

Progress in accelerating global actions for a world without poverty and implementation of the System-wide Plan of Action for the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018-2027): FAO, June 2019

Reducing rural poverty has been recognized as one of the five objectives of FAO's Strategic Framework. The Programme on Rural Poverty Reduction (SP3)^{1,2} prioritizes four core areas of work, aligned with the Action Plan, including:

1. Strengthening rural organizations and institutions and facilitate collective action of the rural poor, develop strategies, policies, guidelines and programmes to improve the rural poor's access to and control over services, finance, knowledge, technologies, markets, and natural resources, including in the context of climate change, and provide policy support, capacity development and knowledge generation to accelerate gender equality and rural women's economic empowerment;
2. Enhancing decent rural employment opportunities, entrepreneurship and skills development, especially for youth and women and strengthen the application of International Labour Standards in rural areas to improve job quality and safety, especially with respect to child labour and forced labour through policy support and capacity development;
3. Providing policy support, knowledge generation, capacity development, and advocacy to expand coverage of social protection to the rural poor, including in fragile and humanitarian contexts and to enhance synergies amongst social protection, nutrition, agriculture and natural resources management, Including climate change;
4. Strengthening national capacities to design and implement comprehensive, gender equitable, multi-sectoral rural poverty reduction policies, strategies and programmes, including in the context of migration and climate change and to provide data, knowledge and tools to promote, evaluate and monitor progress on them.

Furthermore, since 2018, FAO has committed to stepping up its efforts in the global fight to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030, as the majority of the extreme poor still live in rural areas, are most vulnerable to food price volatility, and most depend - at least partially - on agricultural activities and access to natural resources and biodiversity for their food security and their livelihoods. FAO has developed a Corporate Framework on Rural Extreme Poverty, helping to raise awareness across the Organization and amongst key external partners on the importance of supporting governments in meeting Target 1.1. As part of the preparation of the Framework on Extreme Poverty, FAO launched a report on Ending Extreme Poverty in Rural Areas!, building on existent evidence on rural poverty reduction and identifying research gaps. The report builds a narrative on the interlinkages between extreme poverty with hunger, family farming, migration, climate change and conflict, as well as reinforces FAO's Theory of Change on reducing rural poverty.

FAO's contribution to the Plan's action areas:

1. Action area (a): Structural transformation, productive employment and decent work in the contexts of a changing global scenario

Being central to its mission, FAO actively promotes decent rural employment (DRE) at global, regional and country level. FAO plays a crucial role in promoting productive employment and decent work in rural areas, especially with respect to employment in agriculture, livestock, forestry, fisheries, natural resources management, as well as in nonfarm occupations in agri-food value chains. In particular, FAO proactively supports countries in the development of policies and programmes to generate more decent farm and non-farm employment opportunities, promoting employment enhancing and responsible Investments in agriculture and food systems, FAO also works to improve working conditions and foster the application of labour standards in rural settings, as these are among the main factors

¹ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-iG835e.pdf>

² <http://www.fao.org/reduce-rural-poverty/resources/resources-detail/en/c/1157795/>

that undermine the wellbeing and productive potential of rural populations.

As an example, in 2018, In collaboration with the Government of Rwanda and the African Union Commission, FAO organized the two-day regional conference *Youth Employment In Agriculture as a Solid Solution to ending Hunger and Poverty In Africa Engaging through Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Entrepreneurship*, bringing together 465 participants. Field in Kigali on 20-21 August 2018, FAO and its partners, including ILO, UNIDO, CIA and CABI, engaged over 200 young entrepreneurs from across Africa to identify Innovative solutions to challenges in food and agriculture. The recommendations emphasised the enhancement of platforms for youth to share information and knowledge, supporting the establishment of national platforms for greater youth involvement in policy dialogues, and to strengthen mentorship programmes and incubation centres for youth. In Uganda, FAO raised the awareness and developed the capacity of key stakeholders on occupational safety and health In agriculture. In particular protecting children and young workers from pesticide exposure. Among several other awareness raising activities, over 1,700 copies of the *Facilitator's visual guide: Protect children from pesticides* were distributed across the country to help local extension workers engage with rural communities on the subject, FAO's new Corporate Framework on Migration recognizes that migration can be an engine of inclusive economic growth and innovation, and it can greatly contribute to sustainable development and the reduction of poverty as well as inequalities both within and between countries. FAO acknowledges that, migration is part of the evolution of societies and of the process of economic, social and human development and structural and agricultural transformation, FAO focuses on rural migration, from, to and between rural areas, regardless of the duration, direction or causes of the movement. FAO pays attention to both International and internal migration, recognizing that migration within countries is significantly larger than international migration, as countries experience a transition from predominately rural to increasingly urban societies. People who move internally also have a higher likelihood of moving internationally compared to those who have never moved. Policies should aim to maximize the benefits of migration, while minimizing the costs to migrants and societies, in order to make migration work for all.

FAO works in four main thematic areas along the migration cycle:

1. At the pre-decision phase, FAO works in rural areas of origin to minimize the adverse drivers of migration and boost alternatives in order to make migration a choice.
 2. Throughout the migration cycle, FAO works to facilitate rural mobility and ensure people can move regularly and safely between rural and urban areas as well as across international borders.
 3. When the migratory movement (across international borders or within countries) has taken place, FAO works to enhance the positive impacts of migration for agriculture and rural communities,
 4. In transit and destination areas, FAO works to promote resilience and agricultural livelihoods for migrants and host communities.
- 2, Action Area (b): Expanding social protection systems to underpin inclusive poverty-reducing development

FAO continues its commitment to maximizing the impact of social protection by building and strengthening nationally owned social protection systems that are Integrated in broader livelihood promotion and rural development strategies. Leveraging on complementarities, synergies, and areas for cooperation, efforts are being made across regions, crosscutting through many areas of work, combining expertise of several technical divisions and building towards a multi sectoral approach. Specific social protection synergies with food security, natural resource management and resilience work are being scaled up. FAO continues to work around 3 core areas: expansion of coverage of social protection to rural areas, enhancing synergies between social protection agriculture and FSN, and social protection and resilience.

FAO is committed to support governments in (i) the scale and effective reach of social protection systems In rural areas, as well as to (ii) support the progressive integration of social protection into broader economic development processes.

Closely linked with the Plan's Action areas and deliverables, FAO is part of the Global Partnership for Universal Social Protection, as well as an active member of the Social protection Inter-Agency Coordination Board (SPIAC-B), supporting coordinated support to scale-up social protection. In this context, FAO, has been supporting governments in:

- Building the investment and economic case for scaling-up social protection systems. FAO continues to work with partners to develop solid evidence on the economic and productive impacts of social assistance and the multiplier effects it creates, This evidence has been widely used to support and enhance policy at country level, while addressing myths surrounding social assistance, FAO supports the promotive function of social protection, including economic and productive inclusion. Example of this work is clear in Zambia, Lesotho and Kenya, among others.
- Enhancing the visibility of those living in rural areas and the need to adjust the design of SP programmes to better address the multiple vulnerabilities they face (in development and fragile contexts), while ensuring adequate coverage. This Includes for Instance, the development and recent launch of a tool-kit on gender sensitive design and implementation of social protection programmes in rural areas. This tool-kit was presented in a side event during the 2019 Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).
- Promoting evidence based policy and programmatic coherence between social protection and economic programmes, including agriculture and natural resources management to support the move from subsistence to sustainable and productive livelihoods, Key processes include the the development Regional Inter-sectoral Agenda for Social Protection and Productive Inclusion of the Central American System Integration, and now is working with government to develop national implementation plans based on this agenda; as well as specific country support to Colombia, Paraguay, Senegal, Rwanda, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, and Armenia among others.
- FAO also supports the strengthening of government and local level capacity on the design and scale up of social protection programmes in rural areas, including cash transfers, home grown school feeding programmes, among others. Specific support is being provided in Senegal, Zambia, Kyrgyzstan, Ethiopia and Armenia.

Action area (d): The future of food and sustainable agriculture

Multi sectoral approach and poverty analysis: The Organization promotes an approach that addresses the potential trade-offs that come when simultaneously facing the challenges of poverty reduction, sustainable food and agriculture (e.g. as a response to climate change) and migration, FAO's approach for reducing rural poverty and eradicating extreme poverty in rural areas not only recognizes the interlinkages between different development goals, but also the lack of programmatic approaches and strategies across sectors and different levels of government.

In light of this, and given poverty's multidimensional aspect, FAO provides assistance to countries in developing and implementing broad-based multi-sectoral approaches that include options for the multiple pathways out of poverty: making special emphasis in the need of a theory of change for poverty reduction within the context of rural transformation; enhancing countries' capacities to reach all vulnerable groups in rural areas, including the poorest, rural women, indigenous people and youth, in addition to small scale producers; and considering the broader linkages between poverty reduction and sustainable development.

A major challenge in policy development is the lack of available data on poverty and the nature of rural livelihoods in rural areas. To fill this gap, FAO, together with IFAD and the World Bank's LSMS-ISA team, has developed the Rural Livelihoods Information System (RuLiS) to provide policy-makers with evidence to more effectively formulate differentiated policies and monitor indicators related to SDG1 and SDG2. This initiative will support countries' efforts to better understand the challenges of rural poverty as well as enhance poverty measurement and assessments.

Since 2017, FAO has partnered with the World Bank and IFAD in a Joint Initiative for Focusing Agricultural and Rural Development Research and Investment on Achieving SDGs 1 and 2 which aims to strengthen and raise the profile of research and data to support pro-poor investments in agriculture and rural areas within the partner agencies, as well as amongst policy-makers, civil society and the private sector.

FAO has also signed an agreement with Oxford's Human Development Project (OPHI) to strengthen multidimensional measurement of poverty for rural areas, as well as partnered with the International Policy Center for Inclusive Growth (IPC) to develop a Policy in Focus publication around Rural Poverty Reduction³ highlighting key elements to support the eradication of poverty in rural areas.

Access to services for the rural poor: With the aim of reducing rural poverty, FAO works on improving the rural poor's access to and control over a set of enablers (services, finance, knowledge, technologies, markets and natural resources), including in the context of climate change. FAO promotes investments in agriculture and supports the design of pro-poor development strategies and structural constraints faced by poor households in rural areas. This includes improving rural people's access to, control over, and sustainable management of natural resources as well as access to rural advisory and extension services, markets, technologies and inclusive finance, particularly for women and youth. Moreover, FAO helps countries empower the rural poor and strengthen rural organizations to improve their productivity and participation in national and local decision-making processes. For Instance, FAO also promotes farmer-to-farmer exchanges among organized small-scale producers and communities as a South-South Cooperation strategy to reduce rural poverty. By sharing knowledge on sustainable agricultural practices, farmer-to-farmer exchanges put rural people back in the driver's seat, strengthening their organizational capacities, improving management of natural resources, and increasing rural people's capacity to adapt to climate change.

As examples, FAO facilitated participatory policy dialogues on reaching the most vulnerable and poor communities. This served the formulation of pro-poor national investment plans on water in Madagascar, Mali, Niger, and Rwanda; while the review of the legal and institutional framework in Granada advised the establishment of a land bank for agriculture, FAO has also provided support on the formulation of new national projects in Guinea, Central African Republic, and China to encourage more and better investments In increasing access to services, markets and natural resources for poor and vulnerable people.

On the ground, the FAO Action on "Poverty Reduction through Agricultural Development" in Sri-Lanka reached nearly 50,000 vulnerable producers (not qualifying for formal credit). This is a successful story on increasing income and Improving livelihood through greater access to productive Infrastructure and services. Similarly, in Kenya the project on *Increasing Smallholder Productivity and Profitability Project (tSPP)* supported 39 703 farmers (81 percent female) to improve their livelihood through greater access to services and markets, the uptake of technology and management practices, and improved value chains. In Europe and Central Asia, FAO established a regional knowledge-sharing platform on Innovations for smallholders and family farms to promote their empowerment for improved rural livelihoods and poverty reduction (REU Regional initiative 1). In Asia and the Pacific, FAO promoted the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to address some of the agricultural challenges faced in 2018, In collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union and other national partners, this work resulted In supporting the development of national e-agriculture strategies (Pakistan, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, and Fiji).

Action area e) Reducing inequalities

FAO supports Member states in achieving SDG10, particularly In rural areas, FAO actively participates in the Expert Groups Meeting (EGM) on SDG 10, in preparation for the July 2019 session of the UN High level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). FAO also participated in the In the ECOSOC Interactive dialogue with senior officials of the UN Systems on the priority theme "Addressing Inequalities and challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies" (focusing in SDG 10.4). A number of policies, frameworks and technical areas foster a strong focus on reducing inequalities in FAO's work, particularly in rural areas and across different thematic areas, including:

³ <http://www.ipc-iindp.org/pub/ene/PIF44> Rural poverty reduction in the 21st century.pdf.

- Implementing FAO's Gender Policy, which includes generating and communicating evidence and sex-disaggregated data; developing gender equality norms and standards for agricultural policies and programmes; ensuring that gender analysis is incorporated in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of all field programmes and projects; ensuring that none of FAO's efforts perpetuate gender inequality or worsen discrimination against women; amongst other actions.
- Implementation of the FAO Corporate Framework on Social Protection, which presents the Organization's vision and approach to social protection. FAO recognizes the critical role social protection plays in furthering and accelerating progress around food security and nutrition (FSN), agriculture development, rural poverty and resilience building.
- Implementation of FAO Policy on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples through enhancing the capacity of governments to engage with indigenous peoples at the national and international level in pursuance of their rights and visions of development, and through integrating indigenous peoples' issues into those normative and operational areas of its work that affect or support indigenous peoples and their traditional agriculture, food and livelihood systems, amongst other actions.
- Implementing FAO Corporate Framework on Extreme Poverty, and also, the overall work of the Strategic Programme on Reducing Rural Poverty (SP3) which aims to foster the economic and social inclusion of the extreme poor in rural areas and other vulnerable population groups, including migrants and indigenous people. One fundamental area is the expansion of social protection programmes in rural areas, as well as combining social protection with the generation of economic opportunities through comprehensive and dedicated programmes.
- Integrated policies to support family farming: different action to increase productivity and market access and market creation, including the establishment of farmer registries, dedicated extension and rural advisory services, access to credit, strengthening producer organizations, as well as providing support to comprehensive land reforms and land registration,
- Strengthening the governance of natural resources and investment decisions, supporting governments in the application of globally recognized instruments such as the Voluntary Guidelines for the Responsible Tenure of Land, Forests and Fisheries, and the Responsible Investment in Agriculture principles. These global instruments include aspects of enhancing consultation and participatory processes at community and territorial levels geared towards leaving "no one behind".
- Strengthening policy coherence and multisectoral coordination for effectively reducing rural poverty and eradicating hunger, including actions to increase policy coherence between food security, nutrition, social protection and agriculture and the Implementing territorial development and landscape approaches to decrease Inequalities between urban and rural areas, enhance the sustainable use of resources and boost synergies between rural areas and cities.

Gender equality: With the aim of reducing rural poverty, FAO works on accelerating gender equality and rural women's economic empowerment. It supports Member states with policy advice, technical support, capacity development and knowledge generation.

FAO's Policy on Gender Equality prioritizes the equal participation and decision-making of women and men in rural Institutions and in shaping laws, policies and programmes; the equal access to and control over productive resources, services, income, markets and decent employment; and the reduction of women's work burden. FAO contributes to;

- Generating evidence for policy planning, through the analysis of sex- and age-disaggregated data;
- Enhancing the national capacities to design and implement food and agriculture policies and programmes that fully take into account the capacities, needs and aspirations of rural women;
- Promoting responsible governance and management of productive and natural resources that reflect the perspectives and priorities of both men and women, and are grounded in equitable and efficient local institutions; while increasing women's participation in local institutions as possible entry points for service delivery;

- Ensuring equal access of female and male farmers to productive resources and services, climate- smart and labour-saving technologies and practices, and Investment in rural infrastructure;
- Developing gender-sensitive value chains to enhance the full productive potential of women and youth in agri-food systems, while increasing their access to higher-value, more remunerative markets and decent employment opportunities; and
- Supporting the formulation of gender-responsive policies to prepare for and respond to shocks and crises such as risk-informed and shock-responsive social protection; ensuring diverse livelihoods and asset accumulation; and protection for the most vulnerable men and women

FAO was also an active participant of the 2019 UN Commission on the Status of Women, reaffirming the importance of ensuring access to social protection systems, public services and sustainable infrastructure for women and girls as key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Moreover, FAO continues its collaboration with IFPRI to develop the project-level Women's Empowerment In Agriculture (pro-WEAI) - a new tool for measuring and assessing the impact of agricultural development projects on women's empowerment in agriculture. FAO is applying the pro- WEAI in Ethiopia to evaluate the impact of the UN Joint Programme on, "Accelerating progress towards the economic empowerment of rural women (UNJP RWEE)" implemented by FAO, IFAD, WFP, and UN Women, to analyze impacts of the programme on food security and poverty reduction. In addition, the work on multidimensional poverty-a new collaboration with OPHI - will include sex-disaggregated indicators, aimed to inform the different ways in which rural men and women experience poverty.

Action area f) Addressing climate and intensification of natural hazards

Regarding the poverty-climate change nexus, FAO is well advanced in articulating the key interactions and their broader policy implications, including around social protection, migration, climate resilience and youth employment.

As examples, FAO, with other international partners (World Bank and CGIAR, Saint Mary's University) developed a theory of change on the nexus of poverty reduction and climate action in the context of coastal communities, coastal areas and Small Island Development States, Additional work was carried out to build evidence on the climate change and poverty reduction nexus in Cambodia, Viet Nam and Bangladesh). FAO is supporting the active consideration of the dimension of poverty reduction within its GEF and GCF programming, and is supporting countries in stronger consideration of the climate change- poverty nexus within NDCs and NAIPs. In addition, FAO and the Climate Center of the Red Cross and the Overseas Development Institute developed a study, operational guidance, interactive tool and capacity development materials on the role of social protection in climate-related risks, including climate change.

FAO is currently supporting the Implementation of such frameworks at regional level, including in the Caribbean, and in the ASEAN community.

Action area (g) Fighting Poverty in fragile and humanitarian contexts

FAO works across sectors and across different contexts, including fragility, humanitarian emergencies, forced displacement and post-conflict reconstruction. The 2017 and 2018 State of Food and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) discussed that hunger appears to be on the rise, and that most profound and worrying increases were precisely in contexts affected by conflict, compounded by climate-related emergencies. Moreover, FAO's Extreme Poverty Framework highlighted the most of the extreme poor live in contexts of fragility, due to climate or conflict-related risks.

FAO's work on rural poverty reduction acknowledges the need to integrate risk-sensitive programming; while humanitarian action requires contemplating chronic poverty and exclusion to reach those furthest behind. FAO is increasingly integrating its programme of work under the Strategic Framework along the humanitarian-development-peace nexus by directly addressing risk and welfare. From a rural poverty perspective, this nexus perspective is applied

in FAO's work on social protection, gender, migration, climate change among other.

As examples, FAO is a leading actor of the Global Network against Food Crises, established to combat food crises from humanitarian and development perspectives and tackle its root causes. This partnership aims to promote an enhanced coordination among stakeholders through consensus on analyses and coherent projects implementation. The Network held its first High Level meeting in early April, including specific sessions and discussions on the social and economic drivers of food crises, reinforcing the important need to invest in prevention and resilience building of the poorest and most vulnerable. FAO continues to working in enhancing its understanding on the different sources of vulnerability and thus support the design of integrated approaches for poverty reduction and resilience building.

FAO is part of the Grand Bargain working group on cash and social protection, while works in close partnership with WFP, UNICEF, DFID, EU and the World Bank in the development of a common framework on the role of social protection in protracted crises and in fragile and humanitarian contexts^A. Moreover, following the Peace Agreement in Colombia, FAO supported the implementation its Comprehensive Rural Reform, which involved the development of multisectoral territorial development plans in 16 post-conflict territories. Moreover, FAO is also supporting to ensure access to livelihood opportunities for host communities and refugees in the context of the Syria Crises, while addressing the social and economic drivers of fragility investing the social protection, youth employment, access to services, land management, among other.