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RESEARCH ARTICLE

ROLE OF FAO IN GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), of the U.N. is dedicated to providing food security for all. The organization has three main goals that guide its initiatives and strategies: “the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition; the elimination of poverty and the driving forward of economic and social progress for all; and, the sustainable management and utilization of natural resources, including land, water, air, climate and genetic resources for the benefit of present and future generations.” Talks about the organization first began in 1943 in Hot Springs, Virginia, where various governments were committed to the creation of an organization solely dedicated to food and agriculture. It was not until 1945 that the FAO became a specialized U.N. branch. It is the oldest indefinite specialized agency of the U.N. The organization is comprised of 194 Member Nations, two associate members and one member organization, which is the European Union. The organization is currently present in more than 130 countries. The FAO supports policies and political commitments focused on promoting food security and good nutrition while keeping information on issues like hunger and malnutrition problems and solutions up-to-date and easily accessible. To reduce rural poverty, the FAO helps smallholders increase farm productivity, find employment off of the farm and assist communities in finding ways to manage high-risk issues prone to their environment. The FAO partners with member countries’ governments to devise agricultural policy, support planning, draft effective legislation and create national strategies. The organization responds to crisis situations by partnering with humanitarian agencies, such as the World Food Programme, to protect people’s livelihoods and help them rebuild their lives. The organization provides a platform where rich and poor nations can come together to fight global issues that affect everyone. The World Bank and FAO have recently decided to strengthen their partnership to incorporate more cooperation in hopes of making the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development even more attainable. FAO is 39 percent funded by the contributions of member countries and 61 percent funded by voluntary contributions made by various partners. Emily Arnold opined on the FAO that FAO is an especially important organization for the world’s poor because it prioritizes those who are deprived of the basic human rights of food and water while mobilizing the world’s nations to work together.

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INTRODUCTION

FAO, a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN), was established to raise levels and standards of nutrition and living globally; secure improvements in the efficiency of the production and distribution of all food and agricultural products, including sound management and sustainable utilization of national resources; and better the condition of rural populations. It would, in this way, contribute towards an expanding world economy and ensure humanity's freedom from hunger.

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FAO with a broad mandate embracing nutrition, food, and agriculture (which includes “fisheries, marine products, forestry and primary forestry products”). The FAO is a neutral intergovernmental organization. The organization strives to provide information and support sustainable agriculture through legislation and national strategies, with a goal of alleviating hunger. FAO works to promote public-private partnerships, improve smallholder agriculture, and develop mechanisms to monitor, reduce, and warn about hazards to the food chain. Funding comes from industrialized countries, development banks and other sources. The FAO is an agency that combats global hunger and promotes rural development. The today the FAO is still the only global intergovernmental organization with a broad mandate in governing the world’s food and agricultural system, although with the presence of

numerous other players at the regional and global levels, its position is substantially different than in prior decades, however, severely undermined the Organization's reputation. In response FAO began its decades-long decentralization process and opening country offices.

History: FAO was founded 16 October 1945, like first specialized agency within the United Nations. The settlement of this organization occurs at the end of World War II, because the war itself helped to give importance to the problem of food requirements imposed on the people and soldiers. The first idea of an international organization for food and agriculture emerged in 1905, which led to the creation of the International Institute of Agriculture (IIA), thanks Italian initiative. The organization of work for the official establishment of FAO, begins in 1935 with the creation of ad hoc committee within the League of Nations and later in 1943 with the Hot Springs Conference in Virginia. The Conference, which was attended by 45 countries, concluded with the approval of a final act contains 33 recommendations and the will to creation of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. The concrete establishment of this organization was entrusted to the Interim Commission on Food and Agriculture, set up in Washington with representatives of each of the governments and authorities represented at the Hot Springs Conference. Two years later in 1945, in the Conference convened in Quebec City on 16 October was born FAO. The most important initiatives promoted until today are the "Global Campaign Against Hunger", "World Food Programme (WFP)" and the creation of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Goal: - Our goal is to achieve food security for all and make sure that people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives. With over 194 member states, FAO works in over 130 countries worldwide. We believe that everyone can play a part in ending hunger.

Purpose: As expressed in the preamble to the FAO constitution, member states are pledged to promote the common welfare through separate and collective action to raise levels of nutrition and standards of living, improve the efficiency of the production and distribution of all food and agricultural products, better the conditions of rural populations, and thus contribute toward an expanding world economy and ensure humanity's freedom from hunger. Specifically, FAO is charged with collecting, evaluating, and disseminating information relating to nutrition, food, and agriculture and associated areas, including fisheries, marine products, forestry, and primary forestry products. FAO is committed to promoting and, where appropriate, recommending national and international action with respect to the following: (a) scientific, technological, social, and economic research relating to nutrition, food, and agriculture; (b) improvement of education and administration relating to nutrition, food, and agriculture and the spread of public knowledge of nutritional and agricultural science and practice; (c) conservation of natural resources and the adoption of improved methods of agricultural production; (d) improvement of the processing, marketing, and distribution of food and agricultural products; (e) adoption of policies for the provision of adequate agricultural credit, national and international; and (f) adoption of international policies on agricultural commodity arrangements.

The FAO also plays a major role in dealing with food and agricultural emergencies such as drought, famine, plant diseases, and insect plagues.

FAO's mandate: Creating a world free of hunger and malnutrition, where food and agriculture contribute to improving the living standards of all, especially the poorest, in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner—is central to achieving Millennium Development Goal (MDG) (Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger), and important for long-term food security. Specifically, FAO is mandated to develop these instruments “at global, regional and national levels through global governance mechanisms, policy dialogue and support and advice, coupled with the development at country level of the necessary policies and institutional capacities for their implementation”.

Challenge: High-input, resource-intensive farming systems, which have caused massive deforestation, water scarcities, soil depletion and high levels of greenhouse gas emissions, cannot deliver sustainable food and agricultural production. Needed are innovative systems that protect and enhance the natural resource base, while increasing productivity. Needed is a transformative process towards ‘holistic’ approaches, such as agroecology, agro-forestry, climate-smart agriculture and conservation agriculture, which also build upon indigenous and traditional knowledge. Technological improvements, along with drastic cuts in economy-wide and agricultural fossil fuel use, would help address climate change and the intensification of natural hazards, which affect all ecosystems and every aspect of human life. Greater international collaboration is needed to prevent emerging trans-boundary agriculture and food system threats, such as pests and diseases.

FAO Headquarters: Location:- Rome, Viale delle Terme of Caracalla, Country-Italy; Construction started in 1938; Completed-1952; inaugurated-1962. The FAO Building (Italian: *Palazzo FAO*, literally "FAO Palace") is the international headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), located in the San Saba rione of Rome, Italy. Originally built under the Fascist government of Italy in the 1930s to be the seat of the Ministry of Italian Africa, the building was repurposed after World War II to be the headquarters of the then-new United Nations' agricultural agency, the FAO.

The building is located in one of the most scenic parts of Rome, southeast of the Aventine Hill, and overlooking the Baths of Caracalla and the Circus Maximus. It was taken from Ethiopia by Benito Mussolini's troops in 1937 as a war chest, and returned on 18 April 2005. FAO headquarters were in Washington, DC, until 1951. Since then, they have been located in Rome on extraterritorial grounds near the Colosseum and the Baths of Caracalla. The headquarters building was planned originally by the government of Mussolini, but construction was halted by World War II. Completed after the war, it was leased by the Italian government for the "permanent use and occupancy" of FAO at an annual rental of US \$1. Growth in staff and activities over the years created a need for more work space. Aside from additions to the main complex, office space was for some time rented away from the headquarters building. In 1993, the Italian government completed a major expansion of headquarters facilities, bringing all FAO staff together at the Terme di Caracalla address for the first time in 32 years.

Regional offices



Fig. 1. FAO headquarters in Rome

Table 1. Regional office

Regional Office for	Country	Place
Africa	Ghana	Accra
Asia and the Pacific	Thailand	Bangkok
Europe and Central Asia	Hungary	Budapest
Latin America and the Caribbean	Chile	Santiago
Near East	Egypt	Cairo

Structure: FAO has a staff with more than 3600 units and its internal structure is composed by: Conference of the Member Nations, Council of the Organization, the Director General, Departments, Regional Offices, *sub*-Regional Offices and Country Offices. The principal organs of FAO are the FAO Conference, the FAO Council, and the secretariat, headed by a Director General.

Table 2. Sub-regional office

Sub-regional offices for	Country	Place
Central Africa (SFC)	Gabon	Libreville
Central Asia	Turkey	Ankara
Eastern Africa (SFE)	Ethiopia	Addis Ababa
Mesoamerica (SLM)	Panama	Panama City
North Africa	Tunisia	Tunis
Southern Africa and East Africa	Zimbabwe	Harare
The Caribbean	Barbados	Bridgetown
The Gulf Cooperation Council States and Yemen	UAE	Abu Dhabi
The Pacific Islands	Samoa	Apia

FAO Conference:The supreme body of FAO is the all-member FAO Conference, which holds its regular biennial sessions in Rome in odd-numbered years. The conference determines the policy of FAO and adopts its budget. It makes recommendations relating to food, agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and related matters to member nations and to other international organizations. It approves conventions and agreements for submission to member governments. It may establish commissions, working parties, and consultative groups and may convene special conferences. It periodically elects the Director General, as well as the member nations to be represented on the FAO Council. Each FAO member has one vote in the conference.

Table 3. Liaison offices

Liaison offices with/for	Country	Place
North America	USA	Washington, DC
Japan	Japan	Yokohama
European Union and Belgium	Belgium	Brussels
The Russian Federation	Russia	Moscow
The United Nations	Switzerland	Geneva
The United Nations	USA	New York

FAO Council: The FAO Council, consisting of 49 member nations elected by the FAO Conference for three-year terms on a rotating basis (one-third of the membership stands down each year), meets at least once a year, under an independent chairman.

Director General and Secretariat: - Director-General is appointed by the Conference for a term of six years and is re-elected. Under the supervision of the conference and the Council, the Director General has full power and authority to direct the work of FAO. He heads a staff of more than 3,700, including more than 2,000 persons working in various development projects in the field.

FAO Director General

Departments: FAO is composed of seven departments.

- Agriculture and Consumer Protection department promotes agriculture to eradicate human poverty while also protecting the environment and ensuring safe food practices and standards.
- Climate, Biodiversity, Land, and Water department promotes sustainable management practices for land, soils, energy, water, biodiversity and genetic resources.
- Corporate Services, Human Resources, and Finance department support the entire FAO organization.
- Economic and Social Development department promotes economic development through internal production and for trade.
- Fisheries and Aquaculture department promotes management of aquaculture and fishing.
- Forestry department promotes management of resources through forestry.
- Technical Cooperation department supports member countries in their programs and responds to food and agriculture threats and crises.

Regional Offices: The principal function of the Regional Offices is the overall identification, planning and implementation of FAO's priority activities in the Region.

Sub-Regional Offices: Monitoring the level of programme implementation.

Country Offices: Serve as the channel of FAO's services to governments and other partners (donors, NGOs, CSOs, research institutions, etc.). Since 1994, FAO has undergone the most significant restructuring since its founding to decentralize operations, streamline procedures and reduce costs. Highlights of the reforms include the transfer of staff from headquarters to the field, increased use of experts from developing countries and countries in transition and broadened links with the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

Contribution of FAO on Indian agricultural development:- India has come a long way since 1945 when it became one of the founding members of FAO as a low-income food-deficient country. Today, the country is not only self-sufficient in rice and wheat, it also produces over 260 million tonnes of food grains, 269 million tonnes of agriculture produce and 132 million tonnes of milk. Agriculture is a mainstay of the country's economy, contributing to 18 percent of India's GDP and providing a source of employment for more than 47 percent of the population.

Table 4. FAO Director General

Sl.	Term	Director General	Country
1	Oct, 1945 to April, 1948	Jhon Boyd Orr	UK
2	April, 1948 to Dec. 1953	Norris E. Dodd	USA
3	January, 1954 to April, 1956	Philip V. Cardon	USA
4	April, 1956 to Nov, 1956	Sir Herbert Broadley	UK
5	Nov, 1956 to Dec, 1967	Binay Ranjan Sen	India
6	January, 1968 to Dec, 1975	Addeke Hendrik Boerma	Netherlands
7	January, 1976 to Dec, 1993	Edouard Saouma	Lebanon
8	January, 1994 to Dec, 2011	Jacques Diouf	Senegal
9	January, 2012 to present	José Graziano da Silva	Brazil

Table 5. Member Countries of FAO

Countries	Countries	Countries	Countries
(1) Afghanistan	(51) Dominica	(101) Liberia	(151) San Marino
(2) Albania	(52) Dominican Republic	(102) Libya	(152) Sao Tome and Principe
(3) Algeria	(53) Ecuador	(103) Lithuania	(153) Saudi Arabia
(4) Andorra	(54) Egypt	(104) Luxembourg	(154) Senegal
(5) Angola	(55) El Salvador	(105) Macedonia	(155) Serbia
(6) Antigua and Barbuda	(56) Equatorial Guinea	(106) Madagascar	(156) Seychelles
(7) Argentina	(57) Eritrea	(107) Malawi	(157) Sierra Leone
(8) Armenia	(58) Estonia	(108) Malaysia	(158) Singapore
(9) Australia	(59) Ethiopia	(109) Maldives	(159) Slovakia
(10) Austria	(60) European Union ^[A]	(110) Mali	(160) Slovenia
(11) Azerbaijan	(61) Faroe Islands ^[B]	(111) Malta	(161) Solomon Islands
(12) The Bahamas	(62) Fiji	(112) Marshall Islands	(162) Somalia
(13) Bahrain	(63) Finland	(113) Mauritania	(163) South Africa
(14) Bangladesh	(64) France	(114) Mauritius	(164) South Sudan
(15) Barbados	(65) Gabon	(115) Mexico	(165) Spain
(16) Belarus	(66) The Gambia	(116) Federated States of Micronesia	(166) Sri Lanka
(17) Belgium	(67) Georgia	(117) Moldova	(167) Sudan
(18) Belize	(68) Germany	(118) Monaco	(168) Suriname
(19) Benin	(69) Ghana	(119) Mongolia	(169) Swaziland
(20) Bhutan	(70) Greece	(120) Montenegro	(170) Sweden
(21) Bolivia	(71) Grenada	(121) Morocco	(171) Switzerland
(22) Bosnia and Herzegovina	(72) Guatemala	(122) Mozambique	(172) Syria
(23) Botswana	(73) Guinea	(123) Namibia	(173) Tajikistan
(24) Brazil	(74) Guinea-Bissau	(124) Nauru	(174) Tanzania
(25) Brunei	(75) Guyana	(125) Nepal	(175) Thailand
(26) Bulgaria	(76) Haiti	(126) Netherlands	(176) Timor-Leste
(27) Burkina Faso	(77) Honduras	(127) New Zealand	(177) Togo
(28) Burma	(78) Hungary	(128) Nicaragua	(178) Tokelau ^[B]
(29) Burundi	(79) Iceland	(129) Niger	(179) Tonga
(30) Cambodia	(80) India	(130) Nigeria	(180) Trinidad and Tobago
(31) Cameroon	(81) Indonesia	(131) Niue	(181) Tunisia
(32) Canada	(82) Iran	(132) Norway	(182) Turkey
(33) Cape Verde	(83) Iraq	(133) Oman	(183) Turkmenistan
(34) Central African Republic	(84) Ireland	(134) Pakistan	(184) Tuvalu
(35) Chad	(85) Israel	(135) Palau	(185) Uganda
(36) Chile	(86) Italy	(136) Panama	(186) Ukraine
(37) China	(87) Jamaica	(137) Papua New Guinea	(187) United Arab Emirates
(38) Colombia	(88) Japan	(138) Paraguay	(188) United Kingdom
(39) Comoros	(89) Jordan	(139) Peru	(189) United States
(40) Democratic Republic of the Congo	(90) Kazakhstan	(140) Philippines	(190) Uruguay
(41) Republic of the Congo	(91) Kenya	(141) Poland	(191) Uzbekistan
(42) Cook Islands	(92) Kiribati	(142) Portugal	(192) Vanuatu
(43) Costa Rica	(93) North Korea	(143) Qatar	(193) Venezuela
(44) Côte d'Ivoire	(94) South Korea	(144) Romania	(194) Vietnam
(45) Croatia	(95) Kuwait	(145) Russian Federation	(195) Yemen
(46) Cuba	(96) Kyrgyzstan	(146) Rwanda	(196) Zambia
(47) Cyprus	(97) Laos	(147) Saint Kitts and Nevis	(197) Zimbabwe
(48) Czech Republic	(98) Latvia	(148) Saint Lucia	
(49) Denmark	(99) Lebanon	(149) Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	
(50) Djibouti	(100) Lesotho	(150) Samoa	

FAO has been a staunch partner in this journey of success since 1948, when our operations in India first began. In recent years, our efforts in the country have gone beyond the realm of food production, concentrating on providing technical assistance for incorporating best practices to generate agricultural outlooks, facilitating adoption and promotion of improved livestock management practices, and building knowledge and capacities of communities to adapt. At the same time, India is also an important knowledge partner for FAO, providing technical expertise to other countries, and the lessons learned from programmes implemented over the years are now being applied in other parts of the world. In order to achieve the most impact with respect to India's vast and highly heterogeneous food and

agriculture system, FAO is working to facilitate the country's multilateral cooperation in areas such as trans-boundary pests and diseases, livestock production, fisheries management, food safety and climate change. Working with the Government, FAO provides technical assistance and capacity building to enable the transfer of best practices as well as taking lessons learned from different countries and applying them to India's agriculture system.

Priorities work areas of FAO

- Help eliminate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

- Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable.
- Reduce rural poverty.
- Enable inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems.
- Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises.

Programmes and achievements

Codex Alimentarius:- FAO and the World Health Organization created the Codex Alimentarius Commission in 1961 to develop food standards, guidelines and texts such as codes of practice under the Joint FAO/ WHO Food Standards Programme. The main aims of the programme are protecting consumer health, ensuring fair trade and promoting co-ordination of all food standards work undertaken by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

World Food Summit: In 1996, FAO organized the World Food Summit, attended by 112 Heads or Deputy Heads of State and Government. The Summit concluded with the signing of the Rome Declaration, which established the goal of halving the number of people who suffer from hunger by the year 2015.

Tele Food :-In 1997, FAO launched TeleFood, a campaign of concerts, sporting events and other activities to harness the power of media, celebrities and concerned citizens to help fight hunger. TeleFood pays for small, sustainable projects that help small-scale farmers produce more food for their families and communities.

FAO Goodwill Ambassadors:-The FAO Goodwill Ambassadors Programme was initiated in 1999. The main purpose of the programme is to attract public and media attention to the unacceptable situation that some 1 billion people continue to suffer from chronic hunger and malnutrition in a time of unprecedented plenty. These people lead a life of misery and are denied the most basic of human rights: the right to food.

Right to Food Guidelines: In 2004 the Right to Food Guidelines were adopted, offering guidance to states on how to implement their obligations on the right to food.

Response to food crisis: In December 2007, FAO launched its Initiative on Soaring Food Prices to help small producers raise their output and earn more. Under the initiative, FAO contributed to the work of the UN High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Crisis, which produced the Comprehensive Framework for Action.

FAO–EU partnership: In May 2009, FAO and the European Union signed an initial aid package worth €125 million to support small farmers in countries hit hard by rising food prices.

Food security programmes: The Special Programme for Food Security is FAO's flagship initiative for reaching the goal of halving the number of hungry in the world by 2015 as part of its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals.

Online campaign against hunger: The 1 billion hungry project became the Ending Hunger campaign in April 2011. Spearheaded by FAO in partnership with other UN agencies

and private nonprofit groups, the Ending Hunger movement pushes the boundaries of conventional public advocacy. Moreover, the Ending Hunger project is a viral communication campaign, renewing and expanding its efforts to build the movement through Facebook, Twitter and other social networks.

Role of FAO in promoting sustainable aquaculture

The areas summarized by Seilert (2001) as follows:

- To collect, analyze, interpret and disseminate information;
- To promote research and education;
- To promote conservation of natural resources;
- To promote improved methods of production, processing, marketing and distribution;
- To promote the adoption of policy, national and international frameworks; and
- To furnish technical assistance including support for the implementation of the purposes of the organization.

Five distinct role categories of FAO

- Presenting information for the transition to sustainable agriculture. This includes specialists, nutritionists, economists, statisticians and other researchers.
- Strengthening Policy:-Both strengthening existing policy, but also advocating global policy development.
- Increasing public-private collaboration:-Where rich and poor nations can talk to the Food Industry to facilitate greater investments.
- Field Projects:-Currently there are thousands of field projects under way.
- Mitigating risk:-develop monitoring strategies for threats to agriculture, food and nutrition.

Functions:-FAO provides development assistance, provides advice to governments on the subject of general policies, collects, analyses and disseminates information and acts as an international forum to discuss issues related to food and agriculture. Furthermore, its special programs assisting States to be prepared to deal with the crisis and provide emergency food assistance required. FAO mobilizes and manages millions of dollars provided by industrialized countries, development banks and other sources to make sure the projects achieve their goals. Since its founding, the organization has focused special attention on developing rural areas, home to 70 percent of the world's poor and hungry people. Finally, it defines international standards and conventions.

Main functions of FAO are the followings: The Organization shall collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information relating to nutrition, food and agriculture. FAO serves as a knowledge network. It uses the expertise of its staff, agronomists, foresters, fisheries and livestock specialists, nutritionists, social scientists, economists, statisticians and other professionals, to collect, analyse and disseminate data. FAO also publishes hundreds of newsletters, reports and books, distributes several magazines, creates numerous electronic *fora*.

The Organization shall promote and, where appropriate, shall recommend national and international action with respect to:

- Scientific, technological, social and economic research relating to nutrition, food and agriculture;
- The improvement of education and administration relating to nutrition, food and agriculture, and the spread of public knowledge of nutritional and agricultural science and practice;
- The conservation of natural resources and the adoption of improved methods of agricultural production;
- The improvement of the processing, marketing and distribution of food and agricultural products;
- The adoption of policies for the provision of adequate agricultural credit, national and international;
- The adoption of international policies with respect to agricultural commodity arrangements.

Other functions of the Organization

- To furnish such technical assistance as governments may request. FAO lends its years of experience to member countries in devising agricultural policy, supporting planning, drafting effective legislation and creating national strategies to achieve rural development and hunger alleviation goals.
- To organize, in cooperation with the governments concerned, such missions as may be needed to assist them to fulfil the obligation arising from their acceptance of the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture and of this Constitution.

Core functions

- Collecting, analyzing and disseminating information and statistics to its members, particularly about medium and long-term trends
- Developing international instruments, norms and standards.
- Providing advice and capacity-building for agricultural policy makers
- Contributing to emergency and post-emergency assistance at member states' request, through its global network of experts, and
- Assisting member states and the international financing institutions with the programming of their investments in agriculture. FAO operates in 138 countries, sub-regional or regional offices in 88 countries.

Flagship publications:-Every year, FAO publishes a number of major 'State of the World' reports related to food, agriculture, forestry, fisheries and natural resources.

- State of Agricultural Commodity Markets
- State of Food and Agriculture
- State of Food Insecurity in the World
- State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
- State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources
- State of the World's Forests
- State of the World's Land and Water Resources for Food and Agriculture
- State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
- State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Status of the World's Soil Resources

Member countries:-There are a total of 197 members comprising 194 member nations, 1 member organization (EU) and 2 associate members (Faroe Islands and Tokelau).

Criticism

1970s, 80s, 90s

- Dissatisfaction with the organization's performance for at least 30 years was among the reasons for the creation of two new organizations after the World Food Conference in 1974, namely the World Food Council and the International Fund for Agricultural Development;
- The World Food Programme, which started as an experimental three-year programme under FAO, was struggling for power.
- Early in 1989, The Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank based in Washington, DC. wrote that "The sad fact is that the FAO has become essentially irrelevant in combating hunger. A bloated bureaucracy known for the mediocrity of its work and the inefficiency of its staff the FAO in recent years has become increasingly politicised".
- Edouard Saouma, the Director-General of FAO, was also criticized in Graham Hancock's book *Lords of Poverty*, published in 1989. Mention is made of Saouma's "fat pay packet", his "autocratic" management style, and his "control over the flow of public information".
- In 1990, the US State Department expressed the view that "The Food and Agriculture Organization has lagged behind other UN organizations in responding to US desires for improvements in program and budget processes to enhance value for money spent".
- A year later, in 1991, *The Ecologist* magazine produced a special issue under the heading "The UN Food and Agriculture Organization: Promoting World Hunger". The magazine included articles that questioned FAO's policies and practices in forestry, fisheries, aquaculture, and pest control.
- 2000s
- The 2002 Food Summit organized by FAO was considered to be a waste of time by many of the official participants.
- In 2004, FAO produced a controversial report called 'Agricultural Biotechnology: meeting the needs of the poor?'. The report claimed that "agricultural biotechnology has real potential as a new tool in the war on hunger". In response to the report, more than 650 organizations from around the world signed an open letter in which they said "FAO has broken its commitment to civil society and peasants' organisations". The letter complained that organizations representing the interests of farmers had not been consulted.
- In May 2006, a British newspaper published the resignation letter of Louise Fresco, one of eight Assistant Directors-General of FAO. In her letter, Fresco stated that "the Organization has been unable to adapt to a new era", that "our contribution and reputation have declined steadily" and "its leadership has not proposed bold options to overcome this crisis".

- The 32nd Session of FAO's Committee on World Food Security in 2006, attended by 120 countries, was widely criticized by non-governmental organizations.
- On 18 October 2007, the final report of an Independent External Evaluation of FAO concluded that "The Organization is today in a financial and programme crisis" but "the problems affecting the Organization today can all be solved".
- In 2015 FAO was criticized by *The Economist* for giving a diploma to Venezuela for being one of 72 countries that had "reached the UN Millennium Development Goal of halving the percentage of their populations suffering from hunger". *The Economist* expressed doubt over Venezuela statistics.
- In 2016/17 FAO was heavily criticized by Transparency International for recruiting Nadine Heredia Alarcón de Humala, wife of the former president of Peru, Ollanta Humala, to a senior position, at a time when she was being investigated by Peru following corruption allegations.
- At the end of April 2017, FAO staff unions addressed the organization's Governing Council to complain about the practice of issuing short-term contracts that "exploit employees without providing job security, social security and paid leave".

Conclusion

Hunger and extreme poverty have been reduced globally since the 1990s. Yet, around 700 million people, most of them living in rural areas, are still extremely poor today. In addition, despite undeniable progress in reducing rates of undernourishment and improving levels of nutrition and health, almost 800 million people are chronically hungry and 2 billion suffer micronutrient deficiencies. Under a 'business-as-usual' scenario, without additional efforts to promote pro-poor development, some 653 million people would still be undernourished in 2030. Even where poverty has been reduced, pervasive inequalities remain, hindering poverty eradication. Conflicts, crises and natural disasters are increasing in number and intensity. They reduce food availability, disrupt access to food and health care, and undermine social protection systems, pushing many affected people back into poverty and hunger, fuelling distress migration and increasing the need for humanitarian aid.

Trends and challenges eradicating extreme poverty, and ensuring that vulnerable people who escape poverty do not fall back into it, requires action to reduce inequalities. That means addressing inequalities both between and within countries, in levels of income, in opportunities and in ownership of assets, including land. Pro-poor growth strategies, which ensure that the weakest participate in the benefits of market integration and investment in agriculture, would improve their income and investment opportunities in rural areas and address the root causes of migration. But pro-poor growth must go beyond agriculture, by involving both rural and urban areas and supporting job creation and income diversification. Social protection combined with pro-poor growth will help meet the challenge of ending hunger and addressing the triple burden of malnutrition through healthier diets. Permanently eliminating hunger, malnutrition and extreme poverty also requires building resilience to protracted crises, disasters and conflicts, and preventing conflicts by promoting inclusive and equitable global development.

A rethinking of food systems and governance is essential for meeting current and future challenges. Vertically coordinated, more organized food systems offer standardized food for urban areas and formal employment opportunities. But they need to be accompanied by responsible investments and concern for smallholder livelihoods, the environmental footprint of lengthening food supply chains, and impacts on biodiversity. These concerns need to be addressed by making food systems more efficient, inclusive and resilient. On the path to sustainable development, all countries are interdependent. One of the greatest challenges is achieving coherent, effective national and international governance, with clear development objectives and commitment to achieving them. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development embodies such a vision – one that goes beyond the divide of 'developed' and 'developing' countries. Sustainable development is a universal challenge and the collective responsibility for all countries, requiring fundamental changes in the way all societies produce and consume. In this respect, FAO is playing pivotal role though it will be more efficient by eliminating the limitations of the Organization.

REFERENCE

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