



联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Organisation des Nations
Unies pour l'alimentation
et l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

E

FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Thirty-sixth Session

Managua, Nicaragua, (*New dates to be determined*)

Hand-in-Hand towards prosperous and inclusive rural societies

Executive Summary¹

Without prosperous and inclusive rural territories, Latin America and the Caribbean will not be able to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Despite the enormous natural potential of the region, half of the rural inhabitants live in poverty and 20 percent in extreme poverty (United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean [ECLAC], 2019). This context imposes a double challenge: to continue the region's progress in reducing poverty and hunger, addressing the ethnic, economic, social, territorial and gender inequalities that still mark the rural societies of the region, while also implementing broader rural development agendas, which can lead to an inclusive growth dynamic for all actors.

FAO will continue to promote the agriculture sector, and a broad range of rural activities, by supporting social, productive and environmental policies that take advantage of the opportunities offered by the current global context, and contribute to the transformation of agricultural sectors and food systems with an inclusive and sustainable approach. This implies capitalizing on the opportunities offered by the drivers of change and transformation in rural areas of the region.

¹ This document focuses on one of FAO's three priorities in the region, and should be considered in the context of the other two priorities addressed in the documents LARC/20/2 "Transforming food systems for healthy diets for all" and LARC/20/4 "Sustainable and climate resilient agriculture".

Recommendations for the Regional Conference

- Recognize that without effective, inclusive and sustainable rural development, the countries of the region will not be able to achieve the SDGs and that, in order to do so, the process of eradicating hunger and extreme poverty in lagging rural territories must be accelerated, along with the creation of new opportunities for the rural population.
- Request support from FAO to improve the technical quality, efficiency, and impact of policies, programmes and projects aimed at promoting the sustainable and inclusive social and productive transformation of the rural territories of the region. This includes strengthening the institutional framework for rural development and prioritizing actions aimed at providing public goods and achieving measurable high-impact results at the national level through South-South cooperation mechanisms, integrated information systems for the management of sectoral and intersectoral goals, partnerships with the private sector and civil society, agreements with science, technology, innovation and research centres, resource mobilization, technical assistance, technology transfer, the generation of knowledge and policy dialogue.
- Request FAO's assistance in generating knowledge related to the cost and effectiveness of public investments to boost agriculture, food systems and other rural economic activities, with the potential to contribute to economic growth that is inclusive and environmentally sustainable, taking into account existing fiscal and financial restrictions.
- Request FAO's support in the implementation of international cooperation and resource mobilization strategies to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs, especially SDGs 1 and 2, in each national context, and support the *Hand-in-Hand Initiative* presented by the Director-General of FAO in the framework of the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, in order to promote effective cooperation mechanisms between developed and developing countries, based on accurate diagnoses, greater coordination with international development agencies and financial institutions, and the establishment of concrete and ambitious cooperation goals to be monitored through 2030.

Please send any questions about this document to:

Regional Conference Secretariat
RLC-Conferencia@fao.org

I. Introduction

1. Without prosperous and inclusive rural territories, Latin America and the Caribbean cannot achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Of the 169 targets included in the SDGs, 78 percent depend on actions undertaken in rural areas of the world.²

2. Rural-urban territories concentrate 39.3 percent of the total population of the region.³ Expanded agriculture – which includes manufactured goods based on agricultural inputs and complementary services related to agricultural production – contributes between 9 and 35 percent of the GDP of Latin American and Caribbean countries.⁴ The food sector, and associated services, represents about 20 percent of exports and 20 percent of employment in the region.⁵ The agricultural sector of the region produces enough food to meet the energy needs of 821 million people.⁶ The region also contains 40 percent of global biodiversity and 31 percent of the planet's fresh water reserves⁷.

3. Despite this enormous potential, half of the rural inhabitants live in poverty and 20 percent in extreme poverty.⁸

II. Rural societies of Latin America and the Caribbean: a key component of sustainable development

4. Crop production in the region contributes 14 percent of world production.⁹ Livestock in the region contributes 26.5 percent of world beef production, 23.7 percent of poultry and 11 percent of eggs.¹⁰ Fishing accounts for 11 percent of the global catch, and aquaculture production is equivalent to 4 percent of world production.¹¹ The forests of the region cover 46 percent of its total area, with 84 percent of the world's natural forests¹², and carbon stocks in living forest biomass represent 36 percent of world stocks.¹³ The long-term projections for 2030 and 2050 confirm the key role that the region will continue to play in the production and global trade of agricultural and food goods, creating opportunities for growth and adaptation to generate economic, social and environmental sustainability.

² FAO. 2018. *Overview of rural poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Santiago.

³ The calculation uses the rural and urban population reported for 2018, and the participation of urban population in cities of less than 300 000 inhabitants (by 2015). With this information, the rural population reported for Latin America and the Caribbean is 126 million (19 percent), and the rural-urban population (60 percent of the population in cities with fewer than 300 000 inhabitants) is 130 million.

⁴ Elverdin, P. 2014. *Argentina, Brasil, Paraguay y Uruguay (ABPU) y su participación en la agricultura mundial. Grupo de Países Productores del Sur*. ODEPA (2017).

⁵ Trivelli, C., and Berdegué, J.A., 2019. *Transformación rural. Pensando el futuro de América Latina y el Caribe. 2030 - Alimentación, agricultura y desarrollo rural en América Latina y el Caribe, No. 1*. Santiago.

⁶ FAO. Internet. *Indicators of food security*. Rome. <http://www.fao.org/economic/ess/ess-fs/indicadores-de-la-seguridad-alimentaria/es/#.XSea2-tKiUk>

⁷ ECLAC, FAO, IICA, 2019. <http://repositorio.iica.int/bitstream/11324/8214/1/BVE19040295e.pdf>. Durango, S., Sierra, L., Quintero, M., Sachet, E., Paz, P., Da Silva, M., Valencia, J., Le Coq, J.F. 2019. *Estado y perspectivas de los recursos naturales y los ecosistemas en América Latina y el Caribe. 2030 - Alimentación, agricultura y desarrollo rural en América Latina y el Caribe, No. 9*. Santiago.

⁸ ECLAC. 2019. *Social panorama of Latin America 2019*. Santiago.

⁹ FAO and OECD. 2019. *OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2019–2028. Executive Summary*. Rome.

¹⁰ ECLAC, FAO and IICA, 2017. *The outlook for agriculture and rural development in the Americas: A perspective on Latin America and the Caribbean 2017-2018*. San José.

¹¹ FAO. 2018. *The state of world fisheries and aquaculture 2018*. Rome.

¹² FAO. 2015. *Evaluation of the world's natural resources. Database*. Rome.

¹³ FAO. 2017. *The state of forests and the forestry sector in the region*. Secretariat Note. 30th Session of the Latin American and Caribbean Forestry Commission. Tegucigalpa, 25-29 September 2017.

5. Beyond the agricultural sector, 42 percent of the rural population is employed in non-agricultural jobs.¹⁴ Half of the energy generated in the region comes from hydroelectricity, while non-hydroelectric renewable energy sources have begun to develop strongly. The rural environment is also a space for the development of numerous important activities, such as tourism and ecosystem services. It is estimated that the economic value per capita of ecosystem services is USD 33 492 in South America, USD 6 844 in Mesoamerica and USD 4 090 in the Caribbean.^{15 16}

6. There are opportunities that can mobilize all rural development actors, such as the increase and diversification of global food demand, the knowledge economy and technological innovations for production, the bioeconomy, and the innovations needed to face the challenges of climate change and the nutritional transition of the region.

7. Relegating rural development to a secondary role is to depreciate the development of key dimensions for the future of the planet and the region as a whole.

II.1. Facing the challenges of rural development to sustain impacts and create new opportunities

Disadvantages, inequalities and exclusion

8. In recent decades, the region of Latin America and the Caribbean has reduced its levels of hunger and poverty. However, between 2014 and 2018, the number of people suffering from hunger has increased – from 38 million to 42.5 million¹⁷ – and the incidence of extreme poverty in rural areas rose from 18.6 percent to 20 percent.¹⁸ This shows that, even after three decades marked by a global expansion of economic growth and social policies, these can be, in many cases, insensitive to territorial and population diversity.

9. The indigenous and Afro-descendant population, which is estimated at more than 46 million people,¹⁹ consistently registers worse social indicators than other ethnic groups. Rural women devote a greater part of their time to work, but receive lower incomes and have a lower labour participation rate than men; much of their work in the field is unpaid and in conditions of high precariousness and risk.²⁰

10. Of the rural workers in Latin America, 58 percent continue to work in the primary agricultural sector²¹ and, in 14 of 17 countries in the region, family farming accounts for more than half of

¹⁴ ILO. 2016. *Working in rural areas in the 21st Century: Reality and perspectives of rural employment in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Thematic Labor Overview 3. Lima.

¹⁵ Costanza, R., de Groot, R., Sutton, P., van der Ploeg, S., Anderson, S.J., Kubiszewski, I. and Turner, R.K. 2014. *Changes in the Global Value of Ecosystem Services*. *Global Environmental Change* vol. 26: 152-158

¹⁶ Kubiszewski, I., Costanza, R., Anderson, S. y Sutton, P. 2017. *The Future Value of Ecosystem Services: Global scenarios and national implications*. *Ecosystem Services*, Vol. 26, A: 289-30.

¹⁷ FAO. 2019. *The state of food security and nutrition in the world*. Rome.

¹⁸ ECLAC. 2019. *Social Panorama of Latin America 2019*. Santiago.

¹⁹ Angulo, R., Solano, A. and Tamayo, A. 2018. *La pobreza rural en América Latina: qué dicen los indicadores sobre la población indígena y afrodescendiente de la región*. Lima, IEP and FAO.

²⁰ FAO. 2017. *Atlas of rural women in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Santiago.

²¹ ILO. 2016. *Op. cit.*

employment in the agricultural sector.²² Family farming includes more than 80 percent of the agricultural productive units in the region.^{23 24}

11. The index of average labour income in the agricultural sector is 40 percent lower than the average income of all branches of economic activity in the region and, with the exception of Uruguay, in all countries of the region the incidence of poverty is higher in rural agricultural households than in households dependent on rural non-farm employment.²⁵

12. Many rural territories face severe deficits in physical and social capital. In addition, they often face conditions that exacerbate their disadvantages, such as insecurity, violence, the presence of illegal economic activities, and a deficit of infrastructure and services. The inhabitants of these areas are those who suffer the greatest consequences for their well-being.²⁶ This affects the matrix of rural opportunities and is closely related to the increase in migration pressure.

Climate change

13. By 2030, 40 percent of the total area of the region is expected to exceed the threshold of 2 degrees Celsius of temperature increase. In the next five years, the areas that may reach this threshold include the Amazon basin, the central region of Brazil, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), the Peruvian Andes, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and eastern Colombia. For their part, Central America, Mexico and the Caribbean may reach this threshold between 2035 and 2040.²⁷

14. Despite being mostly in high-income countries, the rural and coastal populations of the Caribbean island states are highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, with severe consequences for their health, safety and livelihoods. In the Mesoamerican region, the rural poor are highly vulnerable to extreme weather events, such as droughts and floods, especially in the Central American Dry Corridor. In South America, countries face the challenge of sustainable management of renewable natural resources.

15. The agricultural sectors and food systems absorb much of the impacts of natural disasters and agroclimatic emergencies. In addition, it is the rural populations, usually in areas with poor infrastructure and lower access to rural services and social protection, that are most affected by the greater intensity and frequency of climatic events, and the growing trend of the degradation of natural resources. In this regard, the rural development agenda for the coming decades is inseparable from the agenda of environmental sustainability and resilience.

²² Weller. 2016. *Brechas y transformaciones. La evolución del empleo agropecuario en América Latina*. Santiago. ECLAC.

²³ Leporati, M., Salcedo, S., Jara, B., Boero, V. and Muñoz, M. 2014. *Family farming in figures*. In FAO, Family farming in Latin America and the Caribbean. Policy recommendations. Santiago.

²⁴ Schneider, S. 2016. *Family farming in Latin America and the Caribbean: Looking for new paths of rural development and food security*. Working Paper N° 137. Brasilia, International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth (IPC-IG).

²⁵ FAO. 2018. *Panorama of Rural Poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Santiago.

²⁶ Escobar, M and Rico, D. 2019. *La producción y explotación ilegales de materias primas en las zonas rurales de América Latina y sus líneas de impacto en el desarrollo territorial*. Serie 2030 – Alimentación, agricultura y desarrollo rural en América Latina y el Caribe, No. 27. Santiago. FAO.

²⁷ Jarvis A., Loboguerrero, A.M., Martínez-Baron, D., Prager, S. Ramirez Villegas, J., Eitzinger, A., Born, L., Gonzalez, C. and Tarapues, T. 2019. *Situación rural de América Latina y el Caribe con 2 grados de calentamiento*. Serie 2030 – Alimentación, agricultura y desarrollo rural en América Latina y el Caribe, No. 10. Santiago. FAO.

Technological change

16. The key driver of rural transformation is the large-scale incorporation of technological innovations. These are used in information and communications technologies (including microelectronics, data science, artificial intelligence, remote sensing and distributed ledger technologies, such as *blockchain*) and biotechnology (such as new tools for genetic improvement).^{28 29} As a result, rural areas are experiencing a reduction in the costs associated with their distance and remoteness from markets, thereby creating opportunities to improve the quality of life of rural populations but, at the same time, facing the risk of widening the gaps between those who have access to these technologies and those who do not.

17. The promise of digital transformation will only be fulfilled if it is possible to close the current gaps in access (to the Internet, mobile devices, resources to pay for the connection, and digital skills, among others). In this regard, it is essential to increase investments in infrastructure and services, implement new equipment provision programmes, expand digital connections in rural areas and strengthen capacities among rural populations, so they can value the transformative power of this connection, and take advantage of the full potential of the digital transformation.

18. In addition to reducing the barriers of access faced by rural populations to these technologies, a key challenge is the ability to adapt the political and institutional framework to these changes. New technologies allow more and different actors to participate in rural development, which further complicates the definition of priorities and the allocation of public spending, the development of stable collaborative relationships, regulation, and the implementation of institutional arrangements that are adaptable, transparent and efficient.³⁰

III. A strategy for the sustainable and inclusive development of the region's diverse rural territories

19. While there are territories in the region that are relatively dynamic, specialized and connected with external spaces and actors, there are also lagging territories, which have not been able to capitalize on general growth dynamics to generate inclusion, with greater deficits in their social and productive infrastructure and a high concentration of hunger and poverty.

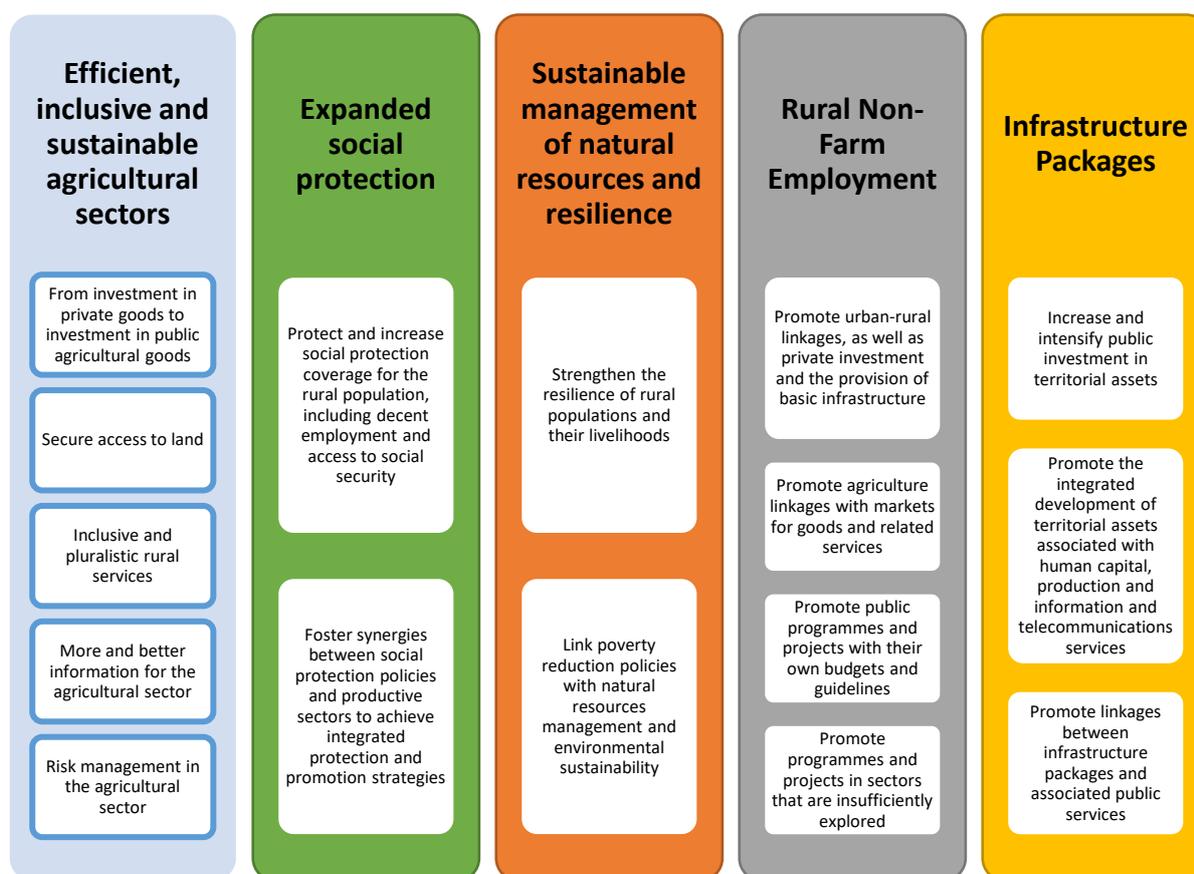
20. These two kinds of territories require differentiated public policies, with specific objectives and actions to: 1) eradicate hunger and extreme poverty in lagging territories; and 2) create new opportunities in rural territories. FAO proposes a strategic agenda with five lines of action to address these objectives in an integrated manner.

²⁸ Trivelli, C., and Berdegú, J.A., 2019. *Op. cit.*

²⁹ Trigo, E. and Elverdin, P. 2019. *Los sistemas de investigación y transferencia de tecnología agropecuaria de América Latina en el marco de los nuevos escenarios de ciencia y tecnología*. Serie 2030 – Alimentación, agricultura y desarrollo rural en América Latina y el Caribe, No. 19. Santiago. FAO.

³⁰ Wilkinson, J. 2019. *Large-scale forces, global tendencies and rural actors in the light of the SDG goals. 2030 Series – Food, Agriculture and rural development in Latin America and the Caribbean*, No 5. Santiago. FAO.

Figure 1. Agenda for the eradication of hunger and rural poverty, and the creation of new opportunities in the rural territories of Latin America and the Caribbean



Source: FAO. 2018. *Overview of rural poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Santiago.

21. Towards the implementation of this new rural development agenda, FAO offers support to member countries in:

- Providing technical assistance for the design, implementation and evaluation of rural development policies, promoting the development of political dialogue and technical exchanges, North-South, South-South and Triangular cooperation mechanisms, multistakeholder partnerships at the national and territorial level, and resource mobilization strategies for the implementation of projects related to high-impact public goods and services, such as the Hand-in-Hand Initiative³¹ and the “100 Territories free of poverty and hunger”³² strategy at the regional level.
- Supporting the countries of the region in building economic development strategies aimed at increasing productivity, social inclusion and sustainability, which are linked to leading actors in strategic development fields to promote private investment, technological progress, economic links between lagging and dynamic territories, and the implementation of integrated infrastructure and territorial services packages.
- Contributing to strategic cooperation between the social, productive and environmental sectors, providing technical assistance for the design of expanded social protection programmes with a focus on rural productive inclusion, food security and resilience, and

³¹ Presented by the Director-General of FAO in the framework of the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, 26 September 2019.

³² <http://www.fao.org/americas/prioridades/100territorios/es/>.

with the capacity for public-private sector cooperation in new hybrid schemes to provide rural services.

- Making available its technical resources, tools and standards developed and validated internationally, to assist countries of the region in strengthening spaces for dialogue and governance of natural resources, the development of regulatory frameworks, land registries, community management schemes, and the recognition and formalization of land tenure rights.
- Providing technical assistance to countries to develop rural development policies adapted to the needs of each population group, and in the implementation of a rights-based approach at the programmatic level, especially in the case of women, rural youth, indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants.
- Supporting the countries of the region in the political, social, organizational and technical strengthening of family farming and artisanal fishing organizations, and related public institutional frameworks; making them visible and supporting the participation of these organizations in integral development processes.

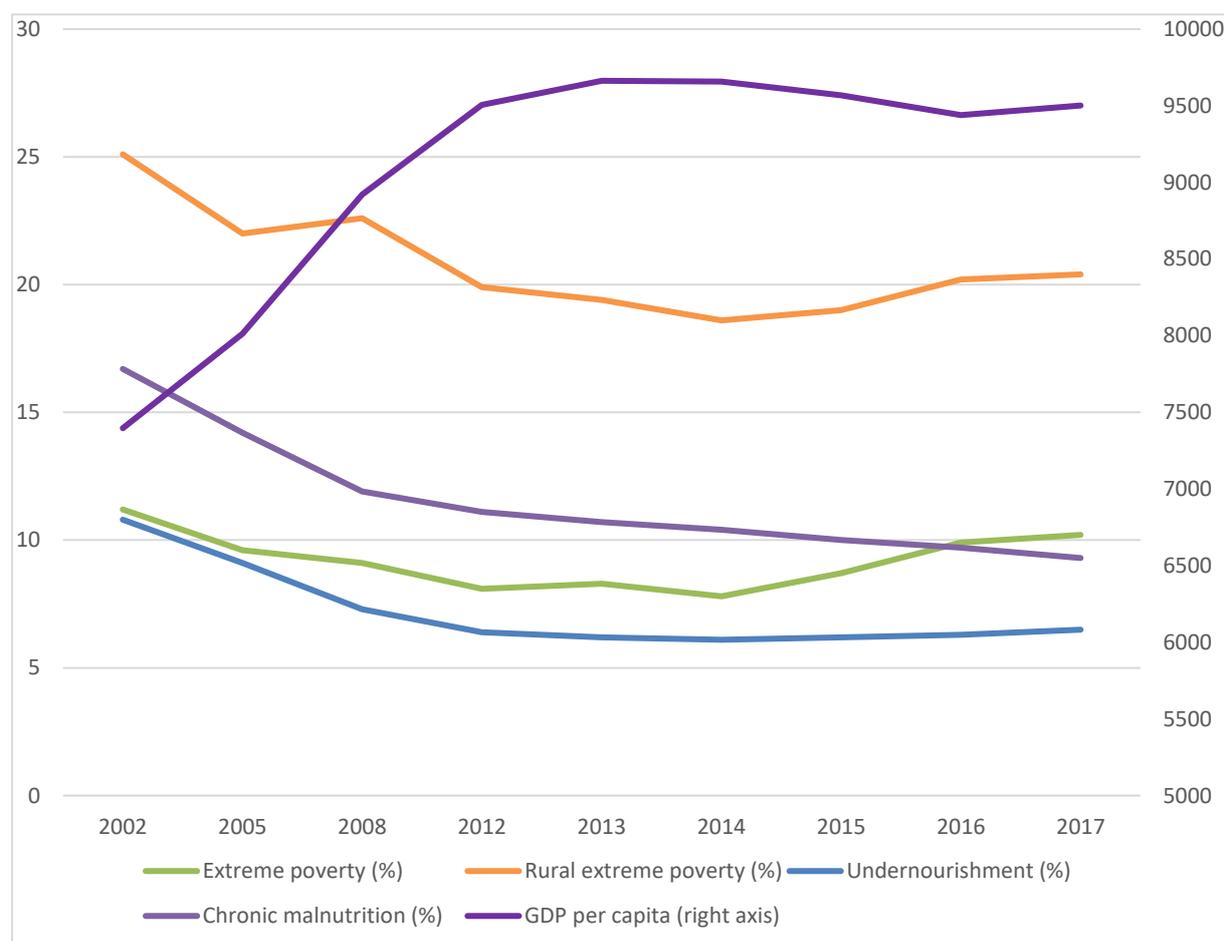
22. Lagging rural territories and those with greater dynamism are distributed heterogeneously throughout the region, and economic growth and public investment are also affected in different ways; for example, by the environmental, productive and social situation of each territory, and the international integration of each subregion. These differences demand strategies tailored to the specific needs and opportunities in each country and subregion, which can help to establish the programmatic emphasis that guides FAO's work.

- In the case of the countries of Mesoamerica, the higher relative levels of hunger and rural poverty require the expansion and adaptation of their social protection systems, and promotion of productive and economic inclusion in rural areas, with an emphasis on coverage for indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples, youth and rural women, the strengthening of family farming and the adoption of comprehensive strategies for productive innovation.
- In the Caribbean countries, it is necessary to prioritize a comprehensive rural resilience agenda, including productive, environmental and social policies, especially in coastal communities, where livelihoods are more vulnerable to the effects of climate change. In addition, there are many opportunities for strengthening value chains such as cocoa, tubers, small ruminants, fish, coffee and traditional markets. There should also be a focus on the dynamics of regional trade and the link between agriculture and tourism.
- In South American countries, together with a focus on the most lagging territories, it is also necessary to prioritize actions in forest dependent territories and populations, including the implementation of strategies for the development of indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples, and the strengthening of access and sustainable management of forests, water and land under responsible governance schemes.

III.1. Eradicating hunger and extreme poverty in the lagging territories of Latin America and the Caribbean

23. The priority development of lagging rural territories will not only allow progress towards the achievement of SDGs 1 and 2, but will also create the conditions for achieving a broader set of development goals, such as reducing gender gaps, ethnic discrimination, rural violence and illegal economies, as well as promoting the sustainable management of natural resources and facing challenges linked to forced migration.

Figure 2. Latin America and the Caribbean: Evolution of extreme poverty, undernourishment, chronic malnutrition and GDP per capita.



Source: CEPALSTAT, FAOSTAT and World Bank.

Focus areas:

24. **Interventions adapted to different national and territorial realities:** FAO offers its support to strengthen the capacity of the countries of the region to generate differentiated strategies for the eradication of hunger and rural poverty.

- At the territorial level, FAO is promoting the “100 Territories free of poverty and hunger” strategy in the region, which seeks to work with the governments of Latin America and the Caribbean in the implementation of development acceleration strategies, providing tools and knowledge, as well as access to successful experiences and technical assistance.
- At the national level, and with a direct impact on large-scale cooperation and financing actions for the achievement of SDGs 1 and 2, FAO is promoting the global *Hand-in-Hand Initiative* to establish effective North-South, South-South and Triangular cooperation mechanisms based on the identification of critical nodes of rural development, greater coordination with a wide range of technical and financial actors, and the establishment of clear and adequate monitoring frameworks for these actions through 2030.

25. **Ensuring food and nutrition security:** There are three challenges: 1) Redefine social protection benefits in line with new multidimensional poverty measurements to address deficiencies in

areas that are highly relevant for food security and nutrition, such as access to drinking water, sanitation and sewerage services, and safe food preparation; 2) Strengthen nutrition-sensitive social protection and incorporate the territorial productive sector to create stable food environments; and 3) Expand social protection coverage in rural areas and in the most vulnerable groups.

26. **Productive inclusion in the framework of social protection programmes:** It is necessary to implement ‘expanded social protection’ strategies^{33 34}, thereby expanding the social assistance base in the region through specific interventions in the productive sector, such as the transfer of inputs and assets, and technical assistance.³⁵ Without social protection, households will not be able to overcome the restrictions that prevent them from making productive investments, and without productive interventions, households will not be able to capitalize on the greater availability of liquidity to take longer-term steps towards economic inclusion, including formalization, trade expansion, decent employment and access to social security.

27. **Sustainable and resilient livelihoods:** Agroclimatic risks and natural disasters disproportionately affect the most vulnerable rural populations and territories. In the Caribbean countries, the effects of climate change are explicitly felt in the increase in extreme weather events such as hurricanes and tropical storms. In Central America, especially in the Dry Corridor territories, the effects of climate change are causing the displacement of crops and populations. In South America, drought and floods have led to increased production costs and failed crops. An economic, social and environmental risk management approach must be explicitly adopted, incorporating adequate rural services for populations in contexts of high fragility, environmental vulnerability, indigenous territories and coastal communities. This implies coordinating humanitarian responses with broader development policies, including disaster prevention, response and early rehabilitation, as well as local development strategies to address institutional and market failures.

28. **Crisis risk management due to epidemics and transboundary diseases of animals and plants (pests, pathogens and weeds):** Currently in Latin America and the Caribbean, *Fusarium* wilt³⁶ and African swine fever are serious threats to banana and pig production, respectively, which directly impacts the livelihoods of rural populations. Climate change could, in turn, increase the emergence and spread of plant pests and animal diseases, and endanger agricultural production, food safety and public health in the region. Having a risk management system in place to prevent and act on crises associated with transboundary diseases is a key investment, and an excellent opportunity to strengthen cooperation ties between the countries of the region.

III.2. Creating new opportunities in rural territories

29. In line with accelerated development strategies in the most lagging rural territories, the new rural development agenda must create new opportunities for all rural inhabitants, creating a solid regional basis for achieving the 78 percent of targets of the SDGs that depend on actions undertaken in rural areas. In this regard, it is essential to generate policy guidelines that consider the cost and effectiveness of public investments to boost agriculture, food systems and other rural economic activities, with the potential to contribute to economic growth with social inclusion and environmental sustainability, considering the fiscal and financial restrictions faced by countries.

Focus areas:

30. **Increasing productivity and access to markets:** This requires that family farmers and rural micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) have access to productive resources,

³³ FAO. 2018. *Op. cit.*

³⁴ Winder, N. and Faret, P. 2019. *Minimum social protection guarantees for the inclusive development of the rural economy in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Series 2030 - Food, agriculture and rural development in Latin America and the Caribbean, No. 22. Santiago. FAO.

³⁵ FAO. 2019. *FAO framework on rural extreme poverty*. Rome.

³⁶ *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* (Foc).

infrastructure, and good quality services and adequate coverage in terms of financing, technical assistance, training, access to markets, food quality and safety certification, business management, and support for associativity. In this regard, greater investment is needed in services that provide public goods to family farming and rural MSMEs. The success of these initiatives depends largely on reconciling innovation agendas with the adoption of more horizontal approaches to assistance, such as participatory rural extension, network management and co-managed platforms, which in practice help to promote the implementation of the territorial development approach in rural areas.

31. **Economic growth and the generation of decent jobs:** The agricultural sector remains responsible for a significant part of the generation of wealth and employment. However, the economic growth of the region based on the export of commodities has had some negative social, economic and environmental effects.^{37 38} The vision of the agricultural sector as a generator of employment must be expanded to involve related value-added sectors in food production, processing, rural services and market access. These should be supported by policies that stimulate their growth through innovation and investment, based on a much stronger foundation of environmental sustainability and social inclusion, since these have become important factors in determining access and competitiveness in more dynamic markets.

32. **Scientific innovation and technological development:** For the countries of the region, the current technological changes can be an engine of positive transformation for rural development. A key challenge is the automation of employment, including taking advantage of its opportunities and mitigating its negative impacts. Another challenge is to encourage innovation to decouple the growth of the agricultural sector from greenhouse gas emissions. A third focus is innovation for the production, supply, processing and marketing of healthy foods. A wide range of opportunities can be created for rural women and youth with appropriate policies and incentives.

33. **Strengthening the economic and social inclusion of family farming and artisanal fisheries:** Changes in markets with greater access requirements, the accelerated pace of technological transformations, and demands for knowledge and management skills impose new challenges for family farming. This socio-productive sector is key to the achievement of healthier and more sustainable food systems, and more dynamic territorial economies. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen family farming organizations, recognizing and valuing their economic, social, environmental and cultural contribution, and creating a renewed institutional framework to meet the current challenges facing the sector. The Global Action Plan of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming provides a comprehensive framework to guide the actions that will be carried out by a wide variety of stakeholders over the next ten years, identifying seven lines of action to develop policies, programmes and regulations that will promote the development of family farming. In addition, it calls for the implementation of 100 national plans globally by 2024.³⁹

34. **Incorporating migratory movements in rural development policies:** Migration – internal and international– plays a key role in rural development. It can both erode the productive and social foundation of the territories, as well as being a dynamic force for development. Expanding the base of rural opportunities also means avoiding the expulsion of rural inhabitants from their own territories due to the general lack of opportunities, violence and environmental vulnerability; and strengthening urban-rural links to foster demographic and economically dynamic territories.

³⁷ ECLAC. 2018. *La ineficiencia de la desigualdad*. Síntesis. Trigésimo séptimo período de sesiones de la ECLAC. Havana, Cuba, 7-11 May 2018. Santiago.

³⁸ Trivelli, C., and Berdegué, J.A., 2019. *Op. cit.*

³⁹ <https://www.familyfarmingcampaign.org/en/news/2019/06/following-the-global-launch-of-the-decade-on-family-farming-the-next-step-is-to-design-and-implement-the-national-action-plans>

35. **Tenure, governance and administration of land and natural resources:** Land in Latin America and the Caribbean is an extremely concentrated resource.⁴⁰ In addition, in many territories of the region, forests, water and biodiversity are threatened by dynamics of unsustainability and unequal access. These inequalities directly affect targets related to SDGs 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 15 and 16.⁴¹ Therefore, it is important to take actions such as community forest management, recognition and protection of indigenous territories, and the strengthening of land registries and formalization of tenure rights. Along these lines, it is necessary to improve the governance of land tenure at all levels, based on the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, approved by the Committee on World Food Security in 2012.⁴²

IV. Key components to strengthen the new rural development agenda

36. **Institutional reform:** The ability to address key aspects, such as vertical and horizontal interinstitutional coordination, must be improved, as well as better management of socio-environmental conflicts, and generating appropriate strategies for cross-border issues. To this end, greater coherence between the functions and powers of existing institutions must be fostered, as well as generating expanded governance spaces, ensuring the efficiency of spending and the effective territorial coverage of investments, and implementing integrated information systems and intersectoral goal-setting. Governments in the region can integrate these lines of action in practice, generating tax incentive systems that reward and promote successful management processes in prioritized territories.

37. **Strengthening budgets for inclusive and sustainable rural development:** In a scenario of lower economic growth and funding availability, it is necessary to prioritize the financing of goods and services with greater impact on rural development. The evidence shows that the trend of public sector spending that prioritizes private transfers is inconsistent with this objective.^{43 44} It is necessary to redirect the public budgets of the rural sector towards the development of public goods (health and agricultural mechanization, innovation, infrastructure, technical assistance and access to markets). However, this will still not be enough to finance the achievement of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is also necessary to promote private investment and public-private partnerships to increase the coverage of public goods and services, and capitalize on the various development opportunities offered by the diversified rural economy of the 21st Century.

38. **Increase the effectiveness of rural development efforts:** Ambitious goals require accurate measurements. This implies strengthening the quality of public spending through evidence-based decisions and adequate information, and improving the capacities of public and private actors to design, implement and evaluate development initiatives, especially in local and subnational governments. This includes an effort to continue improving the quality and impact of FAO-driven projects, which must continue to align their offices, strategic programmes, technical divisions and field projects for the efficient achievement of transformative and sustainable results.

39. FAO recommends countries to invest in actions and strategies that seek to integrate and promote synergies between the three lines of action⁴⁵ proposed for the conference, towards food and agricultural systems that ensure healthy diets, which are produced on a sustainable basis, resilient to climate change and including the poorest and the most vulnerable, generating employment

⁴⁰ Albertus, M. 2019. *Agrarian Structure in Latin America. 2030 Series – Food, agriculture and rural development in Latin America and the Caribbean*, No 17. Santiago. FAO.

⁴¹ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/es/objetivos-de-desarrollo-sostenible/>

⁴² <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i2801s.pdf>

⁴³ FAO. 2018. *Op. Cit.*

⁴⁴ Anríquez, G., Foster, W., Ortega, J., Falconi, C. and De Salvo, C. 2016. *Public spending and the performance of agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean*. Working Paper IDP-WP-722. Washington D.C., IDB.

⁴⁵ LARC/20/2 “Transforming food systems for healthy diets for all”, LARC/20/3 “Hand -in-Hand towards prosperous and inclusive rural societies” and LARC/20/4 “Sustainable and climate resilient agriculture”.

opportunities and reducing inequality in rural areas. FAO offers to support member countries to promote integrated strategies based on these principles and to support the achievements of the SDGs.

40. To promote prosperous and inclusive rural societies, FAO offers assistance to countries to achieve the following SDGs:

SDG 1	No Poverty
1.1	By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people
1.2	By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children in poverty
1.3	Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable
1.4	By 2030, ensure equal rights for all
SDG 2	Zero Hunger
2.1	By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round
2.2	By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons
2.3	By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment
2.a	Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries
SDG 4	Quality Education
4.4	By 2030, substantially increase the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship
SDG 5	Gender Equality
5.1	End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
5.a	Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws
5.b	Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women
SDG 8	Decent Work and Economic Growth
8.3	Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services
8.5	By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value
8.6	By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
SDG 10	Reduced Inequality
10.4	Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality
SDG 14	Life below Water
14.b	Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets

41. As part of its transformation into a more dynamic, responsive, effective and efficient organization, FAO offers innovative support to countries in the implementation of the work programme described in this document. Today, member countries, rural societies and the agricultural and food systems of the region are very different from what they were in the 1970s and 1980s, when FAO's presence in the countries and its modus operandi were established. To maximize this presence, and increase the effectiveness and impact of its support for Members in the regional context, FAO seeks to adopt a model that emphasizes⁴⁶:

- (a) Achieving results in innovations, policies and investments that lead to outcomes and impacts at a scale consistent with the countries' ambitions to comply with the SDGs.
- (b) Working in a more programmatic way and organizing its staff in multidisciplinary teams to integrate policies, norms, knowledge, operations and investment support for member countries.
- (c) Strengthening the operational and implementation capacities of Decentralized Offices in the member countries, particularly those that are experiencing rapid growth in their budgets and work plans.
- (d) Collaboration and partnerships, mobilizing the capacities of the governments of the region, the private sector, civil society, academia and research institutes through collaboration and partnerships, to include the development of strategic alliances, and South-South and Triangular cooperation.
- (e) Developing capabilities to perform high-quality strategic analysis, monitoring, evaluation, knowledge management and responsibility.
- (f) Maintaining the positive growth trend in the mobilization of resources to better serve member countries.

⁴⁶ See LARC/20/8 "*Improving FAO's capacities to serve member countries in Latin America and the Caribbean*".