

## INOFO in the West and Central Africa IFAD Farmers' Forum

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We are happy, finally, INOFO started to interact with the farmers' forum (FAFO) in west and central Africa (WCA). We are looking for a greater involvement in order to advance effective partnerships and collaboration between IFAD and Organic Farmers Organizations (OFOs) in country programmes and investment projects.

In April 2018, the WCA region of the IFAD FAFO held its meeting in Nouakchott-Mauritania. Two members represented INOFO from two countries, namely Senegal and Togo. One of the main purposes of the forum is to discuss on how Farmers' organization can better support IFAD for a shared benefit partnership.

As the Farmers' Forum was established since 2005, as new comer, INOFO's representatives was mainly overthere to observe, learn and contribute where possible. Despite being the only organization pushing for Organic and Ecological agriculture, INOFO's presence in Nouakchott was in a very favourable context. A week prior to the WCA IFAD FAFO, there was in Roma-Italia the second FAO International forum on

Agroecology where the main outcome was to scale up agroecology in line with Sustainable Development Goals to save the planet.

The IFAD portfolio in WCA showcases some very innovative project set-ups, which are empowering Farmers Organisations (FOs) as responsible for the management of one or more project components. Farmers' market access through product value chain being a big focus, it also appears a kind of solidarity between FOs from different country to strengthen each other, which also came out as a big demand to the Dr Gilbert F. Hounbo, IFAD president. The latter also strongly encourage Organic Farmers Organisations (OFOs) to advocate at their country level so that organic and ecological agriculture become a priority in their national program, then IFAD would easily support.

Therefore, INOFO is strongly requesting WCA region of the IFAD FAFO a better communication and a better inclusiveness, like the East and Southern Africa IFAD FAFO, so that the ecological and organic sector become fully part in providing food and agricultural solution in the region.

A major learning point is that the Farmers' Forum is an on-going, bottom-up process of consultation and dialogue between organizations of smallholder farmers and rural producers from all over the world.