

**From:** Regine Andersen <[randersen@fni.no](mailto:randersen@fni.no)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 5, 2023 7:29:12 pm  
**To:** Rengalakshmi-MSSRF <[rengalakshmi@mssrf.res.in](mailto:rengalakshmi@mssrf.res.in)>  
**Subject:** Condolence to Dr. Soumya Swaminathan and the MSSRF

Dear Rengalakshmi,  
Could you please pass this e-mail on to Dr. Soumya Swaminathan. Thank you very much.  
All the best,  
Regine

Dear Dr. Soumya Swaminathan,  
It was with great sadness that we received the message that Prof. MS Swaminathan has passed away. He has meant so much to so many, and not least to the struggle for farmers' rights related to crop genetic resources internationally and in India. He was on the top of FAO when the issue of Farmers' Rights came up in the 1980's and helped facilitate the important Keystone Dialogues which provided the foundation for the international understanding of farmers' rights ever since. And he was instrumental in developing the Indian legislation on farmers' rights which stands out as the most advanced legislation in this regard globally.

But Prof. MS Swaminathan has also inspired many individuals across the world, including myself. He made a great impression on me when I met him the first time in Chiang Mai, Thailand, at a conference in 2002. Here he gave some very inspiring and thought-provoking comments to a presentation of mine, and in our conversation afterwards, I asked him what he would suggest should be my next topic to focus on after my PhD. He suggested very convincingly 'farmers' rights to crop genetic resources'. So that is what I did. In 2005 the FNI established a long-term project on Farmers' Rights 2005 – 2012, and we have followed up with other projects and activities since then. Some of this is presented [here](#) and also illustrated by our website [www.farmersrights.org](http://www.farmersrights.org). We are deeply grateful to Prof. MS Swaminathan for his inspiration and support.

We feel confident that the legacy of Prof. MS Swaminathan will be carried on, not least through the MSSRF, but also through all the people he has inspired around the world. As we understand, he was happy about the project idea of DIVERSIFARM-India, that we are currently developing together, the MSSRF, NBPGR and the Fridtjof Nansen Institute. As he will not be able to follow the new project, it is our hope that we will be able to honour Prof. MS Swaminathan with DIVERSIFARM-India.

On behalf of the Fridtjof Nansen Institute,  
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