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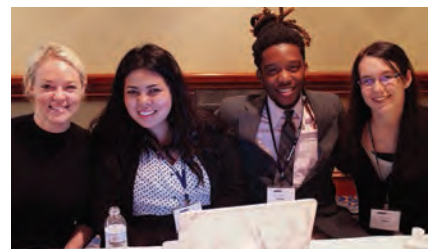
November 11-13, 2016

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FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND GUIDE 2016

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NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS



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11 November - 13 November • www.nmun.org

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2016 National Model United Nations Conference in Washington, DC (NMUN•DC)! We are pleased to introduce you to our committee, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). This year's staff is: Director Chase Mitchell and Assistant Director Tomas Ocampo. Chase completed his B.B.A. in Economics and Global Business in 2015 and currently works as a freelancer in Northeast Wisconsin. This will be his third time staffing an NMUN conference and he is enthusiastic about returning to NMUN•DC. Tomas graduated in 2015 from the University of California, Riverside with a B.A. in both Political Science and Public Policy, and is currently pursuing a Master's in Public Policy degree at the UCR School of Public Policy. This is his first time serving as staff for NMUN and he is looking forward to the committee's start.

The topics under discussion for FAO are:

- I. Role of Child Laborers in Agriculture
- II. Responsible Investment Strategies for Food Security and Nutrition

The FAO is a specialized agency of the UN that was created with the purpose of contributing towards an expanding world economy and ensuring humanity's freedom from hunger. It is at the core of international efforts to raise levels of nutrition, increase efficiency in agriculture, and improve the lives of rural people. It is also a key part of the UN system's efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. Within the Rome-based agencies, the FAO has an essential and distinct role and it will be important for delegates to not only examine how the FAO fulfills its principal function as a forum for policy negotiation and agreement, but also how it carries out its operations and programs.

We designed this background guide to provide a basis for discussion on the topics at hand and as a starting point for your research. The bibliographies in each section will help you find sources to develop your own understanding of each topic. We encourage you to explore the position of the Member State you are representing in-depth, but to also seek to understand the viewpoints of other states, which is a key tool for any diplomat in consensus-building. In preparation for the conference, each delegation will submit a [position paper](#). Please take note of the [NMUN policies](#) on the website and in the [Delegate Preparation Guide](#) regarding plagiarism, codes of conduct, dress code, sexual harassment, and the awards philosophy and evaluation method. Adherence to these guidelines is mandatory.

The [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) are available to download from the NMUN website. This document includes the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure. It is thus an essential instrument in preparing for the conference, and a reference during committee.

If you have any questions concerning your preparation for the committee or the conference itself, feel free to contact the Under-Secretary-General for the committee, Katrena Porter, or the Secretary-General for the conference, Lauren Shaw. You can reach either staff member by contacting them at: usgkat.dc@nmun.org or secgen.dc@nmun.org.

We hope that your preparation is focused and fruitful. We look forward to seeing you at the conference!
Sincerely,

Chase Mitchell, Director
Tomas Ocampo, Assistant Director



Committee Overview

Introduction

The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) was created with the goal of achieving worldwide food security.¹ It aims to accomplish this through promoting agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; reducing rural poverty; enabling inclusive and efficient agriculture and food systems; and improving the resilience to disasters.² David Lubin, an agriculturalist from the United States, was the first to advocate for the creation of an organization addressing agriculture.³ In 1905, his idea led to the creation of the International Institute of Agriculture (IIA) in Rome, Italy.⁴ The IIA focused mainly on creating and distributing statistics for agricultural practices and production.⁵ The idea of an agricultural organization further evolved in 1943 when President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, convened the representatives from 44 governments to discuss the creation, and committed to the founding, of a permanent agricultural organization.⁶ From this meeting, the Interim Commission on Food and Agriculture was established in Washington, D.C.⁷ Shortly after the end of World War II the founding conference of FAO was held in Quebec, Canada.⁸ The constitution of FAO was signed at this meeting and entered into force on 16 October 1945.⁹ FAO was initially based in Washington, D.C. but later relocated to Rome, Italy, in 1951.¹⁰ When it relocated, FAO took over the assets and resources of the IIA.¹¹ The FAO is one of the three Rome Based Agencies (RBAs), in addition to the World Food Programme (WFP) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).¹² The RBAs collaborate to advance food security through the use of a four-pillar framework: policy advice, knowing and monitoring; operations; advocacy and communications; and administrative collaboration.¹³ FAO garnered support from various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) through launching the Freedom from Hunger Campaign in 1960.¹⁴

Governance, Structure and Membership

As a UN specialized agency, FAO reports to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).¹⁵ FAO currently consists of 194 members, two associate members (the Faroe Islands and Tokelau), and the European Union.¹⁶ The primary body of FAO is the Conference of Member Nations, which meets every two years.¹⁷ From this overall membership, a body of 49 Member States is elected to serve three-year terms on the Governing Council.¹⁸ The Council serves as the executive body of the Organization and meets between the biannual FAO Conference.¹⁹ During this time the Council acts on current food and agricultural activities and situations, as well as current and future activities of the organization of the whole, including the development of the Programme of Work.²⁰ FAO is led by the Director-General, who is appointed by the Conference for an initial four-year term that is renewable for

¹ FAO, *Basic Texts of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Volumes I and II*, 2015.

² Ibid.

³ FAO, *David Lubin: An Appreciation*, 2016.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ F Ibid.

⁶ European Union, *FAO's Mission*, 2016.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ European Union, *FAO's Mission*, 2016.

¹² UN WFP, *Rome Based Agencies*, 2016.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Abell, *Freedom from Hunger*, 1962.

¹⁵ FAO, *Basic Texts of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Volumes I and II*, 2015.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

an additional four years.²¹ The current Director-General is Jose Graziano da Silva of Brazil, who was first elected in 2011.²²

The Organization is composed of four main departments: Agriculture and Consumer Protection, Economic and Social Development, Fisheries and Aquaculture, and Forestry.²³ As an RBA, FAO works with its partner organizations to develop sets of targets and indicators related to food security, sustainable agriculture, and nutrition.²⁴ It is instrumental in establishing the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to agriculture.²⁵ Most notable for FAO is SDG 2, which aims to “end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.”²⁶

The 2016-2017 FAO budget is \$2.6 billion, with 39% of current funding coming from assessed contributions and 61% coming from voluntary contributions.²⁷ The amount that Member States financially contribute is determined at the FAO Conference.²⁸ Further funding is provided specifically for programs to enhance food security and includes contributions from Member States, other UN agencies, international financial institutions, and the private sector.²⁹ Moreover, FAO utilizes unique funding mechanisms, such as the FAO Multi-Donor Mechanism, which uses the funds as part of the general budget as opposed to being tied to a specific program.³⁰

Mandate, Functions and Powers

FAO’s primary responsibilities are outlined in the *Basic Texts of FAO*, which include FAO’s Constitution and the applicable Rules of Procedure.³¹ The mandate of the FAO, as outlined in the preamble of the constitution, includes “raising levels of nutrition and standards of living of the peoples under their respective jurisdictions; securing improvements in the efficiency of the production and distribution of all food and agricultural products; bettering the condition of rural populations; [and] contributing towards an expanding world economy and ensuring humanity’s freedom from hunger.”³² FAO is primarily responsible for improving the state of food security and nutrition in all the countries it operates within.³³ However, FAO does not directly provide food; instead it primarily functions in a supporting role, with the aim to provide technical assistance and the sharing of best practices.³⁴ FAO works closely with other organizations, such as the WFP, which do provide direct assistance.³⁵

The core functions of FAO are outlined in its constitution and are mirrored in the current priorities of the Organization.³⁶ These functions include the collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of information related to nutrition, food and agriculture.³⁷ FAO also promotes scientific, technological, social, and economic research relating to nutrition, food, and agriculture, in the context of education and public knowledge.³⁸ Moreover, it focuses on the conservation of natural resources and the adoption of improved methods of agricultural production,

²¹ Ibid.

²² FAO, *Who We Are*, 2016.

²³ FAO, *Who We Are*, 2016.

²⁴ UN WFP, *Rome Based Agencies*, 2016.

²⁵ FAO, *FAO and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals*, 2015.

²⁶ UN DESA, *Goal 2*, 2016.

²⁷ FAO, *Medium Term Plan 2014-2017 and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17*, 2014.

²⁸ FAO, *Who We Are*, 2016.

²⁹ FAO, *Medium Term Plan 2014-2017 and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17*, 2014.

³⁰ FAO, *New FAO funding mechanism makes its debut*, 2010.

³¹ FAO, *Basic Texts of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Volumes I and II*, 2015.

³² Ibid.

³³ FAO, *FAO Attributes, Core Functions, and Comparative Advantages*, 2016.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ FAO, *Basic Texts of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Volumes I and II*, 2015.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

while also improving the distribution of food and agricultural products.³⁹ Similarly, FAO provides research and technical support for improving the trade and regulation of agricultural products.⁴⁰

FAO is also involved in Disaster Risk Reduction activities to increase the resilience of communities to disasters.⁴¹ For example, when Pakistan was hit with a severe flood in 2010 that destroyed livestock and stored seeds, FAO provided wheat seed to over a half a million farming families before the crop season started.⁴² Due to the relationship between food insecurity and disasters, and the further relationship to decreased levels of nutrition, FAO has implemented programs in multiple regions to reduce the risk of food insecurity through a multi-sector approach with four broad thematic pillars: enabling the environment; watch to safeguard; apply risk and vulnerability reduction measures; and prepare and respond.⁴³

Additionally, FAO is involved in disaster relief by conducting needs assessments, such as Crop and Food Supply Assessment Missions and the Integrated Food Security and Humanitarian Phase Classification Scheme.⁴⁴ Other actions taken in emergency situations include analyzing existing food security responses and maintaining the Crisis Management Center, Animal Health, to respond appropriately to animal disease emergencies.⁴⁵ The Food Security Cluster works to ensure that adequate nutrition and food are provided in humanitarian emergencies through the coordination of multiple partner agencies including WFP, FAO, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and other international non-governmental organizations.⁴⁶ FAO has also responded to emergencies, such as the 2015 earthquakes in Nepal and the recent famine in eastern Africa.⁴⁷

Current Priorities and Recent Sessions

The current priorities of FAO are outlined in *FAO Strategic Framework 2010-2019* which includes the reduction of hunger, malnutrition, and food insecurity; increasing the sustainability and productiveness of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; the reduction of rural poverty; enabling inclusive and efficient agriculture and food systems; and improving the resilience of livelihood in disasters.⁴⁸ The two 2015 FAO annual reports on the state of food insecurity and food and agriculture highlighted several needs to address regarding global trends in food production.⁴⁹ These concerns include, but are not limited to, the cycle of rural poverty, growing competition and the diminishing quality of natural resources, climate change, and food price volatility.⁵⁰ The *Medium Term Plan 2014-2017* extensively identifies how FAO plans to address the emerging global challenges through four functional objectives: outreach; informational technology; FAO governance, oversight, and direction; and efficient and effective administration.⁵¹

While there has been a decline in the amount of people suffering from chronic hunger, there are still approximately 795 million people not getting enough food to sustain an active lifestyle on a regular basis.⁵² In 1996 the World Food Summit set a goal to halve the amount of people suffering from hunger from 1 billion to 500 million by 2015; similarly, in 2001 Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 1 was set to halve the proportion of people suffering from hunger in the world population by 2015.⁵³ MDG 1 was achieved in 2010, well ahead of its 2015 deadline, but the WFP noted that the international community did not meet the goal of reducing those suffering from chronic hunger

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ FAO, *FAO in Emergencies*, 2016.

⁴² FAO, *Short history of FAO*, 2015.

⁴³ FAO, *A Field Guide to Disaster Risk Reduction in Southern Africa*, 2014.

⁴⁴ FAO, *FAO in Emergencies*, 2016.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Food Security Cluster, *About FSC*.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Humanitarian Response, *Humanitarian Response: About*.

⁴⁹ FAO, *State of Food and Agriculture*, 2015; FAO, *State of Food Insecurity*, 2015.

⁵⁰ FAO, *State of Food Insecurity*, 2015.

⁵¹ FAO, *Medium Term Plan 2014-2017*, 2013.

⁵² FAO, *State of Food Insecurity*, 2015.

⁵³ UN WFP, *Hunger Statistics*, 2016.

to under 500 million, as set by the World Food Summit.⁵⁴ This further emphasizes the role of the SDGs in ending hunger world-wide and promoting responsible consumption.⁵⁵ SDG 2 was developed to end hunger and food insecurity while SDG 12 was made to promote responsible consumption and production.⁵⁶ Likewise, FAO identified five other SDGs that are related to its work.⁵⁷ SDG 6 emphasizes access to plentiful water that is needed for crops and livestock, while SDG 14 highlights access to fisheries, which FAO has identified as the fastest growing food sector.⁵⁸ On the issue of climate change, SDGs 7 and 13 focus on new forms of energy that are being developed from biofuels and how rising temperatures have threatened global food production.⁵⁹ Finally, SDG 15 emphasizes that life on land must be maintained as a source of food through promoting biodiversity and sustainability.⁶⁰

In the most recent session, FAO adopted a variety of documents that outline its work for 2017 and reviewed its previous work.⁶¹ One such example was the *2014-2015 Programme Implementation Report* which outlined the progress of work with the initiatives under the FAO's purview.⁶² In addition, FAO also highlighted its regional conferences that addressed the particular issues of the region where it was held.⁶³ Most notable was the *29th Session of the Regional Conference for Africa* which was held in April of 2016 in Abijan.⁶⁴ The conference outlined how to synergize the 2025 Zero Hunger Challenge and the SDGs in order to maximize the global resources available.⁶⁵ The main outcome was clear: to achieve zero hunger in one of the most famished regions of the world.⁶⁶

Conclusion

FAO is a UN specialized agency and one of three RBAs that addresses food insecurity in the international community.⁶⁷ It serves in a technical capacity, by being able to share knowledge and provide methods to improve and sustain agricultural practices.⁶⁸ FAO currently provides a pivotal role in strengthening the capacities of agriculture production globally through cooperating with various other agencies.⁶⁹ Examples include coordinating disaster relief with the WFP and setting food standards with the World Health Organization.⁷⁰ Moreover, FAO has worked to improve the livelihoods of individuals living in developing regions of the world, such as improving livestock techniques in rural parts of the West Bank.⁷¹ Given the growing concerns of climate change and its effects on food security, implementing the FAO's *Medium Term Plan 2014-2017* and *Strategic Framework 2010-2019* remains a high priority of the Multi-Programme of Work.⁷²

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ FAO, *FAO and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals*, 2015.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ FAO, *FAO and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals*, 2015.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ FAO Council, *FAO Council: 154th Session*, 2016; FAO, *Council Multi-year Programme of Work 2016-2019*, 2015.

⁶² FAO, *Programme Implementation Report 2014-2015*, 2016.

⁶³ FAO, *FAO Council: 154th Session*, 2016.

⁶⁴ FAO, *Transforming Africa's food systems for inclusive growth and shared prosperity*, 2016.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ UN WFP, *Rome Based Agencies*, 2016.

⁶⁸ FAO, *Basic Texts of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Volumes I and II*, 2015.

⁶⁹ FAO, *Who We Are*, 2016.

⁷⁰ FAO, *FAO in Emergencies*, 2016.

⁷¹ FAO, *FAO in Action*, 2016.

⁷² FAO, *Medium Term Plan 2014-2017 and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17*, 2014.

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The Basic Texts of FAO include the mandate, the constitution, and an overview of the governing bodies. Delegates should use these documents as a base for further research and to ensure that actions that are recommended fit within the mandate of the organization. This document also provides insight into actions being taken in accordance with the Immediate Plan of Action and actions being taken on the reform of the Committee on World Food Security. Examples of actions include the initiation of research reports and conducting cooperative capacity-building work with closely related organizations.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2013). *Medium Term Plan 2014-2017* [Report]. Retrieved 17 April 2016 from: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/027/mf490e.pdf>

This report outlines the current FAO midterm strategic objectives and provides context for each objective. Delegates should familiarize themselves with this document as it provides a comprehensive overview of the work being undertaken by FAO and the progress made in FAO 2010-2019 Strategic Framework. It is useful for delegates in that it provides an up to date overview of what the FAO is specifically working on and the financial resources needed to accomplish it. The overarching goal is to improve the way FAO delivers its services to Member States and organizations.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2015). *Council Multi-year Programme of Work 2016-2019* [Report]. Retrieved 15 May 2016 from: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mo911e.pdf>

The third report of its type, this document covers all aspects related to planning and implementing the program of work within the FAO. More importantly, it provides the delegates a resource to monitor the progress of implementing FAO reforms, particularly the Immediate Plan of Actions from 2008. It also provides a concise overview of the council's agenda that helps clarify what the FAO is looking to undertake in the upcoming years. This source can be utilized to understand how actions being taken can fit into current proposed work areas of the organization.

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I. Role of Child Laborers in Agriculture

*Children who grow up free from child labor have the opportunity to realize fully their rights to education, leisure and healthy development, in turn helping them to make a successful transition into decent work.*⁷³

Introduction

In 2013, the International Labour Organization's (ILO) estimated that there were 168 million child laborers globally, with 98 million working in agriculture.⁷⁴ Children who work in agriculture often do so at the cost of their education, health, and development.⁷⁵ Despite the commitments of international organizations and Member States to protect children from strenuous labor conditions, the complex nature of rural livelihoods and poverty limits the success of many initiatives and requires Member States to address the socioeconomic conditions that necessitate child labor.⁷⁶ As the principal agency of the United Nations (UN) on agricultural matters, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is tasked with assisting Member States in addressing child labor in agriculture through integrating poverty reduction in rural development plans, strengthening social protection, and improving cooperation among international stakeholders to generate tools, strategies and policy that improve the conditions for children, families and communities across the world.⁷⁷

International and Regional Framework

The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) provides the core framework for human rights on employment and for the free development of persons.⁷⁸ Adopted in 1966, the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* further elaborates on these rights, including the "enjoyment of just and favorable conditions of work" and social protection and assistance.⁷⁹ Both documents provide a basis for the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (CRC) (1989), which guides nearly all subsequent standards on children's rights.⁸⁰ Article 32 of the CRC established children's right to be protected from "performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development."⁸¹ Building from this, the ILO drafted several conventions in regards to employment and working age, including the 1973 *Minimum Age Convention*, the 1998 *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-Up*, and the 1999 *Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention*, which contains provisions to eliminate the worst forms of child labor, such as slavery and prostitution.⁸² The *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-Up* mentions that all Member States, even if they have yet to ratify the ILO conventions, must take action to eliminate child labor.⁸³ These standards, which construct the framework on child labor and rights, align with the Sustainable Development Goals of 2015, chiefly Goal 1 on ending poverty in all its forms, Goal 4 on inclusive quality education, and Goal 8 on full and productive employment.⁸⁴

Many regional organizations have adopted frameworks to address the rights of children, including the African Union with the *African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*, which stipulates the hours a child can work, the minimum wage, and the obligation of states to enforce penalties to carry out these rights.⁸⁵ At its Fourth Summit of the Americas, the Organization of American States adopted the *Declaration of Mar del Plata*, which contains key

⁷³ ILO, *Making progress against child labour: Global estimates and trends 2000-2012*, 2013, pp. 3, 12.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁷⁵ FAO, *Gender and Rural Employment Policy Brief #7: Breaking the rural poverty cycle - Getting girls and boys out of work and into school*, 2010, p. 1.

⁷⁶ FAO, *Handbook for monitoring and evaluation of child labour in agriculture: Measuring the impacts of agricultural and food security programmes on child labour in family-based agriculture*, 2015, pp. 13-14.

⁷⁷ FAO, *Rural Employment, FAO's contribution to reducing and preventing child labour in agriculture 2012-2014*.

⁷⁸ UN General Assembly, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights (A/RES/217(III))*, 1948.

⁷⁹ UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (A/RES/2200(XXI))*, 1966.

⁸⁰ UN General Assembly, *Convention on the Rights of the Child (A/RES/44/25)*, 1989.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² ILO, *Minimum Age Convention of 1973*, 1973; ILO, *Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention of 1999*, 1999.

⁸³ ILO, *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-Up*, 1998, p. 11.

⁸⁴ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

⁸⁵ African Union, *The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child*, 1999.

provisions regarding employment, poverty and ultimately the protection of workers.⁸⁶ Many of the declaration's points are updated in the *Summits of the Americas Mandates on Labor*, which incorporates several points of the *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work* and commits Member States from the Latin America and Caribbean region to “protecting children from...any tasks that may interfere with their education and integral development.”⁸⁷ Another regional organization, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), working closely with the ILO, created a Roadmap for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor in 2016.⁸⁸ The Roadmap provides several actions that Member States can take to eliminate the worst forms of child labor, as well as commits ASEAN to assisting Member States in promoting good practices, providing social protection, and pursuing partnerships, among other actions.⁸⁹

Role of the International System

Existing inter-agency collaborations which address child labor in the agricultural sector include the International Partnership for Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture, which brings together the ILO, the International Fund on Agricultural Development, the International Food Policy Research Institute of the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research, and the International Union of Food and Allied Workers to develop strategies in eliminating child labor in agriculture.⁹⁰ Moreover, the ILO, through its International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) has mobilized resources to improve the capacity of Member States in eliminating child labor by working with employers and workers' organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), universities and religious groups, among many others.⁹¹ Each year on 12 June, these groups and others work to address and spread awareness of child labor in during the World Day Against Child Labour.⁹² Another partnership, the Understanding Children's Work program, an inter-agency research cooperation initiative among the ILO, World Bank, and the United Nations Children's Fund, has improved information sharing among the agencies, and provided a common basis for understanding child labor, and is an example of how Member States and the UN can further cooperate.⁹³

In its Strategic Framework (2014-2017), FAO outlined five key objectives, the third of which was to reduce rural poverty and by extension address child labor in agriculture, mentioning that it can jeopardize children's health, development, and education.⁹⁴ To address this, FAO, through its Strategic Framework, will facilitate Member States' implementation of international agreements, codes of conduct, technical standards and good practices on child labor in their agricultural sectors.⁹⁵ Moreover, FAO has also stated in its fourth strategic objective that the private sector, including multinational corporations, should integrate corporate social responsibility practices into their operations which can include preventing child labor in agriculture.⁹⁶ FAO is positioned to assist Member States in integrating international standards on and measures against child labor in national agricultural programs, plans and frameworks, as well as facilitating cooperative measures between Member States and the private sector.⁹⁷

Child Labor in Agriculture

Child labor is generally defined as “work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development.”⁹⁸ As such, child labor in agriculture includes work that is dangerous to children, negatively impacts their education, deprives them of access to school, and forces them to

⁸⁶ Organization of American States, *Declaration of Mar del Plata: Fourth Summit of the Americas*, 2005.

⁸⁷ Organization of American States, *Summits of the Americas Mandates on Labor*, 2005.

⁸⁸ Association of Southeast Asian Nations, *Moving Forward in Unity: To a Peaceful and Prosperous Community – Annual Report 2013-2014*, 2014, pp. 62-63.

⁸⁹ Indonesian Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, *Roadmap Towards a Child Labour-Free Indonesia in 2022*, 2012, p. 22.

⁹⁰ FAO, *FAO's contribution to reducing and preventing child labour in agriculture 2012-2014*.

⁹¹ ILO, *About the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)*, 2016.

⁹² ILO, *World Day against Child Labour*, 2007.

⁹³ Understanding Children's Work, *Understanding Children's Work, an Inter-Agency Research Cooperation Programme*.

⁹⁴ FAO, *The Director-General's Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15*, 2013, p. 30.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 31-32.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁹⁷ FAO, *FAO's contribution to reducing and preventing child labour in agriculture 2012-2014*.

⁹⁸ ILO, *What is child labour*, 2016.

leave school early.⁹⁹ Children play various roles in agriculture, such as supporting family farms by performing household chores, cooking, cleaning, retrieving water, and caring for domestic animals.¹⁰⁰ Over two-thirds of all child laborers perform unpaid family work, which includes household chores, subsistence farming, fishing, and taking care of livestock.¹⁰¹ In many rural areas, livestock-keeping is a common and vital part of life that goes beyond providing an income and serving as a source of food; in developing countries, raising and herding livestock is central to the historical and cultural traditions of many rural communities, and children have always been a part of that tradition.¹⁰² In some fishing communities, children assist with catching fish, loading and unloading harvests, and processing fish in factories.¹⁰³ The nature of child labor is varied, yet agricultural work in all sectors poses occupational hazards to children as spending long hours in extreme weather conditions, poor sanitation and hygiene, carrying heavy loads, exposure to pesticides, and long periods of isolation that can have a direct negative impact on children.¹⁰⁴ Though age-appropriate tasks can be a meaningful part of a child's life, children must often take on tougher tasks to provide for the needs of their families, in particular when their household faces poverty, a decline in income, experience economic shocks, loss of crops, conflict, and drought or famine. In these instances, rural households often send children to work, even if the work is at the expense of children's health or capacity to attend school.¹⁰⁵ Labor shortages because of migration, household poverty, limited access to quality education, and the high costs of schooling are consistent factors that increase child labor in agriculture.¹⁰⁶ Poverty impedes children's development beginning with their removal from school, which results in fewer skills for better employment, poor health, low wages, and ultimately traps communities into a vicious cycle of poverty.¹⁰⁷ These effects are further exacerbated if Member States lack appropriate legislation and policies or fail to enforce existing frameworks.¹⁰⁸

Poverty in rural areas affects small-scale subsistence farmers and the landless poor, among others, and FAO believes poverty reduction strategies should take into account the situation of these varying groups, especially since many children living in these families are heavily involved in the agricultural process.¹⁰⁹ Interventions to improve the situation for children working in agriculture can be difficult, however, due to the informal nature of the work, especially if they do not involve civil society organizations (CSOs) and local NGOs.¹¹⁰ As a result, FAO has worked to ensure that CSOs, state governments, and international organizations collaborate in their work to better understand the situation of children in the varying sectors.¹¹¹ Improving access to education should be prioritized by Member States, and can be implemented through a variety of rural education initiatives that allow for non-hazardous work provided children attend school, and support childcare services that make it easier for poorer households to send their children to school.¹¹² Moreover, governments can integrate measures to eliminate child labor into their national poverty alleviation and development strategies and policies.¹¹³ Targeted agricultural and rural development policies that provide for decent conditions of work, improve partnerships among employers, employees, and communities, and raise public awareness about child labor and poverty can be successful in stemming child labor and its adverse effects.¹¹⁴ Additionally, improving the conditions for girls to attend school and benefit from education by addressing their roles in agricultural work in each sector can significantly reduce the effects of poverty on women and girls.¹¹⁵ It is critical to recognize the differences between different agricultural sectors, and how they affect rural poverty to better address the varying needs of child laborers.¹¹⁶

⁹⁹ ILO, *What is child labour*, 2016.

¹⁰⁰ FAO, *Handbook for monitoring and evaluation of child labour in agriculture*, 2015, pp. 15-16.

¹⁰¹ ILO, *Making progress against child labour: Global estimates and trends 2000-2012*, 2013, p. 23.

¹⁰² FAO, *Children's work in the livestock sector*, 2013, p. 1.

¹⁰³ FAO, *Handbook for monitoring and evaluation of child labour in agriculture*, 2015, p. 18.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 17-19.

¹⁰⁵ FAO, *Children's work in the livestock sector*, 2013, p. 1.

¹⁰⁶ FAO, *Handbook for monitoring and evaluation of child labour in agriculture*, 2015, pp. 13-14.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14.

¹⁰⁹ FAO, *The Director-General's Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15*, 2013, p. 28.

¹¹⁰ FAO, *Children's work in the livestock sector*, 2013, p. 3.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹¹⁴ FAO, *Gender and Rural Employment Policy Brief #7: Breaking the rural poverty cycle*, 2010, p. 3.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

¹¹⁶ FAO, *The Director-General's Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15*, 2013, p. 31.

Social Protection and Child Labor

In its Strategic Framework (2014-2017), FAO highlighted the importance of social protection measures in reducing rural poverty, among them input subsidies, public works programs, childcare, and cash transfer programs.¹¹⁷ Social protection encapsulates policies that seek to reduce vulnerabilities, socio-economic risks, extreme poverty, and deprivation in order to offset the barriers faced by poor households, including low agricultural productivity, limited access to resources, markets, and consistent exposure to natural disasters, the effects of climate change and other hazards.¹¹⁸ Social protection measures can be: preventative, helping communities avoid risks; protective, which assist communities in recovering from losses; promotive, which enhance human capital and capacity building; and transformative, addressing the imbalances of power which created unequal conditions.¹¹⁹ Many social protection measures, including cash transfer programs, have been noted to reduce child labor significantly since they improve the conditions for children to resume their education, obtain higher wages, and improve their communities by investing in human capital.¹²⁰ Brazil's *Bolsa Familia*, Zambia's cash-grants program, and similar initiatives in Ethiopia, Ghana, and Lesotho are several examples that provide for children and families most at risk.¹²¹

Many sub-Saharan Member States, with support from the African Union, have committed to improving social protection measures through commitments such as the 2008 *Ouagadougou Declaration and Plan of Action*.¹²² Globally, more than 2.1 billion people in developing countries receive the benefits of some kind of social protection scheme, signifying the vulnerable position billions of people find themselves in, yet many more are still without protection.¹²³ Though social protection can offer a lifeline to communities in dire situations, FAO recognizes that social protection alone is insufficient in meeting the needs of the rural poor, and thus, should be accompanied with larger rural development initiatives.¹²⁴ Upholding international labor standards in rural areas, such as those that prevent child labor in agriculture, can promote occupational safety and health and strengthen social protection.¹²⁵ The use of social protection policies, importance of primary education, and strengthening of legal and institutional frameworks for the elimination of child labor was reaffirmed recently at the Third Conference on Child Labour in 2013, resulting in the *Brasilia Declaration on Child Labour*.¹²⁶

Case Study: Children and Farming in the United States

Although the necessity of child labor is far more common in developing countries, the use of detrimental child labor occurs even in advanced economies like the United States, where children often work in the fruit and tobacco industries as early jobs or to supplement family income.¹²⁷ Farmworker children are often exposed to hazardous conditions including pesticides, heavy loads, sharp machinery and tools, and extreme temperatures over the summer.¹²⁸ As a result, they are four times more likely to drop out of school.¹²⁹ In some instances, children have been exposed to pesticides that can increase their chances of illnesses ranging from rashes and dizziness, to even brain damage and death.¹³⁰ Though the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) restricts pesticide spraying when workers are present in the fields without protection, some rules are formulated for adult men, not children.¹³¹ Additionally, children working in tobacco fields can contract acute nicotine poisoning from simply handling tobacco leaves and may accumulate as much nicotine in their bodies as a regular tobacco smoker.¹³² In 2012, the U.S. federal

¹¹⁷ FAO, *The Director-General's Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15*, 2013, p. 30.

¹¹⁸ FAO, *The interaction between social protection and agriculture: A review of evidence*, 2013, p. v.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹²⁰ FAO, *The interaction between social protection and agriculture: A review of evidence*, 2013, p. vi.

¹²¹ FAO, *Expanding social protection offers a faster track to ending hunger*, 2013.

¹²² FAO, *The interaction between social protection and agriculture: A review of evidence*, 2013, p. 1.

¹²³ FAO, *Expanding social protection offers a faster track to ending hunger*, 2013.

¹²⁴ FAO, *The Director-General's Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and Programme of Work and Budget 2014-15*, 2013, p. 31.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

¹²⁶ ILO, *The Brasilia Declaration on Child Labour*, 2013.

¹²⁷ Human Rights Watch, *Fields of Peril: Child Labor in US Agriculture – Summary and Key Recommendations*, 2009, p. 7.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 2009, p. 7.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-12.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-14.

¹³² Human Rights Watch, *Child Laborers In America. In 2014*, 2014.

government proposed regulations to curb the number of children working in large tobacco fields, but withdrew them instead because of internal pressure from lobbyists and farmers.¹³³ Though the US bases its child labor rights for the agricultural sector on the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act, the U.S. does not set a maximum number of hours children employed in agriculture can work, does not require for agricultural laborers to be paid overtime, and states that “employees under 20 years of age may be paid \$4.25 per hour during the first consecutive 90 calendar days of employment.”¹³⁴ Most policy regarding child labor in agriculture is left up to the states, with the exception of hazardous work, which is outlined in the *Child Labor Bulletin 102*, under the *Hazardous Occupations Orders for Agricultural Employment*.¹³⁵ Raising the minimum age for working in hazardous farming occupations, amending EPA standards to include pesticide regulations for child laborers, improving support programs for children to attend school, and suggesting that states better monitor enforcement of standards to protect children from hazardous labor conditions, all would improve the condition of child laborers.¹³⁶ The implementation of these standards would be possible in the United States if there were political will to do so, but in developing states where children are driven into labor due to poverty, it is an even more difficult problem to address as communities and governments have far fewer resources at their disposal.¹³⁷

Conclusion

Considering the enormous number of child laborers worldwide and the conditions that Member States have to address to improve the situation for child laborers in agriculture, it is easy to believe that “a world without child labour is still too far in the future.”¹³⁸ However, FAO has made important strides in addressing the role of child laborers in agriculture through partnering with other international organizations, UN agencies, Member States, CSOs, NGOs, and many other stakeholders to assist Member States in implementing national legislation to reduce child labor.¹³⁹ FAO has continued to promote reducing rural poverty, improving access to education and social protection measures to tackle the conditions that cause children to enter agricultural work.¹⁴⁰ Addressing the complex situation of rural communities and child laborers will require Member States and FAO to focus on reducing vulnerabilities for those most at risk, ensuing work can play a positive role in children’s development, families can sustain a living, and benefit from resilient agricultural communities.¹⁴¹

Further Research

In preparing for this topic, delegates should consider how FAO can address the challenges of child labor in agriculture and what steps it can take to improve the capacities of Member States addressing child labor. Delegates can use the following questions to guide their research: How does child labor affect children in developed or developing Member States? What policy recommendations can FAO propose for developing Member States to address rural child labor? How can recommendations by FAO align with the Sustainable Development Goals? What role can CSOs, NGOs and the private sector play in preventing child labor? How can partnerships and international collaboration meet the needs of local rural communities?

¹³³ Human Rights Watch, *Child Laborers In America. In 2014*, 2014.

¹³⁴ United States Department of Labor, *Child Labor Requirements in Agricultural Occupations Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (Child Labor Bulletin 102)*, 2007, pp. 2-3.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

¹³⁶ Human Rights Watch, *Fields of Peril: Child Labor in US Agriculture – Summary and Key Recommendations*, 2009, p. 17.

¹³⁷ Human Rights Watch, *Fields of Peril: Child Labor in US Agriculture – Summary and Key Recommendations*, 2009, p. 17; FAO, *Gender and Rural Employment Policy Brief #7: Breaking the rural poverty cycle - Getting girls and boys out of work and into school*, 2010.

¹³⁸ ILO, *Making progress against child labour: Global estimates and trends 2000-2012*, 2013, p. 3.

¹³⁹ FAO, *Gender and Rural Employment Policy Brief #7: Breaking the rural poverty cycle*, 2010, pp. 3-4.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

¹⁴¹ ILO, *World Day against Child Labour, 12 June 2007*.

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2010). *Ghana: Striving for sustainable agriculture without child labour* [Website]. Retrieved 15 May 2016 from: <http://www.fao.org/gender/gender-home/gender-insight/gender-insightdet/en/c/42487/>

This study conducted by the FAO in Ghana highlights some of the common challenges child labor poses, such as depriving children of an education, exposing them to hazardous conditions, and even trafficking. Of particular importance to this study, small scale fishing was studied, and the roles children play in fishing communities. Overall, the study presents to delegates how the FAO, ILO, and other partners helped integrate child labor policies into national fishing and agriculture policies, and what other Member States can learn from Ghana's successes. Delegates can use this study to examine the approaches the FAO, ILO and Ghana undertook to integrate child labor concerns into national policy, address children's education and improve data-collection efforts.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2013). *The Director-General's Medium Term Plan 2014-17 and Programme Budget and Work 2014-15*. Retrieved 12 May 2016 from: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/027/mf490e.pdf>

The Medium Term Plan of the FAO outlines the agency's goals over the next four years and the means to accomplish those goals. In particular, the Medium Term Plan lists the five objectives of the FAO, including the reduction of rural poverty and its links to child labor. The Plan details the role of the FAO in assisting Member States in implementing international standards, such as those on child labor, and in capacity building. The Plan provides the specific details necessary to understanding the role of the FAO in child labor as it carries out its work over the next five years.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2015). *Handbook for monitoring and evaluation of child labour in agriculture: Measuring the impacts of agricultural and food security programmes on child labour in family-based agriculture* [Handbook]. Retrieved 15 May 2016 from: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4630e.pdf>

This handbook by the FAO provides delegates context for several important concepts: how child labor affects children; how child labor prevention is incorporated into national policies; how monitoring and evaluation can provide policymakers better information; and best-practices to preventing and reducing child labor in agriculture. Though it is designed to assist NGOs, international organizations, policymakers, and evaluators, it is likely to be useful for delegates to understand how policy interventions affect child labor, children, and the communities they live in. It also provides a rich overview of the conditions children labor under, but more importantly, it also provides good practices to address child labor in various agricultural sectors that many delegates will find critical to writing effective resolutions.

Human Rights Watch. (2009). *Fields of Peril: Child Labor in US Agriculture*. Retrieved 15 May 2016 from: https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/crd0510_brochure_low_0.pdf

This report by Human Rights Watch provides personal accounts of child laborers in the United States, and the daily challenges they encounter. Several key aspects of the report delegates should explore include the conditions children face, despite working in a developed country, how regulations may not be effective in aiding children, and the varying responses local, provincial, and national governments and agencies can take to improve conditions for child laborers. The Key Recommendations section would be valuable for all delegates to reference, and to consider as they continue to do their research.

International Labour Organization. (2016). *Tackling hazardous child labour in agriculture: Guidance on policy and practice* [Website]. Retrieved 14 May 2016 from: http://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_IPEC_PUB_2799/lang--en/index.htm

This guide provides stakeholders at all levels with vital information to formulate and carry out initiatives which tackle child labor, especially the most hazardous occupations. It provides an overview of child labor in agriculture, the many ways children are involved in agricultural labor, and details critical hazards which harm the well-being of children. Guidebook 4 provides many initiatives by the ILO-IPEC, unions, employers' organizations and civil society in eliminating

child labor in agriculture. Overall it is a comprehensive guide which helps stakeholders formulate policy decisions and training activities that is indispensable for delegates.

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II. Responsible Investment Strategies for Food Security and Nutrition

*For us, investment in agriculture is not an object of study. It is what we ourselves do every day of our lives. It is what we benefit from when our governments get priorities, policies and regulations straight. It is what we suffer from when it is lacking or, increasingly, when it alienates us from the land, water and other natural resources on which we depend and attacks our resilient food systems.*¹⁴²

Introduction

The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimates that agricultural investment will need to increase by as much as 50% in order to meet the future food security and nutrition needs of low- and middle-income countries.¹⁴³ Trends indicate that investment is increasing, but there are ongoing concerns that investment is being done irresponsibly, to the detriment of local populations and without regard to its impact on food security and nutrition.¹⁴⁴ While FAO and the greater international community have identified hunger and malnutrition as problems that can be solved, there is disagreement about what constitutes responsible investment and to what extent the international community and Member States should regulate investment in agriculture.¹⁴⁵ As the international community begins to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), determining how to maximize the benefits of investment in agriculture and eliminate negative effects will be increasingly important.¹⁴⁶

International and Regional Framework

Modern frameworks on food security and investment draw their roots from the 1996 *Rome Declaration*, which sought to reverse the underinvestment in agriculture that had caused multiple food crises.¹⁴⁷ Some advancements in agricultural investment were made as a result, but nearly a decade later the United Nations (UN) formed a task force to address a new barrage of food crises, this time resulting from rising food prices in an increasingly interconnected global economy.¹⁴⁸ The Task Force built consensus on increasing investment in agriculture, ultimately drafting the “Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action” (UCFA), a document designed to address some of the causes of food price fluctuation and lay out methods for increasing investment in food systems.¹⁴⁹ The UCFA was designed with other recent outcomes in mind, including those of the 2009 World Summit on Food Security, which had recently defined the pillars of food security as: availability, referring to the amount of food in a country or area; access, which refers to having physical, economic, and social access to food; utilization, which refers to people having safe and nutritious food with needs their dietary needs; and stability, meaning food security at all times.¹⁵⁰

It was in this context that the international community began to recognize that some investment practices did not respect the rights of existing users of land, water, and other resources, harmed the environment, and sometimes negatively affected the livelihoods of rural and smallholder farmers.¹⁵¹ This led to the creation of the Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment and Food Systems (RAI), which were adopted by the Committee on World Food Security in October 2014.¹⁵² The objective of the RAI is “to promote responsible investment in agriculture and food systems that contribute to food security and nutrition, thus supporting the progressive realization of the right to adequate food...,” and, while they have been heavily scrutinized by non-governmental organization (NGOs) and

¹⁴² Transnational Institute, *Political Brief on the Principles on Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems*, 2015.

¹⁴³ FAO, *FAO’s role in investment in agriculture*.

¹⁴⁴ Transnational Institute, *Political Brief on the Principles on Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems*, 2015, p. 9.

¹⁴⁵ FAO, *Achieving Zero Hunger: The critical role of investment in social protection and agriculture*, 2015, pp. 19-20.

¹⁴⁶ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

¹⁴⁷ World Food Summit, *Rome Declaration on World Food Security*, 1996; World Food Summit, *Rome Declaration on World Food Security*, 1996.

¹⁴⁸ UN High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action*, 2010, pp. xi-xii.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 2010, pp. 38-39.

¹⁵⁰ Simon, *Food Security: Definition, Four dimension, History*, 2012.

¹⁵¹ FAO, *Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment that Respects Rights, Livelihoods and Resources*, 2010.

¹⁵² UN CWFS, *Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems*, 2015.

civil society organizations (CSOs), the RAI is the most developed framework on responsible investment.¹⁵³ Given that the second goal of the SDGs is to “end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture” and includes a target to “increase investment...in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries,” responsible investment strategies are likely to remain an important issue.¹⁵⁴

Regionally, the African Union (AU) addressed agricultural investment directly in 2003 with the adoption of the *Maputo Declaration*, which committed African States to allocating 10% of their budgets to agriculture, a high bar that few States met, although the AU has consistently followed up on the declaration.¹⁵⁵ More recently, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation adopted the *Beijing Declaration on APEC Food Security*, which included calls for the liberalization of agricultural trade and private investment.¹⁵⁶ These documents are both designed to promote agricultural development within their regions but they contrast regional outlooks on how to address agricultural investment, with Africa focusing on domestic public investment and Asia focusing on liberalization and trade.¹⁵⁷

Role of the International System

The Rome-based agencies, which include the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and FAO, are the core UN bodies for addressing food security.¹⁵⁸ WFP is primarily tasked with providing food assistance and responding to emergencies, but is active in the promotion of agricultural investment in the context of its Purchase for Progress (P4P) programs.¹⁵⁹ P4P provides rural smallholder farmers an incentive to invest in their own farms and increase production by connecting them to markets and leveraging the buying power of WFP to ensure that they have a stable demand for the crops they grow.¹⁶⁰

Unlike WFP, IFAD is engaged almost exclusively in the financing of projects aimed at increasing agricultural investment and food security in the longer-term.¹⁶¹ IFAD provides loans and grants in nine focus areas, including agricultural development, financial services, and small and medium scale enterprise development, and has also implemented several initiatives aimed at increasing investment in agriculture.¹⁶² While IFAD offers highly concessional terms for investment projects in developing countries, its resources are limited and in part reliant on voluntary contributions from Member States.¹⁶³ The World Bank Group, which has more resources at its disposal, also works directly with Member States to expand agriculture financing, in some cases by providing technical and project support, but more often by providing traditional lending.¹⁶⁴ The World Bank and its subsidiary Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) play an important role in encouraging private investment in developing countries.¹⁶⁵ MIGA provides political risk insurance, helping to mitigate investment exposure to expropriation, war, terrorism, and breaches of contract that may otherwise discourage investment in developing countries.¹⁶⁶

FAO is constitutionally mandated to ensure humanity’s freedom from hunger and includes the promotion of increased and effective public and private investment in agricultural and rural development in its strategic objectives.¹⁶⁷ The knowledge and information-based role of FAO allows it not only to analyze and report on trends

¹⁵³ UN CWFS, *Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems*, 2015; Campbell, *5 Reasons Why We Couldn’t Support the Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment*, 2014.

¹⁵⁴ UN General Assembly, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1)*, 2015.

¹⁵⁵ African Union, *Report of the Ministers of Agriculture*, 2003; ONE, *The Maputo Commitments and the 2014 African Union Year of Agriculture*, 2013.

¹⁵⁶ Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, *Beijing Declaration on APEC Food Security*, 2014.

¹⁵⁷ Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, *Beijing Declaration on APEC Food Security*, 2014; ONE, *The Maputo Commitments and the 2014 African Union Year of Agriculture*, 2013.

¹⁵⁸ UN WFP, *Rome-based agencies (RBAs)*.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ UN WFP, *Purchase for Progress*.

¹⁶¹ UN IFAD, *What we do*.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ UN IFAD, *IFAD at work*.

¹⁶⁴ World Bank Group, *Agriculture Action Plan 2013-2015*, p. 59.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

¹⁶⁶ Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, *Investment Guarantees: Overview*.

¹⁶⁷ Yeshanew, *The right to food and investment in agriculture and rural development*, 2012.

in investment, but to also provide technical support.¹⁶⁸ FAO has agreements with 27 international financing institutions that invest in agriculture, including all of the regional development banks, and provides advice and support to governments on legislation that promotes investment in agriculture.¹⁶⁹ FAO helped to develop the RAI, and continues to report on and support efforts that promote responsible investment.¹⁷⁰

Models of Investment in Agriculture

There are three basic types of agricultural investment: capital, including investments in infrastructure, land improvements, and human capital development; research and development, especially on farming techniques, seed development, and pest and disease control; and institutional investments, primarily referring to government policies and regulations that promote investment and allow for producers to have access to global markets.¹⁷¹ It is the goal of all investment to be economically viable, meaning profitable in the long-run, but investments can come from either private or public sources.¹⁷² Public investments include direct government investment in infrastructure or state-owned agricultural enterprises, but can also include subsidies for agricultural activities and aid from partners.¹⁷³ Subsidies remain a hotly contested topic area, as they are used to a much higher degree in industrialized States, which many developing States argue negatively impacts their ability to compete in the global market.¹⁷⁴ Similarly, foreign aid is sometimes viewed as negatively impacting agricultural growth in developing countries as it is often tied to purchasing from the donor country and can force local farmers to compete with goods procured with foreign aid.¹⁷⁵

Although levels of public funding have increased, private flows constitute the largest source of agricultural investment.¹⁷⁶ Domestic private investment is completed by farmers and enterprises within their country and includes land development, livestock, machinery, structures, and related investments.¹⁷⁷ Most domestic farmers in developing countries are investing such that they can sell their crops, especially cash crops, to foreign companies on a contract basis.¹⁷⁸ Smallholders and enterprises alike engage in contract farming in order to be profitable and improve their livelihoods and such actions usually also align with States' economic development priorities.¹⁷⁹

The Impact of Irresponsible Investment

While developing countries continually seek development and economic growth, there is ongoing concern that investment will negatively impact food security and nutrition, even if the RAI are applied.¹⁸⁰ Some CSOs have even stated that “the weakness and incoherence in the Principles will be used to legitimize irresponsible investments.”¹⁸¹ In some cases, investments in developing countries have caused smallholders to lose their land or livelihoods, and in many cases it has decreased their ability to absorb economic shocks.¹⁸² This is often due to an expansion of monoculture, which refers the production of only a single crop in a given area.¹⁸³ Monoculture expansion causes higher levels of land degradation, causes land use to shift away from local food production towards cash crops, and

¹⁶⁸ FAO, *FAO's role in investment in agriculture*.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organization, *Models of Agricultural Investment*, 2012, p. 9.

¹⁷² Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organization, *Models of Agricultural Investment*, 2012, pp. 9-12; UN High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, *Updated Comprehensive Framework for Action*, 2010, pp. 38-39.

¹⁷³ Lowder, et al., *Who invests in agriculture and how much?*, 2012.

¹⁷⁴ WorldWatch Institute, *Agricultural Subsidies Remain a Staple in the Industrial World*, 2012.

¹⁷⁵ Bennett, *African agriculture needs trade not aid*, 2013.

¹⁷⁶ Lowder, et al., *Who invests in agriculture and how much?*, 2012.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organization, *Models of Agricultural Investment*, 2012, pp. 12-13.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Transnational Institute, *Political Brief on the Principles on Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems*, 2015, p. 10.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Oxfam International, *Investing in Poor Farmers Pays*, 2009, pp. 2-3.

¹⁸³ Union of Concern Scientists, *Expanding Monoculture*.

decreases diversification, causing farmers and states to be more susceptible to price fluctuations.¹⁸⁴ This type of investment took place in many developing states over the last 40 years resulting in many states converting from net food exporters to low income food deficit countries.¹⁸⁵

Case Study: Guatemala

Over the last twenty years, Guatemala has experienced rapid growth of industrial agriculture, especially in oil palm, but has seen an increase in poverty and decrease in food production.¹⁸⁶ Focused investment has dramatically increased monoculture and transferred vast tracts of land from smallholders to multinational corporations.¹⁸⁷ The oil palm industry is dominated by a mere six companies and now occupies over 80% of arable land, an area that could otherwise be cultivated by up to 70,000 food-producing smallholders.¹⁸⁸ Many in Guatemala have called this a “land grab” as profits from production are sent abroad and the palm oil itself is exported and used in biofuels, demand for which has steadily increased due to biofuels mandates in industrialized states.¹⁸⁹ While it might have been assumed that such commercial investment would be economically beneficial for the country and advance its development goals, the irresponsible nature of this investment increased monoculture and negatively affected food security.¹⁹⁰

Maximizing the Impact of Agricultural Investment

The RAI and other frameworks provide some basis for determining to what extent agricultural investment is being undertaken responsibly, but do not provide guidance for maximizing its impact on food security and nutrition.¹⁹¹ FAO has already identified that among the most direct methods of increasing food security at the national level is increasing the productivity of rural smallholder farmers.¹⁹² In part, this means ensuring that smallholder farmers have access to markets, including physical access with roads and transportation, and technical access from training and education.¹⁹³ The “Voluntary Guidelines on the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food” elaborate on this, asserting that states should strive to enable smallholder access, especially for women, to productive assets, including land, equipment, and technology.¹⁹⁴ When an enabling environment is established it becomes much easier for rural communities to improve their quality of life and level of food security.¹⁹⁵

Even in such environments, access to capital is a necessity for smallholders to expand their agricultural production.¹⁹⁶ Unfortunately, financial institutions seeking to serve these markets face high levels of risk and struggle to provide physical access.¹⁹⁷ Increasingly, microfinance institutions are being designed to overcome these obstacles and allow rural people, particularly women, to have access to small loans and, in some cases, even microinsurance that helps to mitigate their losses in the event of natural or manmade disasters.¹⁹⁸ While microfinancing must be tailored to specific community needs, best practices include using low-cost delivery channels, such as cell phones, to provide access to microfinance, and ensuring that clients have knowledge of their financial responsibilities.¹⁹⁹

¹⁸⁴ Union of Concern Scientists, *Expanding Monoculture*.

¹⁸⁵ Bello, *How the World Bank, IMF and WTO destroyed African Agriculture*, 2008.

¹⁸⁶ Oxfam International, *Smallholders at Risk*, 2014, pp. 7-17.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ Committee on World Food Security, *Investing in Smallholder Agriculture for Food Security and Nutrition*, 2013.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁶ International Finance Corporation, *Access to Finance for Smallholder Farmers*, 2014, pp. 5-15.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

Even in providing access to financing, technology, and other resources, empowering smallholders requires training to ensure that they can benefit from investments in their community.²⁰⁰ Training can be a difficult task, as it must fit with the community's existing skill levels, but several Member States and NGOs have implemented successful agricultural extension programs designed to develop agricultural knowledge and skills among farmers.²⁰¹ This can take on many forms and cover a variety of topics, from pest management to crop rotation to seed varieties and tilling methods.²⁰² In some cases, training can be focused on specific needs.²⁰³ IFAD's Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme, for example, funnels finances to smallholder farmers so they can access information tools and technologies to help them adapt their agricultural techniques to climate change.²⁰⁴ In almost every situation, however, training is complementary to agricultural investment and can help to ensure positive outcomes.²⁰⁵

Case Study: Kerala, India

In 1998, the Indian government in Kerala state, in partnership with both CSOs and NGOs, created Kudumbashree, an initiative that set up a system of project managers, who established agricultural extension projects and sought feedback from farmers regarding barriers they encountered, and training providers, who spoke local dialects and worked with project managers to tailor their training to specific local needs.²⁰⁶ Based on information they gathered from smallholders themselves, Kudumbashree engaged in community-specific entrepreneurial training and, in some cases, helped to provide access to financing and establish community agricultural projects.²⁰⁷ Kudumbashree has also worked to address systemic problems, lobbying for government policies that allow for women to more readily access land, a necessity for agricultural investment.²⁰⁸ Their efforts have been successful in numerous communities throughout Kerala, allowing many farmers who had previously only been engaged in subsistence agriculture to have profitable enterprises that not only lifted them from poverty, but significantly improved food security.²⁰⁹

Conclusion

The international community has identified that higher levels of agricultural investment are necessary to fulfill the second SDG and ensure adequate food security and nutrition for all.²¹⁰ The RAI provide a baseline for discussion on how best to ensure that such investment is done responsibly, protects human rights, and benefits rural communities, but there is ongoing tension regarding the role of corporations, foreign aid, and subsidies.²¹¹ While there is widespread agreement on the need for smallholders to have increased access to technology, training, and capital, most investment is coming from the private sector, which may or may not incorporate responsible practices.²¹² It is difficult to say how best to leverage investment to improve global food security and nutrition, and many Member States oppose protectionism that would go along with limiting or regulating certain investment flows, but the concept of responsible investment has remained an important topic for FAO and international community.²¹³

Further Research

In considering what actions can be taken by the international community to develop responsible investment strategies for food security and nutrition, delegates should consider the following questions: To what extent do the

²⁰⁰ International Finance Corporation, *Access to Finance for Smallholder Farmers*, 2014, p. 3.

²⁰¹ Collett & Gale, *Training for Rural Development: Agricultural and Enterprise Skills for Women Smallholders*, 2009, pp. 7-13.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Menon, *A Government Programme in Kerala Is Turning Women into Agripreneurs*, 2016.

²⁰⁸ Collett & Gale, *Training for Rural Development: Agricultural and Enterprise Skills for Women Smallholders*, 2009, pp. 67-68.

²⁰⁹ Menon, *A Government Programme in Kerala Is Turning Women into Agripreneurs*, 2016.

²¹⁰ FAO, *FAO's role in investment in agriculture*.

²¹¹ Transnational Institute, *Political Brief on the Principles on Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems*, 2015.

²¹² Lowder, et al., *Who invests in agriculture and how much?*, 2012.

²¹³ Organization of American States, *Declaration of Cochabamba on Food Security with Sovereignty in the Americas*, 2012; FAO, *FAO's role in investment in agriculture*.



current international frameworks promote responsible investment? Should FAO put forth new guidelines on responsible investment? What other UN bodies can best help develop responsible investment strategies or support Member States in their implementation? What national or regional strategies have been successful and can they be replicated elsewhere? What is the role of government subsidies in agriculture? What is the role of the private sector? What challenges might Member States face in developing policy that will promote responsible agricultural investment? What might limit implementation or enforcement of those policies?

Annotated Bibliography

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<http://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/071dd78045eadb5cb067b99916182e35/A2F+for+Smallholder+Farmers-Final+English+Publication.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>

Focused on microfinance, this report from the IFC provides several case studies from Latin America that may be applicable in other regions. Delegates should keep in mind that microfinance is only a small part of agricultural investment, but understanding why it is effective for smallholders will help them to understand their needs and how responsible investment might benefit them. The section on Current Practices and Lessons will be useful in understanding how to maximize the benefits of microfinance, and delegates can use the case studies as models to develop their own solutions.

Irish Association of Non-Governmental Development Organization. (2012). *Models of Agricultural Investment*. Retrieved 14 May 2016 from: <http://www.dochas.ie/Shared/Files/4/dochas-agricultural-investment.pdf>

Designed for a Western audience, this document from Dóchas is meant to provide an overview of various types of investment models, especially those that relate to smallholder farmers, and describe the various policy debates on those methods of investment. Sections two and three will be particularly useful for delegates as they provide a basic overview of investment types that can help delegates understand the core of the topic at hand. While later sections may be overly technical, delegates seeking to understand the financial aspects of the topic would also find those helpful.

Simon, G. (2012). *Food Security: Definition, Four dimensions, History*. Retrieved 16 April 2016 from: <http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/ERP/uni/F4D.pdf>

George-André Simon provides an excellent overview of the history of food security from an international perspective while providing excellent explanations of what food insecurity is and why it occurs. Through a reading of this document, delegates can come to understand the modern context for food security and the process by which the current situation evolved. The fifth section on the future of food security may be particularly helpful for delegates as they consider how to address the topic and produce effective results.

Transnational Institute. (2015). *Political Brief on the Principles on Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems*. Retrieved 10 May 2016 from: https://www.tni.org/files/download/political_brief_rai_principles_1.pdf

This brief gives an overview of the current state of discussion on responsible investment in agriculture and covers much of the criticisms of the current proposals from the civil society. The discussion of the role of the state and notes regarding balance investment and human rights near the end of the document may be of particular interest to delegates. Delegates should bear in mind that while this brief provides a critical civil society viewpoint, it may not align with their national priorities.

United Nations, Committee on World Food Security. (2015). *Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems* [Decision]. Retrieved 16 April 2016 from: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-ml291e.pdf>

While voluntary and non-binding, these principles are critical to understanding how the international community is currently addressing investment in agriculture. Delegates should seek to familiarize themselves with all of the principles herein and think critically about what policy implications these principles have. They should also seek to understand the challenges in adhering to some of these principles and consider how to address these challenges.

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