



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF RURAL ADULT CATHOLIC MOVEMENTS

# VOICE OF THE RURAL WORLD

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## THE FARMER AND FAMILY AGRICULTURE

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**VMR**

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## Summary

Editorial	3
Action of the Movements	5
Dossier	11
Interview	23
<i>Joseph KAMA - Senegal</i>	
General Information	29
Your column	31

*Coverpage: Work in the fields*

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highlights the rural world's life and activities of the member  
Movements belonging or not to the Federation

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*Hardehausen region (Germany) - April 2008*

*Following up on our reflection on food sovereignty and solidarity economy, it seems clear to us that farmer and family agriculture could be an interesting alternative model because it combines the concepts of food sovereignty, solidarity economy and sustainable development. This model, in a way, concretely implements all of these concepts. Contrary to the intensive and industrial agriculture model, it mainly focuses on farmers and their families living a « human » way of life.*

*The VMR dossier describes the family and farmer agriculture model, the challenges it entails and the requirements needed for food sovereignty to become a reality.*

*In the current world food crisis context, we continue to firmly believe in our reflection and will to give life to all these concepts that can really constitute an alternative to the neo-liberal economic system and the excessive exploitation it promotes.*

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*The leaders of this world are trying to deal with the situation, be it in the High Level FAO Conference to take place from 3 to 5 June or the 7th Special Session of the Human Rights Commission. The results of these discussions however will not necessarily lead to a model change. The suggested proposals, rather, go along the lines of saving the current dominant models or of proposals – such as the development of agro-fuels – which are already having devastating consequences in many parts of the world. This is illustrated in the “Movements’ actions” section as well as in the Joseph Kama (Senegal) interview.*

*More than ever, our role as movements is to be informed on these world challenges, and reflect upon alternatives for us to be able to continue to live in peace in this world. The fast degradation of resources and of trade conditions brings us to the conclusion that the world is upside down. If we want to grant a future to our children, it is high time we reverse the process and rediscover the values of sharing and solidarity as well as protecting our resources. In the last May Seminar, the members of the Executive Committee started talking about decrease, a model which promotes a responsible consumption in order to maintain values such as justice and redistribution within the framework of a solidarity economy that respects cultural diversity, local initiatives and the rural world. We will certainly mention this again in the coming months...*

*A reminder to use « Your Column », on page 31 as well as the FIMARC's blog <http://fimarc.wordpress.com/>. They are yours, feel free to use them !*

*Have a good reading of this VMR.*

*Daisy Herman  
Secretary general*



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## Action of the Movements

### Egypt

Since earliest antiquity, Egypt is known as an agricultural country whose soils are enriched by the Nile floods, pictured in the murals of all its temples. Since the 1950s, the country has been faced with a food crisis, which took on huge proportions in these last months. Egypt, with a population of 35 million inhabitants in the 1970s has now reached a population of 80 million. This fast demographic evolution, the development of export crops and rural exodus mean that the country cannot in any way meet its basic food necessities. Faced with this situation of dependence on outside exports be it for food or seeds, the groups organized by ADIM in the Minia diocese try and get organized in order to organically produce the food for the local market.

### Kenya

Following the violence that erupted after the presidential elections, many populations were displaced, crops destroyed and villages set on fire.

Food prices drastically increased and a 50 kg bag of fertilizer, which used to cost 1,500 Ksh (15.65 €) now costs 4,000 Ksh (41.70 €). Another problem is drinking water. The water sector has been privatized, with less and less people having access to it. The KIDEP association organizes trainings in organic farming, for farmers to learn how to make their own compost from manure and natural material in order to meet the need for fertilizers for the coming season.

### Democratic Republic of Congo

Opposition MPs from the Democratic Republic of Congo denounce the agreements reached in April with Chinese companies, e.g. a contract to exploit 30 million hectares of palm trees in order to produce agro-fuels. They accuse the government of negotiating cheap contracts with China. The opposition, while not against cooperating with China altogether, demands for a re-balancing of interests for both parties involved.

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## Colombia

As in other countries in the region, the solution chosen by the authorities in order to eradicate hunger and poverty is that of agro-fuels. In March 2007, Colombia declared that it wanted to become the first Latin American biodiesel producer and thus reach the fifth rank amongst world palm oil producers. The ATI organization is very concerned by this policy and has launched a campaign for the right to food while establishing a dialog between producers, processors and consumers.

## Argentina

Since March the Argentinean agricultural sector is on strike. The reason for this upheaval is the strong increase in taxation of products destined to exports. This increase aimed at keeping production inside the country – a generous idea in theory – but in reality production decreases due to high taxation and the price of food products is on the increase, such as meat (40% increase in one year) or milk and milk products (60% increase)... The situation has been blocked for two months. Farmers block roads and prevent loaded trucks from supplying large cities in order to put pressure on the government to reverse its decision to increase production taxes.



*Farmers demonstration  
March 2008- Argentina*

## El Salvador

On 30 April 2008, MPs very speedily approved – as an alternative to the food crisis – the use of genetically modified seeds, abolishing Article 30 of the Legislation on Seeds which banned the introduction, sale, research and distribution of these seeds in the country. A group of farmers sent a letter to the country's President denouncing this situation and asking him to ban this change in Article 30. The letter also asked for the setting up risk-management mechanisms as defined in the Cartagena Protocol, and the need for a national agricultural policy that does not create dependence on Trans-National Companies dealing in genetically modified production and for supporting the farming sector through subsidies and buying/selling regulations for agricultural products.



## Pakistan

To the initiative of this country's representative in the Asian Seminar on Food Sovereignty and Solidarity Economy, various seminars were organized in March and April on the need and importance of sustainable agriculture. In this country with 165 million inhabitants, the economy is mainly based on agriculture. A World Bank study indicates that 44% of cultivable land is in the hands of 2% of landowners.

## South Korea

The government's decision to resume US beef imports raised a lot of discontent in the country. South Koreans fear contamination by the mad cow disease. 77% of the population is against these imports and the opposition asked for a renegotiation of the agreement with Washington in favor of resuming these imports. Due to public pressure, the resuming of the imports has been postponed for now, officially for technical reasons.



*Seminar on Sustainable Development - Pakistan*









*The EXCO members and the Bishop of Paderborn  
April 2008 - Germany*

## Germany

The KLB in Germany had its General Assembly last May and also celebrated on that occasion the 20th anniversary of the ILD, a service set up to support the movement's development projects. The members of the FIMARC Executive Committee also had on that occasion the opportunity to meet ILD's partners and to discover somewhat the rural milieu in the Hardehausen region.

## Spain

the next International Exhibition on Water will take place in Zaragoza (Spain) from 14 June to 14 September 2008. The theme will be «Water and Sustainable Development».

The choice of Zaragoza, Spain's fifth largest city with 675,000 inhabitants is not accidental. Indeed, Zaragoza is by far the best city in terms of urban water management and consumption savings policy. Whilst water consumption increased in almost all European large cities, Zaragoza reduced its water consumption spectacularly in fifteen years. The water quantity consumed is of about 63 cubic hectometers (64.10 in 2006) versus 84 cubic hectometers in 1995 and 105 cubic hectometers thirty years ago, in spite of a rise in population. The efforts have been made around two levels : acting against water loss and setting up a series of measures to encourage to individually and collectively reduce consumption..

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## Croatia

Croatia, an independent State since 1991 is going through an interesting economic expansion phase. Many efforts have been made in the tourism industry and in preserving natural sites. The rural world and agricultural sector – 6% of the country –

is however in some regions relatively abandoned because the young prefer city life to taking on farming. This will probably create some problems in the long run with a population with a negative growth rate of 2.4%.



*Lakes of Plitvice, April 2008 - Croatia*



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## **Farmer and Family Agriculture for a Social and Solidarity Economy**

*Food and the environment are concerns which are way too serious to be left to the market economy. Farmer and family agriculture – which combines breeding and vegetal production integrated in the « country », managing the environment and producing locally for local consumption – is a means to implement a social and solidarity economy. As opposed to industrial and intensive agriculture, it gives top priority to a « human » life for the farmer and their families. And it really allows for implementing food sovereignty, a basic tool for the local development of families, human communities, countries and regions.*

*The aim of this dossier is to present what farmer and family agriculture can do, the challenges it has to face and the demands it has to meet for food sovereignty to be a reality.*

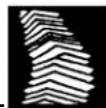
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## THE FAILURE OF INDUSTRIAL AGRICULTURE

In the world, 20% of the rich population consumes 86% of foodstuffs, while 20% of the poor population only consumes 1.3%. These numbers show the imbalance there is in this world as regards consumption: 860 million people do not have enough to eat and this situation is worsening with the current food crisis in many countries. The western world consumes 45% of the world meat production. And yet, 35 kilos of cereals are needed to produce 1 kilo of meat. Cereals are used to produce meat when they could be used to feed starving populations..



Farmer and family agriculture – to clearly differentiate it from intensive and industrial agriculture – provides for 50% of the food produced in the world. In Argentina, 80% of the producers are in farmer and family agriculture. This agricultural sector guarantees a quality of life and a diet adapted to the population. Another example of the excesses of intensive and industrial agriculture : Costa Rica imports more than two thirds of its bean consumption, when it is actually a local production crop ; in 2002, the value of imports of basic grain (corn, rice, wheat, beans) was superior to the value of coffee exports.



## State aid goes to large producers

In Brazil, large landowners and transnational companies control the agricultural trade, that of seeds and the chemical fertilizers and pesticides production: it is an agro-industry. This intensive agriculture only cultivates 17% of the country's land suitable for cultivation. Moreover, the great majority of these surfaces are used for growing sugar cane, soybean or coffee for exports or for the production of agro-fuels. The consequences of this agriculture's development are tragic: local workers expelled, low salaries; in 2005, 300,000 rural workers lost their jobs ; land ownership is concentrated in the hands of a minority.

The European Union Common Agricultural policy favors large agricultural companies, which depend on imports of vegetal proteins for meat production; it favors export dumping, thus causing the ruin of the small farmers in the South. In the Walloon Region of Belgium, 73% of agriculture state aid goes to 20% of farms – the largest ones –, which represent 59% of agricultural cultivated land and only 25% of rural jobs. In the European Union, 70% of the aid goes to 30% of farms.



*Purnode, Belgium - May 2008*

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## Feeding populations or producing agro-Fuels?

Is it not time to develop another type of agriculture that would put an end to competition between 28 million people who work with machinery and 1 million farmers who can only use their arms? Is it necessary to continue to deforest in Amazonia, Indonesia or Africa in order to produce agro-fuels? Especially since water is available in increasingly short supply: the world's agriculture absorbs around 70% of available fresh water, mainly in countries where there is intensive agriculture.

In the world, millions of small farmers and indigenous people depend on local agriculture and its development for their subsistence. To deprive them of their land and local production is to deny them their right to food. Human Rights mean that each human being should be able to freely choose how to implement their right to food: it is the basic principle of food sovereignty.

*Suggested Questions to Groups and Movements:*

- *Do you know the destination of your country's agricultural products : food, exports, agro-fuels?*
- *How important is farmer and family agriculture in your region or country?*



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## « THE HARMONIOUS BALANCE OF FARMER AND FAMILY AGRICULTURE »

In most African countries, farmer and family agriculture accounts for 30 to 50% of the riches produced in the country. It represents the main source of revenue and subsistence for 70 to 80% of the continent.

« Only many hands together allow for picking up the spilled flour » goes an African saying. In other words, we need to join hands to develop local production sectors and local economic activities in order to increase the populations' standard of living. In Thailand, organic rice production brings increased income for producers and allows for healthy and quality food for their families and local populations. It also allows for maintaining and developing local employment..



*Slavonia Region, April 2008 - Croatia*



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## The right to healthy and quality food

The farmer and family agriculture model is an alternative model: organizing and occupying the land into small and medium-sized farms, requiring state aid to small farmers, requiring a land reform which grants the land to landless families (4 million families in Brazil), developing polyculture versus monoculture, healthy food production – without pesticides or chemicals –, banning of GMO's, creation of local jobs and guaranteeing an income to the men and women who work in the rural sector.

Society wants farmers to bring healthy, diversified and quality food to the populations, in a healthy environment, respecting biodiversity, without air, water or soil pollution. Farmer and family agriculture is more than a food production model; it is the foundation of rural economy. It should allow for a maximum number of farmers over the whole territory to live decently, by producing healthy food on human-scale farms, without putting in jeopardy future natural resources.





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## Ten basic principles

« Farmer agriculture is the flower that can only bloom in a harmonious balance of its petals» (François Dufour, French leader of the farmers' trade union « Confédération Paysanne », a member of Via Campesina). It implements a certain idea of the farmers' work and of agriculture, a search for a higher level of individual and collective well-being, and it needs a global framework to develop. It is necessary to re-think the functions and role of agriculture in society. We need to give agricultural assets their social, economic and environmental role back, in order to consider agricultural production as a whole.

Farmer and family agriculture aims at reaching that objective and is based on ten basic principles:

- Distributing production volumes in order to allow for the largest number of people access to farming and to earn a living from their work. It is thus opposed to industrial and intensive agriculture;
- Working in solidarity with farmers from all countries and more specifically developing solidarity between farmers in poor countries;
- Respecting nature ;
- Valorizing abundant resources and saving on scarcer resources, such as water;
- Looking for transparency in all actions linked to the production and sale of agricultural products;
- Guaranteeing healthy and tasty quality food products;
- Aiming at maximum autonomy in the running and life of farms;
- Looking for partnerships with other local players of the rural world, to boost local, social and human life;
- Maintaining biodiversity of animal life and of the cultivated plant varieties, for this biodiversity allows for a better life for all;
- Always having long-term and global strategies, placing agriculture in the context of sustainable development.

## **Facing the Food Crisis: Decrease**

In many areas of the world we hear about dramatic stories caused by the world food crisis. Despite the fact that farmers are the ones who produce the food, they are the ones who most suffer from hunger. The price of basic food products are constantly on the increase, e.g. the 25,000 million poor farmers who suffer from increased rice prices.

The FIMARC delegates from the 4 continents gathered in Assesse (Belgium) analyzed and reflected on the world food crisis.

Natural resources are in the world for the development of human beings. Natural resources are, however, increasingly being privatized and are mainly now in the hands of transnational companies – supported by international finance organizations such as the WTO, the World Bank and the IMF – who manage them without taking the main objective into account : feeding the whole of mankind.

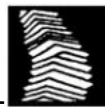
The land used for monocrop production is extending for the production of agrofuels which the multinational companies mainly present as an alternative to fossil fuels and as a solution for the environment. However, this is bringing about the destruction of numerous forests and traditional crops in order to produce ethanol or similar fuels, in huge areas of Africa, Asia and America, due to their land concentration.

We are moving towards a world which is upside down: cars, not people, will be needing to consume the yearly cereal production.

We suggest as an alternative farmer and family agriculture that contributes to guaranteeing food sovereignty for millions of people. This agriculture respects nature, soils, water, promotes biodiversity, local development and puts the people within their communities at the heart of the system.

In a world with a consumerist minority and a majority who lives on the threshold of poverty, it is necessary to propose an alternative. To the neoliberal system – only measured by the growth indicator – we propose a different lifestyle : decrease – promoting responsible consumption in order to maintain the values of justice and re-distribution, within the framework of solidarity economy, a model which secures the principle of food for all, respects diversity of cultures, local initiatives and the rural world.

*Final Press Release FIMARC, Assesse, 04/05/2008*



## Solidarity between the farmers of the world

Farmer and family agriculture needs a global political framework to develop and reach its objectives. The first requirement is to guarantee producers a decent income, and to implement a social policy at the service of rural employment. The second requirement is the implementation of measures and means promoting the quality of products. Farmer and family agriculture acts in favor of local development, through the non-concentration of farms and land and by favoring collective development projects in cooperation with local authorities. Through the promotion of biodiversity, this agriculture preserves nature. Finally, it requires guarantees in terms of land ownership : the right to land for those who cultivate it.

Farmer and family agriculture thus covers a social dimension based on promoting rural employment, on solidarity between farmers, regions and farmers of the world. It should be economically profitable, respect consumers in their food preferences and preserve nature. We are in the dynamics of social and solidarity economy, as defined in VMR N° 89.

### *Suggested Questions to the Groups and Movements :*

- *How are farmers perceived in society and in the country?*
- *What is the economic weight of farmer and family agriculture?*
- *Which are the authorities' choices in terms of agricultural aid?*

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## THE NEED TO ACT TOWARDS WEIGHING ON PUBLIC AUTHORITIES' DECISIONS

The principle of food sovereignty is at the heart of the success of farmer and family agriculture. We need to act in order to organize society starting from the access to fundamental rights for all, and specifically the right to food. In order to meet the challenge of feeding the population, farmer and family agriculture requires a political framework to support it instead of favoring industrial agriculture and the concentration of land and production means.

Farmers organized in movements, various organizations or trade unions demand that the States recognize and implement the food sovereignty principle. Farmer organizations should take part in all negotiations on the future of agriculture in their countries and the world. To put additional weight on decision-makers, we need to create alliances with consumers and other players who want to act along the same lines.

### **« I am talking about harmonious and viable economies »**

« I am talking about millions of human beings ripped from their gods, from their land, habits, dances, wisdom. I am talking about millions of beings which were cleverly imposed to live in fear, with an inferiority complex, people who tremble, are on their knees, desperate and left to feel as servants.

I am talking about natural economies, harmonious and viable, economies matched to indigenous peoples' needs, of disorganized economies that have destroyed food-producing crops, created permanent under-nourishment and are oriented towards the sole benefit of large cities, raiding produce and raw materials.»

*(by Aimé Césaire, poet and French politician – Martinique 1913-2008  
Excerpt from « Discourse on Colonialism » 1950).*



## Penalizing agricultural practices which destroy the land

The countries of the South have the right to protect their own food-producing agriculture through high tariffs on imported foodstuffs. One of the consequences of these choices is that it leads to rich and industrialized countries limiting their agricultural production and ending low-priced exports through public subsidies (dumping). Agriculture in all countries should concentrate on satisfying local market needs for quality food products to bring to consumers.



Farmer organizations should also demand for governments to support the work of rural social movements, and the work in favor of land reforms so as to grant farmers the right and access to land, water, farmer seeds as well as production resources. As was said by an Argentinean farmer organization, the public authorities should support organic and diversified agriculture in order to facilitate the right and access to unproductive land to the farmers who want to cultivate it. It adds : « Public authorities should set up mechanisms which penalize anti-environmental agricultural practices which pollute and deteriorate nature, thus acting against agro-food transnational companies and against the practices of the WTO, IMF and the World Bank. Indeed, the farmer and family agricultural sector is the most important one in the world and guarantees quality of life as well as healthy and quality food for all.»

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## Implementing human rights for all

Attached to the dynamics of social and solidarity economy, farmer and family agriculture can thus develop its social, economic and environmental dimensions. It can contribute to reinforcing the notions of society, solidarity and citizenship. It is more than an economic tool, since it creates a social fabric. The young who turn to textile weaving for selling their products do more than just weave fabric; they also create a social fabric among themselves and in society. The same goes for farmer and family agriculture.

Social and solidarity economy leads to new forms of political structures and counter-powers. It is a fantastic means to reflect on and experiment a fairer distribution of riches, thus contributing to the implementation of human rights for all.

*Suggested Questions to Groups and Movements:*

- *Which are the actions of your group in favor of farmer and family agriculture?*
- *With which networks do you cooperate for these actions?*
- *What are the results you reached through your actions?*





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**In this numero of the VMR, we have interviewed Joseph Kama, national President of MARCS (Rural Adult Catholic Movement of Senegal). Joseph is also technician in renewable energies**

***Joseph Kama, could you introduce yourself for the readers of this VMR?***

My name is Joseph Kama, I live in Senegal. I am married and I am the father of five children. I manage a small local company in Kaolack, as a technician in renewable energies, and more specifically in solar energy. I do this work in the framework of a vast program my country's Government deployed in order to boost the use of solar energy for public lighting and in individual homes.



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I have been a Christian activist in Catholic rural movements for a long time. I am currently the national leader of the MARCS (Mouvement des Adultes Ruraux Catholiques from Senegal). My wife is diocesan treasurer for the Movement.

***Besides this work in renewable energies, you also cultivate the land?***

Indeed, with my family we run a small five-hectare farm.

We grow corn, millet and beans, for our own family consumption. We also grow peanuts to sell to the local market and thus getting financial income..

***What is the agricultural situation in Senegal?***

For a number of years, it has been losing in value: it is no longer able to feed the families who till the land. One of the consequences of this being that the young people abandon agriculture, which is still the foundation of food supply and of our lives.

***What are the reasons for this situation?***

I would say there are three main reasons.

- First, the climate uncertainties. For two years now, we are faced with a rain shortage and the crops have consequently been poor.



*Solar cooker, Senegal*



This does not allow the people to have enough to eat. We are not the only ones to suffer from this climate, but I think it is mainly to climate change in the world.

- The second reason stems from the government policy or more specifically the lack of agricultural policy in the country.

There is no long-term program to allow the farmers access to land, to seeds, inputs and other things you need in order to be able to produce.

The State sets up programs on a case per case basis. I'll take one example. The government promises seeds to farmers, that they can buy at a reasonable price.

But the seeds are of a bad quality, and often arrive too late for sowing. The State lets the middlemen on the loose who help themselves along the way. Seeds that were to be sold to farmers end up being sold on the market by local traders who have taken hold of them on the way. And the State does nothing.



*Exposure program - 2003 - Togo*



*Health training, Senegal*

- The third reason has to do with the poor soil quality inland. The land is overexploited and monoculture i.e. that of peanuts and cotton weakens the soil. Peanuts and cotton are cultivated for exports, often to the detriment of food crops.

***What you just told us shows us that you are faced with some difficulties and that the way to go would be to reach food sovereignty in the country. What does the MARCS Movement do to face the situation?***

Indeed, we really are in the midst of the debate on what food sovereignty should be. However, the State's practice towards agriculture does not go along those lines, at least for the time being.

On our part, in the Movement, we want to train people to better manage the situation themselves.

We need to take charge ourselves. We need to build our own future. To this end, we have set up technical training programs.



For instance, we train the movement members to make their own compost, to regenerate the soil and protect nature. We also have women's trainings for women to learn to process and valorize local produce. These technical trainings, in the villages, are open to all farmer families. They are very popular.

***Shouldn't these technical trainings be organized by competent organizations?***

Few organizations propose these trainings... Moreover, the trainings in the Movement are more than just technical trainings, they are also human trainings which focus on awareness-raising to build our own future, as I was saying earlier.

We develop, through these trainings, the solidarity spirit, the capacity of one's ability to understand and analyze one's situation and to look for solutions and act to improve our lives.

***Who supports the Movement in this training and awareness-raising work?***

First, our members. They all financially contribute to the Movement according to their possibilities. To each meeting, for instance, everyone brings something, which we share, for the meal, which reduces financial costs and thus allows many families to participate.



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Our programs are financially supported by the German KLB Movement, which I would like to thank for its help. At local level, Caritas also supports our trainings.

We also have the support of the country's Catholic church. A year ago, the Bishops published a letter on the rural world situation. This letter was prepared in close cooperation between the Bishops and the MARCS Movement and other rural and farming organizations.

The Bishops insist on three points in favor of the farmers. They defend the need to promote access to land and water – for a production that allows for a dignified life. They also give their support to grass-root communities, the ferment for a better life for all.

***In this rural and farming context, what would your final message be?***

I would like, as one of the MARCS leaders, to insist on the importance of food sovereignty. The MARCS Movement is doing all it can for this principle to be implemented by ourselves and all our members in the aim of reaching a social and solidarity economy. We also want our political leaders to understand this principle and implement it in the country.

Finally, more than ever with the current economic crisis in many countries, we need to defend ourselves against agro-fuels. We need to be united on the battleground to win the challenge of food for all.



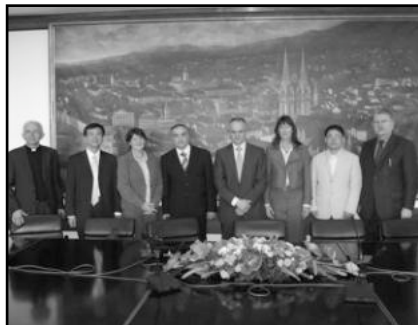
## General Information

As announced in the last issue, the Bureau and Executive Committee members met last May. After a three-day program in Germany – KLB General Assembly and ILD's 20th Anniversary – the Exco members took part in a Seminar on the theme of farmer and family agriculture as an alternative model in the framework of solidarity economy. You will find the Seminar's final press release on page 18.

The regional co-ordinations also had the opportunity to meet during that program.

In Asia, there is talk of participating to the January 2009 World Social Forum with an exposure program with Landless Movement of Brazil. The Latin American coordinators want to focus their efforts on re-establishing contacts within the region in order to already start preparing for the 2010 World Meeting and the Africans foresee decentralized meetings in the three regions of the continent.

The Europeans are currently preparing the Continental Seminar, which will take place in Poland from 7 to 14 September 2008.



*Visit to the Municipality of Zagreb,  
April 2008 - Croatia*

The FAO High-Level Conference on World Food Security: The Challenge of Climate Changes and Bioenergy took place in Rome from 3 to 5 June. We welcome the fact that this Conference has taken place and that the governments wish to be represented at the highest level in the Conference, conscious of the impacts of climate change and agro-fuel development in the rural world. We regret however that civil society has not been more consulted and represented in that Summit.

Mr Jean Ziegler ended his mandate as « Special Rapporteur » for the Right to Food in the Human Rights Commission. We should like to underline the quality of his work.



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We are glad of the nomination of Mr Olivier de Schutter who will succeed him.

In an interview in the « Le Monde » newspaper (3 May 2008 issue) Mr de Schutter clearly refers to the International Financial Institutions' responsibility in the current world food crisis and of the gradual elimination of agricultural subsidies in order to stop the dumping phenomenon...

MIJARC – the International Movement for Catholic Agricultural and Rural Youth – held its World Meeting and General Assembly in Uganda last May. The theme of the meeting's seminar was « Let Us Dare to Build a New Rural World ». The President Georges Dixon Fernandez was elected for a second mandate in the General Assembly.

The IYCW – the International Young Christian Workers federation – officially launched its international campaign in favor of the right to social protection on 28 April this year. The launching of that campaign is part of an action plan set up by the IYCW over a period of at least 8 years for the workers of the informal sector, temporary workers, young women workers and the unemployed. You can sign their online petition on the IYCW website [www.joci.org](http://www.joci.org)

Lux'09: the event's website is now online [www.lux09.lu](http://www.lux09.lu) This website gives you direct access to forum discussions that we encourage you to visit. Do not hesitate in taking part in the debates and making your own proposals to build together the 12 workshop themes which will be addressed during the Forum.





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## Your column

We would like to remind you that this section is open to you. Parallel to the dossier, please find hereunder a brief presentation of the farmer and family agriculture concept.

### ***Some Vocabulary :***

*Farmer* : to be understood as a country's agriculture adapted to a territory, i.e. localized.

*Family* : to be understood in its dimension as a farm able to produce enough for a family to live on, since there are family-owned companies which are wholly capitalistic.

### ***Some Characteristics of Farmer Agriculture :***

- Production Diversity
- Debt limitation
- Valorization of trading in short distribution channels
- Valorization of synergies with other companies in the territory

### ***Success Factors :***

- The challenge of good technical performances: to guarantee production success
- Remunerative prices
- Boost the territory to the maximum, from the village to the country level, even to a group of countries
- Think local, act global; think global, act local

### ***Challenges to Farmer Agriculture :***

- Overcome competition reflexes
- Get organized to better manage risks and unforeseen complications
- Manage political regulations
- Challenge of decision decentralization
- In short : bringing to life a real democracy !

### ***Notions to be Related to :***

- Food Sovereignty
- Solidarity Economy
- Faire Trade
- Sustainable Development



*EXCO members,  
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