

*Expert group meeting in preparation for HLPF 2017*

*Readying institutions and policies for integrated approaches to the  
Implementation of the 2030 Agenda*

**Panel 3 - FAO Brief on Zero Hunger**

**The nexus between SDG1 and SDG2**

**Scaling up efforts to end poverty, hunger and malnutrition**

Despite great progress in poverty and hunger reduction over the last few decades in many parts of the world, poverty, hunger and malnutrition still remain major obstacles to sustainable development. While the world produces enough food to feed everyone adequately, food systems are not working to realize the right to food for all, and resources are used unsustainably. Nearly 900 million people live in extreme poverty and 800 million people suffer from chronic hunger; one in four children under five years of age is at risk of dying from malnutrition-related diseases; over two billion people lack the vitamins and minerals they need to grow, develop and lead healthy lives.

Globally, around 1.9 billion adult people are overweight. Of them, 600 million are obese. This has a high cost in terms of increased prevalence of diet-related non-communicable diseases and the associated health expenditure. It is expected that 11% of children below the age of five will be obese by 2025 if the current trend does not change.

Extreme poverty is disproportionately concentrated in rural areas, and the rural poor are more likely to rely on agriculture than other rural households, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. Sixty percent of the rural poor grow food and thus depend—at least partly—on agriculture for their livelihood and income. Worldwide, small-scale family farmers—including fishers, aquaculturalists, pastoralists and herders as well as indigenous peoples—are responsible for 70 percent of food production. The poor's reliance on agriculture for their livelihoods and income and the high share of their expenditure on food makes sustainable agriculture key to the alleviation of poverty, hunger and malnutrition.

Even in countries where overall poverty was reduced, the poorest have been left behind. Within-country inequalities remain pervasive between economic classes, across different territories, ethnic groups and men and women. Sustained and rapid economic growth, while necessary, has been not sufficient for poverty reduction.

Hunger and poverty are also highly present in urban areas, with a large share of the income of the poor is spent on food that is of low nutritional quality and not sufficiently safe. This can result in the urban poor's inability to address other basic needs, making them more vulnerable to the effects of economic and other shocks.

Women, to a higher extent than men, face barriers to access productive assets, including agricultural and financial resources, as well as labor to work on their farms. Indigenous peoples are also amongst the poorest of the poor and face marginalization. Their livelihoods are often highly dependent on the availability of natural resources which are becoming increasingly contested.

High levels of youth unemployment in rural areas is another key constraint for households in diversifying their livelihoods, building assets and move out of poverty sustainably. Improving off farm employment in agricultural production systems and other parts of the agricultural value chain (such as food preparation and processing as workers or small scale entrepreneurs) is linked to increased youth employment and improved household resilience. Family farmers are responsible for maintaining 85 percent of the world's biodiversity, but are seldom recognized or compensated for this role.

Sustainable food production systems, and improved rural productivity and incomes of small-scale family farmers are critical for sustaining an agricultural transition. Building human capital through the provision of quality basic social services—particularly education and health—and social protection schemes are fundamental building blocks to poverty reduction. Evidence shows that investment in agriculture is the most effective way to reduce poverty, particularly to boost economic growth in the early stages of low-income countries.

### **The nexus between SDG1 and SDG2**

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes these complex issues and prioritizes scaled up, transformational action to eradicate poverty, end hunger and all forms of malnutrition. The vision spelled out in SDG1 and SDG2 adopts a multidimensional, people-centered approach to ending poverty, hunger and malnutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture and food systems in line with a Zero Hunger vision. This vision emphasizes the crucial role of small scale producers, the rural poor, in particular women, as critical change agents in any effective scheme to eliminate these scourges and leave no one behind.

With the adoption of the Agenda 2030, countries have renewed their commitment to fight against poverty and hunger, acknowledging that inclusive and equitable growth is key for achieving sustainable development and moving people out of poverty. As the aim of this expert group meeting is to explore the interrelationships between SDGs, the following key messages are offered to strengthen and expand support to country-led policy processes, especially regarding SDG1 and SDG2.

## Key messages

- i. *“Business as usual” will not be good enough, we need transformational change.* As efforts to achieve the MDGs have shown, “business as usual” is not sufficient and countries are expected to step up their efforts to meet the challenge of Agenda 2030. For example, despite recent advancements, on the current trajectory, under a “business-as-usual” scenario, SDG 2 targets 2.1 and 2.2 will not be achieved and, large segments of the world’s population, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, will remain under- or mal nourished by 2030 and even by 2050. Similarly, global trends in the prevalence and number of children affected by stunting are decreasing but not fast enough, particularly in Africa, in order to attain the World Health Assembly’s global nutrition target of a 40 percent reduction in the number of stunted children by 2025.
- ii. *While the situation is complex, there are opportunities to make progress.* SDG 1 and 2 and related targets reflect the multifaceted nature of the problems. Overcoming these forms of deprivation requires a multi-sectoral and integrated approach. Although the SDGs and the interrelations between them are complex, there are examples of success stories, convincing research and opportunities to make progress. If we focus on replicating and upscaling successful approaches towards integrating SDG1 and SDG2 objectives and learn from the experience of others, the complexity becomes manageable.
- iii. *Policy options should be context specific – one size does not fit all situations.* It will be important to exploit synergies within the existing policy environment, and adapt the approaches to each context and at different levels (national, subnational, territorial) to enhance coherence across relevant sectors and policy domains. This should lead to concrete actions for creating an enabling environment of social and economic development (growth) but also inclusion and reduction of inequalities as to fully engage the most vulnerable in development and economic growth. Sharpening the focus of national policy, legal and programme frameworks and exploiting synergies between social protection, agriculture, nutrition, health and education policies and programs can accelerate and deepen progress on both SDG 1 and 2.
- iv. *Partnerships are key.* The identified means of implementation for SDG achievement call for an expanded set of competencies, knowledge, technologies, financial resources and investments that cannot be mobilized neither by public nor private sector alone. Partnerships, with the private sector, civil society and other key stakeholders, are therefore expected to play an expanded role under the 2030 Agenda, enabling coordinated action by multiple stakeholders to address the integrated, indivisible and interlinked nature of the SDGs. UN institutions will be called upon to play a unique role: providing and upholding inter-governmentally agreed norms and standards, monitoring commitments and tracking results, promoting institutional development as a trusted and neutral facilitator.

- v. *Strengthen governance and coordination.* The 2030 Agenda calls for: more integrative approaches to development; a strong commitment to national decision-making and greater self-reliance by Member States; a clear demand for greater UN system coherence; and a commitment to a greatly enlarged system of monitoring and reporting to enable mutual accountability among all stakeholders. Enhanced governance and coordination mechanisms should include ensuring inter-sectoral dialogue and incentives for sectors and stakeholders to work together to develop a common understanding of problems and solutions regarding policy actions to take towards a shared objective.
  
- vi. *Need for solid evidence, and policy relevant evidence.* Strengthen the use of cross-sectoral evidence by decision-makers to help inform the development of policies, legislation, programmes and investment plans. Solid evidence can also promote a common understanding of the problems and solutions. This will also require strengthening capacities for data analysis, monitoring and assessing the impact of policies, strategies and investment programmes towards the reduction of hunger and poverty, improved nutrition and more sustainable agriculture in the context of the 2030 Agenda.
  
- vii. *Prioritize resource allocation and improve resource use.* This will be crucial for effective implementation of the portfolio of policies, policy instruments and programmes that are needed to achieve SDGs 1&2. FAO, IFAD and WFP estimated that globally, additional annual investment of USD 265 billion are needed on average to defeat extreme poverty and hunger by 2030, as compared to a “Business as usual” scenario. This amount comprises both investment in social protection programmes (USD 67 billion) and investment in pro-poor productive activities (USD 198 billion), i.e. activities that provide poor people opportunities to earn, save and invest. This implies a significant increase of annual investment both in social protection and productive activities in rural areas, compared to the “business-as-usual” situation. Low-income countries have little possibilities to mobilize substantial public and private resources to support such investment programmes, thus requiring international financial cooperation.

We can end poverty and hunger by 2030. But we will need an approach that builds on existing structures, embraces the complexity as an opportunity, fosters effective partnerships and ensures much higher level of resources mobilized towards poverty and hunger eradication than in a “business-as-usual” scenario.