

# Charter

## for Sustainable Smallholder Farming and Food for All

### *Hunger Is a Weapon of Mass Destruction \**

CREATED IN 1960 AS THE COMITÉ FRANÇAIS DE LA CAMPAGNE MONDIALE CONTRE LA FAIM (FRENCH COMMITTEE FOR THE WORLD CAMPAIGN AGAINST HUNGER), THE CMCFCF BECAME THE COMITÉ FRANÇAIS CONTRE LA FAIM (CFCF, FRENCH COMMITTEE AGAINST HUNGER) IN 1967, AND THEN THE COMITÉ FRANÇAIS POUR LA SOLIDARITÉ INTERNATIONALE (CFSI, FRENCH INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY COMMITTEE) IN 1996. CFSI SUPPORTS ACTIONS IN FAVOR OF SMALLHOLDER FARMING AND COORDINATES THE ALIMENTERRE CAMPAIGN.

In 2010, CFSI is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary and its unflinching commitment to promoting access to sufficient food for everyone everywhere.

In 1963, CFSI committed fully by promoting, in France, the Manifesto on Man's Right to Freedom from Hunger that was signed by well-known figures from around the world. Denouncing undernourishment and malnutrition, this manifesto emphasized the way that they trap adults in a vicious circle of impoverishment that hinders children's development and compromises their future.

Since then, undernourishment and malnutrition persist. Admittedly, while we can rejoice that they have receded in many areas of the world, they are increasing on the global level despite governments' constantly repeated promises to halve hunger and poverty by 2015.

Is it acceptable that one billion people today—most of whom are farmers and their families—are undernourished? And that one billion more are malnourished?

Is it acceptable that maintaining current policies could double these numbers by 2050?

Hunger is not inevitable. Our planet can feed all its inhabitants. Civil society initiatives in favour of the right to food, food sovereignty and smallholder farming show that other policies are possible. To bring an end to this scandal, we, the heads of CFSI member organizations, denounce its causes here. We establish a common Charter to inspire and guide our individual and collective actions, and give these actions strength and coherence. We invite those who share our values and our objectives to join us.

# CFSI

## 50 years

of collective action  
for fair development



**We act** to place the economy at the service of humanity, respecting economic, social and cultural rights, notably the right to food and food sovereignty.

**We are convinced** that a solidarity-based economy will come from the combined action of civil society actors, local governments and states.

**We are committed** to collectively promoting our proposals for change, in cooperation between societies, working over the long term, facilitating dialogue and mobilization, and based on north-south alliances.

# In a New Context, Serious Risks of a Worsening Situation

To the causes of hunger—conflicts, climate hazards, soil impoverishment, and poor conservation of harvests—one must now add harm to biodiversity, pressure on water resources, and climate change, all of which further weaken production conditions. Moreover, trade liberalization, competition for access to land, and certain research decisions run a serious risk of worsening hunger, which would have tragic social and human consequences.

## Hunger: Chronic and Silent

The liberalization of the agricultural product trade and the concentration of production on large farms in both developed and developing countries are increasing the share of the food supply that depends on imports and the impact, in countrysides and cities, of the volatility of prices on international markets.

Prices have long been kept low for the urban poor in developing countries thanks to imports, but this has not prevented malnutrition. The “hunger riots” in the spring of 2008, which were sparked by the sharp rise in prices on international markets and worsened by speculation, showed that the social peace bought in cities at farmers’ expense was fragile.

Food habits are undergoing deep-reaching changes. Consumers in developing countries are abandoning local products and turning to imported products while consumers in developed countries prefer processed foods to raw products. In both cases, the distance and number of intermediaries between producer and consumer are increasing.

## Moving Towards 500 Million Landless Farming Families?

In the countrysides, prices are not lucrative enough and are too unstable: many farmers can no longer support their families with what they earn from their labour. Without funds, they cannot acquire the equipment and inputs they need to increase yields and cultivated land.

The directions taken by research, which focuses heavily in developing countries on the needs of agribusiness, and the public authorities’ deficiencies when it comes to transferring the results to developing country farmers deprive farmers of techniques that would allow them to increase production without using chemicals. In the very near future, patented high-yield seeds will make them fully dependent on seed companies and might irreversibly destroy crop biodiversity.

At the same time, given the land necessary for infrastructures, cities and mining, farmland is becoming scarcer and the subject of competition, even speculation, in which family farms have little weight in the face of agribusiness.

Placed in a situation where they cannot earn a living from their labour or have been thrown off their land, hundreds of millions of farmers risk joining the mass of urban poor and migrants. Currently, if agribusiness alone fed the world, there would be 2.7 billion farmers without resources.

# Charter

## for Sustainable Smallholder Farming and Food for All

Today, one person out of six suffers from undernourishment because incomes and food products are distributed unfairly. Current policies, unregulated economic interests, and the challenges created by population growth and the deterioration of the environment could worsen this situation considerably.

This is not inevitable. We are convinced that smallholder farming has a central role to play in feeding the world, sustainably protecting the environment, strengthening the cohesion of the social fabric, and allowing farmers to live in dignity.

To achieve this, public authorities, civil society organizations, food producers, companies and consumers each have their own responsibilities.

**Together, we want to create a world where:**

- 1 The right to food is recognized.** The international context contributes to its attainment. The food sovereignty of each country and regional area is accepted and respected, and markets are effectively regulated. France's and Europe's trade and agricultural policies are coherent with the development of their partners. Public reports on this coherence are issued regularly.
- 2 Smallholder farming is integrated into the national economy.** Farmers have fair access to land, water and seeds. Agricultural products are processed locally; they supply urban centres in priority and contribute to export. Companies develop fair contractual relationships with agricultural producers, and alliances between farmers and consumers are encouraged.
- 3 Smallholder farming is productive.** Public research is mobilized to increase yields without excessive use of chemical inputs. Results are disseminated and farmers receive support applying these results. Rural youths—both boys and girls—have access to education and training.
- 4 Associations of actors** (farmers, consumers, local authorities) **benefit** from north-south and south-south **solidarity** through inter-territory exchanges, support and cooperation.
- 5 Public opinion**, in both developed and developing countries, **acknowledges the need to modify modes of production and consumers' habits** so that everyone can have sufficient food and the environment can be preserved. Public policies and civil society organizations encourage behavioural changes.

For our part, we are committed to making these approaches, policies and types of solidarity a reality in line with our values. We shall assess our joint actions in light of this Charter every five years. We shall report on our successes and failures to our partners and all those who support our organizations through their actions and/or donations.

## CFSI Member Organizations



## Invitation

Convinced that the more of us there are who work toward the same goal, the more we will be able to influence mentalities, practices and policies, and the more we will be able to help lower the number of people suffering from hunger, **we invite:**

- **our partners in developing and developed countries** to share their approval of this Charter by signing it;
- **the organizations that recognize themselves in this Charter** to forge and develop partnerships with CFSI around specific actions; and
- **individuals** who approve of the content of this Charter to let us know by signing below.

## Signature

IN \_\_\_\_\_, ON \_\_/\_\_/\_\_

LAST NAME

FIRST NAME

[ORGANIZATION]

[POSITION]

# CFSI

**50 ans**  
d'action collective  
pour un développement  
solidaire



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