



**CROPS FOR THE FUTURE** (952016-X)

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A Member of



## **Global nutrition and agricultural experts agree that dietary diversification is the way forward**

8 SEPTEMBER 2017 – Global nutrition and agricultural experts agree that agricultural and dietary diversification is the way forward in the face of climate change. This was the strong message conveyed at a high-level meeting co-hosted by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and Crops For the Future (CFF). Participants agreed priority actions to enhance the role of agricultural and dietary diversification in achieving the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Sustainable Development Goal 2 (SDG2): Zero Hunger. Held at the IFAD headquarters in Rome from 4 – 5 September, the meeting was supported by IFAD and the Association of International Research and Development Centers for Agriculture (AIRCA). Around 20 agriculture and nutrition experts from AIRCA, IFAD, FAO and Bioversity International participated in the meeting.

The Rome meeting built on last year's successful Global Action Plan for Agricultural Diversification (GAPAD) SDG2 Roundtable Forum in Nairobi, Kenya where over 40 participants from 14 countries discussed how agricultural diversification can contribute to achieving SDG2. The Rome event explored specifics, as experts brainstormed action plans on agricultural diversification to be implemented across the SDG2 targets, with emphasis on diversification of diets.

Speaking at the Rome event, Professor Sayed Azam-Ali, Chief Executive Officer of CFF and Chair of AIRCA, emphasised the need for collective actions across the whole value chain if we are to meet the daunting challenge of zero hunger.

“It has become clear that diversification of our diets is crucial in the face of rapid urbanisation, sedentary lifestyles and more vulnerable climates. For this, we need

ingredients from a diverse range of crops that can grow in environments that are increasingly marginal for the world's major crops. It is not only important to feed the world, but to nourish a growing population with healthy, diverse diets that include ingredients from a wide range of species. The purpose of GAPAD is to foster links between stakeholders to promote and champion agricultural diversification based on a credible global knowledge base and best practices. Of course, agricultural diversification is a huge challenge. However, if we decide not to broaden the base of global agriculture, we will need to explain the wisdom of depending on a narrow range of agricultural species to nourish over 9 billion people on a hotter planet.”

The meeting was part of the ongoing efforts of the Global Action Plan for Agricultural Diversification (GAPAD) – an initiative spearheaded by CFF with AIRCA partners to promote the role of agricultural diversification in achieving five of the 17 SDGs. Through GAPAD initiatives, agricultural diversification and sustainable practices can contribute to improved nutrition, food security and poverty alleviation.

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### **About Crops For the Future**

Crops For the Future (CFF) is the world's first and only centre dedicated to research on underutilised crops for food and non-food uses. Based near Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, CFF research focusses on agricultural biodiversity to enhance agricultural systems and their sustainability, address changing climates, and improve food and nutritional security and economic well-being, especially of the poor. [www.cffresearch.org](http://www.cffresearch.org)

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