

**STATEMENT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL**  
**INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAW ORGANIZATION**  
**WORLD FOOD DAY**

**16 October 2021**

On World Food Day, the International Development Law Organization joins the international community in calling for action for better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life for all.

This year's World Food Day is marked for a second time while countries around the world are responding to and recovering from the widespread effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

Profound inequalities and injustices continue to exist globally, and today's agri-food systems are being further exposed to the compounded effects of health and economic crises, climate change and the loss of biodiversity, disproportionately affecting the rural poor, reducing women's access to nutritious food and sources of income, and exacerbating the vulnerabilities of individuals at the margins of our societies.

Building inclusive food systems is a monumental task. The rule of law – through its principles of accountability, transparency, equality and non-discrimination, anchored in international human rights standards, and its commitment to building strong, effective and participatory institutions – provides a crucial framework for food systems transformation.

There is an urgent need to prioritize the development of fair and effective legislation to reshape food systems, to ensure access to affordable, safe and nutritious food for all, especially the most vulnerable, while protecting the environment. At the same time, a strong focus is required on developing more accountable institutions and practically empowering people and communities to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food.

Guided by the 2030 Agenda, particularly Sustainable Development Goal 16, IDLO works at local, national and international levels to advance the progressive realization of the right to adequate food. With governments, we help build credible, participatory, accountable and transparent institutions. We also empower individuals and communities to claim their rights.

In collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, we are helping Uganda and Honduras protect the right to adequate food in national responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. Through a people-centered approach, IDLO works at the individual and institutional levels, from listening to the most vulnerable and food insecure, including women and girls, to providing strategic advice on policy and legislative reforms.

We are also working with the World Health Organization on a program to strengthen the enabling environment for evidence-informed, coherent and equitable public policies and interventions. We convene multi-stakeholder dialogues and collaboration between civil society, academia, and government stakeholders, mainstreaming human rights-based approaches for more sustainable and nutritious food systems.

On World Food Day, the International Development Law Organization remains committed to fighting hunger and malnutrition by putting people at the center and leveraging the rule of law and justice to advance the right to adequate food.

*The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) enables governments and empowers people to reform laws and strengthen institutions to promote peace, justice, sustainable development and economic opportunity.*