



FIAN INTERNATIONAL ZAMBIA 2021

presentation of farmers manifesto to political  
parties

Sarovar premier hotel Lusaka Zambia



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## Opening remarks

The meeting was opened by Ms. Nalukui Micapo from University of Zambia (UNZA). She welcomed all participants and thanked FIAN, Caritas and PELUM for organising the meeting.



## Background to the workshop



Mr. Miga Wilfred on behalf of the organisers explained the background and objectives of the meeting. He indicated that even though government introduced the e-voucher system which is been implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and targets a number of districts in the 10 Provinces; farmers still face a lot of challenges in accessing the facility. Farmers tend to get their input late because of poor network. He added that the food system and environment has been compromised due farmers use of agro chemicals such as pesticides and fertilizers.

Focus of agriculture policies which support industrial agriculture has negatively impacted on small scale farmers who faces numerous challenges including high cost of inputs. He said that Agroecology improves the adaptive capacity of agroecosystems and reduces vulnerability to natural disasters, climate change impacts, he appealed to Government, farmers, and other relevant stakeholders to make concerted efforts to improve the livelihoods of small-scale farmers by fostering ecological land use management.

## Farmers manifesto presentation



Ms Mubanga Musamba presented the farmers manifesto and she raised a question, “can we keep calm if pesticide residues are within legal limits”?

She argued that even though the government has identified agriculture as priority sector to reduce poverty and enhance household food security. And Zambia has made some progress in this respect, the evidence shows that despite achieving annual growth rates of more than six per cent in agriculture, crop yields remain low by international standards and rural poverty rates remain stubbornly high at about 80 per cent. The failure of the agricultural sector to provide for livelihoods for the majority people in rural areas is considered a major factor contributing to rural poverty.

## FARMERS VOICE



Ms. Dorcas Shoonga, a farmer who practices agroecology from Rufunsa District called on women in the country and the rest of the world to adopt organic farming practices for good health, increased crop yields and incomes. Mrs Shoonga said women needed to engage in agroecology for protection of human, soil, and environmental health.

Women have a responsibility to care for the family and organic farming will help us achieve that because the family will eat food free from chemicals. The soil will produce more because it will be healthy and there will be more money for the family," she said. She urged political party leaders to include agro ecology agriculture in their manifestos as a tool to attaining increased agriculture production for economic development.



Mr. Chiwambo Rolon an agroecology farmer from Lusaka, said that organic farming should be promoted because it makes farms more

resilient to various natural disasters and creates social, cultural, and environmental connections.

He added that, adopting this kind of agricultural practice will help promote development and people will have good health. The current diseases being experienced among young generation are a reflection of poor and unhealthy diets. He added that a market for organic food should be set up so that farmers can easily be selling their produce.

## Comments by political parties on manifesto and actions points



Speaking at the same function, Patriotic Front (PF) representative Mr. Yamfwa Mukanga said the ruling party former manifesto acknowledged that FISP is weak in targeting beneficiary farmers and is therefore, vulnerable to abuse. An e-voucher piloted in 13 districts removed, unintended beneficiaries from a list of 241,000 farmers.

The PF Government will among others promote private sector participation in the markets for inputs, roll-out the e-voucher system to cover the majority farmers, promote out-grower schemes for the provision of inputs for farmers and review FISP to make it more robust in empowering beneficiary farmers to eventually graduate from the programme.

He added that the ruling party was in the process of concluding its 2021 manifesto and would consider the submissions that the farmers had regarding agroecology .



United Party for National Development (UPND) representative Mr. Patrick Mucheleka said his party had prioritised agriculture and the need to uplift the lives of small holder farmers. He appealed to Civil Society Organisations to engage his party and share ideas for the development of the nation.



National Democratic Congress (NDC) representative Ms. Saboi Imboela said that her party will not limit their support of peasant farmers, the party will pay attention to how the agriculture produce gets marketed and processed. She added that the party manifesto is still been worked on and she will share with CSOs when its ready.





Movement from Multiple Party Democracy representative (MMD) Mr. Joshua Mulenga said that before they include agroecology farming in their manifesto, they need more consultation .



National Restoration Party (NAREP) representative Mr. George Mwene said that seed industry needs to be looked at critically, there is a need to fight over seed for small scale farmers and advocating for small scale farmers. The challenge has been that in a lot of developing countries, governments for a long time controlled the seed sector, a scenario that didn't work, he explained.

He added that "We need a seed distribution system so that farmers would have the seeds at their door steps if they need it. farmers should be able to go to anywhere close by and pick seeds at good cost

## closing remarks

Ms. Martha Mpongwe thanked political parties and Civil Society Organization (CSOs) for finding time to participate at the meeting. She thanked, Caritas Zambia and PELUM for their collaboration.

ANNEX

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