AgroSpectrum Envisaging Future | Updating Present ASIA

APAC innovators, and policymakers join the World Food Forum 2023 to step-up actions for food system transformation

08 November 2023 | News

The World Food Forum (WFF) is a youth-led movement and network to transform our agrifood systems that is committed to the theme: â??Agrifood systems transformation accelerates climate action.â?•



The World Food Forum (WFF) is a youth-led movement and network to transform our agrifood systems that is committed to the theme: â??Agrifood systems transformation accelerates climate action.â?•

Asia and the Pacific converged at the FAO headquarters in Rome from 16-20 October for the World Food Forum while hundreds more joined the forum virtually to inspire individual and collective actions for agrifood system transformation. The World Food Forum (WFF) is a youth-led movement and network to transform our agrifood systems that is committed to the theme: â??Agrifood systems transformation accelerates climate action.â?•

Similar to the global line-up of WFF events, the regional World Food Day ceremony hosted by the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific on 16 October kicked off a week-long engagement of youth, governments, private sector, academia and other stakeholders from the region at the third annual World Food Forum.

Youth voices from Asia-Pacific â?? loud and clear!

The Asia-Pacific region is home to 700 million young people between the age of 15 and 24 who are untapped reservoir of potential to accelerate agrifood system transformation and rural development.

â??Youth are powerful,â?• said FAO Senior Food Safety and Nutrition Officer, Sridhar Dharmapuri, in a keynote address at the WFF Asia-Pacific Youth Assembly. â??You must advocate, innovate, and accelerate actions for food security, healthy diets, and nutrition. FAO is here to support youth involvement in agrifood system transformation,â?• added Dharmapuri.

A satellite event hosted by the FAO Regional Office showcased youth actions to build sustainable food systems. Young people from Asia and the Pacific came together to share how networks created and led by them are making a difference on the ground to improve lives and livelihoods for people of all ages. The event highlighted youth actions like promoting indigenous products of farmers in the foothills of the Himalayas, developing new food products with underutilized crops such as millets and designing educational games to help prevent the spread of African swine fever (AFS).

A mobile game application to create awareness on AFS and biosecurity was also exhibited at the WFF in Rome, an example of innovative platforms built by students from the George Maison University of the Republic of Korea with support from FAOâ??s Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) and the Liaison and Partnership Office in ROK.

Food traditions and cultures from Asia added flavour to the WFF in Rome with exhibitions of mountain products from Bhutan and, Nepalâ??s indigenous crops.

Youth dialogues hosted virtually or in hybrid modality by FAO offices in China, Japan, Nepal and the Republic of Korea together with partners, offered a space for young people to share innovative solutions to preserve traditional agricultural knowledge and heritage like Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS), promote local food and underutilized crops for healthy diets, and deploy innovative technologies for low-carbon agriculture.

This youth-led momentum in the region will continue with the creation of National Chapters, a self-sustained youth platform that echoes the principles of the WFF, thus orchestrating tangible changes in local and national agrifood systems.

Science and innovation

Examples of successful digital innovations targeting climate impacts within the agrifood system were highlighted at a virtual event hosted by the FAO Regional Office for Asia-Pacific as part of the WFFâ??s Science and Innovation Forum. The webinar featured leaders and innovators who are driving local solutions to tackle climate change challenges in their countries and promoting inclusive digital solutions for climate action.

Novel techniques like the use of drones and air samplers for biosafety and animal welfare were also on display by ECTAD on the sidelines of the Science and Innovation Forum, highlighting the critical role of surveillance to anticipate, detect, prevent, and respond to avian influenza and other endemic disease outbreaks.

Investments and partnerships

The Hand-in-Hand Investment Forum convened by FAO during the WFF week, was a platform for countries to attract investments and partnerships for national agriculture and food value chains. Six countries from Asia and the Pacific - Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Lao Peopleâ??s Democratic Republic, Pakistan, and Vanuatu joined the second edition of the HIH Investment Forum in Rome. Ministers and representatives from these countries presented their investment plans to investors, multilateral development banks, the private sector, and donors, seeking support for Government plans to reduce poverty and hunger.