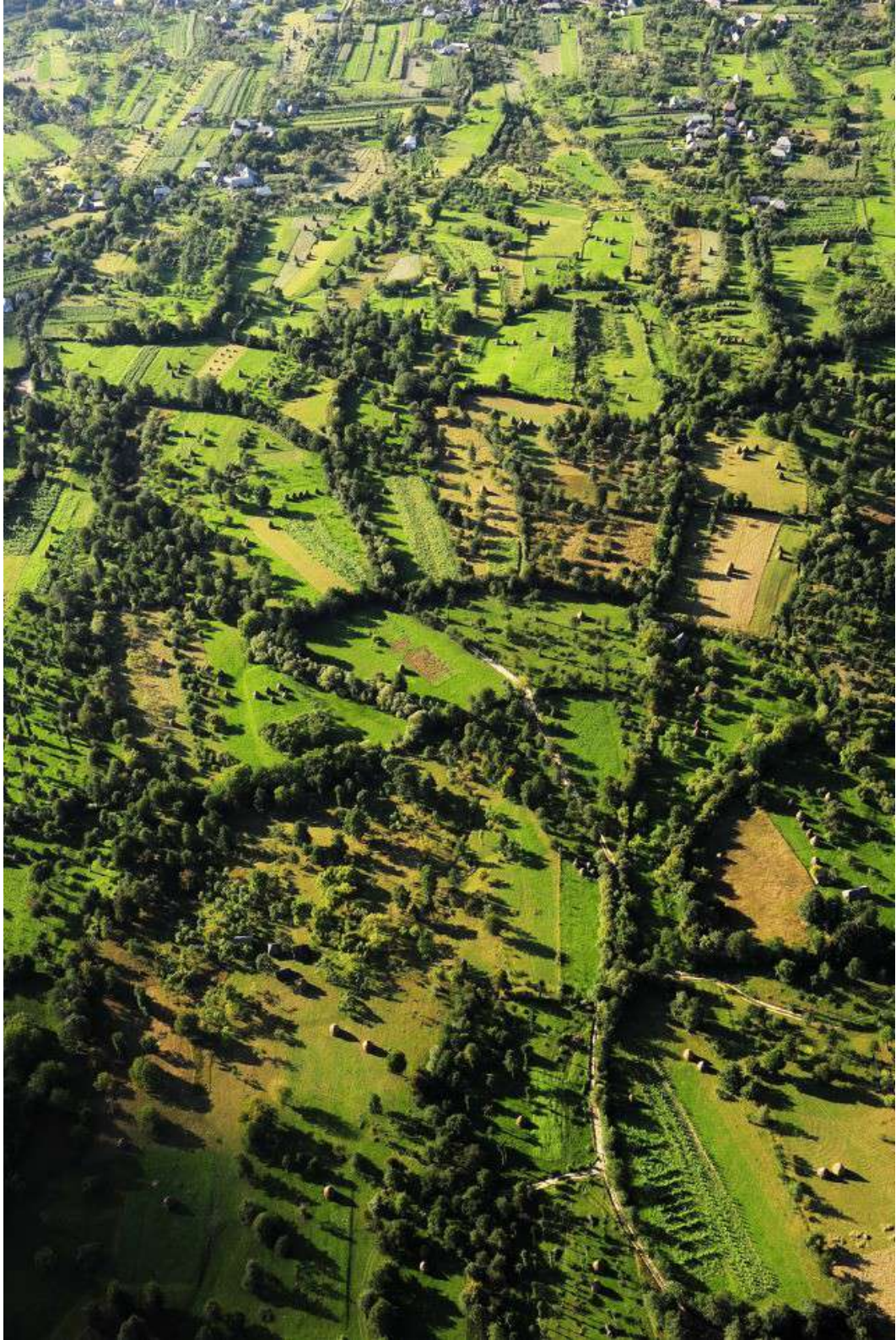
State of play – European family farmers

- Europe – a very **diverse** region (East / West, public / private sector);
- Small scale agroecological farming – not an alternative or niche but actually a **mainstream** production system; it engages the majority of people active in agriculture; the majority of small scale family farmers are in the East;
- **Ex. Romania:** 46% rural population, 4.7 million active peasants (over 40% of EU peasants); over 99% of Romanian people engaged in agriculture are peasant, small scale family farmers, using less than 50% of the farmland;
- **Public policies and public funds support mostly the industrial food production and distribution model** (CAP, IMF, World Bank, EBRD);

** 80% of the food consumed at global level comes from small scale family farms (FAO), situation relevant also for Europe.*









KEY elements of small scale farming SUSTAINABILITY:

- **Food quality** – nutritious, diverse, fresh, culturally appropriate;
- **Healthy** for human and animal consumption and for the environment – less use of chemical input, agroecological food production practices, less aggressive with soil and use of natural resources;
- **Productive** – high efficiency of use of natural (land, seeds, water) and financial resources; crop diversity;
- **Local economy** – oriented towards local markets, affordable prices;
- **Employment** – highest employment level, local, fair and humane work conditions;

The role of a small scale family farmer (peasant) in the society:

- Food producer (sustainable agroecological practitioner, biologist, veterinarian, land worker, cook);
- Innovator (fabricates work tools, ameliorates plant genetic resources);
- Employer;
- Marketer;
- Educator (transfer knowledge in the family and in the community);
- Artist and artisan (textile, ceramic, accessories, poetry, music, etc.);
- Permanent scholar;

MAIN ISSUES that affect small scale farming SUSTAINABILITY:

- **Public funds** support industrial food and farming systems (private or public sector), to the detriment of small scale family farming;
- **Public policies – *food safety standards*** – favor industrial system;
- Lack of effective participation in **decision making**;
- **Digitalization** of the production, market, generates more market and resources grabbing and leaving small scale food producers behind.
- **International trade and commercial agreements** push further for industrial standards and practices, marginalizing small scale family farmers.

peasant rights
rural women and men



The last negotiation session of the United Nations Declaration for the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural areas

Palais des Nations – Human Rights Council, Geneva

April 2018



17 December 2018

Adoption of the *UN Declaration for the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas*
by the United Nations General Assembly - New York



Overall votes:

- 121 votes in favor
- 8 votes against
- 54 abstentions
- 10 non voting (absent)

European votes:

- **In favor:** Belarus, Luxembourg, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Switzerland
- **Against:** Hungary, Sweden, United Kingdom
- **Abstention:** everyone else



United Nations

RIGHTS ACHIEVED by UNDROP

SOCIAL

CULTURAL

ECONOMIC

POLITICAL

CIVIL

**NATURAL
RESOURCES**

The Content of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP)



United Nations

- Art. 1: **Definition** of peasants and other people working in rural areas
- Art. 2: General obligations of States
- Art. 3: **Equality** and **non-discrimination**
- Art. 4: Rights of peasant **women** and other women working in rural areas
- Art. 5: Rights to **natural resources** and the right to development
- Art. 6: Right to **life, liberty** and **security** of person
- Art. 7: Freedom of **movement**
- Art. 8: Freedom of **thought**, opinion and expression
- Art. 9: Freedom of **association**
- Art. 10: Right to **participation**
- Art. 11: Right to **information** with regard to production, marketing and distribution
- Art. 12: Access to **justice**
- Art. 13: Right to **work**
- Art. 14: Right to **safety** and health at work
- Art. 15: Right to food and **food sovereignty**
- Art. 16: Right to a **decent income** and livelihood and the means of production
- Art. 17: Right to **land** and other natural resources
- Art. 18: Right to a safe, clean and healthy **environment**
- Art. 19: Right to **seeds**
- Art. 20: Right to **biological diversity**
- Art. 21: Rights to **water** and to sanitation
- Art. 22: Right to **social security**
- Art. 23: Right to **health**
- Art. 24: Right to adequate **housing**
- Art. 25: Right to **education** and training
- Art. 26: **Cultural** rights and **traditional knowledge**
- Art. 27: Responsibility of the United Nations and of other international organizations
- Art. 28: General Obligations

UNDROP implementation



The real value of the implementation process for the Rights of Peasants will be determined by their contribution to **changes in the lives and livelihoods of rural women and men around the globe, particularly the vulnerable and marginalized.**

COLLECTIVELY building the process:

1. **Awareness** raising of authorities, peasants and the large public
2. **Capacity development** of peasants and small farmers organizations to defend their rights
3. Country level focus for building **inclusive processes** of participation in decision making, between governments and the small farmers organizations
4. **Partnerships, cooperation & coordination** in the society to support the voice of peasants and small farmers on a long term
5. **Monitoring and evaluation** of respect and fulfillment of the rights of peasants or the cases of violation and degradation of the rights of peasants





Peasant seeds systems:

- Human, small scale, community oriented;
- Produced by people, traditional knowledge, agroecological production practices;;
- Collective system;
- Local market oriented;
- Rich nutrition and taste value;
- Adaptability to climate conditions;
- Genetically diverse;
- Traditional and local culinary cultures;

Industrial seeds systems:

- International market oriented;
- Adapted to transport and industrial processing;
- Poor nutrition and taste value;
- Produced by scientists and companies;
- Practices based on chemical input and intense mechanization;
- Promotes digitalization of genetic information;





Vegetable free seeds distribution - 2020

Distribution by county - Romania



Seeds requests:

3035



38,4% men 61,6% women

The majority of people who requested seeds are small scale food producers, own or lease land

Size of farms

1 hectar sau mai puțin



între 1 și 5 hectare



între 5 și 50 de hectare



Program lead by peasant women of Eco Ruralis association in Romania

In 2020, 38 de species and 106 varieties of vegetables and aromatic plants were distributed. Over 30 small scale seeds producers contributed with local varieties to this seeds distribution.

Minimum requirements for respecting peasants rights to SEEDS by countries:

1. **Protect peasants seeds** – heterogeneous material – from patents and copyrights and digitalization of genetic information for food and agriculture.
2. **Transparent and inclusive legislative process** and further **implementation process**, with focus on the rights holders – small family farmers, peasants and other people working in rural areas.
3. **Allow peasants and farmers to use, exchange and sell farm saved seeds or propagating material produced at farms.**

United Nations - Decade for Family Farming

Global Action Plan:

- 1. POLICY**
- 2. YOUTH**
- 3. WOMEN / GENDER**
- 4. ORGANIZATIONS**
- 5. ECONOMY**
- 6. SUSTAINABILITY**
- 7. DIVERSITY**



United Nations
Decade of
**FAMILY
FARMING**
2019-2028

Pillar 01

Develop an enabling policy environment to strengthen family farming



- Implement **coherent policies**, investments and institutional frameworks
- Promote **inclusive and effective governance mechanisms** and **timely and geographically relevant data** for well-targeted policy design and implementation
- Guarantee **sustained political commitment** and **adequate resourcing** by state and non-state actors
- Shift from sectoral policies to **context-specific strategies** and **programmes to address the rights and multi-dimensional role**

(Linkages with Articles 2, 8, 10, 11, 25 – UNDROP)

Pillar 02

Support youth and ensure the generational sustainability of family farming.



- Improve **access to land and natural resources**, productive assets, education, capacity development programs and financial services
- Strengthen **youths' participation** in family farmers' **organizations** and collective actions
- Inclusion of **youth in decision-making processes**
- facilitate the **intergenerational transfer** – interconnect traditional knowledge with innovative ideas

Pillars 3

Promote gender equity in family farming and the leadership role of rural women

- Ensure **equal rights and opportunities for women** and men in family farming
- Guarantee **access to social rights**, education, health and social protection for women and their children
- Increase **access to natural resources**, (re-)productive assets, financial services and markets
- Promote **leadership and enhance participation** in their organizations and in policy-making processes
- **Reduce all forms of violence against women and girls** in family farming and in rural areas

(Linkages with Article 4 UNDROP)

Pillar 04

Strengthen family farmers' organizations and capacities to generate knowledge, represent farmers and provide inclusive services in the urban-rural continuum

- Strengthened **governance and organizational capacities** of family farmers' **organizations**
- Improve **technical expertise and capability** to access and provide (both farming and non-farming related) **services**
- Support **collective actions** by strong, transparent and inclusive organizations
- **Improve communication**, ICTs capacities and services to ensure that family farmers' voices are heard

(Linkages with Articles 2, 9, 10 – UNDROP)

Pillar 05

Improve socio-economic inclusion, resilience and well-being of family farmers, rural households and communities

- **Scale up human rights-based social protection interventions**
- Develop **public policies to improve access to and control of natural resources** and productive assets
- Promote programs for disaster and risk management and **capacity development to strengthen resilience and economic viability**
- Develop and implement policies to **improve income-generating opportunities** and support **access to domestic and local markets** to guarantee continuous and structured demand for family farmers' products and services

(Linkages with Articles 15, 16, 17, 18, 22 - UNDROP)

Pillar 06

Promote sustainability of family farming for climate-resilient food systems

2

5

7

9

- Public policies to **improve family farmers' rights to use, manage and control natural resources** (water, land, ocean, genetic resources, forest resources, aquatic systems, nutrients, energy)
- Promote **innovative and integrated farming practices** to increase productivity in a sustainable manner, optimizing the diversity of species and genetic resources
- Promote **farmer-to-farmer exchange** ; indigenous and traditional knowledge
- Develop **inclusive market environment** for family farmers
- Promote institutional arrangements for **inclusive and fair value chains** with improved conditions for family farmers

(Linkages with Articles – 5, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 – UNDROP)

Pillar 07

Strengthen the multi-dimensionality of family farming to promote social innovations contributing to territorial development and food systems that safeguard biodiversity, environment and culture

- Improve **synergies between production systems** (fisheries, aquaculture, forestry, crops, livestock)
- Enhance the different **ecosystem services** provided by family farmers
- Strengthen family farmers' role in promoting **social innovation and diversification of employment opportunities**
- Improve **interconnections between rural and urban** areas
- Promote innovative **economic opportunities and market solutions** to take advantage of the multi-dimensional services and goods provided by family farmers

(Linkages with Articles 16, 20, 26 – UNDROP)

La Via Campesina goals in the UN Decade for Family Farming

1. **Small Scale.** Promote Small Scale Family Farming as a focus of the Decade
2. **Human Rights.** Promote the use and application – implementation of the UN Declaration for the Rights of Peasants and Other People working in rural areas
3. **Diversity of food producers.** Promote the inclusion of the food producers and food systems in the process: peasant, indigenous, pastoralists, fishers, landless, workers etc.

Other instruments that protect and promote small scale family farming and peasants rights:

1. International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)

- ✗ Art. 9 – Farmers Right to Seeds

2. New Organic Farming Rule of the EU:

- ✗ Stipulations on right to sell seeds – heterogeneous material - produced by farmers themselves, certified in the organic system

3. Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the context of the national food security (Right to Food)

4. Voluntary guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests in the context of national food security (VGGT)

5. UN Decade for Family Farming (UNDFF)



Thank you!