

**SIXTEENTH COORDINATION MEETING ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION**
Population Division
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**CONTRIBUTION
TO THE SIXTEENTH 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.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has a long-term interest in migration, as 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. Working with governments, UN agencies, the private sector, civil society and local communities, FAO plays a key role in addressing the complex drivers of large movements of refugees and migrants, and in harnessing the developmental potential of migration, especially in terms of food security and poverty reduction. FAO works on all forms of migration, including voluntary migration, mainly undertaken for socio-economic reasons, and forced migration, induced by conflicts, human-induced crises and natural disasters. FAO pays attention to the intersection between forced and voluntary migration, when people move because they perceive there are no other alternatives to escape poverty and survive in dignity.

In its Strategic Framework, FAO is committed to work on [migration](#), under the programme of action for Strategic Objective 3 *Reducing Rural Poverty*, acknowledging the role of [migration and remittances](#) as part of its integrated approach for rural poverty reduction; and under the programme of action for Strategic Objective 5 *Increase the Resilience of Livelihoods to Threats and Crises*, renewing efforts to address the factors that compel people to move, especially those linked to natural disasters, conflict over natural resources and environmental deterioration, and strengthen the resilience of displaced and host communities. FAO works to: (i) generate sound evidence on the dynamics, drivers and impacts of rural migration; (ii) promote policy dialogue and capacity development to integrate migration into agriculture and rural development (ARD) policies, strategies and programmes; and (iii) strengthen partnership and advocate for investing in ARD, climate change adaptation and resilient livelihoods to address current migratory flows.

2. RECENT DATA INITIATIVES AND RESEARCH FINDINGS RELEVANT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW YORK DECLARATION

FAO is implementing a *Migration Evidence Generation Plan*, to fill existing evidence and data gaps on migration. The Plan is covering six areas: (i) Rural migration dynamics (who migrates, from and to which areas, for how long, and why); (ii) Migration and labour absorption capacity of the rural economy; (iii) Impacts of migration on rural and agricultural livelihoods and potential for local development and rural poverty reduction; (iv) Migration and climate change; (v) Migration and protracted crisis; and (vi) Migration and social protection. FAO has initiated collaborations with research institutes for a set of knowledge products on distress migration, mapping of evidence gaps, climate change and migration, and rural youth migration. The *FAO-CIRAD Atlas "Rural Africa in motion Dynamics and drivers of migration South of the Sahara"*, published in November 2017, provides evidence that many migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa originate from rural areas and move internally or within the continent; and that ARD is necessary to address migration's drivers. FAO's flagship publication on *the State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA)* will focus on migration and agricultural and rural development in 2018.

Evidence generation component of ongoing FAO migration projects has focused on internal migration dynamics and rural-urban linkages, and on the potential of rural economy and remittances to generate decent employment opportunities for young people in migration-prone areas. Through the [project "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 has carried out diagnostics on youth migration and employment. In Tunisia, FAO has analyzed the drivers and patterns of rural youth migration and its impact on rural livelihoods; while in Ethiopia the focus has been on youth migration and seasonal mobility, with the aim of drawing lessons on how to better manage seasonal agricultural migration. FAO's project "Fostering productive investments to create decent farm and non-farm jobs for rural youth in migration-prone areas in Senegal", funded through the FMM mechanism, aims to promote productive investments in ARD in migration-prone area and puts strong focus on improving the evidence base to harness the potential of migration for rural development. The project has generated comprehensive data and research to close the gaps on: i) the dynamics and causes of rural outmigration; ii)

the capacity of the rural space to create decent jobs opportunities for youth and absorb new labour market entrants; iii) the impact of remittances and diaspora funds on farm and non-farm activities; iv) the link between social protection and migration; v) the impact of male migration on women's empowerment in agriculture and vi) the impact of climate change on migration.

In line with the commitment to improve evidence and data collection (Para 40, New York Declaration [NYD]), FAO works with partners to provide guidance for dissemination and use of comparable migration data, disaggregated by sex, age and area of origin. On 1st December 2017, FAO held a Technical workshop on "[The drivers and impacts of migration and labour mobility in origins and destinations: Building the evidence base for policies that promote safe, orderly and regular people's and labour mobility for poverty reduction and sustainable development](#)". The workshop brought together researchers and policy makers to provide evidence, promote understanding, and enhance dialogue on migration, labor and people's mobility for poverty reduction and sustainable development. FAO also contributed to the *GMG Handbook on Migration Data*, launched in December under the lead of UNDESA and IOM, by bringing attention to gaps related to the drivers and impacts of migration in rural areas and agriculture-based livelihoods; and advocating for adding specific questions/modules to current surveys, or exploring alternative data sources.

Additional *FAO publications* released in 2017 include: a corporate brochure on [Migration, Agriculture and Climate Change](#); and two guidance notes: one on "[Strengthening sectoral policies for better food security and nutrition results: Rural migration](#)" and another on "[Forced Migration and Protracted Crises: a multilayered approach](#)"; as well as the different set of materials produced for the FAO [World Food Day \(WFD\) 2017](#), whose theme was the interlinkages between migration, agriculture and rural development. Moreover, at the request of the G7 Presidency of the Republic of Italy, FAO collaborated with IFAD, WFP and OECD, to reflect on the linkages among agriculture, food security and migration, which were reflected in the [final declaration](#) of the G7 Agriculture ministerial meeting (Bergamo, 14-15 October 2017).

3. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN DURING 2017 TO SUPPORT MIGRATION-RELATED TARGETS OF 2030 AGENDA

FAO strongly advocates for the importance of implementing migration-related targets of the 2030 Agenda, 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 shocks and stresses (Target 1.5). In addition to initiatives mentioned in section 2, FAO's efforts in this sense can be summarised as follow:

Disseminate and improve the uptake of knowledge and good practices

On the occasion of WFD 2017, 26 stories of beneficiaries from FAO projects (including RYM project beneficiaries) were collected and shared through the [WFD platform](#). The stories provide concrete examples of the challenges linked to rural livelihoods and how rural development can provide sustainable alternatives to migration. FAO's RYM Project has implemented innovative mechanisms in Ethiopia and Tunisia to address rural youth migration through rural employment promotion, such mechanisms provide significant insights for the identification of good practices and lessons learned. In line with SDG Target 8.8, FAO also works towards promoting decent labour rights for migrant workers in precarious or informal jobs, especially those working in agriculture, including temporary and seasonal migrants. This involves preventing forms of exploitation and discrimination; promoting safe, decent and fair working conditions; and improving the portability of rights and benefits.

Advise and support capacity development at country and regional level

FAO works to enhance awareness and capacities of rural stakeholders and agricultural line ministries to account for migration and labour mobility in ARD planning. In November 2017, FAO organized a regional workshop in Ghana gathering participants from 8 different countries (Kenya, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Senegal, Rwanda, Uganda, Burkina Faso, and Ghana). The workshop raised awareness on the nexus between

migration, agriculture and rural development, and was an opportunity to exchange lessons learned on how to mainstream migration into sectoral policies. In Tunisia and Ethiopia, activities included the training of accompagnateurs (agricultural coaches), and the direct support of youth and youth groups through training, inputs and agricultural technologies. At the global level, FAO is about to launch the e-learning “Migration and youth in rural areas”, which also provides policy recommendations on how to maximize the positive impacts of rural migration, while minimizing the negative ones. Moreover, in line with Target 10.7, FAO advocates for strengthening safe and regular labour migration channels, including seasonal migration schemes in agriculture. Furthermore, FAO is actively engaged in initiatives geared to solve major forced migration crises around the globe, including for example Syrian refugees and host communities in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey; IDPs and resident communities within Syria and Somalia; and South Sudanese IDPs within the country, and South Sudanese refugees in Uganda.

Facilitate, promote and support policy dialogue

FAO has been actively involved in the consultation and stocktaking phase towards the adoption of the Global Compact on Migration (GC/M), highlighting the need to: (i) address the drivers of migration and its agricultural and rural dimensions, by improving livelihood opportunities in areas of origin; (ii) extend labour rights to migrant workers in agriculture and enhance opportunities for safe and regular labour mobility, including through seasonal migration schemes and return programmes matched with rural market needs; (iii) and share lessons learned and tools on how to harness the potential of migration for ARD, including by enabling the productive investments of remittances and diaspora funds in rural areas. Between April and October 2017, FAO supported the thematic consultations, by co-leading the development of the issue brief on the drivers of migration (together with UNHCR and UNDP) and contributing to the one on migration and sustainable development. FAO also attended the Preparatory Stocktaking Meeting in Puerto Vallarta (4-6 December 2017), highlighting the agricultural and rural dimensions of migration.

At country level, FAO supports Member States to strengthen policy dialogue and coordination across key sectors and stakeholders to address the drivers of rural migration and harness its developmental potential. For example, FAO’s RYM Project established regular meetings of the steering committees composed by relevant stakeholders of such commitment in both Tunisia and Ethiopia. In Senegal, a regional and national consultation process is bringing together sectoral stakeholders to discuss a roadmap on rural migration and potential for rural youth employment through remittances and diaspora investments.

Strengthen partnerships and advocacy at national, regional and global levels

In January 2018, FAO and IOM signed a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) to further strengthen cooperation at global and country level, around key areas: evidence generation and knowledge sharing; advocacy and awareness raising on the nexus between migration, agricultural and rural development and food security; and design, implementation and monitoring of joint country-level activities. FAO is also strengthening the collaboration with Rome-based Agencies (WFP and IFAD) to mainstream ARD and food security in the global migration debate, and has engaged with UNHCR in relevant global and country-level activities.

Throughout 2017, FAO has actively contributed to the work programme of the Global Migration Group (GMG), by attending meetings at strategic and technical level, and providing technical inputs as needed. In November 2017, FAO obtained the Observer Status to the Global Forum for Migration and Development. FAO has contributed to mainstream migration into agricultural networks (e.g. the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development and the Social Protection Inter-Agency Coordination Board) and is engaged in various clusters and global fora on issues relevant to forced displacement, through relevant Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) subsidiary bodies. Finally, the 2017 World Food Day “[Change the future of migration. Invest in food security and rural development](#)” was the occasion for outreach and advocacy on the links between migration, food security, nutrition and ARD. The ceremony at FAO headquarters was attended by Holiness Pope Francis, among others, and over [200 events were organized in more than 100 countries](#).

4. INITIATIVES THAT WILL BE UNDERTAKEN DURING 2018 TO SUPPORT MIGRATION-RELATED TARGETS IN THE 2030 AGENDA

FAO has started acting as 2018 co-chair of the GMG together with IOM. The SG report “Making migration work for all” requests the UN to be a source of ideas and policy guidance, as well as a convener, for the implementation of the NYD and the GC/M (para 70). FAO, as UN Specialised Agency, and as GMG co-chair in 2018, is committed to support Member States in their efforts to achieve the SDGs, by bringing together the relevant expertise of the GMG entities in a range of migration-related policy fields. FAO will also ensure that the GMG stands ready to support the Office of the SRSG, by providing technical expertise, evidence and data on migration-related matters in a timely manner, and in full respect of the state-led nature of the process towards the adoption of the GC/M. FAO will also work with GFMD co-chairs, Member States and all other partners towards ensuring that 2018 discussions remain firmly based on evidence and data, while taking into consideration the linkages between migration, agriculture and rural development.

The consultation and stocktaking phase towards the GC/M underlined the need for *better data and more evidence on drivers, impacts and patterns migration*. The 2018 edition of the FAO’s flagship publication State of Food and Agriculture, to be launched in October 2018, will analyse the dominant trends in rural migration (including internal and circular/seasonal migration), the main drivers and impacts on rural communities and agricultural development and the complex relation between rural migration and protracted crises. Further *regional atlases* on rural migration, in addition to the Atlas on Sub-Saharan Africa, are being considered. Moreover, building on the *GMG Handbook on Migration Data*, FAO and IOM will guide GMG’s internal discussion to support the uptake of the Handbook among data producers and users; and on the GMG’s role in improving migration data, particularly in rural areas and related to agricultural activities.

Throughout 2018 FAO will continue *strengthening partnership* with development agencies (e.g. IOM, UNHCR, OECD, the RBAs), CSOs, the private sector and academia. It will also foster south-south cooperation and sharing of lessons learnt among countries. Through major key events and participating in global fora, FAO will also advocate for the importance of agriculture and rural development in addressing current migratory flows towards the adoption of the Global Compact on safe, orderly and regular migration.

At regional level, FAO will mainstream migration across *FAO regional conferences* during the first half of 2018. These conferences are key to define the corporate work programme at regional level. In this occasion, FAO will also advocate for an official recognition of the interrelations between migration and agricultural and rural development (e.g. through ministerial declarations). Opportunities for initiatives of a regional or sub-regional scale are also been discussed. Increased regional activities will be accompanied with strengthened technical capacity across FAO’s regional offices to translate global declarations and commitments from the GC/M into concrete actions and results at regional and country level.

At country level, FAO is committed 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, NYD). FAO will continue promoting policy dialogue and coordination on policy options and innovative mechanisms to address the drivers of rural migration, including the promotion of investment in large-scale land restoration and climate-risk proofing agriculture, sustainable management and equitable access to natural resources, rural employment creation for youth, and inclusive social protection systems in rural areas. The lessons learned from the projects in Ethiopia, Tunisia and Senegal will be used to scale-up activities and consolidate results to promote rural youth employment as an alternative to migration and to harness the development potential of migration. FAO is also initiating a project in Kenya, which should promote local value chain development as a mean to provide alternatives to migration. FAO will continue providing humanitarian assistance to protect and save agriculture-based livelihoods during conflicts and forced displacement, while contributing to sustainable peace processes and building the resilience of rural households, displaced and host communities. It will also continue promoting investments in sustainable agriculture and advocating for the agriculture, climate change and migration nexus to be considered across sectors, and throughout communities of origin, transit and destination.