



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



OUR PRIORITIES

The Strategic Objectives of FAO

Required citation:

FAO. 2019. Our priorities – The Strategic Objectives of FAO. Rome. 28 pp. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this information product do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) concerning the legal or development status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The mention of specific companies or products of manufacturers, whether or not these have been patented, does not imply that these have been endorsed or recommended by FAO in preference to others of a similar nature that are not mentioned.

The views expressed in this information product are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of FAO.

© FAO, 2019



Some rights reserved. This work is made available under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 3.0 IGO licence (CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO; <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/igo/legalcode/legalcode>).

Under the terms of this licence, this work may be copied, redistributed and adapted for non-commercial purposes, provided that the work is appropriately cited. In any use of this work, there should be no suggestion that FAO endorses any specific organization, products or services. The use of the FAO logo is not permitted. If the work is adapted, then it must be licensed under the same or equivalent Creative Commons licence. If a translation of this work is created, it must include the following disclaimer along with the required citation: "This translation was not created by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). FAO is not responsible for the content or accuracy of this translation. The original [Language] edition shall be the authoritative edition."

Disputes arising under the licence that cannot be settled amicably will be resolved by mediation and arbitration as described in Article 8 of the licence except as otherwise provided herein. The applicable mediation rules will be the mediation rules of the World Intellectual Property Organization <http://www.wipo.int/amc/en/mediation/rules> and any arbitration will be conducted in accordance with the Arbitration Rules of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL).

Third-party materials. Users wishing to reuse material from this work that is attributed to a third party, such as tables, figures or images, are responsible for determining whether permission is needed for that reuse and for obtaining permission from the copyright holder. The risk of claims resulting from infringement of any third-party-owned component in the work rests solely with the user.

Sales, rights and licensing. FAO information products are available on the FAO website (www.fao.org/publications) and can be purchased through publications-sales@fao.org. Requests for commercial use should be submitted via: www.fao.org/contact-us/licence-request. Queries regarding rights and licensing should be submitted to: copyright@fao.org.

This publication has been printed using selected products and processes so as to ensure minimal environmental impact and to promote sustainable forest management.

Cover photo: ©FAO/Peter DiCampo

OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Today, member states face an increasing number of demands and challenges in agricultural development. To support them, FAO has identified five key priorities on which it is best placed to intervene. These priorities, or **Strategic Objectives**, represent our main areas of work to achieve our vision of a

world free from hunger and malnutrition, where food and agriculture help to improve the living standards of all, especially the poorest, in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner – contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



**HELP ELIMINATE HUNGER,
FOOD INSECURITY AND MALNUTRITION**



**MAKE AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES
MORE PRODUCTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE**



REDUCE RURAL POVERTY



**ENABLE INCLUSIVE AND EFFICIENT
AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD SYSTEMS**



**INCREASE THE RESILIENCE OF LIVELIHOODS
TO THREATS AND CRISES**

For more information on the overarching strategic direction of FAO, see the Reviewed Strategic Framework 2010-19.

THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK OF FAO

To help accomplish our Strategic Objectives, FAO works through five **Strategic Programmes** leveraging our **core functions** to achieve concrete results. The Organization's **technical knowledge and expertise** underpins everything we do, while fully integrating our **cross-cutting themes** of gender, governance, nutrition and climate change impacts in all aspects of our work.

Gender

We aim to close the gender gap in agriculture, thereby generating significant gains for the agricultural sector and helping to reduce hunger, malnutrition and poverty.

Governance

We aim to strengthen interactions between stakeholders and make participation in the improvement of governance a widely shared, mutual learning process.

Climate change

We aim to help agricultural sectors respond to the challenges posed by climate change, in order ensure sustainable development.

Nutrition

We aim to eliminate malnutrition in all its forms, as a basis for good health and social and economic development.

Strategic Programme 5
**INCREASE THE RESILIENCE
OF LIVELIHOODS TO THREATS
AND CRISES**
Pages 22-23-24-25

Strategic Programme 4
**ENABLE INCLUSIVE
AND EFFICIENT AGRICULTURAL
AND FOOD SYSTEMS**
Pages 18-19-20-21

OBJECTIVE 6 – cutting across the Strategic Objectives
Pages 26-27

TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP

FAO ensures its technical excellence through quality control by technical divisions, support to corporate networks and the delivery of expertise to corporate programmes. The capacity to identify and respond to emerging challenges through technical committees, and making our expertise available through high-quality publications, is equally important in promoting our technical leadership.



FOOD and AGRICULTURE in the 2030 AGENDA

Food and agriculture cut across all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and lie at the very heart of the 2030 Agenda. With an integrated approach aimed at tackling the root causes of poverty and hunger while sustainably managing natural resources, **the Strategic Framework of FAO is intrinsically aligned with the SDGs**. It is geared towards supporting countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda – ensuring that no one is left behind.

Strategic Programme 1

**HELP ELIMINATE HUNGER,
FOOD INSECURITY AND
MALNUTRITION**

Pages 6-7-8-9

Strategic Programme 2

**MAKE AGRICULTURE,
FORESTRY AND FISHERIES MORE
PRODUCTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE**

Pages 10-11-12-13

Strategic Programme 3

REDUCE RURAL POVERTY

Pages 14-15-16-17

OUR CORE FUNCTIONS

1. Facilitate and support countries in the development and implementation of normative and standard-setting instruments such as international agreements, codes of conduct, technical standards and others.
2. Assemble, analyse, monitor and improve access to data and information in areas related to the mandate of FAO.
3. Facilitate, promote and support policy dialogue at global, regional and country levels.
4. Advise and support capacity development at country and regional levels to prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate evidence-based policies, investments and programmes.
5. Advise and support activities that assemble, disseminate and improve the uptake of knowledge, technologies and good practices in the areas of our mandate.
6. Facilitate partnerships between governments, development partners, civil society and the private sector for food and nutrition security, agriculture and rural development topics.
7. Advocate and communicate at national, regional and global level on areas of our mandate.

STATISTICS

The key area of Statistics ensures the quality and integrity of the data produced and analyzed by FAO, including aspects of standardized methodologies, country statistical capacity data quality and statistical governance and coordination.

**HELP ELIMINATE
HUNGER,
FOOD INSECURITY
AND MALNUTRITION**



Hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition all pose serious threats to people's health. They are also a potential source of conflict and instability and can jeopardize social and economic progress in many ways. The 2030 Agenda has an increased the global focus on eradicating all types of malnutrition, with a clarion call to ensure sustainable agriculture works for nutrition.

After decades of steady progress in the fight against hunger, we are witnessing some backtracking: in the last two years, the number of undernourished people has risen to 821 million, taking us back to the figures registered a decade ago. Climate change, a surge in the number and complexity of conflicts in African and Near East nations and economic slowdowns are the main reasons behind the rise in hunger.

Meanwhile, other forms of malnutrition are also on the rise: almost four out of ten adults worldwide are overweight or obese – a trend which is associated with a surge in diet-related non-communicable diseases both in the developed and developing world. At the same time more than two billion people suffer from various micronutrient deficiencies.

Investments in agriculture have led to higher productivity, ensuring global food production keeps pace with a population that has more than doubled

since 1970. However, despite stronger political commitment, with countries progressively acknowledging that everyone has the right to adequate food, the latest statistics show that investments and policies have not been fully effective in fighting hunger and malnutrition and that some population groups have not been reached by these efforts.

As a specialized UN agency with a mandate to help countries in this endeavour, FAO works in partnership with governments and other development actors at global, regional and national levels. One of the main types of FAO's support relates to the development of adequate policy and institutional environments and the strengthening of countries' capacities to help them translate their political commitments into concrete action and eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

OUR WORK from theory to practice

DESIGNING POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

Commitments made by governments are reflected in the policies, investments and legislations they create. FAO supports countries in adopting or redesigning policies, strategies, laws and investment plans, within and across sectors, to sharpen their effectiveness in

addressing food insecurity and malnutrition.

FAO works with different partners – particularly economic bodies like the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union's New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) – to guide countries in outlining the need for greater policy focus and coherence across sectors to achieve better food security and nutrition. The joint FAO/EU FIRST Policy Assistance Facility, for example, (see p. 8), has revamped policy dialogue on food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture among policy makers and development partners in countries like Kenya, Ethiopia, Chad, Pakistan, Myanmar, Honduras and Guatemala.

STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION

Ridding the world of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition requires action at all levels, from consumers to producers and their organizations, as well as from civil society organizations and the private sector to governments and international organizations. FAO assists all stakeholders in enhancing their governance and coordination mechanisms at national, regional and international levels.

Through FIRST, for example, FAO has contributed to revising the

FIRST

draft statutes of the participatory council for food security and nutrition in Timor-Leste, and has supported the council in prioritizing the most relevant food security and nutrition interventions outlined in the Zero Hunger National Action Plan.

IMPROVING EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION MAKING

Targeted action to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition requires a common understanding of the root causes, but unreliable, fragmented, insufficient or non-existent information can make it difficult to reach a consensus. FAO works hand in hand with governments to collect data, feed information systems and produce relevant information products, such as The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) and its regional overviews. FAO also provides support to countries to monitor ongoing policies, programmes and investments and assess their impact on rates of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

ENHANCING GOVERNMENTS' CAPACITIES TO FINANCE POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

For countries to translate their policies and investment plans into action, increased financial and human resources dedicated to food security and nutrition are needed. FAO supports governments in assessing their financing

Since its inception in 2015, the FAO/EU FIRST Policy Assistance Facility has helped countries create an enabling environment to make investments in sustainable agriculture more effective in ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition.

Thanks to its network of policy officers embedded in the relevant ministries or departments of over 30 countries, FIRST helps governments make the most out of every euro invested.

Above all, it acts as a broker between those who want change (governments), those who are willing to support those efforts with investments (like the EU) and those who can provide their expertise and technical assistance (like FAO).

FIRST has supported countries like Niger in developing agricultural investment plans, which are aligned with the budgeting of relevant ministries to ensure steady progress towards achieving food security and nutrition. FIRST has also assisted governments in the ECOWAS region in reviewing the policies and needs of the fisheries sector (with a specific focus on the trade-offs between commercial fisheries aimed at exports and small-scale fisheries) as well as the challenges and opportunities related to developing aquaculture in the region. In Myanmar, FIRST has helped the government link nutrition-sensitive agriculture with land tenure issues. Several legal changes now support crop diversification and encourage farmers and other actors to invest in different farming activities, from fruits and vegetables to aquaculture.

By combining government efforts and priorities, EU funding and support and FAO expertise, FIRST has already made a significant contribution. Representing just 0.1% of the EU's resources for food security and nutrition, the Facility adds value with over 4 billion euros in investments.

requirements and helps them to map existing resources and increase resource mobilization. The Organization also assists countries in undertaking capacity needs assessments and developing institutional capacities for national budgeting and resource allocation

that can turn policies and plans into effective action. In 2018, FAO supported over 15 countries in developing investment plans for their sectoral strategies, integrating issues of extreme poverty, social protection and nutrition.

HUNGER, FOOD INSECURITY AND MALNUTRITION



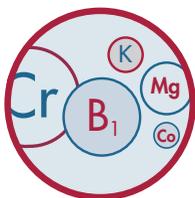
Over **800 million** people are chronically undernourished today



98% of undernourished people live in developing countries



672 million adults suffer from obesity, while **38.3 million** children under 5 are overweight



1.5 billion people are affected by one or more forms of micronutrient deficiency



150.8 million children under 5 are affected by stunting, while **50.5 million** suffer from wasting



Demand for food is projected to expand by **60%** as the global population increases to **9.7 billion** by **2050**

PARLIAMENTARIANS

The first Parliamentary Alliances and Fronts for food security and nutrition issues originated in Latin America, but thanks to FAO's support are now present worldwide. These include the Near East Regional Arab Parliamentary Union and Africa's Pan-African Parliamentary Alliance. These neutral platforms, populated by lawmakers from across the political spectrum, provide a unique opportunity for debating food security and nutrition issues beyond national politics. They also raise awareness among parliamentarians about the various legislative instruments which can be used to improve food security and nutrition.

Parliamentary Alliances and Fronts against hunger and other legislative initiatives help strengthen legal and policy frameworks at both local and global levels so as to enable a progressive realization of the right to adequate food.

In October 2018, FAO, together with the Spanish Parliament, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation and the Latin America and the Caribbean Parliamentary Front against Hunger, organized the First Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition, bringing together around 200 parliamentarians from 80 countries to discuss issues of food security and nutrition.

A green-tinted photograph showing a pair of hands. The left hand holds a long, thin, dark stem horizontally. The right hand holds a small, white, cylindrical cup. The background is filled with large, light-colored leaves, possibly from a plant like a papaya. The overall image has a soft, natural feel.

**MAKE AGRICULTURE,
FORESTRY AND FISHERIES
MORE PRODUCTIVE AND
MORE SUSTAINABLE**

Food and agriculture stand today at a crossroads. Looking back, major improvements in agricultural productivity have been recorded over recent decades to satisfy the food demand of a growing global population. But progress has often come with social and environmental costs, including water scarcity, soil degradation, ecosystem stress, biodiversity loss, decreasing fish stocks and forest cover and high levels of greenhouse gas emissions. The productive potential of our natural resources base has been damaged in many places around the globe, compromising the future of the planet.

There is compelling evidence to suggest that building more efficient and equitable agriculture and food systems and investing in rural development can accelerate achievement of goals and targets across the 2030 Agenda. An effective transition towards more integrated, sustainable agricultural production systems requires changing how sectors are governed. It entails better dialogue and policy coherence with all stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society, academia and research institutions and developing partnerships and accountability at different levels. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) makes it necessary to align and enhance investments in agriculture and to prioritize those actions that achieve measurable results on the ground.

OUR WORK from theory to practice

The ambition of the 2030 Agenda is to shift societies and economies onto a sustainable development pathway while “leaving no one behind”. Such a significant transformation can only be achieved through integrated and coherent actions, decisions and initiatives that target poverty, inequality, food insecurity and malnutrition, the degradation of natural resources and inclusive growth. This transition is being mainstreamed through supporting countries to adopt a common vision for sustainable food and agriculture and translating it into actions through the following **five interconnected principles**:

- 1 Increase productivity, employment and value addition in food systems** 
- 2 Protect and enhance natural resources** 
- 3 Improve livelihoods and foster inclusive economic growth** 
- 4 Enhance the resilience of people, communities and ecosystems** 
- 5 Adapt governance to new challenges** 

This common vision serves as a framework for more coherent and effective actions in agriculture, forestry and fisheries in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

FAO supports countries to work towards more sustainable food and agriculture by:

Supporting producers in adopting more productive, sustainable and climate-resilient practices

- Helping producers test and adopt innovations, practices and production systems that increase productivity and resilience to climate change while preserving natural resources through participatory approaches.
- Working with institutions (including farmer's organizations, extension services, local NGOs, private companies etc.) to enhance capacities to promote the adoption of more integrated, sustainable and resilient production systems.

Promoting the transition to sustainable and climate-resilient agricultural policies and governance mechanisms

- Working with countries to review and strengthen their policies, investment strategies and programmes and helping align them in support of implementing the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Climate Agreement.
- Helping countries to strengthen cross-sectoral dialogue, promoting the transition to sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture and a stronger role of agriculture, forestry and fisheries in national sustainable development.

Providing knowledge and information for evidence-based decision-making

- Gathering and sharing information and knowledge needed to support the transition to productive, sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture.

- Working with public and private institutions to strengthen capacities to collect and analyze data and produce evidence for informed decision-making on the management of natural resources across agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors.

Supporting countries in implementing policies and international treaties

- Working with public and private institutions to strengthen national capacities in developing and implementing legal and institutional frameworks and incentive mechanisms needed for the transition to sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture, forestry and fisheries.
- Supporting countries to implement international instruments and partnerships that promote productive, sustainable and climate-resilient agriculture. FAO

AREAS OF ACTION TO ENSURE PRACTICE CHANGE

In the quest for sustainable production models, FAO has led the development of cross-sectoral Global Knowledge Products, a range of tools designed to provide global solutions in sustainable agriculture through interdisciplinary participation.

These guide efforts to make agriculture, forestry and fisheries productive and more sustainable:

1. Strengthening sustainable food and agriculture (SFA) in national SDG implementation

The Progress toward Sustainable Agriculture Report is envisaged to

assist countries in improving the planning and implementation of practices, approaches, policies and governance mechanisms which contribute to more sustainable agriculture. The report, the first source of regularly-published information on trends across multiple dimensions at national, regional and global levels, will also offer an analytical approach of the main drivers of sustainable agriculture and provide case studies to present the state of sustainable agriculture worldwide.

2. Making sustainable and innovative practices and technologies work for smallholder farmers

The Global Farmer Field Schools (FFS) Platform provides tools to improve FFS quality, and where appropriate, support further inclusion of the FFS approach towards sustainable and resilient agriculture. It aims to collect, develop and analyze information that is relevant for the global community.

3. Supporting Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) implementation

The Nationally Determined Contributions implementation support facilitates information sharing dedicated to NDC implementation in the agricultural sector. The overall goal is to support member countries in their efforts to implement NDCs and achieve SDGs by enhancing their climate change capacity in the agriculture sector, implementing climate smart policies and projects.

4. Promoting agroecology and biodiversity

The Agroecology Knowledge Hub

contains tools, analytical framework, protocols and data collection methods to support informed decision-making. It assists researchers and analysts in assessing the multi-dimensional impacts of agroecology production systems, consolidating information and providing a guidance framework for reviewing policy options for agroecology. *The Biodiversity Mainstreaming Platform* facilitates adoption of good practices and policies that support biodiversity conservation and resilience of production systems, with an integrated landscape/ seascape approach that reduces pressure on natural habitats and species.

5. Advancing landscape and territorial approaches

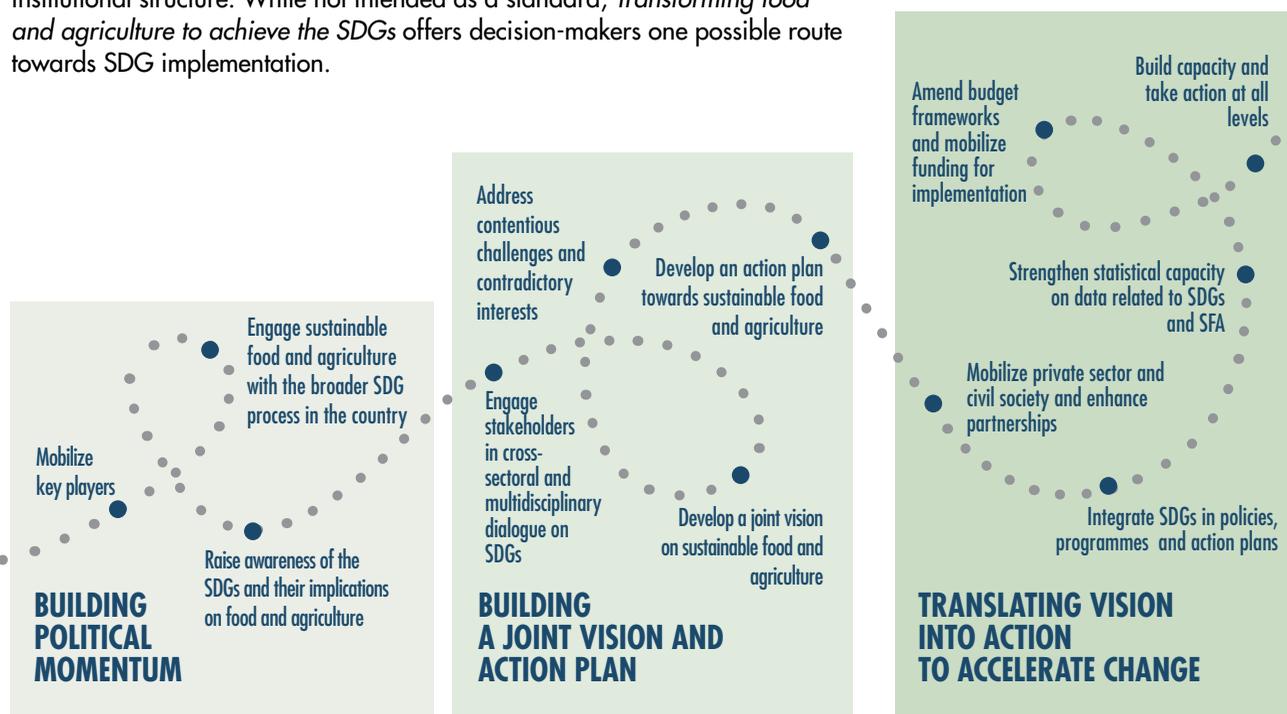
The Integrated Management and Restoration of Landscapes and Seascapes platform uses a cross-sectoral approach, integrating existing knowledge products and ongoing technical work related to management of landscapes and seascapes, territorial development and the restoration of degraded ecosystems. It aims to provide a user-friendly database of these resources.

6. Coping with water scarcity in agriculture

The Water in Agriculture and Food Systems platform provides tools and approaches for better management of water in agriculture and food systems, offering an integrated approach to water management through enhanced water productivity, sustainable fisheries, national infrastructure development and alternative water sources.

MAINSTREAMING SUSTAINABLE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

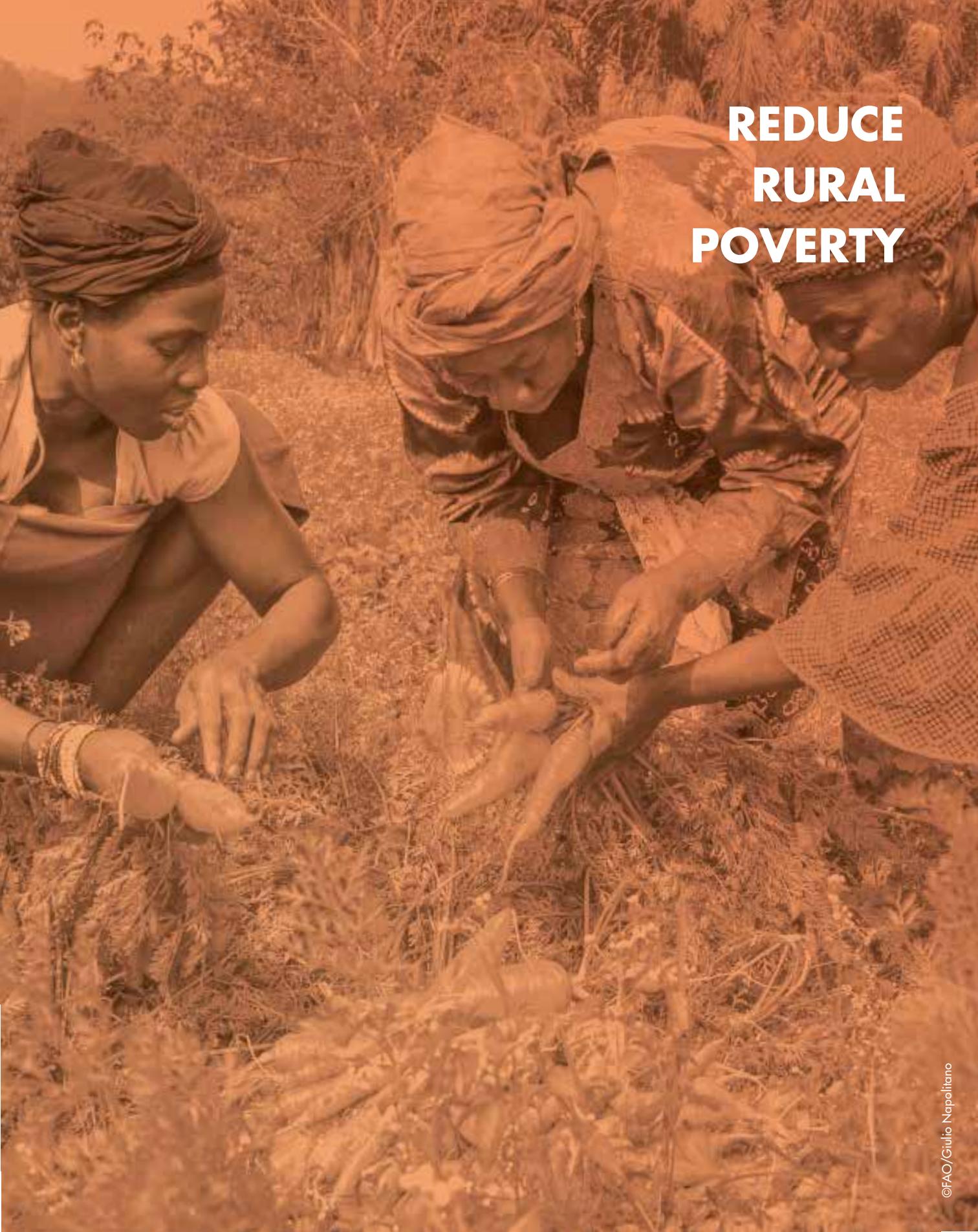
The transformation of food and agricultural systems will not happen by itself. Mainstreaming sustainable food and agriculture into national development strategies and action plans requires setting up a process and a functioning institutional structure. While not intended as a standard, *Transforming food and agriculture to achieve the SDGs* offers decision-makers one possible route towards SDG implementation.



The 20 interconnected actions outlined in *Transforming food and agriculture to achieve the SDGs* can help decision-makers map strategies to achieve Zero Hunger and the SDGs that relate to food and agriculture, including fostering more resilient livelihoods and higher productivity and incomes for rural smallholders.

Rural investment, stronger farmers' co-operatives, public partnerships, accessible policy debates and better coordination across ministries, all with a focus on people, their livelihoods and the environment, are key aspects of delivering necessary and transformative change.

Each action is identified by its contribution to SDG goals and relates to key components of the development agenda. In particular, they focus on helping smallholders gain access to and benefit from markets; boosting diversification, knowledge and resilience; safeguarding natural resources including soil health, biodiversity and water; reducing food loss and waste, improving nutrition, and promoting sustainable consumption; assuring tenure rights and adequate social protections; addressing and adapting to climate change; and improving governance systems.

A photograph with a warm, orange-toned filter showing three women in a rural field. They are crouching and examining several harvested carrots. The woman on the left is looking down at a carrot in her hand. The woman in the center is holding a bunch of carrots. The woman on the right is also looking at the carrots. The background shows a field of dry vegetation and some trees.

**REDUCE
RURAL
POVERTY**

Poverty remains one of the biggest obstacles to human development and economic growth. Although progress has been made in reducing poverty globally, about 736 million people continue to live in extreme poverty and inequalities are still pervasive. About 80 percent of the world's poorest live in rural areas, depend on agriculture for their livelihoods and are also amongst the most likely to be food insecure and malnourished. Yet, without access to resources, services, technologies, markets and economic opportunities, their productivity and income remain low.

UN member countries have committed to eradicating extreme poverty and hunger for people everywhere by 2030. FAO helps countries develop and implement evidence-based pro-poor policies, strategies and programmes that promote inclusive growth and sustainable livelihoods, income diversification, decent employment, access to social protection and empowerment of people in agriculture and in rural areas.

PATHWAYS OUT OF POVERTY

In low-income countries in particular, investing in agriculture reduces poverty more directly than investing in other sectors, as it offers the most direct route for rural people to benefit from land and labour – their main assets. However, because the poor often need to

engage in multiple economic activities, reducing rural poverty requires a vision of rural transformation that includes an economic diversification that can generate jobs and empower people in agriculture and beyond.

Recognizing the diverse spectrum of poor rural households, FAO proposes a broad approach with differentiated strategies to help the rural poor and extreme poor move to a higher labour status and productivity and reach decent standards of living through their livelihoods.

This multi-sectoral approach aims to address the social, economic, political and daily challenges that poor rural people face by:

- Increasing access to natural resources and other assets; ensuring supportive extension and information systems to improve their income and capacity to manage risks; and linking small-scale agriculture to markets and food systems, while also ensuring food security.
- Mobilizing investments to create decent employment opportunities for the rural poor as well as productive enterprises in agriculture and in the nonfarm economy.
- Building and scaling-up social protection systems.
- Strengthening local governments and empowering the rural poor and their organizations to benefit from the development process.

OUR WORK from theory to practice

EMPOWERING RURAL PEOPLE AND IMPROVING ACCESS TO PRODUCTIVE RESOURCES, SERVICES, MARKETS AND TECHNOLOGIES

FAO helps countries better engage poor rural households in agriculture to increase their income generation capacity. This includes supporting the design of pro-poor development strategies and programmes that improve rural people's access to natural resources agriculture related services, including information, extension, markets, technologies and inclusive finance, particularly for women and youth, indigenous people and specific vulnerable groups. FAO also works to empower rural people and strengthen rural institutions, improve their bargaining power, increase their participation in decision-making processes and influence the formulation of national policies that affect their livelihoods. FAO supports countries in helping poor and vulnerable communities increase their resilience, adaptive and coping capacity to climate risks and change. Through fostering inter-ministerial collaboration, FAO helps countries integrate poverty reduction strategies and climate change initiatives.

ACHIEVING DECENT RURAL EMPLOYMENT

Poor rural people often hold precarious, poorly paid and

informal jobs and many of them, particularly women and youth, are unable to find employment. Poor rural households too often depend on children's labour in agriculture to ensure their food security. This can trap them in a vicious cycle of hunger and poverty.

FAO works to build lasting policy changes that favour decent job creation in order to contribute to rural poverty reduction. This includes fostering investments for inclusive rural transformation, supporting the formulation of policies, strategies and programmes that foster decent rural employment creation, especially for youth and women, as well as the improvement of working conditions and labour standards in the agri-food system. Notably, FAO supports the monitoring of social safeguards and due diligence principles in agricultural value chains, particularly to prevent child labour.

FAO also works to build human capital, providing the rural poor with skills and capacities to access decent employment opportunities in agri-food systems as producers, entrepreneurs or wage workers, while providing additional support to the poorest. FAO also promotes the creation of green jobs and good practices on sustainable agriculture for rural people to adapt to climate change.

CHANGE THE FUTURE OF MIGRATION

Though it is a key component of the development process,

migration is often not a choice but rather a necessity. In many countries, poverty, food insecurity, limited access to land, resources, and social protection, lack of employment, natural resource depletion and climate change are driving rural people to migrate in search for better opportunities.

Agriculture and rural development can address the adverse drivers of migration by giving poor people viable options for moving out of poverty while staying within their own communities.

FAO supports policies and interventions that maximize the benefits of migration, while minimizing the costs to migrants and societies. This includes ensuring safe, orderly and regular migration from, to and between rural areas; encouraging the investment of remittances and the contribution of diaspora; and helping migrants returning in agriculture or rural areas. FAO also helps countries in strengthening social cohesion and promoting the resilience of agriculture livelihoods for migrants and host communities.

BUILDING INCLUSIVE, NUTRITION-SENSITIVE, RISK-INFORMED AND SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS

Social protection can help households manage risks and shocks and facilitates economic transition, for instance by providing a minimum income for the poorest to engage in productive activities and helping the poor transition

into jobs and income-generation opportunities by relaxing insurance and credit constraints.

A sustainable transition to the labor market would require that social protection is also extended from a risk management and social assistance stance, to a stabilization and transformation role. It is therefore critical to ensure that rural farmers and farm workers have access to a minimum package of adequate social protection. FAO provides countries with evidence-based policy support to design nutrition-sensitive, risk-informed and shock-responsive social protection systems for coping with climate risks and change and integration with rural development processes, while advocating for expanding coverage to poor and extremely poor rural people. FAO also promotes coherence between social protection and agriculture by generating evidence on the productive impact of social protection in rural areas and supporting the design of broader rural development strategies that combine these components.

MULTI-SECTORAL POLICIES TO REDUCE RURAL POVERTY

FAO promotes a multi-sectoral approach that addresses the potential trade-offs between facing the challenges of poverty reduction and achieving sustainable food and agriculture according to the Sustainable Development Agenda. FAO supports countries in developing and implementing broad-based multi-sectoral approaches that include options for the

ENHANCING THE USE OF POVERTY ANALYSIS IN THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SECTORS

FAO enhances the capacity of countries to use data and utilize ongoing research initiatives for policy making. In Latin America, FAO launched a regional Alliance of experts for the Elimination of Rural Poverty and produced the first FAO Regional Flagship on Rural Poverty. FAO is also supporting countries, Panama and Morocco as two examples, to boost their capacities to use poverty analysis in the design of multi-sectoral strategies for poverty reduction in rural areas, fostering coordination through a common vision of development.

FAO, together with IFAD and the World Bank, 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 worked with the World Bank and IFAD on 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.

FAMILY FARMERS ARE KEY TO REDUCING RURAL POVERTY



More than **90%** of farms are run by an **individual** or a **family** and rely primarily on family labour



Family farms occupy around **70-80%** of **farm land worldwide**



Family farming represents an opportunity to **boost local economies**



Due to the variety of food they produce, family farmers also strongly contribute to **food security**

Source: ©FAO 2014.

multiple pathways out of poverty emphasizing the need for a theory of change for poverty reduction within the context of rural transformation.

Many countries have already developed successful policies and strategies that are lifting people out of poverty and hunger and

that serve as examples for others, especially those with similar socio-cultural and economic backgrounds. To this end, FAO coordinates a Knowledge Exchange Platform that fosters South-South and Triangular Cooperation to facilitate the exchange of lessons learnt and

best practices among countries of the global south and help them end poverty and hunger. Since 2016, the Knowledge Exchange Platforms are active in China, Ghana, Kenya and Senegal, where national policies and strategies have helped to lift the population out of poverty and hunger.



**ENABLE
INCLUSIVE AND
EFFICIENT
AGRICULTURAL
AND FOOD SYSTEMS**

In our increasingly interconnected world, agriculture and food systems are crucial for countries in meeting the objectives set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to eliminate hunger, improve nutrition, reduce rural poverty and increase resilience to climatic and economic shocks.

Globalization has brought revolutionary changes to agricultural and food systems, while rapid urbanization has transformed supply chains. Today's global agricultural markets are more integrated, but potentially more risky as opportunities for trade in developing countries increase alongside the need to intensify food production to feed a growing planet.

Countries require assistance and capacity building in accessing international markets and meeting international standards for food safety. Increased investments are key to produce better quality products that ensure nutritional needs are met and higher prices attained by producers.

OUR WORK from theory to practice

SUPPORTING DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT OF STANDARDS

Internationally agreed standards on plant health, animal health

and food safety contribute to the safety and quality of food, thereby protecting consumers. Countries require support to implement and enforce the relevant regulations and standards.

FAO works with countries to:

- Ensure they are active members of FAO and WHO's Codex Alimentarius.
- Build country capacity to apply Codex Alimentarius' food standards, guidelines and codes of practice.
- Boost capacity to meet the necessary standards and procedures for accessing markets.
- Strengthen regulatory frameworks and policies for plant and animal health, food safety and food quality.
- Support institutional and technical capacities of public and regulatory bodies.

HELPING COUNTRIES BENEFIT FROM TRADE

New and existing international agreements and mechanisms facilitate the development of trading systems and new market opportunities. Countries' access and ability to understand the rapidly changing international market and the potential consequences of changes must be better incorporated into decision-making processes.

FAO works with countries to:

- Develop country capacity for evidence-based decision making in the formulation and adoption of trade-related agreements.
- Facilitate neutral dialogue on issues related to the formulation of trade agreements.

- Assist in the design of appropriate trade policies, raising awareness of the implications of changes to trade policies, and assisting in strengthening regulatory frameworks.
- Produce international market data and information as a basis for analysis of commodity market and trade-related developments.
- Create awareness of international market information and analysis and its use in the formulation of trade and market policies.

FAO FRAMEWORK FOR THE URBAN FOOD AGENDA

The world is experiencing unprecedented urban growth. Today, over half of the global population is urban and, by 2050, an additional 2.5 billion people are expected to live in urban areas.

Reflecting FAO's overall mandate in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the global commitment to sustainable urban development of the New Urban Agenda, four cross-cutting principles have been identified: 1) Rural-urban synergies, 2) Social inclusion and equity, 3) Resilience and sustainability, and 4) Food system (inter)connections. FAO works with countries to deliver the urban food action programme through seven comprehensive areas of support:

- Effective national urban and territorial policies and transformative institutions to enhance sustainable food systems.
- Integrated food system planning and inclusive food governance mechanisms to support

sustainable urbanization and territorial development.

- Short supply chains and inclusive public food procurement to untap the potential of production in the city and surrounding region.
- Innovative, sustainable agrifood business to generate employment and develop functional and prosperous territories across small towns.
- Improved access to food and green environments for healthy cities.
- Optimized supply chains and circular bioeconomy for reduction of food losses and waste in urban centers.
- Evidence-based outreach initiatives to improve global urban food governance and to boost investment.

DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE AND EFFICIENT VALUE CHAINS

Approximately three-quarters of the world's agricultural value-added activities take place in developing countries. Although heightened demand for high-value products is an opportunity for developing countries, modernizing agro-industries and food chains also poses risks in terms of equity, sustainability and inclusiveness, particularly for smaller-scale producers and agroenterprises.

FAO works with countries to:

- Formulate and implement food industry and agribusiness development strategies.
- Provide policy guidance and

capacity development on policies.

- Support market linkages through inclusive business models, including institutional procurement models linking smallholders to large buyers.
- Strengthen the capacities of private sector and producer organizations.
- Promote participation of women at higher levels along the value chain.
- Encourage South-South cooperation, allowing countries to learn from the successful experiences of other developing countries.

REDUCING FOOD LOSS AND WASTE

Food loss and waste contributes to food insecurity, squanders precious natural resources, and slows economic and social development. Most food waste occurs at the consumption stage, whereas food losses arise from insufficient infrastructure, technologies and practices along the value chain.

Food loss and waste are a significant source of GHG emissions and a lost opportunity to enhance food security and nutrition. FAO is ready to support countries in their efforts to achieve the SDG target of halving food waste and reducing food loss by 2030.

FAO works with countries to:

- Support countries in calculating their levels of food loss and waste.
- Support policies, practices and

technologies to minimize food loss and waste.

- Promote better linkages between industry, research, governments, civil society organizations and consumers to eliminate food loss.
- Build capacity to improve harvesting practices, transport, processing and storage facilities to minimize food loss and waste.

PROMOTING AGRIBUSINESS FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

Inadequate public and private investments derail the development of inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems. An estimated annual average of USD 83 billion of net investment in developing country agriculture would be required to increase production by 60 percent by 2050, yet agricultural investment has been either stagnant or declining in recent years.

FAO works with countries to:

- Mobilize investments in food and agricultural systems.
- Develop capacity of public and private actors to design, plan and implement investments.
- Promote financial institutions and services that meet requirements of investors of different sizes from the agricultural, fishery and forestry sectors.
- Promote principles for responsible agricultural investment.

REGIONAL INITIATIVES

Through its Regional Initiatives, FAO seeks to address the many challenges across the value chain that small producers and even small economies face.

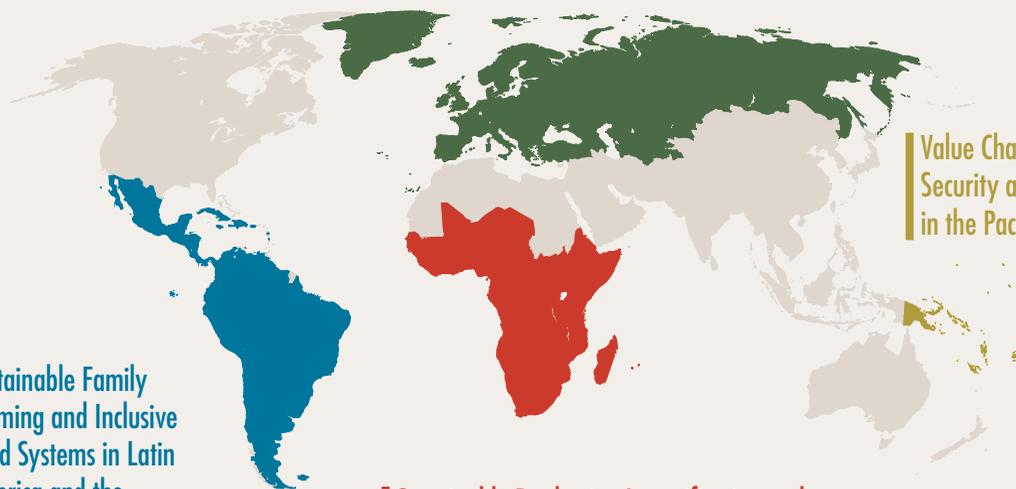
Food and agricultural systems need to increase inclusiveness by linking smallholder producers with agribusiness enterprises and supply chains for effective and sustainable participation in rapidly changing markets. To do this, FAO helps develop necessary tools such as analytical information for sound policies; building capacities at the institutional and individual levels; and helping to fight food losses and waste.

Regional Initiative on Agri-Food Trade and Market Integration in Europe and Central Asia

Value Chains for Food Security and Nutrition in the Pacific Islands

Sustainable Family Farming and Inclusive Food Systems in Latin America and the Caribbean

Sustainable Production Intensification and Value Chain Development in Africa



ENSURING POLICY SUPPORT FOR FOOD SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Promoting policy changes that foster the emergence of a stronger, more competitive food sector and improve access to markets is critical.

FAO works with countries to:

- Improve data collection to develop policy-relevant indicators, analysis and dissemination.
- Enhance evidence-based policy dialogue at all levels by improving outreach of

evidence and knowledge generated through advocacy and communication.

- Develop national capacities in policy monitoring.

**INCREASE
THE RESILIENCE
OF LIVELIHOODS
TO THREATS AND
CRISES**



Small-scale farmers, herders, fishers and forest-dependent communities produce more than half of global agricultural production and over 80 percent of food in developing countries. Yet, they are among the world's poorest and most food insecure people. Small-scale producers (especially women and girls) are highly exposed to disasters and crises that destroy or damage their fields, livestock, equipment, infrastructure, storage facilities and food reserves.

The increasing frequency, intensity and scale of natural hazards and related disasters, food chain crises, and conflicts – compounded by underlying vulnerabilities – cause widespread human suffering and huge economic losses and threaten progress made in ending hunger and malnutrition. The combination of acute shocks and chronic stressors creates a vicious downward spiral, pushing poor families into destitution and, ultimately, dependency on costly humanitarian aid.

Building the resilience of agricultural livelihoods to threats and crises and promoting agriculture's role in reducing conflict and sustaining peace are key to making sustainable development a reality, and offer a powerful lever for reaching the Sustainable Development Goals' pledge of leaving no one behind. Agriculture and food systems must be resilient and risk sensitive in order to feed present and future generations.

By bringing together humanitarian and development actions – with a deliberate focus on contributing to sustaining peace – FAO strives to both meet the immediate needs of those impacted by crises while simultaneously addressing root causes of hunger and vulnerabilities and seeking to open new opportunities tailored to local livelihoods and agri-food systems.

A cornerstone of FAO's resilience programme is the development and strengthening of risk-informed and shock-responsive systems together with humanitarian and development partners. Social protection programmes simultaneously help improve access to food, mitigate risks and incentivize investments in food system development in low-income and crisis contexts. Social protection is a critical strategy to reduce poverty, build resilience and enable development.

OUR WORK from theory to practice

ADVISING COUNTRIES IN GOVERNING CRISES AND DISASTER RISK

FAO assists communities, countries and regional and global institutions in developing and adopting appropriate and enabling policies, institutional structures, capacities and financing for disaster risk reduction and crisis management. Adequate disaster risk and crisis

governance at all levels is crucial for protecting agricultural livelihoods from multiple hazards.

Risk-informed decisions and investments are essential to prevent and mitigate the increasing threats from multiple shocks that affect both the agricultural sector and people's capacity to feed themselves.

MONITORING THREATS TO AGRICULTURE

FAO, together with 14 partners, monitors global acute food insecurity via the IPC/Cadre harmonisé-based *Global Report on Food Crises*, which raises international awareness of food insecurity situations of particular concern and triggers both humanitarian responses and resilience building investments.

FAO supports communities, countries and regional organizations in monitoring threats and predicting crises and disasters that impact agriculture and food security and nutrition. This includes efforts to link risk monitoring with timely alerts to trigger early action at institutional and community levels. This helps communities and countries anticipate, prepare for and reduce the impact of shocks, human suffering, and knock-on costs.

FAO also supports vulnerability and resilience analysis and measurement to inform decision-making for more appropriate policies, programmes, strategies, investments and actions related to agriculture, food security and nutrition.

WHY RESILIENCE MATTERS



Conflict, climate variability and extremes, and economic downturns are deepening acute and chronic hunger and malnutrition. If we are to achieve Zero Hunger, we must simultaneously meet immediate humanitarian needs while addressing underlying fragilities through a mix of humanitarian, stability, peace-building, and development interventions.

Anchored in decades of field experience in diverse crisis situations, FAO's resilience work addresses three main groups of shocks or events: **1.** disasters resulting from natural related hazards, including extreme climate events; **2.** food chain crises of transboundary pest or diseases and/or technological threats; and **3.** protracted crises, including violent conflicts.

1. NATURAL HAZARDS

Agriculture (crops, livestock, fisheries, aquaculture and forestry) absorbs **23%** of all damages/losses caused by medium- to large-scale natural disasters.

When farmers apply disaster risk reduction good practices their returns are **2.5 x higher** than with their usual production practices.

2. FOOD CHAIN CRISES

Approximately **75%** of recently emerging infectious diseases affecting humans are of animal origin.

Every **\$1** invested in preparedness saves **\$5** in response to an animal disease outbreaks.

3. PROTRACTED CRISES

60% of chronic or acute food insecure people live in conflict-affected contexts.

75% of all stunted children under the age of five live in countries affected by armed conflict.

UN Security Council Resolution 2417 (May 2018) makes it clear that all parties to conflicts are responsible for ensuring they do not target civilians and objects necessary for food production and distribution, or objects indispensable for their survival including crops, livestock and water sources.

REDUCING COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY TO CRISES AND DISASTER RISKS

FAO works with countries and communities to prevent and mitigate crisis and disaster risks by promoting risk reduction good practices and technologies as well as risk-transfer and social protection measures for people whose livelihoods depend on crop, livestock, fish and forest products. The evidence shows

that when farmers apply disaster risk reduction practices, like conservation agriculture or the use of drought tolerant seeds, they see on average returns 2.5 times higher than those gained via their usual production practices. Scaling up vulnerability reduction measures is crucial to strengthen agricultural livelihoods and reduce the impact of shocks, so that people can rebuild their livelihoods better and faster, contributing to lasting food security and nutrition.

PREPARING FOR AND RESPONDING TO CRISES AND DISASTERS

When threats and crises are unavoidable, FAO works with governments, communities and other partners to prepare for and respond to shocks and reduce their impacts. Saving livelihoods lives. FAO is on the ground in more than 60 countries, providing critical productive inputs to reboot agricultural activity; vaccinating pastoralists' animals on a large

REGIONAL INITIATIVES

FAO works at all levels – from global to regional to national to local – partnering with governments and communities alike.

Many threats and shocks are transboundary by nature, demanding efforts to increase resilience to transboundary threats for dealing with regional impacts. Natural hazards can damage terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems across national borders. Plant pests like locusts or cassava mosaic, high impact animal diseases such as avian influenza or Peste des petits ruminants, or food safety events like food contamination have regional and even global repercussions.

The increasing mobility of people and their assets means disasters, food chain crises and conflicts have widespread impacts that spill over borders and can drive instability and food insecurity across an entire region.



scale or teaching farmers new ways of doing things to increase resilient food production – even in crisis situations. Timely humanitarian support to protect and rehabilitate agricultural livelihoods promotes self-help and ensures that people do not become irreversibly destitute. Delivering the SDGs in a changing climate, eradicating hunger and feeding a growing population will hinge on helping farmers, herders, fishers and forest dwellers and food sector workers increase the resilience of agriculture and food systems and related livelihoods

by enhancing their capacities to anticipate climate risks and hazards, to absorb the impact of shocks and stresses and to reshape and transform development pathways in the longer term.

FAO brings together humanitarian, development and peace actions and actors to build more resilient agricultural livelihoods and food systems, enabling people to become self-reliant and productive again, and contributing to local stability and conflict prevention. Within

the framework of the Global Network against Food Crises, FAO and partners including WFP, UNICEF, IFPRI, resource partners and others, are turning the humanitarian–development–peace nexus into concrete action. The Network works across three main areas: (1) harmonized and country owned analysis and information; (2) evidence-based strategic programming at national, regional and global level; and (3) political advocacy and coordination.

OUR CROSS-CUTTING THEMES



©FAO/Asif Hassan

GENDER

Closing the gender gap in agriculture would generate significant gains for the agricultural sector and help reduce hunger, malnutrition and poverty.

The agricultural sector is underperforming in many developing countries, partly because women tend to be locked out of land ownership, access to credit and productive farm inputs and access to markets as well as other resources and services. This gender gap impedes development and costs societies in terms of lost agricultural

production, food security, nutrition and economic growth.

Women are the backbone of rural economies, working as farmers, laborers and entrepreneurs. In a world where most of the people suffering from hunger and extreme poverty live in rural areas, it is imperative to ensure that women have access to the resources and services they need to be more productive.

FAO works with partners to eliminate gender-based barriers

and support countries in devising equitable agricultural and rural development policies to increase the participation and empowerment of women and narrow the gap between them and men.

FAO's cross-cutting theme on gender helps to coordinate the Organization's work on gender and women's empowerment and ensure the integration of these issues in all five Strategic Objectives and all the cross-cutting themes.

GOVERNANCE

Our aim is to strengthen interactions between stakeholders as well as to make participation in the improvement of governance a widely shared, mutual learning process.

Governance refers to the rules, policies and processes through which public and private actors articulate their interests; frame and prioritize issues; and make, implement, monitor, and enforce decisions.

Development processes affecting food security, nutrition, livelihoods, and the management and sustainable use of resources, all face increasingly complex governance challenges.

To address these challenges, stakeholders will need to reach a common understanding and to increase the dialogue within and across sectors. Governance analysis helps identify priority political challenges and bottlenecks, while governance-oriented stakeholder analysis assesses how different individuals, groups or organisations are likely to be affected by political decisions and contribute insight into how political arrangements or institutions can help to support sustainable solutions. Achieving progress requires involving stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society, academia and research institutions, and developing partnerships at different levels.

FAO's cross-cutting theme on governance enhances the effectiveness of our policy

assistance and better addresses the complex challenges of achieving our Strategic Objectives in all aspects of our work.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Due to its extensive impact on the agricultural sectors, responding to climate change is vital for attaining all aspects of sustainable development.

A world without hunger will not be possible without a global concerted effort to respond to changing climatic patterns. FAO supports countries to combat this challenge head on by pursuing more productive, sustainable and climate-resilient agricultural development.

Responding to climate change is not only vital to eradicating hunger, but to achieving the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Poverty, health, water use and biodiversity will all be affected by a changing climate. Productive, sustainable and climate-resilient agricultural development is among the most effective ways to address and mitigate these inter-related challenges.

As a cross-cutting aspect of the work of FAO, climate change is being mainstreamed throughout our Strategic Framework. All of the FAO Strategic Programmes examine how climate change affects their core aims and what they must do to support Member States to respond effectively.

For more information and key messages, see the brochure *FAO's Work on Climate Change*.

NUTRITION

We aim to eliminate malnutrition in all its forms, as a basis for good health and social and economic development.

In November 2014, world leaders adopted the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and the Framework for Action at the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), reinforcing their commitment to end all forms of malnutrition by 2030. To meet these commitments, FAO works for nutrition-sensitive food systems that deliver healthy diets for everyone all year. This approach requires action at every level of the food system – from input supply, through production, post-harvest management, processing, retailing to consumption – and cuts across all of the FAO Strategic Programmes.

Our work promotes the sustainable production of nutrient-dense foods with the protection of biodiversity in favour of more diversified food consumption; the development of nutrition-sensitive value chains and trade and effective consumer protection and seeks to ensure that the poorest have access to healthy foods and good nutrition even in times of crisis.

We educate consumers in order to raise awareness of the benefits of consuming healthy diets, so that they can make informed choices about dietary selection. We also assist governments and regional bodies in developing enabling environments that are conducive to improvements in nutrition and healthy diets.

KEY MESSAGES

Food and agriculture are key to achieving the entire set of SDGs

Investing in agriculture – crops, livestock, forestry and fisheries – and rural development are powerful tools to end poverty and hunger and open the door to sustainable development. Agriculture can play a major role in combating climate change.

We can end hunger and poverty by 2030

The 2030 Agenda's historic commitment can become a reality – if we work together. The interconnected Agenda means actors must partner and share knowledge to support countries in implementing and monitoring the SDGs.

Ready and able to support

A specialized UN agency, FAO's wide-ranging capacities, long experience working with development actors and unique expertise in the three dimensions of sustainable development can assist countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda. FAO's strategic framework is broadly aligned with the SDGs.

FOOD and AGRICULTURE in the 2030 AGENDA

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are a set of global priorities adopted by countries in September 2015 to end poverty and hunger, sustain the planet's natural resources and ensure prosperity for all.

Food and agriculture cut across all the SDGs and lie at the very heart of the 2030 Agenda.

With an integrated approach aimed at tackling the root causes of poverty and hunger, sustainable management of natural resources and leaving no one behind, the FAO Strategic Framework is broadly aligned with the SDGs.

Our wide-ranging capacities, long experience working with development actors and unique expertise in the three dimensions of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) qualify FAO as a valuable partner for countries in implementing and monitoring the SDGs.

We are ready for action to help our members achieve the 2030 Agenda.

To learn more, consult our webpage on the work of FAO in the SDGs (fao.org/sustainable-development-goals). The page is continuously updated with all you need to know about food and agriculture in the 2030 Agenda.