FAO MIGRATION FRAMEWORK IN BRIEF
Migration can be an engine of economic growth and innovation, and it can greatly contribute to sustainable development and the reduction of inequalities both within and between countries.

FAO acknowledges that migration is part of the evolution of societies and of the process of economic, social and human development and transformation. FAO focuses on rural migration, from, to and between rural areas, regardless of the duration, direction or causes of the movement. FAO pays attention to both international and internal migration, recognizing that migration within countries is significantly larger than international migration, as countries experience a transition from predominately rural to increasingly urban societies. People who move internally also have a higher likelihood of moving internationally compared to those who have never moved.

As stated in the International Organization for Migration (IOM) document, migration is:

“the movement of a person or a group of persons, either across an international border, or within a State. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes; it includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, and persons moving for other purposes, including family reunification (IOM, 2011).”

For the purpose of its work, FAO adopts this broad definition of migration.

Migration can have a variety of impacts on rural populations, food systems and the rural economy.

The challenges and opportunities of migration are highly dependent on country context. Policies should aim to maximize the benefits of migration, while minimizing the costs to migrants and societies, in order to make migration work for all.

THE FRAMEWORK’S PURPOSE

The purpose of the FAO Migration Framework is to guide the Organization in carrying out its work on migration at global, regional and country levels. It aims to ensure greater coordination between technical units and decentralized offices, and strengthen coherence and synergies across the Organization. The Framework is particularly timely, as the United Nations is asked to provide policy assistance and technical and capacity development support to Member States for the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, in line with the 2016 New York Declaration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The FAO Migration Framework is primarily targeted at FAO as an organization, including all personnel in all geographic locations. The Framework is also directed to all FAO governing bodies and Member States, and provides a basis for collaboration with development partners.
KEY FACTS

- IN 2017, THERE WERE 258 MILLION INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS.

- INTERNAL MIGRANTS ARE ESTIMATED AT ONE BILLION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

- IN 2017, THERE WERE 68.5 MILLION FORCIBLY DISPLACED PERSONS WORLDWIDE.

- 85 PERCENT OF REFUGEES ARE HOSTED BY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

- WOMEN ACCOUNT FOR ALMOST HALF OF ALL INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS.

- ONE-THIRD OF ALL INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS ARE AGED 15–34.

- INTERNATIONAL REMITTANCES ARE ESTIMATED AT USD 613 BILLION; ABOUT 40 PERCENT ARE SENT TO RURAL AREAS.

- IN 2016, CLIMATE AND WATER-RELATED DISASTERS WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR 23.5 MILLION DISPLACEMENTS.

FAO VISION FOR MIGRATION

Migration from, to and between rural areas occurs as a voluntary and informed choice. People in rural areas are resilient to threats and crises, and have sustainable livelihoods that allow them to decide whether to stay in their communities of origin or to migrate. If they decide to migrate, people are able to do so through safe, orderly and regular channels within their countries or across international borders.

When migration occurs, migrants and their families, as well as communities at origin and destinations, are supported in maximizing the benefits of migration and addressing any negative effects. In host communities, migrants participate in food and agricultural systems and are enabled to contribute to rural development.
WHY DOES FAO WORK ON MIGRATION?

The drivers and impacts of migration are intimately linked to FAO’s global goals of eradicating hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, eliminating poverty and promoting the sustainable management and utilization of natural resources.

FAO, given its mandate as a specialized UN agency, is uniquely placed to support Member States in addressing both the rural dimensions of migration as well as its implications for rural populations, including the future of agriculture (i.e. crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture) and food systems. FAO’s comparative advantage is based on the Organization’s following characteristics: (i) expertise in humanitarian and development contexts, (ii) widespread country presence and solid partnerships with agricultural and rural stakeholders, and (iii) role as a knowledge organization supporting countries in advancing evidence-based policies and large-scale investment programmes.

Migration is an inherently complex phenomenon. There is no clear dichotomy between ‘forced’ migration, driven by conflicts or crises, and ‘voluntary’ migration, driven by the search for better opportunities. People increasingly move as a result of a combination of reasons, and often along the same routes, regardless of their migration status. Rural migration often takes place in steps, as people first move from small villages to secondary towns or large cities, before migrating abroad. Responses require multi-sectoral approaches and broad multi-stakeholder partnerships.

FAO has an active role to play in working across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. This involves integrating the rural and agricultural dimensions of migration into the core of the migration agenda and spurring greater coherence between migration policies and sectoral policies linked to agriculture, rural development, rural poverty reduction, food security and nutrition, and natural resource management.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

FAO approach to migration is informed by three principles:

1. **Inclusiveness**, to ensure that the needs of vulnerable, disadvantaged or marginalized groups are addressed in FAO’s interventions on migration, and that attention is paid to gender, age and cultural dimensions.

2. **Sustainability**, to ensure policies, programmes and investments take into account environmental, social and economic considerations. It also implies promoting long-lasting impacts, institutional strengthening and stakeholder ownership.

3. **Managing complexity**, to ensure a whole-of-government approach is adopted and broad multi-stakeholder partnerships are mobilized.
WHAT FAO DOES ON MIGRATION

FAO supports Member States to “facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people” (SDG 10.7), through the lens of agriculture, rural development and natural resources. Acknowledging FAO’s global goals and its mandate to lead international efforts to defeat hunger and promote sustainable food and agriculture, FAO builds strategic partnerships and aims to complement the work of other stakeholders by focusing on rural migration.

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

1. **At the pre-decision phase**, FAO works in rural areas of origin to **minimize the adverse drivers of migration and boost alternatives** in order to make migration a choice. FAO puts special attention on addressing the causes and impacts of forced migration and displacement, building the resilience of agricultural livelihoods to threats and crises, and mitigating the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation. At the same time, FAO works to provide alternative opportunities for prospective rural migrants, especially young women and men who are those most prone to migrate, by promoting decent work opportunities in agriculture and food systems in rural areas or their proximity.

2. **Throughout the migration cycle**, FAO works to **facilitate rural mobility** and ensure people can move regularly and safely between rural and urban areas as well as across international borders. FAO supports the voluntary return of migrants and their sustainable reintegration in both development and emergency contexts, when deemed safe to do so. FAO stresses the importance of internal migration (within the same country) and is actively engaged in providing attractive opportunities in rural areas and their
surroundings, by fostering rural-urban linkages and supporting the development of small- and medium-sized towns and cities, and thereby exploiting the potential of agriculture and agro-industry. FAO also advocates for seasonal agricultural migration schemes to take advantage of circular and seasonal migration opportunities. FAO works to support awareness raising efforts and information campaigns targeting prospective migrants in rural areas concerning the opportunities and risks of migration, while advocating for the rights of agricultural migrant workers in areas of destination.

3. When the migratory movement (across international borders or within countries) has taken place, FAO works to enhance the positive impacts of migration for agriculture and rural communities. FAO works to encourage the transfer of knowledge, skills and technology as well as the investment of remittances in agricultural and non-agricultural activities in rural areas to support livelihoods, create positive spillovers in the local economy, and enhance adaptive capacity to climate variability and change.

FAO works towards these goals through the engagement of diaspora, and supporting opportunities for investments by migrants and returnees. At the same time, FAO recognizes that migration can pose challenges to rural communities; the Organization thus works to minimize its negative impacts for household members and rural people who stay behind, and transform them into opportunities, including those that advance women’s economic empowerment.

4. In transit and destination areas, FAO works to promote resilience and agricultural livelihoods for migrants and host communities. FAO works to support the social and economic integration of migrants and their peaceful coexistence with host communities. This is achieved by supporting migrants in accessing productive resources and employment opportunities in agriculture, strengthening social cohesion, and preventing and/or mitigating conflicts over natural resources. FAO also works to improve food security and nutrition for migrants and their families.
INCLUSIVENESS

FAO’S WORK AREAS ON MIGRATION

MINIMIZE THE ADVERSE DRIVERS OF MIGRATION AND BOOST ALTERNATIVES IN RURAL AREAS

- Fostering decent work opportunities and access to services and infrastructure.
- Increasing the resilience of agricultural livelihoods to threats and crises.
- Mitigating the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation and strengthening adaptive capacity.
- Expanding access to social protection.
- Preventing/mitigating conflicts over natural resources.

FACILITATE RURAL MOBILITY

- Advocating and supporting the development of seasonal/circular agricultural migration schemes.
- Fostering rural-urban linkages and food systems.
- Supporting the reintegration of returnees (when related to agriculture and rural areas).
- Supporting information campaigns targeting rural migrants.
- Advocating for the rights of agricultural migrant workers and their families.

THROUGHOUT THE MIGRATION CYCLE

ENHANCE THE BENEFITS OF MIGRATION

- Encouraging the investment of remittances in agricultural and non-agricultural activities.
- Fostering diaspora engagement, for infrastructure and agri-business development, mentorship and knowledge transfer.
- Fostering the potential of migration to enhance adaptive capacity to climate variability and change.
- Supporting households and communities in mitigating the challenges and negative impacts of migration.

WHEN MIGRATION HAS OCCURRED

PROMOTE RESILIENCE AND AGRICULTURAL LIVELIHOODS FOR MIGRANTS AND HOST COMMUNITIES

- Supporting migrants (including refugees and IDPs) to engage in food systems and agricultural livelihoods.
- Contributing to sustaining peace, strengthening social cohesion and preventing conflicts over natural resources.
- Supporting migrants in accessing land and assets in host communities.
- Supporting food security and nutrition interventions targeted to migrants, their families, and host communities.

SUSTAINABILITY

MANAGING COMPLEXITY
In implementing its work on migration, FAO focuses on:

> **Generating and disseminating knowledge and evidence** on the patterns, drivers and impacts of migration. FAO aims at closing the knowledge gaps on rural migration to support evidence-based policies, programmes and investments. It supports countries in conducting assessments, fostering knowledge and evidence partnerships, strengthening data collection and analysis, and sharing good practices and lessons learnt.

> **Providing policy support** at global, regional and country levels to strengthen policy and programmatic coherence between migration policies and sectoral policies in areas under FAO’s mandate. FAO promotes policy dialogue and coordination among ministries, and across sectors and levels of government, to implement effective policies and investment programmes.

> **Developing capacities** of FAO personnel and stakeholders at regional, country and community levels to support the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of evidence-based policies, projects and programmes. FAO focuses on developing technical and functional capacities to engage in rural migration through face-to-face training and e-learning, developing guidance tools, and facilitating South-South cooperation and peer-based learning mechanisms.

> **Increasing advocacy and outreach** to contribute to shaping emerging global, regional and national agendas on migration and raising awareness about the critical role migration plays in agriculture and rural development.

> **Facilitating strategic and multi-stakeholder partnerships** between migration, agricultural and rural stakeholders. FAO collaborates with a wide range of actors, including governments, UN agencies and development partners, the private sector, research institutes and civil society, particularly with migrants, diaspora and youth associations. FAO is active in global cooperation mechanisms, and is part of the UN Network on Migration. FAO collaborates with the UN Resident Coordinator and UN Country Teams to ensure coordinated responses and delivery at country level, including through the participation to dedicated clusters and working groups and in alignment with UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs).
STRUCTURE OF THE FRAMEWORK

The FAO Migration Framework is organized within five chapters:

> **Chapter 1** presents the **FAO MIGRATION DEFINITION, VISION AND MISSION**. It clarifies the main concepts, highlights the focus of FAO’s work on rural migration, sheds light on the complexity of migration, and presents FAO’s vision and mission on migration.

> **Chapter 2** spells out the **RATIONALE FOR FAO ENGAGEMENT ON MIGRATION**. It presents why FAO works on migration and its comparative advantage, and describes the importance of migration with respect to agriculture and rural development.

> **Chapter 3** outlines the overarching **GUIDING PRINCIPLES** informing FAO’s work on migration; namely, inclusiveness, sustainability and managing complexity.

> **Chapter 4** describes **FAO AREAS OF WORK ON MIGRATION**. It presents what FAO does on migration, identifying the four main thematic areas of work along the migration cycle. It presents current work areas as well as new areas where FAO could focus or expand its work, based on the Organization’s expertise and comparative advantage.

> **Chapter 5** illustrates the **KEY STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGEMENT**. It presents how FAO works on migration along the FAO core functions namely, knowledge generation, policy advice, capacity development, advocacy and outreach, and partnerships.
The Framework design allows FAO personnel and readers to easily navigate the chapters and identify information needed according to their roles, responsibilities and technical areas of expertise. It also contains a mapping of FAO’s areas of work on migration with the relevant Strategic Programmes.

Supplementary tools have been included under the different sections for those who may require additional information and would like to access more in-depth advice and related materials. In particular, Tool 1: FAO and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration presents the objectives and related actions of the Global Compact for Migration that are most relevant to FAO’s work on migration. Additional tools provide a quick overview on how to get started on data collection (Tool 2: Assessing available data sources), policy support (Tool 3: Mapping and analysing policies), capacity development (Tool 4: Preparing capacity development activities) and partnerships (Tool 5: Identifying relevant stakeholders).

Finally, in the list of Annexes, the user will find additional materials, including a glossary of the common migration-related terms used in the Framework and a list of concrete example of FAO’s work in relation to the four thematic areas. The Framework will be followed by operational guidelines that provide guidance on how to implement the Framework in the context of FAO’s Strategic Framework and its internal governance structures.

Rural migration will continue to be an essential element of economic and social development.

Clear and coherent policies are essential for a successful development process that can benefit migrants and their households, as well as areas of origin, transit and destination.
FAO RESOURCES ON MIGRATION


FAO, IFAD, IOM & WFP. 2018. The linkages between migration, agriculture, food security and rural development. Rome, Italy. 84 pp. (also available at www.fao.org/3/CA0922EN/CA0922EN.pdf)
