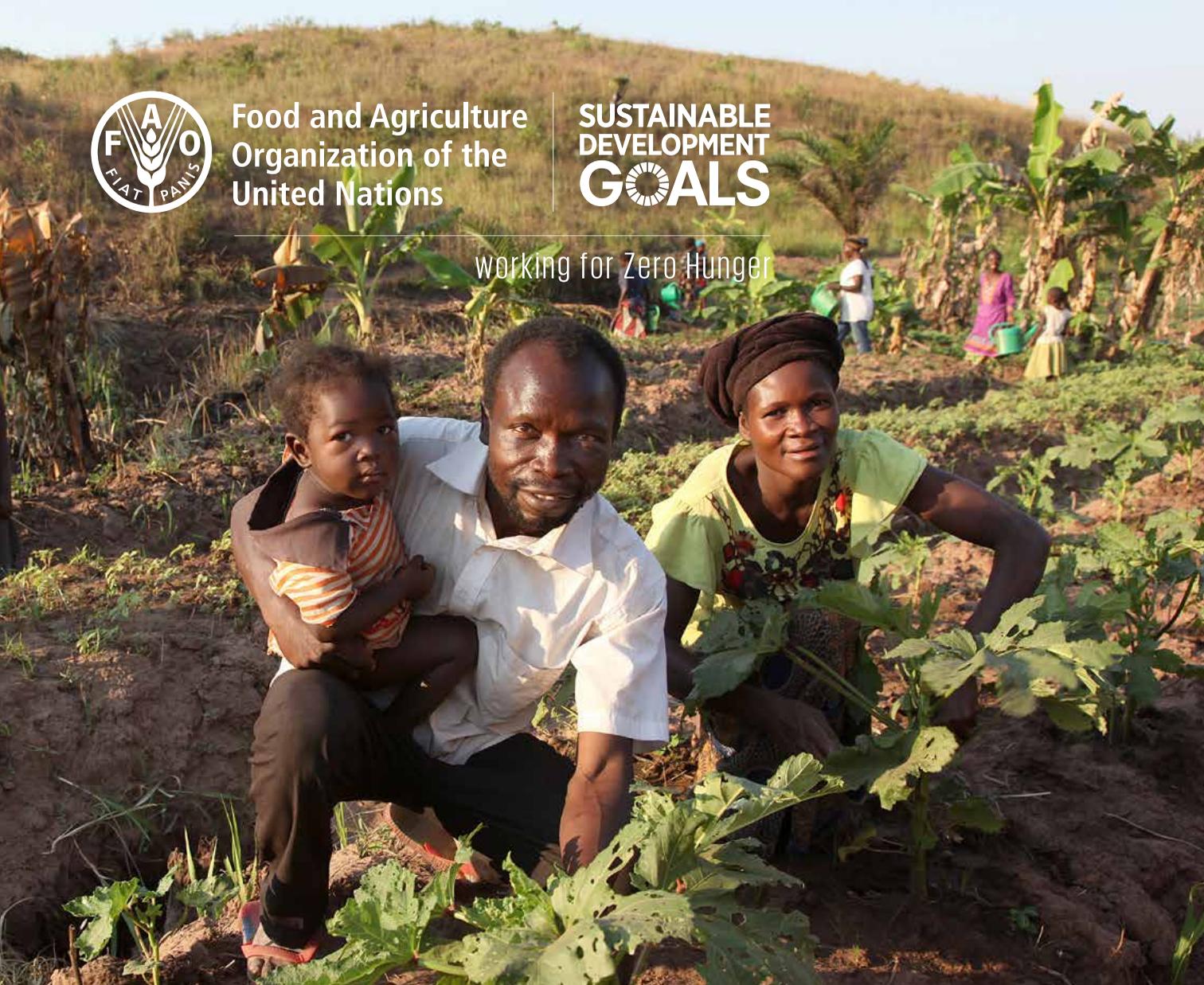




Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS

working for Zero Hunger



FAO'S WORK ON FAMILY FARMING

Preparing for the Decade of
Family Farming (2019–2028)
to achieve the SDGs

CONTENTS

PAGES 4–9

INTRODUCTION

PAGES 10–11

KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

PAGES 12–13

FAMILY FARMING AND THE SDGs

PAGES 14–17

FAO'S WORK ON FF IN AFRICA

PAGES 18–21

FAO'S WORK ON FF IN ASIA
AND THE PACIFIC

PAGES 22–25

FAO'S WORK ON FF IN EUROPE
AND CENTRAL ASIA

PAGES 26–29

FAO'S WORK ON FF IN LATIN AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN

PAGES 30–33

FAO'S WORK ON FF IN THE NEAR EAST
AND NORTH AFRICA

PAGES 34–35

CONCLUSIONS AND KEY MESSAGES

Cover photo: THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO – A family planting vegetables as part of an FAO project that uses farming to help conflict victims. ©FAO/Frank Ribas



TAJKISTAN

Family farmers harvesting hay in Tajikistan, where FAO projects are promoting animal health.
©FAO/Vasily Maximov



**FAMILY FARMERS
PRODUCE ABOUT
80 PERCENT OF
THE WORLD'S
FOOD VALUE**

INTRODUCTION

**FAMILY FARMERS
ARE KEY ACTORS
TOWARDS
ACHIEVING
FOOD SECURITY,
POVERTY
REDUCTION AND
ENVIRONMENTAL
PRESERVATION
IF SUPPORTED
BY AN ENABLING
POLICY
ENVIRONMENT**

Supporting family farming (FF) offers a unique opportunity to meet the needs of future generations while ensuring that no one is left behind.

RWANDA

A woman planting papaya seeds as part of an FAO and Global Environment Facility programme to manage agro-ecosystems and biodiversity.
©FAO/Marco Longari

Today, there are 2.1 billion poor people in the world, of whom 767 million live in extreme poverty (WB, 2016). About 821 million people are chronically hungry (FAO, SOFI 2018). The Sustainable Development Goals of ending poverty and achieving Zero Hunger will have to be accomplished in the context of climate-change-related hazards that are putting pressure on food systems and are increasingly perceived as a driver of potentially vast migratory flows. By 2050, population growth

and dietary changes will drive food needs up by 60 percent, and already jeopardized agricultural production and livelihoods will face the challenging goal of providing a growing population with sufficient and healthy food and preserving a depleted natural resource base. Agriculture produces at least one-quarter of global greenhouse (GHG) emissions. The consequent effects of climate change are in turn increasingly felt in agriculture itself, which is highly dependent on climate conditions and therefore



progressively subject to change and variability, with obvious impacts on food security.

This scenario calls for a necessary transition towards a new paradigm informing food systems and rural development, which puts environmental, social and economic sustainability at the centre, to ensure food and nutrition security for all, preserve the environment and provide jobs and social development opportunities for rural dwellers.

Family farmers lie at the heart of this transition. They produce about 80 percent of the world's food value but, paradoxically, are often poor and food insecure themselves.

They collectively represent the largest source of employment worldwide and spend their income mostly in rural areas, thus contributing to local economies.

Family farmers are the custodians of multicropping farming systems, a key asset for enhancing resilience to

crop failures and price shocks and for contributing to improved food security and nutritional outcomes, as opposed to agricultural systems focused on a few commodity crops. Multicropping systems are more adaptable to low carbon agriculture, as they are less fossil-fuel dependent for production and transport of fresh food to local markets.

Family farmers have the potential to promote environmental sustainability of agricultural

INTRODUCTION

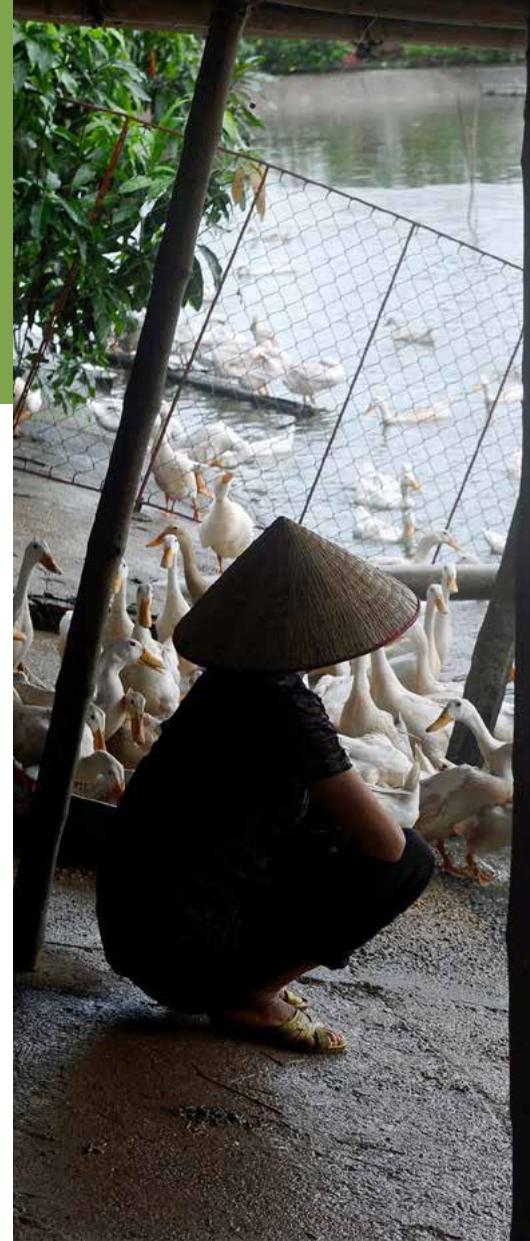
systems thanks to their understanding of local ecologies and land capabilities, and to their preservation of seeds and other genetic resources.

However, to play a key role in the establishment of sustainable food systems, FF needs an enabling policy environment that turns its whole potential into reality and tackles current challenges.

Rural women are essential to the success of FF and rural families, as they contribute to farming with their labour and knowledge of agricultural practices and biodiversity. Women engage in on-farm and off-farm activities to ensure their families' food security and diversify income sources. They account, on average, for 43 percent of the agricultural labour force in developing countries, ranging from 20 percent in Latin America to 50 percent in Eastern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Despite their essential contribution, women have less access than men to productive resources and opportunities – land, livestock, labour, education, extension and financial services, and technology – which limits their capacity to generate marketable surpluses and add value to their production.

Young people make up roughly one-fifth of the population of developing and emerging economies, but in many parts of the world the farming sector lacks generational renewal. The young find it hard to engage in agriculture – despite its largely untapped reservoir of employment opportunities – and the drudgery and poor remuneration associated with family farming turns them off. Also, they face major barriers with regard to access to the resources, services and financing mechanisms necessary for farming activity. This is creating a growing trend towards urbanization, with more young people moving away from rural areas in search of new opportunities.

Enabling policies for family farmers must address the root causes of rural poverty, food insecurity, migration and environmental degradation. This requires a multidimensional and integrated approach: a coherent strategy to support FF transcends agricultural policies, as helping small-scale food producers improve productivity is not enough. Enhancing capacities of governments, institutions, producer organizations and researchers to design and implement integrated family farming and rural development strategies



is paramount. This implies looking at more complex sets of objectives, including securing access to land and other natural resources, achieving gender equality, enhancing market opportunities, reducing costs and inputs dependency, guaranteeing universal social protection coverage, promoting strong organizations, increasing resilience from natural and economic shocks, and adapting to climate change.



VIET NAM

A farmer tending to her ducks in Viet Nam, where family farming has contributed to reducing hunger by over 80 percent since 1990.

©FAO/Hoang Dinh Nam

The International Year of Family Farming, the Decade and the in-between period: consolidating FF within the international agenda and FAO's work.

Over the last years, FAO has been working with governments and other relevant actors to put FF at the centre of the international debate on agriculture and food security.

In 2014 FAO led the celebration of the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF 2014), which focused world attention on FF's important role in alleviating hunger and poverty, providing food security and nutrition, improving livelihoods, sustainably managing natural resources, protecting the environment, and fostering sustainable development. The main outcome of IYFF 2014 is represented by the strong political

commitment in favour of family farming which has risen to the highest global level, leading to the formulation and improvement of national and regional policies, programmes, activities and institutional arrangements in support of FF.

IYFF 2014 also significantly raised the international profile of family farming, which was included in the follow-up to

INTRODUCTION

the Zero Hunger Challenge launched by the United Nations Secretary-General in 2012, in the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) in 2014 and in the preparation for the United Nations Post-2015 Development Agenda.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) focus on agriculture, on its role for achieving sustainable development worldwide, and on a set of strictly related issues. The recognition of the central role of family farming is highlighted by many different goals and targets, constituting an integrated, indivisible set of global priorities that stresses their central importance as key actors in the 2030 agenda, and calls for actions towards their reinforcement.

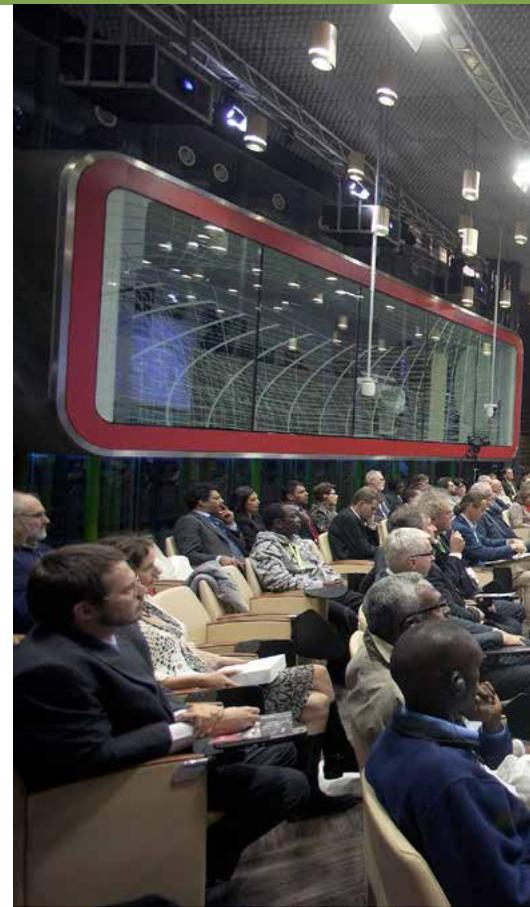
IYFF 2014 also resulted in a greater focus on FF within FAO: following recommendations emanating from the Legacy Document and all the positive results achieved during IYFF 2014, FAO has been increasingly putting family farming at the centre of its work.

Through its Strategic Framework, FAO has worked and continues working with governments and key ministries to shape pro-poor

rural development policies, strategies, programmes and plans that target smallholders and family farmers, promote their empowerment, and increase their access to resources, services, social protection policies, pro-poor technologies and markets. All 15 FAO Regional Initiatives deal with the root causes of family farmers' vulnerability, while three initiatives directly address FF as their main theme.

IYFF 2014 also resulted in The Family Farming Knowledge Platform (www.fao.org/family-farming/en), a comprehensive and up-to-date digital collection of policy, scientific, legal, and statistical information on FF that supports policy-making and exchange of experience at different levels.

IYFF 2014 underlined that a large proportion of forest-dependent people in the world are also family farmers. The global Forest and Farm Facility programme provides direct support to forest and farm producer organizations (FFPOs) of FF worldwide, enhancing their capacities to manage climate-resilient landscapes, build sustainable rural economies and develop more effective advocacy to drive user-centred FF national policies.



Family farmers' extensive knowledge of agroecology and their ability to implement it emerged as a main theme of IYFF 2014. The Scaling Up Agroecology Initiative was launched in 2018 together with major UN partners as a way forward to promoting and achieving the SDGs by accompanying and supporting national agroecology transition



ITALY

Global Dialogue on Family Farming
with FAO Director-General José
Graziano da Silva, FAO
headquarters, October 2014.
©FAO/Giulio Napolitano

farming, and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, by addressing family farming from a holistic perspective, including eradicating rural poverty in all its forms and dimensions.

FAO is ready to support policies and multi-stakeholder dialogue at different levels, and will continue helping countries to shape poverty reduction policies and programmes that are tailored towards FF needs and strengthen organizations and cooperatives to improve family farmers' and FFPOs' participation in decision-making. At the family and community level, FAO will continue to empower poor family farmers to participate in policy dialogue and decision-making processes that affect their livelihoods. FAO will continue tailoring support, services, technologies, etc. to the diverse groups of small-scale family farms, to better support their increasing access to resources, credit, markets, decent employment opportunities and social protection coverage.

This publication highlights some of FAO's work at regional and national level showing the positive developments since IYFF 2014 and underlining specific levers and processes that need to be improved throughout the upcoming Decade. ■

processes through policy and technical capacity building.

It is also important to note that 2022 has been declared International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture, with FAO as lead agency.

FAO supported the campaign for the declaration of the

United Nations Decade of Family Farming, as the natural outcome of the favorable political momentum generated by IYFF 2014 and its successful results. In December 2017, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the Decade of Family Farming 2019–2028 to serve as a framework for countries to develop public policies and investments to support family

KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

- Almost 80 percent of the world's poor and food insecure live in rural areas, mostly depending on agriculture production for their subsistence.
- Ninety-five percent of the rural poor live in East Asia, South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.
- Most of the rural poor are small-scale family food producers who depend on agriculture and aquaculture for their food and income but face many difficulties accessing productive resources, opportunities and markets.
- These small-scale farmers, herders, fishers and forest-dependent communities are particularly at risk from disasters and crises (natural and/or human-induced) that destroy or damage harvests, equipment, supplies, livestock, seeds, crops and stored food (FAO, 2017)
- The lack of tenure security is a threat to family farming especially in Africa, Asia and Latin America.
- Agricultural growth in farming and low-income economies is at least twice as effective as growth in other sectors at reducing hunger and poverty.

FAMILY FARMS

What is family farming?

Family farming (FF) is a mode of agricultural, forestry, fisheries, livestock and aquaculture production which is managed and operated by a family and predominantly reliant on family labour, including both women and men. The family and the farm are linked, co-evolve and combine economic, environmental, social and cultural functions" (FAO, 2014). It has been defined as a way of life.

- FF is by far the most prevalent form of agriculture in the world, with over **90 percent of all farms – more than 500 million – run by families** (FAO, SOFA 2014).
- FF is the predominant form of food production both in developed and developing countries, **producing over 80 percent of the world's food** in value terms (FAO, SOFA 2014).
- FF is the **largest employer** worldwide.
- FF also **contributes to local market development, community level**

cooperation, resilience, and global domestic products

as well as preserving and enhancing local traditions, heritage and food systems, community ecosystems and rural landscapes.

- The vast majority of the world's family farms are very small, with **women-operated family farms on average only one half to two-thirds the size of those operated by men** (FAO, SOFA 2011).
- Ninety percent of the 140 million people involved in fisheries at the global level are small-scale fisher folk. They supply **over 60 percent of the fish destined for direct human consumption** (FAO, 2014).
- An estimated **200 to 500 million pastoralists herd their animals on rangelands that cover one-third of the earth's land surface**, and derive sustenance from extensive nomadic, semi-nomadic and transhumant livestock rearing. They produce useful animal products in the world's harshest environments, and contribute significantly to food security in these regions (FAO, 2016).

90% OF ALL FARMS



RUN BY FAMILIES

80% OF WORLD FOOD



PRODUCED BY FF

➔ Family farmers include forest communities. **Around 40 percent of the extreme rural poor live in forest and savannah areas (FAO, SOFO 2018).** The unique combination of forest and farm resources has created complex natural resource management systems all over the world (FAO, SOFO 2012).

➔ Mountain farming is largely family farming. **Around 40 percent of mountain populations in developing and transition countries – about 300 million people – are food insecure,** with half of them suffering from chronic hunger (FAO, 2013).

➔ There are **more than 370 million indigenous people, accounting for 5 percent of the world's population and 15 percent of all the poor (UN, 2009).** Traditional **Indigenous territories encompass up to 22 percent of the world's land surface and coincide with areas that hold 80 percent of the planet's biodiversity (WB, 2008).**

➔ FF is key to enhanced food security, sustainable growth and the fight against rural poverty and environmental degradation.

WOMEN'S FARMS ARE



50%–66% SMALLER THAN MEN'S

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' TERRITORIES



HOLD 80% OF THE PLANET'S BIODIVERSITY

SMALL-SCALE FISHING



SUPPLIES OVER 60% OF ALL CONSUMED FISH

MOUNTAIN POPULATIONS



300 MILLION PEOPLE ARE FOOD INSECURE IN DEVELOPING AND TRANSITION COUNTRIES

FORESTS ARE RELIED ON



BY 40% OF THE EXTREME RURAL POOR

LIVESTOCK RANGELANDS



COVER 1/3 OF THE EARTH'S LAND SURFACE

FAMILY FARMING AND THE SDGs

Family farming is a major contributor to many of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



FF IS CENTRAL TO ACHIEVING THE SDGs



In particular, SDG2 aims to end hunger, achieve food security and promote sustainable

agriculture. Within this goal, target 2.3 is dedicated to doubling the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers by guaranteeing access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets, and opportunities for value addition and off-farm employment. FF combines environmental sustainability, food security and poverty reduction, and is linked to many other goals and targets, including:



END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE

- 1.4, access to resources and services
- 1.5, reduce vulnerability and exposure to risks



ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS

- 5.A, equal rights to economic resources and control over land and financial services



ENSURE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND MODERN ENERGY FOR ALL

- 7.1, access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services



INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH, EMPLOYMENT AND DECENT WORK FOR ALL

- 8.5, achieving full employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people
- 8.7, elimination of the worst forms of child labour



BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND FOSTER INNOVATION

- 9.3, access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises to financial services, including affordable credit



REDUCE INEQUALITY WITHIN AND AMONG COUNTRIES

- 10.4, social protection policies



SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION PATTERNS

- 12.2, sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources
- 12.3, reducing food losses along production and supply chains
- 12.7, sustainable public procurement practices



TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

13.1, strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity



CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

14.B, access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets



PROTECT, RESTORE AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE USE OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS, SUSTAINABLY MANAGE FORESTS,

COMBAT DESERTIFICATION, AND HALT AND REVERSE LAND DEGRADATION AND HALT BIODIVERSITY LOSS

KENYA

A husband and wife benefitting from FAO's Conservation Agriculture Programme to sustainably improve the livelihoods of farmers.
©FAO/Luis Tato

FAMILY FARMING COMBINES ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, FOOD SECURITY AND POVERTY REDUCTION

FAO'S WORK ON FF IN AFRICA



Actions to improve family farmers' access to markets will increase opportunities and reduce poverty.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW OF FAO'S WORK

➔ The Regional Initiative (RI) on Sustainable Production Intensification and Value Chain Development is focused on sustainable intensification of production and the associated measures needed to address post-production issues, including better handling, processing and distribution, improved food quality and safety, and access to markets.

➔ The RI also aims to create decent job and entrepreneurship opportunities for young women and men.

➔ The RI's main actions are to:

- support development of value chains of livestock, crop and aquaculture;
- support the development of transboundary trade in agricultural products;
- strengthen the linkages

AFRICA | FACTS AND FIGURES:

- Family farms feed and employ two-thirds of the population and work 62 percent of agricultural land.
- There are estimated to be over 100 million family farms in the 47 countries of the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).
- In SSA, 95 percent of farms are smaller than five hectares and make up the majority of farmland in the region.
- Most family farmers in the Sahel region and eastern part of SSA are agro-pastoralists.
- Around 50 million people in SSA are mobile livestock keepers (pastoralists) seeking grazing resources under highly variable conditions.
- Pastoralism contributes around 40 percent of GDP in most countries in the Sahel region.
- Small-scale fisheries account for more than 60 percent of Africa's fisheries production, with most catches from the sector destined for human consumption.
- It is estimated that 85 percent of the investments in agriculture in SSA – monetary savings, labour – are made by family farms.
- Up to 80 percent of all wood removed from forests and farms is used for wood fuel and charcoal, a significant proportion of which comes from community forests, traditional lands and small family farms.
- Sub-Saharan Africa is generally characterized by low production and productivity in the agriculture sector and many small-scale producers whose use of agricultural inputs is minimal. The majority of farmers are more focused on subsistence than selling into commercial markets. However, competition over water and pasture leads to conflicts between farmers and pastoralists in search of grazing grounds.



RWANDA

Farmers planting a tree at a Farmer Field School, part of efforts to promote water retention and prevent soil erosion.
©FAO/Marco Longari

between family farmers and markets;

- promote integrated innovative practices and use of affordable technologies tailored to the production needs and demands of small-scale family farms; and
- facilitate the exchange of knowledge and best practices.

► The Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) strengthens forest and farm producer organizations

and promotes sustainable production and inclusive value chains of wood fuel and a wide range of other products coming from forests and family farms. FFF also supports improved dialogue and engagement of Producer Organizations (POs) in cross-sectoral policy processes with facilitated access to technical support services and experience sharing related to climate change and resilience building in a number of African countries.

EXPERIENCES

Mozambique and other Portuguese-speaking countries

► In partnership with the Government of Brazil, FAO is promoting dialogue and experience sharing on public policies targeting Family Farming in Africa's Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP). CPLP governments have all started taking steps towards FF characterization and are

FAO'S WORK ON FF IN AFRICA

CHARACTERIZING FAMILY FARMING INCREASES AWARENESS AND FACILITATES INCLUSIVE POLICIES TO COMBAT POVERTY

currently the subject of a study being conducted by CPLP's Family Farming Working Group (FFWG), a multi-stakeholder grouping including member countries, academic experts, and representatives from civil society and the private sector. The study aims to collect information to enable governments to frame national agricultural policies that are more sensitive to the reality of vulnerable farmers unable to access agricultural inputs, extension services, credit and other resources.

➤ Mozambique, in partnership with the Government of Brazil, has gone one step further in laying the groundwork for a national land registry system for family farmers.

Through a national seminar on FF, definition of the concept of FF in Mozambique, and data collection on family farming and registry systems, the Government of Mozambique now has the necessary inputs to create the registry, which is expected to be operational by early 2019.

West Africa

➤ In West Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo),



FAO is supporting farmers' organizations to exchange best practices and generate evidence-based data through their membership in Family Farming Observatories (FFOs).

➤ The Network of Farmers Organizations and Agricultural Producers of West Africa (ROPPA) is facilitating regional consultation among small-scale food producer organizations to identify key issues and priority topics to guide mapping exercises at the regional level.



MALI

A selection of melons at a market in Mali, where farmers are supported by FAO's Integrated Production and Pest Management programme. ©FAO/Swiatoslaw Wojtkowiak

Knowledge exchange and targeted policies are harnessing the potential of FF.

Mali

FAO, with the financial support of its partners, assisted the Government of Mali in building resilience in the Sahel and improving the livelihoods of family pastoralists (over 7 900 households) through the “productive transfers” approach (CASH+). This programme combines two complementary interventions – cash transfers and productive assistance – to enhance productive, financial and social capacities of vulnerable households and their community institutions.

Senegal

The Regional Symposium on Agroecology organized by FAO in November 2015 laid the groundwork for a National Platform on Agroecology, which was launched at a Regional Meeting on Agroecology in Dakar in 2018. The launch brought 300 people together from all sectors relevant to agroecology, including farmers, policy-makers and academic experts on food systems.

Angola

FAO has supported the establishment of agroecology centres in four Angolan provinces. Led by 35 local trainers and supported by FAO experts in Rome, these centres aim to bring agroecological concepts and practices to local communities and other interested parties. The project – a joint effort by the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, and the Provincial Governments of Namibe, Huila and Benguela, FAO and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) – targets five municipalities and aims to improve livelihoods and increase resilience of pastoralists and agro-pastoralists by fostering land rehabilitation and rangeland management through the Agro-Pastoral Field School approach. ■

FAO'S WORK ON FF IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Population and economic growth will place huge demands on scarce resources making strategies to sustainably bolster family farming vital.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW OF FAO'S WORK

FAO is committed to working together with its partners in the region and around the globe to eradicate hunger.

The Regional Initiative on the Zero Hunger Challenge in Asia and the Pacific (RI-ZHC)

seeks to redress the high level of undernourishment in the region where 62 percent of the world's undernourished people and over 100 million stunted children reside.

RI-ZHC has been implemented in Bangladesh, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Nepal, and Timor-Leste and extended to Cambodia, Fiji, Pakistan, Thailand and Viet Nam.

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC | FACTS AND FIGURES:

- Small-scale food producers produce almost 80 percent of the milk in Asian countries, and 80–90 percent of aquaculture farms in the region are family based.
- The region holds around 60 percent of the world's population and is home to 74 percent of its family farmers, including small-scale farmers, fishers and livestock producers.
- FF is very diverse, spanning from full-time family members' farming with the support of wage labour, to small-scale and subsistence farming.
- Family farmers produce 80 percent of the region's food and work 85 percent of the total farmed land.
- Female farmers contribute up to 85 percent of the work on farms but receive barely 20 percent of the family's farming income.
- Many small-scale farmers, fishers, indigenous peoples and pastoralists are displaced due to the lack of legal recognition of their customary tenure rights. While the process of tenure reform has been slow in some countries, in others there has been a significant transfer of forest lands to family farmers and positive policy changes in their favour.
- The rural population is ageing – young farmers and men are migrating.
- Eighty-five percent of the global population engaged in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors is in Asia – 96 percent of all aquaculture engagement is in Asia, with 90 percent of this estimated to be in the small-scale sector.

The main thematic components are:

- formulate food security and nutrition strategy;
- promote nutrition-sensitive agriculture; and
- conduct data analysis and monitoring of SDGs for decision-making.

The Blue Growth Initiative of Asia and the Pacific aims to achieve sustainable growth of Asian aquaculture.

Under the initiative, FAO will support Member Countries to:

- strengthen the enabling environment and governance of aquaculture and capture fisheries;



PHILIPPINES

Reflection in a rice field in Altavas, where an FAO water-impounding project aims to improve food and nutrition security.
©FAO/Jake Salvador

- improve efficiency and sustainable growth of aquaculture;
- protect biodiversity and ecosystems through combatting illegal fishing;
- develop inclusive, fair and gender-sensitive aquaculture and fisheries; and
- increase resilience of small-scale food producers to climate, natural and socio-economic shocks.

EXPERIENCES

The Philippines: Restoring Agricultural Livelihoods in Conflict-affected Communities in North Cotabato.

Since 2015, FAO's activities in the region have been guided by its Mindanao Strategic Programme for Agriculture and Agribusiness. The programme supports the Philippines' ▶

Bolstering agriculture can contribute to sustaining peace, spurring economic growth and ending poverty.

FAO'S WORK ON FF IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

peace and development objectives by helping 10 475 poor households (52 125 people) in five municipalities in Cotabato Province recover their agriculture and fisheries-based livelihoods and improve their resilience.

In addition, FAO has been promoting enhanced natural resources governance and secure land tenure rights in the Philippines and elsewhere in Asia. Specifically, FAO has been fostering the recognition of customary tenure in Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Viet Nam through the implementation of the principles and good practices encompassed in the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forest in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT).

Farmer Field Schools in Save and Grow – Sustainable Intensification of Rice Production (SIRP in the Philippines

Rice is the Philippines' most important food staple and the major contributor to the country's annual agricultural output, providing around 20 percent of the gross value added of agriculture and employing some 2.5 million households.

FAO financial and technical assistance is behind the Farmer Field Schools in Save and Grow (FFS-S&G) initiative to ensure the sustainable intensification of rice production, help farmers increase their yields and enhance resilience to climate change. The initiative brings good agricultural practices to farmers, provides venues for collaboration and offers an effective mechanism in training extension workers and technicians. It helps rice farming families reap better returns, improve incomes and household food security, and eradicate hunger.

Other Initiatives

► FAO's Sri Lanka Agro-economic Development Project integrates small producers into production value chains in agriculture by promoting inclusive business models, ensuring product standards respond to real market needs, improving market conditions, and strengthening and empowering producers, associations and cooperatives.

► FAO provides technical assistance to the Governments of Nepal and Bhutan – and soon Myanmar – to implement food and nutrition security programmes under the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP).



The approach involves increasing the productivity and food security of small-scale family farmers (mainly women) in Nepal; and linking producer organizations to local markets in Bhutan.

Forest and Farm Facility

► The FAO-led Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) work with the Viet Nam Farmer's Union has led to:



NEPAL

One of thousands of earthquake-hit farmer families in Dhading who have received grain and vegetable seed from FAO. ©FAO/S. Gajurel

Industries (FSCSI) have yielded cross-sectoral platform and policy networks enabling FFPOs to raise several policy hurdles to the attention of decision-makers.

➤ In Myanmar, FFF has led to greater economic empowerment for women entrepreneurs, helping them develop as business managers and negotiate access to credit from financial institutions; and to the establishment of the Women Entrepreneurs Development Fund within the Ministry of Industry. Impacts of FFF support include:

- regional-level producer associations catalysed to engage in regional, national policy processes;
- FFPO business capabilities built from bottom up;
- eight local NGOs supporting the establishment of business-oriented Community Forestry Forest Products Producers Associations (CFPPA) at village level in Ayeyarwady, Chin, Shan and Rakhine States;
- average incomes rises for hundreds of thousands of forest and farm producers of between 12 and 18 percent; and
- FFPOs representing 177 community forest user groups receiving grants for further business development. ■

- seven value chains being advanced by local Forest and Farm Producer Organizations (FFPOs), 14 collective farm groups and cooperatives being established, developing businesses involving 295 forest and farm households and raising their incomes; and

- sustainable forest management certification (FSC), sustainable agriculture, bio-diversification, plus safe and organic certifications.

➤ In Nepal, FFF partnerships with the Federation of Community Forest Users Nepal (FECOFUN) and the Federation of Nepalese Cottage and Small

FAO'S WORK ON FF IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

FAO is playing an important role in empowering smallholders and vulnerable groups.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW OF FAO'S WORK

FAO's RI on Empowering Smallholders and Family Farms for Improved Rural Livelihoods and Poverty Reduction aims

to empower small-scale family farmers, promote inclusiveness and reduce rural poverty by supporting policy, institutions and governance, and farmers and communities.

The initiative also seeks to eradicate rural poverty and contribute to food security by enhancing competitiveness and productivity and increasing income through sustainable intensification of production, better organization, adequate services and integration into agri-food value chains. Pilot projects, farmer field schools and strengthening extension services are all tools being used to increase sustainable agriculture practices and contribute to competitive FF.

EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA | FACTS AND FIGURES:

- There are substantial differences among subregions and countries across the region.
- Around 97 percent of all farms in the 28 countries of the European Union (EU) are classified as family farms.
- In the EU, many farms are struggling due to an ageing farming population – almost one-third of farm managers are 65 years or over, the vast number working on family farms.
- In the Russian Federation and western Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries, family farms cover only 34 percent of all land but produce 62 percent of all output.
- In Central Asia, family farms control 71 percent of all agricultural land, producing 88 percent of total output – Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan have particularly strong family farm sectors.
- In Central Asia, nearly two-thirds of the population lives in rural areas, with most people working on family farms, which are struggling to survive due to an ageing farming population.
- FF is important for regional and national food security, but many small-scale holdings are not economically viable.
- Women face greater constraints in accessing productive resources, livestock, financial services and markets, and their ownership of land is limited. Although they represent 40–55 percent of the agricultural workforce in the region, women are mostly unpaid contributing family workers.

FAO is helping family farmers enhance access to natural resources, decent employment and social protection through multi-sectoral rural development policy support and community development. FAO is also offering support in natural resource management and adaptation and resilience to climate change by promoting integrated pest management, organic agricultural techniques, conservation of plant and animal genetic resources, and proactive drought risk management. To ensure women, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups are not left behind, FAO



GEORGIA

Farmers filling in Georgia, where FAO projects are seeking to rehabilitate seed production and enhance fishery products. ©FAO/Vladimir Valishvili

is supporting inclusive rural and community development policies, access to value chains and the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGGT). Through national land consolidation programmes, the Organization is also supporting countries in addressing structural problems with small farm sizes and excessive land fragmentation.

EXPERIENCES

Ongoing studies on FF

Through 2017–18, FAO has been conducting country studies on

the needs and constraints of small-scale and family farms in seven regional countries (Albania, Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).

The studies aim to:

- analyse the development trend and current state of small-scale food producers and family farms in each country;
- understand the current political priorities and policies affecting small-scale and family farms; and

**FAO IS WORKING
TO RAISE
AWARENESS,
ENHANCE
PARTNERSHIPS
AND SCALE UP
SUPPORT**

FAO'S WORK ON FF IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

➔ provide recommendations on how to further support the development of commercial family farms and ensure inclusive growth, improved rural livelihoods and reduction of rural poverty.

The studies are relevant for FAO, the participating governments, donors and other international organizations when formulating policy and preparing programmes. Recommendations from the studies will feed directly into the formulation of the Country Programming Framework (CPF), the multi-annual cooperation agreement between FAO and each country.

Georgia

In Georgia, the Rural Development Strategy 2017–2020 focuses on agriculture and all aspects of rural development, with three priorities:

- ➔ economic recovery and increased competitiveness;
- ➔ improved social conditions and living standards; and
- ➔ environmental protection and sustainable management of natural resources.

FAO is also assisting the government in establishing a nationwide Farm Registry (FR) after the resounding success of the pilot project in the Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti region. The FR is made up of alphanumeric and geographical information providing users with consolidated data on farms, an important tool in targeting support programmes for rural poverty reduction.

Gender Mainstreaming

Gender-sensitive approaches help to address the challenges of FF, especially regarding women's roles and responsibilities. FAO's first Regional Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan for Europe and Central Asia 2016–2017 addressed these issues, focusing on:

- ➔ capacity development and raising awareness of gender issues to formulate evidence-based agricultural policies and strategies that are responsive to the needs of disadvantaged groups of rural populations;
- ➔ economic empowerment of rural women through diversification of their income-generating



opportunities and improved access to markets; and

- ➔ provision of technical assistance related to gender equality, human rights and social inclusion within agricultural strategies such as country programming frameworks, technical cooperation projects, etc.



KYRGYZSTAN

Farmers harvesting cucumbers, part of an FAO project to help small-scale community-based agriculture.
©FAO/Sergey Kozmin

Governance of tenure in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan

Tenure rights and land governance are generally less secure in Central Asia than in the rest of the region, negatively affecting FF.

To combat this, an FAO project in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan is raising awareness of the VGGT; assessing the legal

and institutional framework for compliance with it; and preparing a roadmap for VGGT implementation in both countries. The roadmaps are action plans identifying where further improvements are needed and will be distributed to both governments to help them make the right policies to achieve VGGT compliance. ■

**WITHOUT
SECURE ACCESS
TO LAND, PEOPLE
CAN BE FORCED
TO LIVE A LIFE
OF HUNGER
AND POVERTY**

FAO'S WORK ON FF IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

REGIONAL OVERVIEW OF FAO'S WORK

The RI on Family Farming and Inclusive Food Systems for sustainable rural development aims to improve family farmers' access to productive resources (land, water, energy, infrastructure) as well as financial (credit, insurance) and non-financial (technical assistance, innovation, knowledge) rural services.

The RI strengthens producer organizations by promoting

rural communities' participation in sustainable development strategies. By enhancing various regional and subregional platforms for policy dialogue, this RI is supporting the establishment of producer networks to build a common agenda for social participation.

With the support of the FFF, Family Farming Producers' Organizations in Bolivia, Guatemala and Nicaragua have been able to adopt inclusive business models and assist

Access to productive resources, financial services and social security will harness family farmers' potential.

communities in the recognition of communal lands and in designing community plans for the sustainable use of land and forests.

FAO is developing comprehensive policy programmes for social protection, productive entrepreneurship, inclusive, efficient and resilient nutrition-sensitive food systems and decent employment, with special emphasis on rural women, youths and indigenous peoples.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN | FACTS AND FIGURES:

- Around 60 million people work on nearly 16.5 million family farms in the region.
- Eight out of ten farms in Latin America are family farms: 56 percent of these (over 9.2 million) are located in South America, 35 percent (5.8 million) in Central America and Mexico, and 9 percent (1.5 million) in the Caribbean.
- FF is the biggest industry in the entire region.
- Over 90 percent of farms are family farms in Antigua and Barbuda, Chile, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Paraguay and Suriname.
- Over 80 percent of farms are family farms in Brazil, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Panama and Saint Lucia.
- Almost 23 percent of agricultural land is in the hands of family farmers – they hold 13 percent in Andean countries and 34 percent in Southern Cone Countries.
- Small-scale farms coexist in the region with medium- and large-sized operations – the average size of farms dedicated to family farming is 13 hectares, but average farm size falls to 2.51 hectares excluding the Southern Cone.

FAO works with key partners to implement pro-FF policies.

➔ The Specialized Meeting of Family Farming of Mercosur (REAF), founded in 2004, is a regional multi-stakeholder policy dialogue platform for public policies for FF. REAF has allowed for the setting of common criteria

GUATEMALA

A family in Guatemala, where an FAO programme has helped improve livelihoods and the management of natural resources.

©FAO/Valentina Stutzin/
Guadalupe Gómez Verdi



for family farming registries in the member countries. In 2012 REAF approved the Family Farming Fund (FAF) which is administrated by FAO. The FAF provides for the participation of FF organisations in the meetings of REAF, and for implementing its work plan.

➤ The Central American and the Dominican Republic Commission on Family Farming (CCAF), launched in 2016 by FAO and the Central American Agricultural Council (CAC), constructs and strengthens public policies for FF and sustainable rural development.

➤ FAO is assisting the Ad hoc Working Group on Family Farming and Rural Development and the Ministerial Meeting on Family Farming of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), as part of the 2025 CELAC Plan for Food and Nutrition Security and Eradication of Hunger.

➤ The Latin American Parliament (Parlatino), with FAO's technical and knowledge support, issued the Model Law on Family Farming in 2017. The Model Law aims to provide legal and technical support for mainstreaming family

farming in the legislative agenda on the fight against hunger, malnutrition and obesity.

www.fao.org/3/a-17354ES.pdf

➤ FAO, with the support of Brazil and Mexico, has been promoting South–South Cooperation projects to assist national and subregional policy initiatives for gender equality, access to land and rural services.

➤ FAO, in collaboration with key partners such as RIMISP, IICA and IFAD, has supported the Andean Dialogue Group

FAO'S WORK ON FF IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

(Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) in establishing an innovative agenda for family farming and rural development.

EXPERIENCES

Farmers' Registries in Central America

Central American countries are establishing national strategies for identifying and registering family farmers. FAO has also assisted similar schemes in Costa Rica, El Salvador and Guatemala. Both the registry and characterization of FF will generate knowledge and facilitate the implementation of differentiated public policies in favour of family farmers. Pilot projects have been launched in the Dominican Republic, Honduras and Panama, where a definition of FF has been agreed by governments and FF organizations.

Rural Women Regional Agenda on Family Farming

Since 2012, FAO has facilitated a regional agenda on Rural Women and Gender Equality. The Conference on Rural Women in Latin America and the Caribbean held in the scope of IYFF 2014 approved a common agenda for cooperation in promoting socio-economic and political inclusion of rural women.

Other initiatives

Argentina

In 2015, the government approved Law 27 118 declaring FF to be in the public interest for its contribution to the nation's food security and food sovereignty.

Ecuador

FAO has partnered with BanEcuador and the Government of Ecuador to design a social management strategy to facilitate women's access to financial resources. Ecuador's emphasis on economic development coupled with social equity – under the umbrella of the Good Life National Plan – has ensured the success of this strategy.

FAO is also supporting the implementation of "Gran Minga Agropecuaria", an ambitious and comprehensive public programme to support the revitalization of rural areas and agriculture.

Paraguay

An Inter-institutional Technical Board for Public Purchases from Family Farming was established, making it easier to buy FF agricultural products and for producers to become suppliers to the State.

With technical support from FAO, the Ministry of Agriculture



established the Advisory Council of FF, a participatory space for policy dialogue on family farming.

Peru

FAO provided technical assistance in drafting and implementing Law 30355/2015 for the Promotion of Family Farming. The law recognizes family farmers' role in food security, agricultural biodiversity, sustainable use of natural resources, revitalization of local economies, and rural employment. This led to the regulatory and institutional framework for the Family Farming National Strategy 2015–2021.



PERU

Potato farmers involved in a benefit-sharing project to conserve crop diversity and adapt crops to changing needs. ©FAO/Sandro Cespoli

Via Campesina, is working with the Colombian Government to revitalize rural areas and improve the livelihoods of family farmers.

Rural Youth and Family Farming in the Caribbean

FAO is managing the implementation of baseline studies for “Supporting innovation in integrated agroecological production systems, youth employment creation and youth engagement in productive processes in Jamaica, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago”. In Belize, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana and Haiti, FAO is also implementing a policy initiative aimed at building youth engagement in FF.

Bolivia (Plurinational State of)

FAO is supporting the development of a new legal framework to support local production, farmers’ organizations and Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS). Different stakeholders are involved in the project, which is mapping the current situation of agroecological production in Bolivia, including analysing the legal framework and developing technical material for training courses. ■

Under the National Strategy of Social Inclusion and Development, FAO is supporting the implementation of the Haku Wiñay/Noa Jayatai projects. These projects aims to develop the productive capacity of rural entrepreneurship by enabling better access to rural services in the forest zones of Peru.

Colombia

In 2015, FAO partnered with WFP and the Government of Brazil on a project to promote solutions increasing the income and entrepreneurial capacities of FF in Colombia.

The project involved 12 producer organizations and over 300 families and led to 15 trade agreements improving market access for family farmers.

Also, with FAO’s technical assistance, in 2017 the Ministry of Agriculture of Colombia promulgated a Ministerial Resolution launching guidelines for public policies for family farming.

As international guarantor of Point 1 of the Peace Agreement, “Integral Rural Reform”, FAO, in collaboration with the European Union and PNUD

FAO'S WORK IN THE NEAR EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

REGIONAL OVERVIEW OF FAO'S WORK

FAO's RI on small-scale FF (RI-SSFF) implements projects that directly contribute to increasing agricultural productivity and incomes of family farmers, reducing rural poverty through small-scale agricultural development in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, and the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

RI-SSFF is guided by three main strategies:

- ➔ sustainable and innovative practices developed to boost the agricultural productivity of farmers and their associations in small-scale family farming;
- ➔ decent rural employment opportunities and complementary social protection mechanisms for small-scale family farmers developed and incentivized; and
- ➔ strengthened capacities of rural organizations and institutions to improve small-scale family farmers' access to rural services and markets.

Over the next two years, RI-SSFF will also focus on new challenges to rural poverty reduction, such as climate change, migration, increased demand for education, water scarcity, land degradation and changing weather patterns. RI-SSFF is also developing a partnership with the World Rural Forum to further its work.

FF can transform rural areas, reduce migration and eradicate poverty.

NEAR EAST AND NORTH AFRICA | FACTS AND FIGURES:

- Poverty has been in decline over the past few decades, but at a slower rate than in other regions.
- About 40 percent of the region's population lives and works in rural areas and nearly 85 percent of agricultural land holdings are farmed by families.
- Around 70 percent of the region's poor people live in rural areas, and these vulnerable rural communities are largely dependent on agriculture.
- More than 80 percent of agricultural production is provided by small-scale FF.
- Family farms control only 25 percent of arable land — the average size of a family farm in the region is less than 2 hectares and steadily decreasing.
- Between 25 and 40 percent of the labour on family farms is provided by women and their role is increasingly important, especially given the steady increase in male migration.
- The region has high population growth rates coupled with growing economic prosperity, both of which are increasing the demand for wide-ranging and resource-intensive food production, but there are underlying regional trends that constrain agricultural development.
- Supply constraints due to declining water tables, soil degradation and desertification limit production capabilities.
- Human-induced climate change — with increasingly high temperatures and erratic weather — limits and will continue to limit productivity.

A couple who took part in an FAO project assisting war-affected resource-poor livestock keepers in Southern Lebanon.

©FAO/Kai Wiedenhofer



EXPERIENCES

SSFF regional and national studies

In 2015–2016, FAO and other partners analysed small-scale family farming practices in the NENA region and produced one regional and six national reports (Egypt, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia).

The reports aimed to guide implementation of RI-SSFF and were based on existing

data and documents, as well as interviews with key participants. They analysed successful experiences, identified policy support provided to SSFF in the region, and provided relevant policy recommendations. Potential for employment – particularly youth employment – was given special emphasis.

In Lebanon, family farmers have limited resources and receive little to no social protection – 75 percent of small-scale farmers

are not registered – causing them to implement counterproductive coping mechanisms.

FAO is working with the Lebanese government to strengthen the interconnections between agricultural and social policies to help rural communities and expand social protection coverage to farmers and fishers, through:

➤ supporting national dialogue on social protection to design and implement integrated

FAO'S WORK IN THE NEAR EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

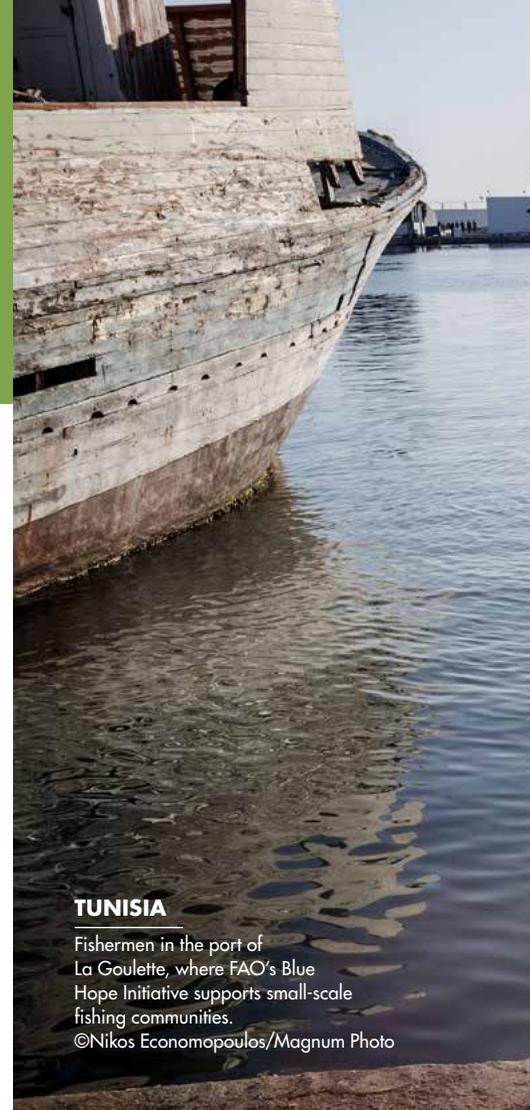
EXTENDING SOCIAL PROTECTION AND ENABLING FAMILY FARMING IN LEBANON CAN TRANSFORM RURAL AREAS AND ERADICATE POVERTY

and multi-sector social policies targeting rural areas to reduce poverty and improve living conditions;

- supporting coordination mechanisms between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Social Affairs;
- consulting with the International Labour Organization, the Ministry of Labour and the National Social Security Fund on extending social coverage to FF;
- strengthening farmer coverage and developing productive activities to complement this programme; and
- creating a farmers' registry and ensuring the inclusion of farmers and fishers in the social security system.

The establishment of a farmers' registry

Lebanon's digital farmers' registry integrates for the first time socio-economic indicators on farmers' households (gender, age, education, disabilities, etc.) and information characterizing farmers' plots, their locations – building on information available in the Land Parcel Identification System (LPIS) – and their related use. It also includes information on farmers'



TUNISIA

Fishermen in the port of La Goulette, where FAO's Blue Hope Initiative supports small-scale fishing communities.

©Nikos Economopoulos/Magnum Photo

access to social protection systems and agriculture support services.

The registry was designed and developed as open-source software and has already been piloted and tested in five villages (in Akkar, North Lebanon, and Bekaa, East Lebanon) before being scaled up across the whole country.

The Blue Port of Zarzis (Tunisia) pilot case

FAO's Blue Port of Zarzis project has reduced distressed migration and illegal activities while strengthening the sustainability of local fishers'



associations and supporting small-scale fishers through:

- ➔ cleaning up the local fishing environment;
- ➔ adding value to existing fishing activities;
- ➔ creating rural employment and facilitating poverty reduction;
- ➔ contributing to the fight against illegal fishing; and
- ➔ supporting the strong fishing tradition in Zarzis.

After completing an in-depth study on how to improve conditions and generate local incomes, FAO offered training activities and micro-projects to enhance sustainable small-scale fishing to 2 000 small-scale fishers, mostly women and young people.

Regional consultation in Tunisia: defining agroecology in the NENA Region

With the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of the Government of Tunisia, FAO organized the NENA Agroecology Consultation

in November 2017. Over 70 participants representing a wide range of stakeholder groups from 14 countries (Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Sudan, Syria, and Tunisia) attended the three-day workshop. Participants redefined agroecology in the context of the prevailing conditions of the NENA Region and confirmed their readiness to further the agroecology agenda and mainstream it into the development agenda of their countries. ■

CONCLUSIONS AND KEY MESSAGES



1. An enabling environment is key to turning FF potential into reality

High-level political commitment, multi-sectoral strategies, effective laws and policies, conducive institutions, inclusive multi-stakeholder platforms for dialogue and adequate budgets to support implementation are the necessary preconditions to effectively remove the impediments which prevent many family farmers from thriving: limited access to land and economic resources, lack of adequate infrastructure and technologies, lack of inclusive food markets, and gender inequalities.

2. Strengthening FF means supporting gender equality

Supporting women farmers to achieve gender equality in decision-making is the primary cross-cutting policy that needs to be promoted. Public policies and affirmative actions are required to ensure equal tenure rights for women and men and equal access to economic resources and services that cater for the specific needs of rural women.

3. Youth is the future of FF

The drudgery and poor remuneration associated with agricultural work turn young people away and encourage migration. Maintaining interest

in farming as a profession is vital to future food security and agricultural development. We need to “cultivate” young farmers by designing policies and programmes that facilitate decent on-farm employment and entrepreneurship. Off-farm opportunities also have to be enhanced in input, processing and distribution activities and in services for rural development as a whole. To achieve these goals, young farmers must be supported in the creation, use, adaptation and dissemination of technologies, processes and ICT tailored to their needs.

4. Helping family farmers face climate change starts a virtuous circle

Almost 80 percent of the world’s poor live in rural areas, and most depend on agriculture for their livelihoods: climate change will severely compromise their ability to earn a living from agriculture, forestry and fisheries. Policies and investments focusing on productive, inclusive and resilient agricultural development are critical to safeguarding the world’s rural poor. Recognizing and strengthening the role of family farmers in promoting sustainable landscape and community-centred adaptation and mitigation is key for the future of the planet.

5. Promoting FF access to social protection in agriculture leads to better risk management and sustainable production

A large number of family farmers in the world still lack access to appropriate social assistance (transfers of food, cash or other to the poorest) and social insurance (access to maternity benefits, workplace injury insurance, unemployment and pensions, etc.). Ensuring family farmers have access to an adequate level of social protection is crucial not only for fighting poverty and promoting FF resilience but also for supporting sustainable livelihoods. Providing greater access to social protection and agricultural support gives family farmers the means to better manage risks, increase capacity to invest in family production, and ensure basic needs of the family are satisfied.



LESOTHO

Group of farmers, all beneficiaries of FAO Emergency and Recovery Programme 2012–2013.
©FAO/Elisabeth Tsehlo

6. Access and security of tenure is key for FF

Family farmers require secure access to and control of land, water and natural resources whether within statutory or customary tenure systems. Safeguarding legitimate tenure rights is central to food security, poverty eradication and sustainable livelihoods. Furthermore, redistributive land reforms can facilitate equitable access to land and the eradication of rural poverty, especially in the presence of highly concentrated landownership patterns.

7. Innovation for FF means involving family farmers

Innovation is about social, economic, institutional/organizational, policy and technological processes, and having an impact on the lives of family farmers. For innovation to be sustainable and transform

rural livelihoods it has to include multiple goals such as increasing yields, raising rural incomes, preserving natural resources, lifting family farmers out of poverty and enhancing resilience to shocks. The public sector – working with civil society, farmer organizations and the private sector – must create the conditions that will enable innovation to flourish, fostering the capacity of farmers and other stakeholders, and providing incentives for them to innovate.

8. Supporting FF and FF organizations to scale up agroecology

Agroecology connects traditional and scientific knowledge to produce food in a more sustainable way, adopting local rather than “one-size-fits-all” solutions. Farmers’ organizations around the world play an important role in maintaining the knowledge

and tools needed to practice agroecology, which allows them to access and control natural and productive resources (such as land, water, seeds, etc.) and produce healthy, environmentally sustainable food. One of the main features of agroecology is that it looks for local solutions and links to the local economy and markets, giving farmers in the field improved livelihoods and a better quality of life.

9. Strengthening rural organizations and institutions is key to empowering FF through collective action

Supporting family farmers to form their own institutions and organizations enables them to achieve benefits and take advantage of opportunities that they are unlikely to get individually. Strong producer organizations can substantially increase income and livelihoods by aggregating supply, improving linkages within value chains, developing processing capacity for marketing, and accessing services, including finance and investment. They can also play a vital role in offering a social protection function to their members and in linking family farmers to government programmes, as well as enhancing their visibility as important development actors. ■

FAO'S WORK ON FAMILY FARMING

Preparing for the Decade of
Family Farming (2019–2028)
to achieve the SDGs



Family farming is by far the most prevalent form of agriculture both in developed and developing countries, representing the largest source of employment worldwide. It is much more than a mode of food production. It is a way of life.

In 2014, the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF 2014) focused the world's attention on family farmers' important role in alleviating hunger and poverty, providing food security and nutrition, improving livelihoods, sustainably managing natural resources, protecting the environment, and fostering sustainable development. In 2017, the United Nations

Decade of Family Farming 2019–2028 was proclaimed as a framework for countries to develop public policies and investments to support family farmers and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including eradicating rural poverty in all its forms and dimensions.

This publication highlights some of FAO's key messages and work on family farming at regional and national level, showing the positive developments since IYFF 2014 and underlining specific levers and processes to scale up throughout the upcoming Decade.