

Action now in food security, nutrition and agriculture will be instrumental in tackling the root causes of hunger and poverty, addressing climate change, promoting sustainable development and achieving prosperity for all. These are all key elements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which represents a call to action for the global community to deliver on the transformations needed to create a more sustainable, prosperous, inclusive and peaceful world.

The ability to eradicate hunger and malnutrition and sustainably feed a growing population by 2030 depends on dedicated investments in social protection, disaster risk reduction and efforts to foster the **unique skills of farmers, fishers, herders and forest-dependent communities to produce food and manage the natural environment** we all rely on. Moving forward with a comprehensive vision of SDG2 will deliver progress throughout the 17 SDGs.

Key messages:

- A. **Reach zero hunger by working together** to tackle root causes, link social protection to sustainable agriculture
- B. **Accelerate investment in food and agriculture** to drive implementation across the SDGs
- C. **Address the needs of the most vulnerable populations, including rural people**, to ensure that no one will be left behind

The importance of food security, nutrition, and agriculture

- Food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture represent a fundamental connection between people and planet and the three dimensions of sustainable development.
- Malnutrition, as a result of lost productivity and direct health care costs, could account for as much as 5 percent of global GDP, equivalent to US\$3.5 trillion per year. Prevention of malnutrition has strong returns on investment – it delivers \$16 in returns on investment for every \$1 spent.
- People in conflict affected states are up to three times more likely to be undernourished than those who are living in more stable developing countries and over 100 million people are currently affected by food security crises. As climate change increases the exposure of food insecure populations to extreme weather events, such as the 2016 El Nino event, competition over scarce natural resources serves to compound the severity of crises and intensify risks for conflict and forced displacement. Conflict and protracted crises call for specially designed and targeted assistance that addresses the immediate need and resilience and the capacity to absorb and prepare for crises.
- Over 75 of the extreme poor live in rural areas, many of them are rural workers and family farmers, including women and youth. For example, estimates from Sub-Saharan Africa indicate over 60% of the economically active population are in agriculture. In many cases, the rural poor are, simultaneously, producers of food and vulnerable to food insecurity; caretakers of natural resources, vulnerable to climate change, and without adequate support to increase their resilience, produce sustainably and manage the environment.
- Moving forward with transformative action requires shifting to more sustainable and diversified production and consumption patterns, improving governance and meaningful participation, and securing and combining the political will to act with adequate funding from all partners.
- Pro-poor growth strategies in rural areas should include the voiceless and vulnerable in the benefits of economic growth. Poverty cannot – and should not – simply be exported to cities. A persistent and heavy focus on investing in agriculture and rural areas is an essential component of any strategy to achieve the SDGs. It represents an economic opportunity and these strategies should include the voiceless and vulnerable in the benefits of economic growth.

Ending poverty, hunger and malnutrition is viable, affordable, and makes business sense. There has been insufficient investment in recent decades specifically targeting the agricultural livelihoods, food security and nutrition of the extreme poor. **Explicit political commitments with follow-up action and financing are now needed** to make ending hunger and poverty an international, national and government-wide priority.

The great ambition of the SDGs can only be achieved through cooperation and partnerships at all levels between multiple actors - governments, UN agencies, cooperatives, civil society, the private sector, academia and other key actors - and across a broad range of areas.

¹ Prepared by FAO, IFAD and WFP