

SG report to the GA on the Protection of migrants: Res 69/167***Contribution from the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)***

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has long experience in dealing with migration issues, as migration processes are closely related to agriculture and rural development, poverty reduction, food security, and natural resource management. Taking into account the migration-development nexus, FAO strategically works to strengthen the positive impacts of migration in rural areas, by fostering rural-urban linkages, advocating for a better management of rural labour mobility, and promoting the investment of remittances in rural farm and non-farm activities.

Migration is a key component of rural households' livelihood strategies. Through migration, households aim to diversify their income sources. Remittances help reducing liquidity constraints and allow investments in human capital. Migrants can also make significant contributions to the development of their areas of origin through the transfer of remittances, know-how and technologies, as well as bring collective gains through the engagement of diaspora groups. **FAO aims at supporting countries to enhance their capacity and increase policy coherence to reduce distress migration and promote migration patterns that contribute to improve food security and poverty reduction.**

In its revised Strategic Framework, FAO has renewed its commitment to work on migration and remittances. In particular, under the programme of work for **Strategic Objective 3 Reduce Rural Poverty**, FAO acknowledges the role of migration as part of its integrated approach for rural poverty reduction at country level. FAO and its partners focus on addressing the root causes of distress migration by supporting countries in building resilience of vulnerable people and creating a better future for their youth. Rural youth face many hurdles in trying to earn a livelihood. Pressure on arable land is high in many parts of the world, making it difficult to start farms. Young people often also lack access to inputs, credit, services and many other productive resources necessary for agriculture or to start up non-farm businesses.

FAO works to generate viable options for rural people, especially for rural youth, by creating **decent employment opportunities in rural areas** and thereby addressing the root causes of distress rural out-migration. FAO also advocates for the extension of **social protection**, including to the rural poor and vulnerable migrant workers. In this regard, FAO promotes access to social protection systems that provide direct income support with immediate impact on food security, nutrition and poverty reduction; support rural households in better managing risks; enhance human capital to improve productivity and employability; stimulate local economic development with positive feedback on agricultural production, employment, social inclusion and rural poverty reduction; and achieve sustainable management of natural resources and resilient livelihoods.

More specifically, FAO's technical work in support to countries focuses on:

- **Generating evidence** about the impact of labour migration and remittances on food security and rural livelihoods, as well as natural resource management. Improved knowledge about these linkages translates into greater awareness of the food security and poverty dimensions of migration.
- **Strengthening policy dialogue and coordination** across governments and rural stakeholders to enhance policy coherence and better incorporate migration into agriculture, food security and rural development policies and programmes.
- **Providing technical support and capacity development** to reduce involuntary and distress rural out-migration. FAO will continue facilitating policy dialogue and support innovative mechanisms to invest remittances in productive activities in agriculture and rural areas. Its work will also help

to increase access to social protection schemes and complementary programmes that reduce vulnerability, inequalities and help to alleviate poverty and deprivation, taking into account different risks and vulnerabilities throughout the lifecycle.

At the country level, FAO also advises governments on how to **diversify rural economies**, by fostering rural-urban linkages, creating more employment and better income-generating opportunities along the value chain and (environmental) services, and channelling workers' remittances to productive investments in rural farm and non-farm activities.

FAO also helps governments integrate youth aspects into large-scale **agricultural investment strategies and programmes**, such as in Nigeria and Benin. Through the FAO **Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS)** approach, FAO provides rural youth with the skills and insights needed to engage in farming and adopt environmentally friendly production methods. Facilitating youth's access to credit, it helps them become entrepreneurs, increasing their chances to make a gainful living in rural areas. Such solutions can only thrive if there is adequate rural infrastructure and when conditions on both sides of agricultural and rural labour markets are favourable for youth employment (skills training on the supply side and job creation tailored to youth skills and aspirations on the demand side).

- **Contributing to global cooperation mechanisms**, such as the Global Migration Group (GMG), and engaging with key partners, like the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Bank (WB), and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

With reference to the **Resolution 69/167 adopted by the General Assembly on protection of migrants**, FAO strongly supports the promotion and protection of the human rights of all migrants, regardless of their migration and employment status. In particular, **FAO shares its concerns about the issue of migrants' protection at sea. There is a need for action both to ensure migrants in such dangerous situations are provided with support, and reduce the burden on fisheries vessels and operators. Indeed, considering the many vulnerabilities and hazards associated with fisheries activities, it is worth underlining the situation of strain that fisheries operators are facing in providing support to migrants in such vulnerable situations. FAO works to draw attention on the need to intervene at the countries of origin, to reduce major pressing factors that drive migrants to undertake such strenuous sea crossings, especially across the Mediterranean.**

In terms of solutions and ways forward, FAO strongly advocates joining forces around existing mechanisms for collaboration and to identify solutions for this emergency that are sustainable and well-embedded in more long-term interventions. In particular, solutions should consider how to reflect elements for a better management of migration across the sea and of working conditions of migrant fisher workers. In pursuing long-term solutions, FAO calls for immediate actions to contribute to the implementation of international standards in the sector, such as the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication which refer also specifically to the Voluntary Guidelines for the Design, Construction and Equipment of Small Fishing Vessels. FAO collaborates with IMO and ILO on promoting safety at sea leading to the development of guidelines and standards on the safety of fishing vessels and fishers.