

SE38: Harnessing climate finance and social protection for inclusive agrifood system transformation

Organized by: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Green Climate Fund, the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Summary of the side event

Rural populations are on the front line of climate change, but only 1.7 percent of the limited pool of climate finance currently reaches small-scale farmers. The challenge in responding to climate change is therefore not just to scale up climate finance but to ensure it is mobilised to deliver an inclusive and just response to the climate crisis for rural communities. Through its focus on poor and vulnerable populations, social protection can play a critical role in advancing inclusive and resilient climate action to support climate adaptation and mitigation goals, as well as to address unavoidable loss and damage and ensure a just transition for rural populations and those working in agrifood systems.

To raise awareness of this issue and explore key challenges and opportunities in directing climate finance towards social protection for inclusive agrifood system transformation, this event brought together a distinguished group of experts and speakers to address the topic. Lauren Phillips, Deputy Director of FAO's Rural Transformation and Gender Equality Division, opened the session with an overview of FAO's work on this area, including [joint work with UNICEF in the Caribbean](#) and upcoming projects supported by the FCDO's Social Protection Technical Assistance, Advice and Resources Facility (STAAR). She also emphasized the importance of collaborative fora such as the [Universal Social Protection 2030 Working Group on Social Protection and Climate Change](#) (which FAO co-chairs along with the International Labour Organization and the Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre) and the multi-stakeholder [FAST Partnership](#), which works to unlock more and better climate finance for agrifood system transformation.

Opening remarks from Ann-Kathrin Beck, Senior Policy Officer for Social Protection at the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), set the scene for the discussions, including an update on the taskforce on Adaptive Social Protection and Climate Finance BMZ have been supporting. These were followed by a presentation from Matthew Walsham, FAO Social Protection Specialist, on findings from a recent review of social protection for rural populations within the existing portfolio of three of the major multilateral climate funds, including insights from the review on scaling-up and strengthening the role of social protection in inclusive climate action for rural, agrifood system dependent populations.

Stephanie Speck, Head of Vulnerability and Head of Communications for the Green Climate Fund, then spoke about the Fund's perspective on the role of social protection in relation to their strategic priorities going forward. Her remarks were followed by insights and reflections on Brazil's experience in relation to climate finance and social protection at both national and international level from H.E. Carla Barroso Carneiro, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Federative Republic of Brazil to FAO. The final presentation from Imelda Phadtare, Principal Climate Change Advisor for Save the Children Australia, focused on the [LINK project](#), a new \$28 million dollar Green Climate Fund project that integrates social protection with climate adaptation by using Mozambique's Productive Social Action Programme to target and deliver support to rural communities.

The side event, which was closed by H.E. Evelyn Ashton-Griffiths, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to FAO, was an important opportunity to raise awareness and foster collaboration among CFS delegates and other key actors across the climate, social protection and agrifood sectors on how to scale up and strengthen the use of social protection for inclusive climate action in rural settings.