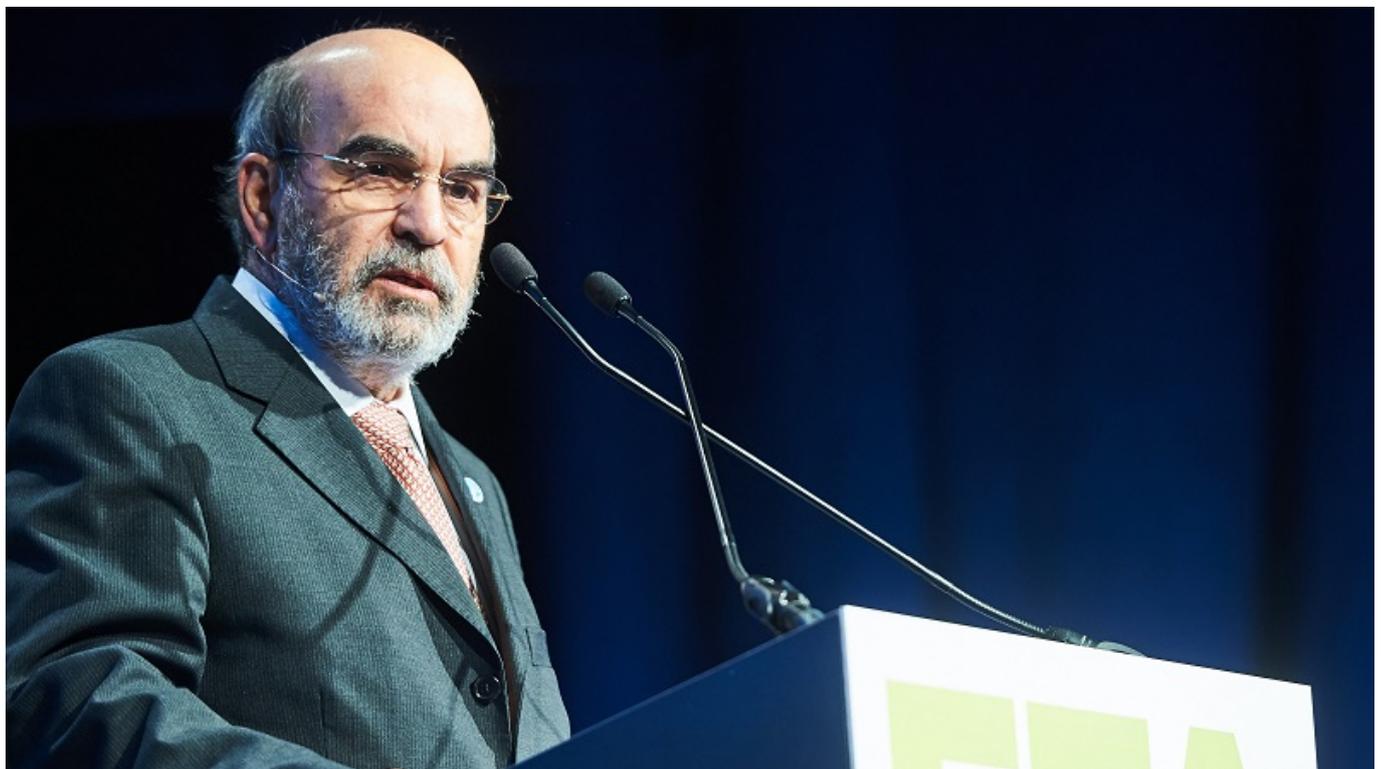


FFA2016: New green revolution key to tackling world hunger

Written by Brian Johnson on 23 March 2016 in Feature
Feature

Reforming global food system an issue of survival, says UN agriculture chief.



Hundreds of millions of people will continue to go hungry and remain trapped in poverty unless the international community implements fundamental changes to the global food system.

This was the stark warning delivered to participants at the ninth Forum for the Future of Agriculture in Brussels, on Tuesday by the Director General of the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation, José Graziano da Silva.

In a speech focussing on transforming the current global agricultural model, Graziano da Silva argued that if new UN objectives aimed at eradicating hunger and poverty were to be more than just aspirational, then stronger collaboration on a wider range of issues than those normally associated with agri-food production were needed.

"We must not only look at the production side of agriculture, but at the whole value chain and consider completely reforming our food system," he said.

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Graziano da Silva argued that only by introducing better governance, new and innovative working methods and breaking free from traditional policymaking silos could governments hope to achieve the objectives set out in the UN's new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

"We must bring the private and public sectors together; we must make sure that ministers of agriculture talk to ministers of health and also to ministers covering other areas like education. Nutrition for example shouldn't just be the sole responsibility of health ministers."

He said that it was also crucial to ensure that ministers don't just "get together to fight over budgets", but can come together, "to find innovative solutions for complex development problems."

Graziano da Silva said it was time for policymakers to introduce new, restructured less sector-specific governance models that were better attuned to modern and innovative ways of working and financing.

"Old fashioned silos will not help us manage the SDGs", he said.

He added that that action should be targeted at so called 'family farmers', who despite producing over half the world's food don't grow enough themselves to escape hunger or poverty.

"It is essential to invest and create new products, technologies, processes and friendlier business models to support them, improve their resilience and enable them to produce more in a sustainable way," he said.

"There are so many new technologies available, but most family farms are still using traditional systems. They need all the tools available. We need a new green revolution to face the impact of climate change."

"It's an issue of survival".

About the author

Brian Johnson is the Managing Editor of the Parliament Magazine

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