Emerging trends, challenges and opportunities

In the area of trade, FAO undertakes in-depth analyses of multidisciplinary issues related to agricultural trade and markets and provides guidance for responsible value chains. Issues addressed have included the interactions between climate change and trade, the interlinkages between agriculture and migration, and the promotion of responsible business conduct and due diligence in global value chains. The objective is to identify emerging trends and challenges, and propose policy options that help promote the proper functioning global markets and value chains and eradicate hunger. The publications developed under this work area present state-of-the-art analysis to inform all key stakeholders in and beyond the agricultural sector.

Agricultural commodities and development
Agricultural commodity markets play a fundamental role in sustainable development, and are especially important for developing countries. They influence the allocation of resources in agriculture and the adoption of technologies, thus affecting income distribution and welfare. Agricultural commodity markets and prices also have macro-economic impacts for many national economies. The work undertaken under this research area feeds into the writing of The State of Agricultural Commodity Markets report (SOCO), which is part of FAO’s flagship publication series.

Contemporary global issues
This track of work undertakes novel research on multidisciplinary areas connected to food and agriculture. Examples of these areas of work include the interlinkages between agriculture and migration; the reverberations that climate change may have on international commodity markets and trade; the effects of trade on poverty and income distribution in developing countries, and the mechanisms through which these impacts are transmitted to household level.

Responsible global value chains for agricultural products
FAO promotes responsible business conduct in global agricultural value chains. It collaborates with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to promote the application of the OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains by companies. This collaboration includes awareness-raising activities and implementing a pilot project to test the guidance with companies and industry initiatives. The project focuses on peer-learning and disseminating good practices. The team is also planning activities to promote responsible global value chains for tropical fruits.

Global engagement (G20 and G7)
FAO supports the deliberations of the Group of Twenty (G20) and the Group of Seven (G7) with evidence-based policy advice, technical inputs, thematic reports and proposals for concrete actions that support the provision of global public goods in the area of food security and sustainable agriculture. The reports are often produced in partnership with the Rome-based Agencies, the World Bank, OECD and others. Examples of issues addressed include sustainable water and soil management in agriculture, information and communication technology (ICT) use in agriculture, value chains, human capital development, and the 2030 Agenda.
Commodities and Development Report 2017: Commodity Markets, Economic Growth and Development

The report examines the complex interlinkages between migration, agriculture, food security and rural development. It does so by taking stock of the literature and the evidence from both developed and developing countries focusing on why people from rural areas decide to migrate. The report covers both direct linkages between food security and migration (when people do not see viable options other than migrating to escape hunger) and the indirect ones (when migration becomes part of a broader household strategy to cope with income uncertainties and food insecurity risks).

Available in: English

The Linkages between Migration, Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development: Technical report

The report examines the complex interlinkages between migration, agriculture, food security and rural development. It does so by taking stock of the literature and the evidence from both developed and developing countries focusing on why people from rural areas decide to migrate. The report covers both direct linkages between food security and migration (when people do not see viable options other than migrating to escape hunger) and the indirect ones (when migration becomes part of a broader household strategy to cope with income uncertainties and food insecurity risks).

Available in: English

Commodities and Development Report 2017: Commodity Markets, Economic Growth and Development

The report brings together the complementary expertise of UNCTAD and the FAO, creating synergies between both mandates – UNCTAD’s to promote the integration of developing countries into the global economy and FAO’s to eradicate hunger and promote food and agricultural production. The report added to the available global body of research on commodity dependence to inform public policy analysis and deliberation, focusing particularly on developing countries.

Available in: English

OECD-FAO Publications

OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains

OECD and FAO have jointly developed this guidance to help enterprises observe standards of responsible business conduct and undertake due diligence along agricultural supply chains. This practical guidance should help companies ensure that their operations contribute to sustainable development.

Available in: Chinese, English, French and Spanish

Pilot project on the implementation of the OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains Final Report

FAO and the OECD are currently operating a pilot project to road test the OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains with a group of selected enterprises and industry initiatives. Participants include global consumer brands, retailers, producers, financial enterprises as well as industry programmes, associations and cooperatives seeking to support their membership base in strengthening their responsible business practices.

Available in: English

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