

**FIFTEENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**

Population Division

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

United Nations Secretariat

New York, 16-17 February 2017

**CONTRIBUTION
TO THE FIFTEENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION¹**

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

¹ The views expressed in the paper do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has a long-term interest in migration related issues, many of its drivers and impacts are intimately linked to FAO's global goals of fighting hunger and achieving food security, reducing rural poverty and promoting the sustainable use of natural resources. Investing in agriculture and rural development, climate change adaptation and resilient livelihoods is an important part of the global response to the current migration challenge. Working with governments, UN agencies, the private sector, civil society and local communities, FAO plays an important role in addressing the root causes of large movements of refugees and migrants, including those leading to distress migration and forced displacement, and in harnessing the developmental potential of migration, especially in terms of food security and poverty reduction. In its revised Strategic Framework, FAO has renewed its commitment to work on [migration](#) issues. In particular, under the programme of action for Strategic Objective 3 *Reducing Rural Poverty*, FAO acknowledges the role of [migration and remittances](#) as part of its integrated approach for rural poverty reduction. In implementing Strategic Programme 5 to *Increase the Resilience of Livelihoods to Threats and Crises*, FAO is also renewing efforts to address the factors that compel people to move, especially those linked to natural disasters, conflict over natural resources and land, as well as environmental and livelihood deterioration in rural areas, and in strengthening the resilience of both displaced people and host communities to shocks and stresses.

FAO's contribution to 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

FAO participated in the preparation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, advocating for a stronger focus on migration and emphasizing the need of addressing its root causes, such as food insecurity and rural poverty, and to account for internal and seasonal migration. FAO strongly advocates for the importance of implementing migration-related targets with a gender and age-differentiated perspective, including: protect the rights of migrant workers (Target 8.8); reduce remittance transfer costs (Target 10.c); ensure safe, legal and orderly migration (Target 10.7); build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and stresses (Target 1.5).

FAO's contribution to the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants

FAO has been actively engaged in all the coordination mechanisms leading to the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. Particularly, it has provided technical inputs to the report "In Safety and Dignity: Addressing large Movements of Refugees and Migrants" and to the draft of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants. FAO has also contributed to the Global Migration Group (GMG) statement at the plenary session, and drafted with UNFPA the concept note for roundtable 2 "[Addressing drivers of migration and highlighting the positive contribution of migrants](#)" as well as contributing to the concept notes of other roundtables.

FAO remains committed to the implementation of the New York Declaration and of the migration-related targets of the 2030 Agenda. FAO can contribute in the follow up to the New York Declaration with its expertise on agriculture, food security and nutrition, rural development, livelihood support and natural resource management. Thanks to its experience in both developmental and humanitarian settings, FAO is in a privileged position to support Member States to address rural migration and strengthen the resilience of migrants and refugees in fragile contexts, including in protracted crisis contexts.

A. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DURING 2016 TO SUPPORT MIGRATION-RELATED TARGETS OF 2030 AGENDA

During 2016, FAO's contribution to the Global Migration Agenda has revolved around five main aims:

1. Generate evidence on migration and rural development to inform policies and decision-making

In order to ultimately inform global policies and debates on migration, FAO has formulated a multi-year Evidence Generation Plan on Rural Migration in order to develop various knowledge products filling the main evidence gaps regarding rural out-migration trends, its determinants and consequences. Six thematic sub-themes have been identified, namely: (i) the dynamics of rural migration, with a focus on distress migration; (ii) the labour absorption capacity of the rural economy; (iii) the impact of migration on agriculture and rural livelihoods; (iv) migration and climate change; (v) migration and protracted crises; and (vi) migration and social protection. In 2016, FAO's activities to build such evidence have included the publication of: two brochures on [Migration, Agriculture and Rural Development](#) and [Migration and Protracted Crises](#); a guidance note on [Distress migration and youth in protracted crises and one on migration and food security](#); a working paper on [Addressing Rural Youth Migration at its Root Causes](#); and a [related infographic](#). FAO has also prepared an information note analysing statistics on internal and international migration patterns in sub-Saharan Africa and undertook a desk review centred on the links between migration and climate change.

2. Disseminate and improve the uptake of knowledge and good practices

Through FAO's project on "[Youth migration food security and rural poverty reduction: Fostering rural diversification through enhanced youth employment and better labour mobility](#)" (RYM Project) funded by the Italian Development Cooperation, FAO aims to contribute to address the root causes of distress migration in countries of origin and promote innovative mechanisms for youth employment in rural areas, thereby reducing distress rural out-migration by young people. The global component of the project aims to generate knowledge products that will provide a sound basis for the identification of good practices and lessons learned. In Tunisia, FAO is carrying out a study to analyse the drivers and patterns of rural youth migration and its impact on rural livelihoods; while in Ethiopia the focus is on youth migration and seasonal mobility, with the expectation of drawing lessons on how to better manage seasonal migratory patterns associated with agriculture. Field level activities to promote alternatives to migration for rural poor youth in both countries will also allow for identifying good practices.

3. Advise and support capacity development at country and regional level

Capacity development activities are at the core of FAO's work. In relation to migration, such activities are aimed at enhancing awareness and capacities of rural stakeholders and agricultural line ministries' to account for migration and labour mobility in agriculture and rural development planning. Examples of these activities in Tunisia and Ethiopia have included the training of *accompagnateurs* (agricultural coaches), and the direct support of youth and youth groups through training, inputs and agricultural technologies. Furthermore, FAO has provided support in refugee-hosting communities in Lebanon, as well as in internally-displaced (IDPs) and refugee camps in Iraq, Yemen and South Sudan. It has helped vulnerable protracted displaced populations in the West Bank and in Gaza to build resilient agricultural livelihoods, and it has promoted the sustainable use of fuel and energy in refugee and IDP camps in Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia and Myanmar, in the context of the interagency [SAFE initiative](#). FAO has also successfully implemented the [Junior Farmer Field and Life School](#) (JFFLS) approach, which teaches

vulnerable youth agricultural topics by linking them to life skills, in contexts of crises and protracted crises, involving IDPs, refugees and young returnees.

4. Facilitate, promote and support policy dialogue

At global level, and as mentioned above, FAO has been actively involved in the High-Level Summit on Migration, especially to bring issues related to the need to address the root causes of migration to the discussions, and to protracted crises and forced displacement. At country level, FAO supports Member States to strengthen policy dialogue and coordination across key sectors and among stakeholders to address the root causes of rural out-migration and harness its developmental potential. In that regard, the RYM Project provides an example of such commitment in both Tunisia and Ethiopia, with the establishment and regular meetings of the steering committees composed by relevant stakeholders.

5. Strengthen partnerships and advocacy at national, regional and global levels

Throughout 2016, FAO has contributed to existing global cooperation mechanisms on migration such as the GMG and the Global Forum for Migration and Development. It has also contributed to mainstream migration into agricultural networks such as the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development and the Social Protection Inter-Agency Coordination Board. In particular, it has contributed actively to the GMG work programme, by attending working level meetings, participating to two GMG working groups (“Mainstreaming migration in national development policies”, and “Data & Research”) and to events organized by GMG and its members, and providing technical inputs to relevant documents and statements. Through its participation, FAO has advocated for a stronger focus on the root causes of migration (including also internal and seasonal migration) into the development agenda. Furthermore, it has contributed to the GMG’s “Handbook for improving the production and use of migration data for development” and to the “GMG Guidance Note on integrating migration and displacement into UNDAF and country programming”. FAO has also strengthened its collaboration with IOM, especially in the area of: evidence generation on migration and agriculture, migration and development, and resilience, crises response and recovery. FAO has also worked in close cooperation with UNHCR to support country responses to crisis, such as in Sudan where the two Organizations are working together to enhance the resilience and self-reliance of refugees and asylum seekers through skills-building initiatives and sustainable rural livelihood strategies.

B. INITIATIVES THAT WILL BE UNDERTAKEN DURING 2017 TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW YORK DECLARATION FOR REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

During 2017, FAO will support the implementation of the New York Declaration both by contributing to existing global cooperation mechanisms and by providing policy advice, technical support and capacity development at country level. In particular, FAO is committed to support Member Countries in addressing the drivers that create or exacerbate large movements of refugees and migrants, including forced displacement and protracted crises, with special attention to the drivers of distress migration. Acknowledging that food insecurity, rural poverty and lack of income generating opportunities are among the factors pushing migration, FAO is committed to enhance decent rural employment opportunities, particularly for young people, in rural areas of origin (*Paragraphs 37, 43-44 of the New York Declaration*). Recognizing that conflicts, weak governance, political instability (*Paragraph 64 of the New York Declaration*) and natural hazards are the primary causes of large movements of refugees and IDPs, FAO is committed to address root causes, including mitigating the impacts of climate change and promoting sustainable natural resource management. In addition, support will continue to be provided to affected populations (*Paragraph 80*) toward the achievement of durable solutions (*Paragraph 75 of the New York Declaration*).

At the global level, FAO will advocate for a common position on migration by actively contributing to the process for the adoption of the Global Compact on Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration by 2018. FAO is also actively engaged in the Global Compact on Refugees, especially in relation to forced displacement and protracted crises. Other than the GMG, FAO will be active in global cooperation mechanisms such as the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GMFD), the Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development (KNOMAD), Global Remittances Working Group (GRWG) and the Solutions Alliance. FAO is also strengthening its collaboration with other UN agencies and key partners, such as IOM and IFAD. In particular, FAO is finalizing with IOM a joint note for global and country-level collaboration. During 2017, FAO will also actively engage in the awareness raising events around the World Food Day 2017, which will focus on migration.

As regards the commitment to improve evidence and data collection (*Paragraph 40 of the New York Declaration*), FAO will work with its partners to provide guidance for the dissemination and use of comparable data, with a focus on disaggregated data by sex, age and area of origin. To this end, FAO will work on the implementation of Evidence Generation Plan on Rural Migration. FAO has already initiated collaborations with research institutes for an initial set of knowledge products on distress migration, mapping of evidence gaps, climate change and migration, and rural youth migration, among others. Throughout 2017, FAO's focus on migration will be enhanced through the preparatory work of the FAO flagship publication on the State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA), whose theme for 2018 will be centred on the linkages between migration and agricultural and rural development, and awareness raising events around the World Food Day in October 2017.

At the country level, FAO will identify concrete entry points for considering migration aspects in its delivery mechanisms, work programmes and country projects. In 2017, FAO is initiating two new projects on migration. In Senegal, a project will provide evidence and technical support to strengthen relevant policy frameworks and institutional mechanisms for decent employment creation through the investment of remittances and cash transfers in farm and non-farm activities, in synergy with complementary financial services. In Kenya, the project activities will promote local value chain development as a means to provide alternatives to distress migration.

FAO will maintain its commitment to strengthen the capacities of national stakeholders to better incorporate migration and labour mobility in rural poverty reduction and resilience policies related to agriculture, rural transformation, employment and social protection (*Paragraphs 46-47, 57 of the New York Declaration*). It will continue to promote policy dialogue and coordination on policy options and innovative mechanisms to address the root causes of migration in rural areas, including the promotion of investment in large-scale land restoration and climate-risk proofing agriculture, sustainable management and equitable access to natural resources and rural employment creation schemes for youth, and inclusive social protection systems in rural areas. These commitments will come along FAO's on-going direct livelihood support provided to vulnerable people, including refugees, IDPs, host communities and returnees. FAO will continue providing humanitarian assistance to protect and save agriculture-based livelihoods during conflicts and forced displacement. The rehabilitation and long-term recovery of resilient agricultural livelihoods remains a priority, and is seen as essential in addressing hunger and reducing poverty whilst contributing to sustainable peace and overall development (*Paragraph 84 of the New York Declaration*).