

## Item II. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2025 – Strengthening Coordination and Collaborative Actions

Thank you very much for this opportunity to be part of this important discussion.

To answer the question about innovation, derisking, equity and impact, please permit me to share with you a perspective from a participant in a recent gathering of agroecology donors held here in Rome last week.

At that meeting, Pierre Kadet, from Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) defined innovation in a simple and elegant way. Innovation, he said, is a practical solution to a real problem which is co-created with the intended end user. Co-creation with the end user. Very clear. Although IDRC is not a philanthropic organization, I bring in Pierre's perspective partially to illustrate that philanthropies do not work alone but rather collaborate with bilateral and multilateral development agencies and private investors, with the aspiration to strengthen government policies and programs for healthy and sustainable food systems.

I'm sure we all agree that solutions to food insecurity depend in large measure on local, community-based traditional knowledge and organization. Co-creation is one of the 13 principles of agroecology as articulated by HLPE some years ago. Philanthropies have the flexibility and mission mandate to use their resources to support civil society organizations and networks that are close to the ground, mobilizing some of the hundreds of millions of food insecure people to advocate on their own behalf.

Philanthropies are well positioned to support the immense creativity and reach of these civil society organizations and movements of which they form part. To achieve scale, this co-creation growing out of traditional knowledge works best when local efforts rooted in territorial realities are networked together through municipal, regional, national and international alliances and coalitions which coalesce into movements, all of which can be supported by philanthropies.

Poorly regulated markets and inadequate public programs have not been kind to the poor. We see in the SOFI report the effects of inflation, fragile supply chains, and the increased consumption of cheap, highly processed food. Gaining access to affordable, nutritious food points to the need to work towards food sovereignty to satisfy dietary requirements with healthy local food, from the community to the national level. Food sovereignty is a necessary but complex innovation and requires co-creation with those seeking it to achieve it.

The PFM itself is not itself a grant making institution but rather a consortium of philanthropies, collectively supporting CFS goals and the uptake of CFS products. Permit me to provide an example of philanthropic support provided through the Agroecology Fund, a member of the PFM. This is just one example - the innovation is truly

overwhelming and inspiring - we are overwhelmed with excellent proposals from around the globe to transition to healthy and sustainable food systems. In India, for example, we are honoured to support the NCNF and we applaud India's public commitment to natural farming.

But let me turn to Africa. First a quick appreciation to my colleague from Kenya. We applaud Kenya's work towards a national agroecology plan, which is co-created with civil society networks like Pelum which for example support farmer networks in the local manufacture of bio inputs. On the other side of the continent, Nous Sommes la Solution is a women led civil society network in West Africa - It has received philanthropic support to research indigenous rice varieties together with universities and public research institutions as a climate resilience solution. Their research was used in advocacy for increased support to small holder farmers growing these varieties, for strengthening territorial markets for local products together with municipal authorities and to strengthen the business case for women's managed agroecological enterprises. To share lessons, build power, and counter concentrated corporate interests across Africa, Nous Sommes la Solution has joined the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa, which advocates for agroecology – a pillar of food sovereignty - to be featured in African nations' climate action plans.

This sort of nested network action and movement building, with civil society organizations at the centre of collaborations with allies from the public and private sectors, starting from the local and building to the continental and global, is some of the work that philanthropies support. These efforts are critical for innovation, equity and impact. It is certainly our hope that with increased and consistent support to this type of grassroots leadership, the next SOFI report will indicate greater progress towards food security.

Thank you.