



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations




OUR PRIORITIES

The FAO Strategic Objectives



The new and
improved FAO
has a real chance
at winning the
battle against
hunger, malnutrition
and rural poverty.





Achieving FAO's goals to end hunger and poverty is a challenging and complex task. However, in an evolving and interdependent world, it is more important and urgent than ever before.

Against a backdrop of rising food demand, persistent food insecurity and malnutrition, rural poverty, economic instability and climate change, we must be able to deliver impact on the ground. These challenges prompted a major rethink of how we do business, with a broad and inclusive process that started in 2012 and culminated in 2013 with a new strategic framework. Today, FAO is a fitter, flatter and more flexible organization whose activities are driven by the five strategic objectives described in this booklet. The process of strengthening our presence in the field and a clear focus on results is well underway.



HELP ELIMINATE HUNGER, FOOD INSECURITY AND MALNUTRITION



The figures are as grim as they are familiar: more than 800 million people suffer from chronic hunger; one in four children under five years of age is at risk of dying as a result of malnutrition associated diseases; over two billion people lack the vitamins and minerals they need to grow and develop into healthy human beings.

The world already produces more than enough food for all. However, many do not have access to the food produced, because they simply do not have the resources needed to purchase or produce enough good food. But poverty isn't the only factor behind hunger. Wars, natural disasters and economic crises can all block people's access to food. Furthermore, even if food is available, it is important that people eat food that is well-balanced, safe and nutritious. Not eating the right quantity and quality of food is self-perpetuating. It takes a toll on people's health, energy and mental abilities, making it harder for them to learn and lead a productive life.

FAO's mandate is to support its members in their efforts to ensure that people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives. But we can't do it alone. Ridding the world of food insecurity and malnutrition requires action at all levels of society, from farming communities to international organizations. We can help by supporting policies and political commitments that promote food security and good nutrition and by making sure that up-to-date information about hunger and malnutrition challenges and solutions is available and accessible.



STRENGTHEN POLITICAL WILL

WE SUPPORT GOVERNMENTS AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS to design the right policies, programmes and legal frameworks that promote food security and nutrition.

WE ADVOCATE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THESE POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES, encouraging sufficient financial resources to be made available, the right organizational structures to be in place, and importantly, ensuring adequate human capacities.

ENHANCE GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION

WE ENHANCE THE CAPACITY OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS to put in place governance and coordination mechanisms and broad partnerships for more focused and coordinated action towards the eradication of hunger and malnutrition.

IMPROVE IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

WE ASSIST COUNTRIES IN ENSURING that the formulation of policies, investment and action plans is based on evidence; helping countries in generating credible data and statistics, and strengthening analytical capacities.

WE WORK WITH PARTNERS to monitor progress, assess impact and learn lessons from their efforts in food security and nutrition.

WE ENCOURAGE PARTNERS TO MAKE SURE THAT ACTION at all levels (global, regional and country) produces country-level tangible and measurable results towards the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

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MAKE AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES MORE PRODUCTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE



Feeding the growing global population – projected to reach 9 billion by 2050 – will require a significant increase in the productivity of the agricultural sectors (crops, livestock, forestry and fisheries), while conserving the world's natural resources. Growing agriculture is also the best way to reduce poverty in most developing countries. However, we must ensure that this increased productivity does not only benefit the few, and that the natural resource base can provide services (pollination, nutrient cycling in soils, quality water, etc.) that enhance sustainability.

The switch away from a simple focus on maximizing productivity towards a more sustainable agriculture requires research and innovation. Much is not yet known, for example the role that ecosystem services can play in improving agricultural productivity. Nor is there much knowledge about how to increase productivity using fewer scarce or expensive inputs, such as water, fertilizers or pesticides. Living within our carrying capacity is a central principle of sustainability.



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SUPPORT PRACTICES THAT INCREASE SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY

WE DEVELOP AND SHARE sustainable production strategies with decision-makers.

WE DEVELOP AND PROMOTE management practices that increase productivity and save natural resources.

WE HELP PRODUCERS TO ADOPT the technologies and practices that best suit their needs.

PROVIDE INFORMATION TO SUPPORT THE TRANSITION TO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

WE GATHER AND SHARE THE INFORMATION needed to underpin the development of highly sustainable and productive agriculture.

WE DEVELOP AND SHARE ANALYTICAL TOOLS for planning the management of natural resources in agricultural systems.

WE HELP COUNTRIES TO COLLECT relevant data for use in decision-making.

WE DEVELOP TOOLS FOR SETTING INTERNATIONAL POLICIES on sustainable agriculture system production.

PROMOTE THE TRANSITION TO SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

WE HELP COUNTRIES TO ASSESS the effectiveness of their strategies for sustainable agriculture.

WE SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLICIES AND LAWS to underpin the transition to sustainable agriculture.

WE HELP NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS TO SUPPORT the transition to sustainable agriculture.

ADVOCATE THE ADOPTION OF INTERNATIONAL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR HIGHLY PRODUCTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

WE ENSURE THAT INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS on sustainable agriculture are backed by national laws and policies.

WE STRONGLY ADVOCATE COUNTRY ADHERENCE to international agreements and partnerships that promote productive and sustainable agriculture.

WE SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION of national laws and policies on sustainable agriculture.

REDUCE RURAL POVERTY



The global target of halving the share of people living below the extreme poverty line of USD 1.25 per person per day has already been reached ahead of the expectation. Progress has been uneven, however. Most of the decline has been achieved in Asia, and in Sub-Saharan Africa, poverty rates have declined too slowly to prevent the absolute number of poor from increasing.

Fighting rural poverty remains the biggest challenge. More than three quarters of the world's extreme poor live in rural areas, affecting more than 900 million people in 2010. Rural poverty strikes the households of small-scale agricultural producers and workers that hold precarious, poorly paid jobs or who are unable to find employment.

Helping smallholders to improve farm productivity is important, but it is not enough to lift all rural poor out of poverty. Off-farm employment opportunities need to be increased, along with finding better ways for rural populations to manage and cope with risks in their environments such as better social protection. By providing greater income security the rural poor will be stimulated to invest more into their future: into their farms, sustainable food security, and the education of their children.

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IMPROVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE RURAL POOR TO ACCESS DECENT FARM AND NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT

WE IMPROVE THE DESIGN of rural economic diversification strategies and policies that promote decent work creation and skills training for rural workers, especially for youth and rural women.

WE ASSIST IN THE APPLICATION OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR STANDARDS, such as eliminating discrimination, ensuring occupational safety and health and preventing child labour, consistent with overall improvement of rural livelihoods.

IMPROVE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS

WE STRENGTHEN THE SYNERGIES between social protection measures and food security, improved nutrition, agricultural productivity growth, empowerment of rural women, and rural poverty reduction.

WE SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES on social protection for the rural poor, including in relation to remittances, migration, and cash transfers.

WE STRENGTHEN SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMMES to be more effective to help the rural poor manage risks.

EMPOWER THE RURAL POOR GAINING SUSTAINABLE ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

WE STRENGTHEN RURAL INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS, including producer organization and cooperatives.

WE FORMULATE COMPREHENSIVE RURAL DEVELOPMENT and poverty reduction strategies.

WE IMPROVE PROVISION of rural infrastructure and services accessible to the rural poor.

WE IMPROVE ACCESS of the rural poor to natural resources and the sustainable management of those resources.

WE IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY and income generation capacity of smallholder farmers and other producers.

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ENABLE INCLUSIVE AND EFFICIENT AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD SYSTEMS



Global food challenges are different today than in the past, and so are the solutions. Globalization and commercialization have brought revolutionary changes to agricultural and food systems. Global agricultural markets are also more integrated and more risky than ever before.

Recent developments in food systems and value chains have yielded positive results, but at the same time have created serious barriers for smallholder producers and small countries to participate in local, national and global markets. Increasing their participation in food and agricultural systems is critical to achieving FAO's goal of a world without hunger.

IMPROVE THE INCLUSIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF FOOD SYSTEMS

WE BUILD NATIONAL CAPACITY to collect and use information about food, agriculture and markets.

WE HELP GOVERNMENTS TO SUPPORT the sustainable development of food systems.

WE HELP GOVERNMENTS TO REGULATE plant and animal health, food quality and safety.

WE HELP STRENGTHEN RURAL-URBAN LINKS and improve food transport to cities.

WE BUILD AN EVIDENCE BASE on food loss and waste, and work with partners to create an enabling environment to reduce them.

WE HELP COUNTRIES TO STRENGTHEN small and medium food and forestry enterprises.

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HELP STRENGTHEN PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATION TO IMPROVE SMALLHOLDER AGRICULTURE

WE HELP GOVERNMENTS TO COLLABORATE more effectively with the food industry.

WE FACILITATE PUBLIC-PRIVATE EFFORTS to improve smallholder productivity and access to markets.

WE ENGAGE THE FOOD INDUSTRY AND NON-PROFITS in providing support and services to smallholder farmers and small and medium food companies.

WE FACILITATE GREATER PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INVESTMENTS in strengthening the food sector.

WE ASSIST THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND NON-PROFITS to ensure that their activities take account of the rural poor.

WE ENSURE THAT GLOBAL AND REGIONAL COMPANIES can meet the evolving needs of consumers for food and agricultural products.

IMPROVE THE INCLUSIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY OF MARKETS

WE GATHER AND SHARE INFORMATION on market access and development.

WE HELP COUNTRIES TO PARTICIPATE MORE FULLY in global and regional markets based on fair trade principles.

WE ENCOURAGE COUNTRIES TO ADOPT INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS on animal health and food quality and safety.

WE STRENGTHEN FINANCIAL MECHANISMS TO SUPPORT the growth of the agriculture and food industries.

WE BUILD THE CAPACITY OF REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS to contribute to the development of efficient and inclusive food markets.

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INCREASE THE RESILIENCE OF LIVELIHOODS FROM DISASTERS



Feeding the world's growing population, without irreparably harming the environment is a huge challenge in a world beset by crisis and disaster. Wars, earthquakes, droughts, floods, pests and disease outbreaks, tsunamis, financial crises... such emergencies make sustainable food security for all seem an unattainable dream. Every region of the world is at risk but the poorest people are the most vulnerable, because they often lack the basic means to enable them to cope or recover.



Natural disasters have always occurred but climate change may be intensifying their frequency and power. In the past, humanitarian agencies have focused mainly on disaster relief. A new paradigm is needed that emphasizes reducing risks to enhance resilience to shocks. The approach, which requires action at local, national, regional and global levels, aims to ensure that families, communities and institutions anticipate, accommodate or recover and adapt from crises and disasters in a timely, efficient and sustainable manner.

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HELP COUNTRIES GOVERN RISKS AND CRISES

WE HELP COUNTRIES AND REGIONAL AND GLOBAL AUTHORITIES develop strategies and plans for reducing and managing disaster-related risks to agriculture, food, and nutrition.

WE ASSIST COUNTRIES TO ENSURE THAT RISK REDUCTION MEASURES are included in all policies related to agriculture, food and nutrition.

WE BUILD NATIONAL AND LOCAL CAPACITIES for reducing and managing risks specific to agriculture, food and nutrition.

WE SUPPORT STRATEGIES FOR RISK REDUCTION AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT, based on good practices tested and implemented in various agro-ecological and diverse livelihoods contexts.

WE ADVOCATE FOR THE MOBILIZATION OF ADEQUATE RESOURCES towards risk reduction for agriculture, food and nutrition.

HELP COUNTRIES WATCH TO SAFEGUARD

WE DEVELOP AND SHARE MECHANISMS to monitor and warn about multi-hazard risks and threats to agriculture, food, and nutrition.

WE HELP COUNTRIES AND COMMUNITIES to monitor, warn and act on risks and threats to agriculture, food and nutrition.

HELP COUNTRIES PREVENT AND MITIGATE RISKS

WE DEVELOP AND SHARE STRATEGIES to reduce the impact of disasters on livelihoods.

WE HELP COUNTRIES TO ENSURE their agricultural and marketing systems can withstand and recover from crises.

WE ASSIST COUNTRIES AND COMMUNITIES to reduce local conflict over access to natural resources.

WE DOCUMENT AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE about the implementation of successful risk reduction measures (including social protection and social adaptation).

SUPPORT COUNTRIES' PREPARATION AND RESPONSE

WE ADVOCATE AND PROVIDE ASSISTANCE so that humanitarian action protects the livelihoods of vulnerable farmers, herders, fishers and tree-dependent communities during emergencies.

WE HELP TO ENSURE that disaster response plans are coordinated at all levels.

WE DOCUMENT AND SHARE KNOWLEDGE about successful disaster preparedness and response actions.

GETTING THE JOB DONE



Our **TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE** underpins everything we do. Achieving our ambitious objectives requires us to adjust and deploy our technical capacity, particularly as we concentrate more of our work in the field. The responsibility for making sure we deliver high quality knowledge and services lies with FAO's technical departments; their technical capacities feed into the corporate plans on the strategic objectives.

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FAO works through organization-wide *ACTION PLANS* to address the issues and problems identified for each strategic objective, where we apply our *CORE FUNCTIONS* to achieve concrete results by:

Working with countries to develop and implement agreements, codes of conduct and technical standards;

Collecting, analyzing and monitoring agricultural data and information to support policy decisions;

Enabling policy dialogue at global, regional and country levels;

Working in partnership with a wide range of institutions, including international and regional organizations, universities, governments, civil society, the private sector and grassroots organizations;

Building the capacity of countries to meet their agricultural development goals;

Capturing and sharing knowledge internally and with partners;

Communicating about our work.

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Two fundamental areas of work – gender and governance - are fully integrated in the way we work through the strategic objective action plans.

GOVERNANCE involves strategies, policies, processes and decisions. It is fundamental to all organizational settings, from large international agencies like FAO to national governments, businesses and local communities. To achieve our strategic objectives, we will need to tackle many complex challenges across a number of sectors. Our success will require governance mechanisms that support effective problem solving by stakeholders whose agendas often conflict.

FAO will give prominence, in all of its work, to strengthening the rules and processes that affect the interactions between state and non-state actors. Governance issues will be taken up in the context of all five strategic objectives. In addition, we will address governance challenges across the strategic objectives to reinforce consistency, coordination and mutual learning.

GENDER: A world free from poverty, hunger and malnutrition requires that both men and women have opportunities and can benefit from sustainable development. Like governance, the issue of gender cuts across all of FAO's strategic objectives. We will make sure that all of our work emphasizes gender equity, participation and the empowerment of women. This will involve addressing gender issues relevant to our five strategic objectives, helping countries to support gender equity and analyzing and sharing knowledge and lessons learned across all of the strategic objectives.

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Achieving FAO's goals to end hunger and poverty is a challenging and complex task. Today, thanks to major changes in how we do business, FAO is a fitter, flatter and more flexible organization, whose activities are driven by five strategic objectives. The new and improved FAO has a real chance to win the battle against hunger, malnutrition and rural poverty.

HELP ELIMINATE HUNGER, FOOD INSECURITY AND MALNUTRITION

We contribute to the eradication of hunger by facilitating policies and political commitments to support food security and by making sure that up-to-date information about hunger and nutrition challenges and solutions is available and accessible.

MAKE AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES MORE PRODUCTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE

We promote evidence-based policies and practices to support highly productive agricultural sectors (crops, livestock, forestry and fisheries), while ensuring that the natural resource base does not suffer in the process.

REDUCE RURAL POVERTY

We help the rural poor gain access to the resources and services they need – including rural employment and social protection – to forge a path out of poverty.

ENABLE INCLUSIVE AND EFFICIENT AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD SYSTEMS

We help to build safe and efficient food systems that support smallholder agriculture and reduce poverty and hunger in rural areas.

INCREASE THE RESILIENCE OF LIVELIHOODS FROM DISASTERS

We help countries to prepare for natural and human-caused disasters by reducing their risk and enhancing the resilience of their food and agricultural systems.

