



## BOOSTING DECENT RURAL EMPLOYMENT THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTEGRATED COUNTRY APPROACH AND DIMITRA CLUBS

Thanks to its Flexible Multi-Partner Mechanism (FMM), FAO has successfully implemented a number of projects in recent years in two crucial work streams that contribute to rural poverty reduction and gender equality: decent rural employment (DRE) and community engagement. In the first case, through the Integrated Country Approach (ICA), FAO has supported countries in developing more youth-inclusive and employment-centred policies and strategies, with a strong emphasis on job creation and job quality. In the second, in its efforts to promote the use of community-led and participatory models for facilitating the empowerment of rural populations and gender equality, the Dimitra Club (DC) approach has been developed and implemented by FAO in several countries of sub-Saharan Africa. DCs have a bottom-up, community-led approach to development that enhances the capacities of rural populations, particularly women and youth, to participate in local decision-making, organize for collective action and engage in dialogue and networking. They amplify the voices of rural women, so that they are heard at national and international levels. In order to maintain and expand upon the significant achievements of previous programmes and activities and to promote impact at scale, this project was implemented to ensure continued coordination and technical support to both work streams, to mobilize further resources and to create partnerships for subsequent projects in these areas.



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### WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

The project enabled the Organization to maintain core capacities and technical expertise in two work areas: DRE and DCs, while also ensuring coordination and technical backstopping in several countries and a smooth transition into a second phase of relevant projects.

As a result, the project contributed to the development of key knowledge and normative products, technical support to Regional and Country Offices and advocacy on DRE, child labour prevention and the community-led development model of the DCs. It promoted and increased the visibility of the related areas, systematizing lessons learned, enhancing capacities and mobilizing resources for scaling up. In addition, FAO tools and approaches in the areas of decent rural youth employment, child labour prevention and community engagement were developed in a gender perspective and disseminated.

### IMPACT

Both DRE and community engagement represent key drivers for poverty reduction and improved livelihoods. Enhancing youth employment rates and working conditions in rural areas through improved access to productive resources and skills development have significant potential to reduce rural poverty. In addition, ending child labour in agriculture is crucial for future decent youth employment opportunities, the reduction of poverty and the achievement of food security. Through the DRE Team, FAO supports countries in the development of policies and programmes to generate more decent farm and non-farm employment opportunities, promoting employment enhancement in agri-food systems with a focus on disadvantaged groups of workers. Through community mobilization, the DCs facilitate rural women and men's empowerment by improving their participation in decision-making processes, promote collective action and intra- and intercommunity dialogue, and enhance women and youth's voices and leadership.

### KEY FACTS

#### Contribution

USD 596 929

#### Duration

June 2018 – June 2020

#### Resource Partners

Multilateral

#### Beneficiaries

Rural men, women, children and youth in the targeted countries, with a particular focus on the most marginalized; Agricultural line ministries; Ministries of labour, education and vocational training, environment and youth; Regional organizations and financial institutions; Agricultural producers', workers' and employers' organizations; and Community-based organizations.

# ACTIVITIES

- Technical support was provided to Regional and Country Offices on youth employment promotion, child labour prevention, and gender equality, including in relation to the activation of the inception phase of the ICA Programme and resource mobilization through the development of a joint proposal developed by FAO, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on youth employment in Guatemala.
- Advocacy activities and communication and knowledge products on youth employment and child labour prevention were produced. This included support to the development of a tool and guidelines on conducting value chain analyses that focus on youth employment, awareness raising on hazardous work for children (in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention) and knowledge generation on child labour in agriculture in the Middle East and North Africa (in collaboration with the ILO and the League of Arab States).
- Technical support was provided to ensure a smooth transition from the ICA global programme to Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) projects led by country offices, through the development of three spin-off TCP projects.
- Visibility on DRE, child labour prevention and gender equality was enhanced through key knowledge products, coordination and consultations with resource and development partners, as well as the development of ICA and DC broad proposals as FAO flagship programmes on DRE and community engagement and empowerment.
- The FAO DRE toolbox and database were updated.
- Technical support was provided to ensure the effective integration of the DC approach in 20 projects in sub-Saharan Africa throughout the project cycle (formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation). This support included methodological backstopping to ensure adaptation of the methodology when the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic broke out.
- Methodological support was provided for action-trainings on the DC approach, including on participatory communication and women’s leadership, that were conducted in Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madagascar, Mali, Niger and Senegal to a variety of different stakeholders (representatives from NGOs, ministries, community radio stations and producer organizations).
- Policy support was provided to facilitate the institutionalization of the approach in relevant national projects (e.g. the World Bank-funded Climate-Smart Agriculture Support Project and the *Projet d'appui à l'agriculture sensible aux risques climatiques* (PASEC) and legal instruments and institutions (e.g. the Rural Code in Niger and *le Conseil Agricole* in Senegal).
- Advocacy activities were conducted and communication and knowledge products (such as impact studies, country brochures and videos) were produced to facilitate the sharing of experiences and capitalization of good practices related to the DCs.



**Project Code**  
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**Project Title**  
Boosting the Decent Rural Employment and Dimitra Work

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