



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

World Food Day 2024 Press Release

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This year's theme is not just a slogan—it is a call to action. The right to food is recognized as a basic human right, enshrined in international law, and yet we know that globally, 733 million people still face hunger. In addition to this, more than 2.8 billion people cannot afford a healthy diet, meaning that they may not be consuming enough nutrients to support a healthy life.

Here in **Papua New Guinea**, food security is threatened by a range of challenges, including **climate change, economic inequality, and natural disasters**. These factors make it difficult for many communities—particularly rural and vulnerable populations—to access the food they need. Addressing these challenges requires a coordinated and sustained effort from **government, communities, and international partners**.

As **FAO Director-General Dr. QU Dongyu** has emphasized, the right to food must go beyond just having enough food on the table. It must also ensure that people have access to diverse, nutrient-rich diets that are affordable and safe. This means building resilient food systems that can withstand economic and environmental shocks.

Here in Papua New Guinea, FAO continues to work closely with the government and local communities to build sustainable agrifood systems that can withstand environmental and economic shocks. By integrating innovative farming practices, promoting local food production, and fostering stronger community-based food systems, we are laying the foundation for a more resilient future. Our initiatives focus on empowering smallholder farmers, improving access to nutritious foods, and enhancing sustainable land use to ensure long-term food security for all Papua New Guineans.

Collective Action and Sustainability

However, addressing food security requires more than just policies—it requires collective action from all sectors of society. **Governments, the private sector, civil society, and individuals** must work together to ensure that the right to food is realized for all people.

At FAO, we believe that sustainability is central to these efforts. **Climate change** continues to pose a significant threat to food security, particularly in countries like Papua New Guinea, where

agricultural productivity is heavily impacted by changing weather patterns. To address this, FAO is promoting **climate-smart agriculture**, which helps farmers adapt to changing environmental conditions while improving yields and protecting biodiversity.

We are also working to ensure that **diversity in food systems** is maintained. By promoting **agroecology, regenerative farming**, and the conservation of **traditional crops**, we can build food systems that are both resilient and sustainable. This approach ensures that future generations will have access to the same diverse and nutritious foods that have sustained our communities for generations.

The Role of Women and Youth

I would like to take a moment to recognize the critical role that women and youth play in achieving food security. Women are the backbone of rural communities, responsible for much of the food that is produced and prepared in homes across the country. Yet, they often face barriers to accessing resources, markets, and decision-making processes. FAO is committed to ensuring that **women's empowerment** is at the heart of our food security initiatives. Through programs that support **women-led enterprises** and **gender-sensitive agricultural policies**, we are working to ensure that women have the tools and opportunities they need to succeed.

Similarly, **youth** are essential to the future of food security. Their innovation, energy, and commitment to sustainable practices are key to building resilient food systems. We must continue to invest in **youth leadership** in agriculture, providing them with the knowledge, skills, and resources needed to shape a sustainable future.

Conclusion and Call to Action

As we celebrate **World Food Day 2024**, let us remember that food is not just a commodity—it is a right. Every person deserves access to the foods that support their health, dignity, and future. This is why our theme today—“**Right to Foods for a Better Life and a Better Future**”—is so important.

But turning this right into reality will require all of us to step up. I call on each of you—whether you are a policymaker, a farmer, a business leader, or a concerned citizen—to join us in this mission. Together, we can build **agrifood systems** that are **efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable**. Together, we can achieve the **Four Betters: Better Production, Better Nutrition, a Better Environment, and a Better Life**.

Let us commit today to ensuring that no one is left behind in our efforts to achieve food security for all.

Thank you for your dedication and for contributing to this vital dialogue.

