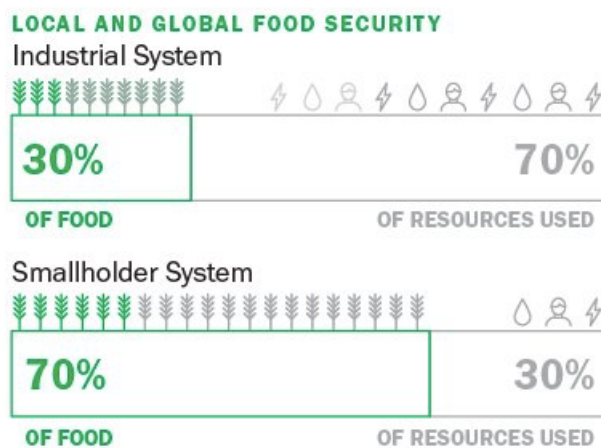


## Inclusive Food Value Chains in Sustainable Production and Consumption

The world food system is currently undergoing through the dramatic transformations. These changes are heading toward concentrated industrialization. Despite the potential of economic opportunities, it does not necessarily apply the equal accesses and outcomes. Further, this structural transformation will post many challenges on food safety issue as well as environmental condition, especially to the vulnerable groups. Therefore, it is essential to enhance the sustainable practices and inclusiveness of food production and consumption.

Inclusive food value chains are food production and processing systems that generate value for all actors along the chain, from the farmers, to the processors, transporters, manufacturers to the wholesalers and retailers. They are inclusive if they create co-benefits for the groups that would not normally receive sufficient benefits from the value chain, including women, poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups. They are sustainable if environmental burden on resources, such as land, water, energy, and air, is reduced and mitigated equally among stakeholders. Examples of steps towards inclusive and sustainable food value chains include, but are not limited to, reduction of post-harvest losses and food waste, transparency in supply chains, Participatory Guarantee Systems, sustainable production (e.g., agroecology), and recognition of the farmer as provider of ecosystem and climate services.

Creating inclusive food value chains is essential as a global action to achieve food security. The [2020 Global Food Policy Report](#) highlights the need for sustainable and responsible food systems. Policies need to acknowledge the imperative role of youth, women, indigenous people and other marginalised groups in shaping their food systems. One way to promote inclusivity, food security and food resilience is through promoting sustainable production and consumption in food systems. This includes valuing local diets and ensuring that value chains benefit local producers and sustainable farming practices. Globally, approximately 500 out of a total of 570 million farms are characterized as family farms (FAO, 2014; Lowder, Scoet, & Raney, 2016). However, current global food value chains disadvantage local farms in favour of large-scale industrial food systems. Industrial food production consumes more energy and resources but produces less food. According to Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2018), industrial food systems require 70% of resources and produce only 30% of global food production; whereas smallholder systems are more efficient, using 30% of resources and yield 70% of the world's food. Today, food systems drive environmental degradation and biodiversity loss, and are responsible for 37% of greenhouse gas emissions (Stockholm Environment Institute, 2020). To avoid scarcity of natural resources and threatening future food security, food systems must adhere to sustainable, ecological and inclusive principles.



*Note: Global and local global food production. Industrial food systems require 70% of resources and produce only 30% of global food production; whereas smallholder systems are more efficient, using 30% of resources and yield 70% of the world's food.*

*Source: Adapted from Ellen MacArthur Foundation (2018)*

In Asia, the agricultural sector is dominated by family farmers (85%), who are typically poor, marginalized, remote and underserved. The low production value, as compared to Europe, is compounded with limited access to modern farming technology, services and information. [SEI Research](#) has shown that a large proportion of women participate as producers, laborers traders, processors, retailers, or consumers. Nonetheless, they do not have equal access to farm inputs, resources, services and opportunities as men. As a result, they are prone to a higher risk of poverty and more vulnerable to climate uncertainties, which economic empowerment in Asian agriculture does not necessarily link to gender equality.

In Europe, family farms are also by far the most common type, although the European food system has undergone major changes in the past century (Eurostat, 2016). The transformation from local to global food systems has shifted toward large scale agro-food processing, which amplifies the challenges of future food security and environmental impact due to its unsustainable practices such as intensification and concentration of food production. Additionally, farming continues to be a predominantly rural profession in Europe, where female farmers have significantly less access to the capital and resources, and 70% of farms are managed by men. Further, women farmers are likely to tend farms that are approximately 7 hectares smaller than male-managed farms.

### Family Farmers as backbone to Sustainable Agriculture



Utilisation of Agricultural Areas by Family Farmers in Asia & Europe



*Note: Agricultural areas charactered by family farmers in Asia and Europe.*

*Source: Adapted from FAO (2014)*

In rural areas, issues of poverty and food security are interrelated, with around 821 million people reported to be food-insecure worldwide. These people are also vulnerable to climate change which may force farmers to migrate out of their farmlands, exacerbating inequality of food access. Marginalized communities are most affected in all dimensions of food security: availability, access, utilization and stability.

To alleviate poverty and food insecurity, it is critical to support family and smallholder farmers, their localised production systems and higher resilience contributes to sustainable development across social, economic, and environmental outcomes. Family farmers have the potential to promote social equity and community well-being by creating higher levels of social engagement that is adapted to local culture, while avoiding static gender roles and social stigma. Family farms and smallholders also generate employment and income growth, especially in the rural areas, which leads to poverty reduction. Additionally, they can uphold nutritional diversity, while supporting sustainable resource use. These benefits of family farming could strengthen the food value chain and future food security.

In pursuing inclusive and sustainable food value chains, there is the essential need for collaborative support from stakeholders to identify the current issues and the way forward. Sustainable production and consumption encompass several elements including sustainable production practices, investment in consumer behavioural change and localisation of food systems through circular agriculture approaches. This way, farmers can diversify income sources and reduce their costs of cultivation, helping address both poverty and food waste. Therefore, family farmers and small-holding farmers are powerful agents of change in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 12.

Developing food systems that promote this kind of farming is needed to achieve key goals in the 2030 Agenda:

<p><b>1</b> NO POVERTY</p> 	<p><b>NO POVERTY</b> Improved <b>livelihoods</b> among family farmers flow to wider communities and beyond the agriculture sector where they create opportunities to reduce poverty</p>
<p><b>2</b> ZERO HUNGER</p> 	<p><b>ZERO HUNGER</b> Family farmers play a major role in <b>promoting healthy nutrition, prioritizing sustainable food production systems and maintaining agricultural biodiversity</b></p>
<p><b>5</b> GENDER EQUALITY</p> 	<p><b>GENDER EQUALITY</b> By addressing the gender-based inequalities faced by women farmers, <b>more inclusive</b> and sustainable growth can be achieved</p>
<p><b>6</b> CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</p> 	<p><b>CLEAN WATER &amp; SANITATION   LIFE ON LAND</b> Family farmers in rural communities have local knowledge on how to <b>responsibly use and manage natural resources</b></p>
<p><b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p> 	<p><b>DECENT WORK &amp; ECONOMIC GROWTH   REDUCED INEQUALITIES</b> Given its labour intensive nature, family farms can be a <b>source of livelihood and employment</b> for people living in rural communities</p>
<p><b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p> 	<p><b>SUSTAINABLE CITIES &amp; COMMUNITIES</b> There is a significant <b>nutritional and local economic benefits of creating stronger links</b> between growing cities with family farmers operating in surrounding rural areas</p>
<p><b>12</b> RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p> 	<p><b>RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION &amp; PRODUCTION</b> Family farmers play a crucial role in achieving <b>resilient food system</b> by encouraging sustainable consumption and production patterns</p>
<p><b>13</b> CLIMATE ACTION</p> 	<p><b>CLIMATE ACTION</b> Family farming systems, which often <b>employs sustainable agricultural techniques</b>, can be part of the solution to reducing emissions coming from food production systems</p>
<p><b>17</b> PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</p> 	<p><b>PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS</b> By recognising their skill, knowledge, and voice, family farmers can act as <b>agents of change</b> to foster collaboration and inclusion in policy development</p>



*Note: The contribution of family farmers to SDGs.  
Source: Adapted from FAO (2019)*

Here, we are inviting participants and colleagues at the ENV Forum to provide their valuable perspectives toward the four-themed questions on policy development of sustainable food consumption and production:

<p><b>WHAT DO WE WANT TO KEEP?</b></p> <p>What are working well regarding the current policy, regulation, practice, and institution?</p> <p>What are good examples that should be cultivated to promote the inclusion of smallholder famers in food value chains?</p>	<p><b>WHAT DO WE WANT TO FORGET?</b></p> <p>What are the factors hindering the inclusion of smallholder farmers in food value chains regarding the aspects of policy, regulation, practice and institution?</p>
<p><b>WHAT CAN WE IMPROVE?</b></p> <p>What are the things that work and can be easily adapted and modified to be better aligned with the concept of equitable, effective and sustainable value chain?</p>	<p><b>WHAT CAN BE FURTHER DEVELOPED</b></p> <p>What could be the next steps to improve the situation?</p>

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