

International Migration Review Forum 2022

Round table 1 (GCM Objectives 2, 5, 6, 12, 18)

17 May 2022, Conference Room 4, United Nations, New York

Statement on behalf of the UN Rome-Based Agencies FAO, IFAD and WFP

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as prepared for delivery

Esteemed Co-chairs of the IMRF Round Table 1,

Distinguished representatives of Member State delegations and present participants in the auditorium,

1. I am **honoured to speak on behalf of the Rome-based agencies**, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Food Programme (WFP). **The objectives of the Global Compact for Migration covered in Roundtable 1 are closely linked to the mandate of our organizations:** eradicating hunger and achieving food security, eliminating poverty and promoting rural development and the sustainable management of natural resources.
2. **Human mobility is deeply rooted in the structural transformation of rural areas.** A large share of migrants comes from rural areas. Migration has long been an important livelihood diversification strategy to cope with the seasonality and risks in agriculture.
3. The **drivers of migration are complex and interrelated.** Many people leave rural areas because of poverty, food insecurity, lack of decent work opportunities, conflicts and instability, and to find better prospects. **As rural livelihoods are largely based on natural resources, the impacts of climate change add further complexities,** making rural populations exceptionally vulnerable.
4. Therefore, it is **key to address the adverse drivers of migration,** and **invest** in sustainable agri-food systems, decent rural employment opportunities, and resilient rural livelihoods.
5. **Migrants' labour is an indispensable element** across all food systems and agricultural value chains, be it on farms or processing facilities, at sea and on land. **Agriculture is one of the most hazardous of all economic sectors** and many **agricultural workers suffer occupational accidents and ill health.**
6. While **migrant workers play a vital role in feeding the world,** the **COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the pervasive decent work deficits they face,** and the importance of addressing them to ensure the sustainable transformation of food systems.
7. While migration brings both challenges and opportunities, **continuous and coherent efforts are still needed to fully tap into the developmental potential of migration** for agriculture, rural development and food security.
8. At present, **migration aspects are rarely reflected in agricultural, rural development and climate change policies, and little acknowledgement is given to the positive contribution** migrants can make to rural development and climate change adaptation, including through remittances and diaspora investments.
9. In times of increasing instability and food crises, as well as unprecedented and accelerating climate change, **it is of utmost priority to recognize the role of migration as a climate change adaptation strategy and to**

consider the role of migrants and remittances in contributing to building sustainable, inclusive and resilient agri-food systems and livelihoods for rural and urban populations worldwide.

10. Pursuant to the commitment to support the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, **FAO, IFAD and WFP call on Member States to work with all stakeholders, including migrants, and step up their efforts to:**
 - a) **Address the adverse drivers of migration** by investing:
 - in the **eradication of rural poverty and achievement of food security**;
 - in the **provision of humanitarian assistance to address emergency needs** following shocks;
 - in **climate change adaptation and resilient livelihoods**, and
 - in the **creation of better employment and entrepreneurship opportunities in rural areas** and the provision of **training and skills development**, particularly for women and youth;
 - b) **Promote regular pathways**, including through bilateral labour migration agreements, **for those people who migrate from rural areas and for those who work in agri-food systems**, including seasonal agricultural workers;
 - c) Support **measures and instruments enabling the use of remittances and diaspora investments** for sustainable agri-businesses, climate-resilient rural livelihoods, and **the transfer of social capital** to contribute to climate change adaptation and ecosystem restoration in areas of origin, transit and destination;
 - d) Ensure that **the role, safety and potential of migrants is considered in agricultural and climate policies and programmes**;
 - e) **Improve coherence and coordination** between sectoral policies on migration, climate change, food security and agriculture and **enhance collaboration between policy actors** across different levels of governance (sub-national, national, regional, global);
11. On behalf of the Rome-based Agencies, FAO, IFAD and WFP, **I want to thank the co-chairs of Roundtable 1 and the UN Network on Migration for providing this important space to bring in the agriculture, rural development and food security perspective to this discussion.**