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# FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

## Thirty-eighth Session

Georgetown, Guyana, 11–13 March and 18–21 March 2024

**Building resilience in the region through  
agrifood systems transformation and the use of early-warning systems**

### Executive Summary

Agrifood systems (AFS)' intrinsic connection to economic, environmental and social processes can make them vulnerable to crises and shocks that could negatively affect food security and nutrition, poverty reduction and economic growth. Challenges such as the recent economic and international crises, increasingly frequent and extreme disasters, and structural inequalities jeopardize the achievement of the goals defined by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Without enhancing the resilience of AFS, they will become increasingly vulnerable in a world prone to crises.

Resilience is a key approach to address natural hazards, climate change, economic volatility, external economic dependence, environmental vulnerabilities and extended inequalities, which compound the risk of disasters and crises in the region. Nevertheless, it is relatively new in the policy setting and lacks a solid and systemic implementation to protect AFS. Identified hazards are monitored; however, fully addressing vulnerabilities to reduce risk through resilience capacities, particularly for rural populations, remains a pending task. The prevailing approach focuses on monitoring hazards and responding to emergencies and it hinders systemic resilience building efforts based on a more robust understanding of underlying risk factors.

FAO's technical approach to resilience is integral. It includes developing methodologies to improve risk and impact analysis. It also facilitates national and regional policy dialogues and supports multisectoral and multi-actor collaboration for resilience, provides evidence and best practices to address vulnerabilities to shocks, whilst implementing and supporting government implementation of emergency agriculture to protect food security and rural livelihoods. Furthermore, FAO supports countries' work towards inclusive rural transformations to support resilience capacities of vulnerable communities, family farmers, women, youth and Indigenous Peoples.

To foster resilient and inclusive AFS, FAO recommends adopting integral approaches to address the interconnected threats that the current regional challenges pose on food security and well-being by improving data and information systems, ensuring inclusive multi-hazard early warning systems fostering coherence between sectoral policies, and mainstreaming resilience in emergency response, climate and development strategies.

Documents can be consulted at [www.fao.org](http://www.fao.org).

### Suggested action by the Regional Conference

The Regional Conference is invited to:

- (a) request FAO to support Members to improve risk and impact-related data and analysis;
- (b) request FAO to support Members to establish inclusive multi-hazard early warning systems;
- (c) request FAO to support the development of coherent social, economic and environmental policies, including the mobilization of timely, effective and context-specific investments and,
- (d) request FAO to provide technical support to mainstream resilience in development and climate strategies, and to address underlying vulnerabilities such as poverty and inequality.

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## I. AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS AND MULTIPLE RISKS

1. The pressure on agrifood systems (AFS) is rapidly increasing. Their intrinsic connection to economic, environmental and social processes makes them vulnerable to different crises and shocks that strain their ability to properly function. Building resilience among the different sectors and actors involved in the various components of AFS is key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defined by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger).

2. Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) faced considerable challenges in the aftermath of the COVID -19 pandemic and the global food crisis. In 2022, the region's gross domestic product (GDP) expanded by an average of 2.7 percent.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, available regional projections for the end of 2023 estimated that GDP would edge up 1.7 percent and projections for 2024 indicate that momentum in the region will remain weak.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the surge in fertilizer and basic food prices in 2022, linked to international events such as the war in Ukraine and export restrictions by several key food exporters, exposed the susceptibility of the region's AFS to external crises. The concurrent and successive shocks have led to a spiral of instability, constraining AFS' ability to recover. These events have incremented the regional food inflation rates surpassing the global averages in the second half of 2020 and, in 2022, the prevalence of hunger in the region remained higher than the pre-pandemic levels.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ECLAC. 2022. *2022 Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean: Trends and challenges of investing for a sustainable and inclusive recovery*.

In: [https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/48078/7/S2201057\\_en.pdf](https://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/48078/7/S2201057_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> ECLAC. 2023. *Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean 2023. Financing a sustainable transition: investment for growth and climate change action*. In: <https://caribbean.un.org/en/244788-economic-survey-latin-america-and-caribbean-2023>

<sup>3</sup> ECLAC, FAO, WFP. 2022. *Towards sustainable food and nutrition security in Latin America and the Caribbean in response to the global food crisis*. In: <https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/48532-towards-sustainable-food-and-nutrition-security-latin-america-and-caribbean>

3. Climate change exerts additional pressures, as LAC is particularly affected by disasters.<sup>4,5,6</sup> The frequency and intensity of disasters, particularly climate-related events like droughts, floods and storms, have risen markedly over the past 50 years,<sup>7</sup> and the region is the second-most likely to be hit by disasters.<sup>8</sup> Climate change means that climate extremes and shocks will intensify in the future. Climate change patterns are also linked to the surge of transboundary pests and diseases and animal diseases. Impacts on rural livelihoods and food security, particularly for small and medium-sized farmers and Indigenous Peoples in the mountains, are projected to worsen, including the overall reduction of agricultural production, suitable farming area and water availability.<sup>9</sup> Disruptions in agrifood systems may also lead to loss and waste and reduction in the quality and safety of food, negatively impacting food security.

4. The region's severe inequality worsens the impacts of pressing risks. There is a group of countries with extremely high rural poverty and extreme poverty levels, mainly concentrated in Central America and the Caribbean. However, rural poverty and territorial inequalities are masked in countries with a seemingly high gross domestic product and lower national poverty levels. Moreover, poverty rates in LAC are 15 percentage points higher in rural areas compared to urban areas.<sup>10</sup> Agriculture growth over the last two decades mainly benefited specific products, regions and capital-intensive companies linked to the global agrifood market. In contrast, small-scale farmers, family-run operations and those with limited land access struggle to obtain agricultural resources, assets and rural services, exacerbating disparities within the agricultural landscape.

#### *A worsening scenario*

5. Weather extremes have a direct impact on food security and are one of the three key drivers of food crises, along with conflict and insecurity, and economic shocks,<sup>11</sup> impacting food security through multiple channels in the region. Disasters like droughts, floods and pests are destroying crops and livestock, while disruptions in agricultural supply chains, such as those experienced during COVID 19 and now related to the war in Ukraine, are impacting- food production, reducing food availability or increasing food prices. Moreover, loss of income and market access due to disasters are having a direct effect on diminishing the rural population's ability to afford food, which, added to price spikes and trade disruptions, pose a particularly challenging scenario, especially for the poor. In fact, in LAC, production losses as a result of disasters represent an average daily energy loss per capita of 975 calories, and this is significantly higher than in other regions.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>4</sup> UNDRR. 2022. *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2022: Our World at Risk: Transforming Governance for a Resilient Future*. Geneva.

In: <https://www.undrr.org/media/79595/download?startDownload=true>

<sup>5</sup> FAO. 2023. *The impact of disasters on agriculture and food security 2023 – Avoiding and reducing losses through investment in resilience*. In: <https://www.fao.org/3/cc7900en/cc7900en.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> FAO. 2021. *2021 The impact of disasters and crises on agriculture and food security*.

In: <https://www.fao.org/3/cb3673en/cb3673en.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> FAO. 2021. *2021 The impact of disasters and crises on agriculture and food security*.

In: <https://www.fao.org/3/cb3673en/cb3673en.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> ECLAC. 2021. *Planning for disaster risk reduction within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. In: <https://repositorio.cepal.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/ae6fe59f-e288-431b-8edd-7cbe1f760c8d/content>

<sup>9</sup> IPCC. 2022. *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Working Group II contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change – Technical Summary*. IPCC.

In: [https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC\\_AR6\\_WGII\\_TechnicalSummary.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGII_TechnicalSummary.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> ECLAC. 2023. *Social Panorama of Latin America and the Caribbean 2023: labour inclusion as a key axis of inclusive social development*. In: <https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/type/social-panorama-latin-america-and-caribbean>

<sup>11</sup> FSIN and Global Network Against Food Crises. 2023. *2023 Global report on food crises: Joint analysis for better decisions. Mid-Year Update*. Rome.

In: <https://www.fsinplatform.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/GRFC2023-MYU.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> UNDRR. 2023. *Overview of disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean 2000-2022*.

In: <https://www.undrr.org/media/89900/>

6. Disasters also affect nutrition and diet diversification. Consumers' reaction to shocks can further disrupt food systems stability, adding to price spikes and trade disruptions, with even worse consequences after repeating and concurring disasters.
7. In 2023 about 13.6 million people faced “emergency” or “crisis” level acute food insecurity in the region,<sup>13</sup> coupled with major deficiencies. Lack of data on the impact of disasters and shocks on food security, livelihoods and the impact of disasters and crises on other development dimensions is a consistent limitation across the region.
8. Food insecurity leads to negative coping strategies that can increase vulnerability and poverty severity. For example, people facing acute food insecurity resort to selling their productive assets, including their land to secure food, falling into deeper poverty levels. They also tend to live in risk prone areas and are more vulnerable to these risks than other groups because they have less access to technical assistance, information, services, markets, savings, credit and insurance, which makes them less able to cope with crises and disasters.<sup>14,15</sup>
9. LAC countries reduced the shares of rural poverty and extreme poverty in the last decades. The steepest reduction of these indicators occurred between 2003 and 2013, when the region's commodity-led development strategies were accelerated by favourable external conditions.<sup>16</sup> However, the pace of rural poverty reduction stagnated, and extreme poverty levels increased from 2014 onwards, amounting to a ten-year cycle of stagnation and setbacks. The latest available analysis estimates that 19.5 percent of rural households in the region lived in extreme poverty by 2022 – this rate is similar to 2013.<sup>17</sup> The persistence of poverty in the region is also fuelled by disasters and shocks. The agriculture sector experiences 23 percent of the total economic losses from disasters at the global level, and up to 65 percent of the total losses due to drought.<sup>18</sup> The impact of these shocks is worse on poorer communities, which suffer relatively higher income losses than the regional average.<sup>19</sup> By 2030, climate change could drive an additional 2.4–5.8 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean into extreme poverty.<sup>20</sup> Moreover by 2050, over 17 million people in LAC may be forced to migrate within their countries due to slow-onset climate change impacts such as changes to water distribution, extreme temperatures and sea level rise.<sup>21</sup>

## II. CURRENT APPROACHES TO RESILIENCE IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

10. The *United Nations (UN) Common Guidance on Helping Build Resilient Societies* defines resilience as “the ability of individuals, households, communities, cities, institutions, systems and societies to prevent, resist, absorb, adapt, respond and recover positively, efficiently and effectively when faced with a wide range of risks, while maintaining an acceptable level of functioning without

<sup>13</sup> FSIN and Global Network Against Food Crises. 2023. *2023 Global report on food crises: Joint analysis for better decisions. Mid-Year Update*. Rome.

In: <https://www.fsinplatform.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/GRFC2023-MYU.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> IDB. 2020. *The Inequality Crisis: Latin America and the Caribbean at the Crossroads*. IDB. In: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18235/0002629>

<sup>15</sup> See Appendix 1 for detailed impacts of disasters along the pillars of food security.

<sup>16</sup> Ocampo, J.A. 2017. *Commodity-Led Development in Latin America. International Development Policy – Revue Internationale de Politique de Développement*, 9, 51–76. In: <https://doi.org/10.4000/poldev.2354>

<sup>17</sup> ECLAC. 2023. *Social Panorama of Latin America and the Caribbean 2023: labour inclusion as a key axis of inclusive social development*. In: <https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/type/social-panorama-latin-america-and-caribbean>

<sup>18</sup> FAO. 2023. *The impact of disasters on agriculture and food security – Avoiding and reducing losses through investment in resilience 2023*. In: <https://www.fao.org/3/cc7900en/cc7900en.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Jafino. 2020. *Revised Estimates of the Impact of Climate Change on Extreme Poverty by 2030*. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper #9417. In: <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/34555>

<sup>20</sup> Jafino. 2020. *Revised Estimates of the Impact of Climate Change on Extreme Poverty by 2030*. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper #9417. In: <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/34555>

<sup>21</sup> Clement, V.K. 2022. *Groundswell Part 2: Acting on Internal Climate Migration*. Washington, DC. World Bank.

compromising long-term prospects for sustainable development, peace and security, human rights and well-being for all". Nonetheless, this concept is relatively new in the region, and countries are still in the process of defining how resilience translates in their particular contexts and how to harness its potential for agrifood systems. This will entail going beyond identifying, monitoring and alerting about hazards to place attention on reducing risk, particularly risk that threatens rural populations at the heart of the systems.<sup>22</sup>

11. Since COVID-19, there is a better understanding of disasters' impact on different parts of the system including transport and access to markets. However, key advances mostly focus on protecting agriculture commodities. Specific components such as phytosanitary health and market prices also have relatively strong information systems; nonetheless, changes to risk patterns in a climate change context need to be further incorporated. Foresight exercises will be essential. Resilience-building efforts for AFS have been mostly placed on protecting production and to some extent to protect access to food, as evidenced by the way specific early warning systems are being designed and implemented. Monitoring threats and losses in terms of productive losses of key commodities for national economies, and monitoring food prices are the main current focus.

12. In places with a history of severe food crises, such as some countries in the Dry Corridor of Central America, governments and development and humanitarian partners are having a visible role in protecting agriculture to prevent acute food insecurity, for example, through seeds, fertilizers, technical assistance and conditional cash transfers, and adopting innovative approaches such as anticipatory action. In all countries where agriculture is a crucial productive and economic activity, the private sector is also playing a key role in terms of resilience building of the agrifood system, for instance, by installing meteorological stations, investing in irrigation and implementing farm-level new technologies to monitor and reduce production losses, risk-proofing storage facilities, and influencing the public infrastructure investment agenda.

13. Emergency responses are still driving the agenda, which means that threats are prioritized based on past impacts instead of future outlooks, limiting the efforts to build resilience systemically. However, there are strong signs of increased awareness of the need for a paradigm shift. Tools and methodologies for monitoring and evaluating the impact of disasters and crises on food security and nutrition and agricultural livelihoods have been implemented to facilitate decision-making in several countries.<sup>23,24</sup> Nevertheless, in terms of measurements, the focus of the public and private sectors has traditionally been placed on assessing damages to production and assets. Impacts of disasters and crises on livelihoods and food security in the LAC region are not systematically measured and often can only be inferred from damages to production, except for countries using the Data in Emergencies (DIEM) Hub which gives some indication of the main shocks that have affected livelihoods over a given period.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, risk evaluations do not disaggregate analysis according to types of territories, gender, ethnicity or age. Hence, differentiated vulnerabilities of specific groups remain invisible. LAC is yet to fully understand the drivers and triggers of disasters, and how disaster risk is hampering the region's progress toward achieving resilient and inclusive agrifood systems.

### **III. A REGIONAL AGENDA FOR INCREASING THE RESILIENCE OF AGRIFOOD SYSTEMS<sup>26</sup>**

#### **III.1. Data and information systems for timely and effective action**

##### ***Monitoring and Early Warning Systems***

<sup>22</sup> Including hydro-climatic hazards.

<sup>23</sup> Rapid needs assessment, IPC, D&L evaluation, DIEM.

<sup>24</sup> Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua and Peru.

<sup>25</sup> Data in Emergencies Hub (DIEM) is an Information System created by FAO driven by regularly collected primary data. Its objective is to understand the impact of shocks in food crisis contexts and inform decision-making in support of agricultural livelihoods. It is currently in use in Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti and Honduras. See <https://data-in-emergencies.fao.org/>

<sup>26</sup> To learn about specific regional examples please see Appendix 1.



14. Early warning systems create and build on risk knowledge to monitor hazards and provide timely alerts that reach decision makers and people exposed. Such systems create windows of opportunity to mitigate the potential adverse effect of the hazard by reducing the risk or preparing a response that rapidly alleviates impacts. AFS actors are starting to develop subsector-specific risk analysis and monitoring systems<sup>27</sup> such as the Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture (GIEWS). This is FAO's global early warning system specifically designed to monitor hazards that might affect food production and food prices and other key aspects of the functioning of AFS. Hazards can include climate risks such as drought, animal diseases, plants pests and/or El Niño-related impacts among others. Existing national systems originally designed to protect populations against life-threatening hazards need to evolve to integrate additional early warning systems with agrifood system-sensitive triggers to activate alerts and anticipatory action. Anticipatory action is an approach to risk management focused on linking alerts to concrete actions to reduce potential impacts of imminent hazards that is key to complement other risk reduction efforts to ensure the resilience of agrifood systems.

#### ***Integrated analysis with territorial focus***

15. Disaggregated and integrated analyses to identify territorial interactions, synergies and trade-offs are being developed to design context-specific solutions and promote efficient and effective investment strategies. For example, countries in the Central American Dry Corridor have identified key investment components under the Hand-in-Hand Initiative that will generate a dynamic effect on poverty reduction through new territorial opportunities that promote investment, competitiveness and sustainability.<sup>28</sup> To develop effective adaptation and prevention strategies, it is key to acknowledge the heterogeneity within agrifood systems, promote resilience capacities that are linked to subject-specific characteristics and contexts, and connect with local governance systems.

### **III.2. Coherent economic, environmental and social policies**

#### ***Mainstreaming inclusion***

16. It is widely acknowledged that disaster and crises resilience strategies without differentiated approaches tend to exacerbate existing inequalities, by not effectively reaching the most vulnerable populations.<sup>29,30,31,32</sup> To achieve resilient and inclusive AFS, it is paramount to address structural inequalities in the design of policies and interventions, not only to bridge already existing gaps but also to prevent further gaps from developing.

17. Communities have become more aware of risks and understand the importance of resilience-building through investment in capacity building and infrastructure development. Increased community capacity and engagement leads to a sense of empowerment and enhances collective action, reducing vulnerability and contributing to a positive impact on the well-being of the community. More nuanced approaches regarding women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and people of African descent will also be needed. Disaggregated data and evidence to inform policy-making processes, gender,

<sup>27</sup>One example is the monitoring impact of drought. This is important because drought is often a silent disaster that undermines people's food security and livelihoods without catching public attention and triggering timely mitigation mechanisms. This is especially the case in countries where commercial, larger-scale agriculture has invested in irrigation, and the problem is restricted to the situation of the smallholders.

<sup>28</sup> a) digital soil mapping; b) agricultural zoning for climate risk; c) strengthening of National Agricultural Research Institutes in Research and Development and innovation; d) integrated safe water systems; and e) generation of digital ecosystems to strengthen rural micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and family farming organizations.

<sup>29</sup> Woodhill *et al.* 2022. *Food systems and rural wellbeing: challenges and opportunities*.

In: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12571-021-01217-0>

<sup>30</sup> Davis, B, Lipper, L. & Winters, P. 2002. *Do not transform food systems on the backs of the rural poor*.

In: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12571-021-01214-3>

<sup>31</sup> IFPRI. 2020. *2020 Global food policy report: Building inclusive food systems*.

In: <https://doi.org/10.2499/9780896293670>

<sup>32</sup> FAO. 2020. *Social protection and COVID-19 response in rural areas*. In:

<http://www.fao.org/3/ca8561en/CA8561EN.pdf>

intercultural and life-cycle approaches, and intersectoral policy coordination are key to ensure that no one is left behind.

#### ***Climate change adaptation and financing***

18. Climate shocks are a main driver of disasters in AFS and are slated to increase in the future, with substantial cascading impacts on the environment, economy, social and political stability, and other dimensions of sustainable development. Hence, climate change adaptation is a central area for the progress towards AFS resilience. Adaptation has been increasingly possible and scalable due to the greater availability of climate financing mechanisms in the last decade. It also represents a significant opportunity for additional long- and short-term disaster risk management approaches, since national and agricultural climate change adaptation plans have traditionally incorporated disaster risk reduction strategies and tools, and are now starting to include early warning systems, thus opening possibilities for anticipatory action and emergency response preparedness.

#### ***Risk informed agricultural and territorial planning and investment***

19. National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) are often used as a strategic framework that governments develop to address the impacts of climate change at the national level. Although NAPs do not replace disaster risk management plans, available international financing to support NAPs has facilitated these climate adaptation and mitigation planning processes with obvious risk reduction co-benefits. When developed with a focus on agriculture and food security, NAPs enhance a country's resilience to climate-related impacts, bringing different sectors together and promoting risk-informed territorial and agricultural planning. Agriculture NAPs are increasingly becoming a standard policy instrument in LAC countries under the Paris Agreement and are one of the main drivers of climate-related resilience building.

#### ***Strengthening family farming***

20. Differentiated policies for family farming are relevant to improving access of family farms to rural services, assets and value chains which is often suboptimal due to their small scale. Nevertheless, the challenge of fully unlocking the transformative potential of this sector and overcoming policy limitations regarding scale and coverage remains. It is key to keep supporting multisectoral coordination and improving critical tools, such as administrative registries to link family farmers with targeted public policies. Successful initiatives that enable family farmers to prevent, absorb and recover from shocks and disasters combine secure land access, tailored credit options and insurances, technical assistance to enhance productivity and risk management, and connection to marketing opportunities, such as family-farming focused public purchase initiatives, and particularly school feeding programmes.

### **III.3. Putting poverty and inequality reduction and livelihoods resilience at the centre**

#### ***Comprehensive national social protection systems***

21. Integrated and comprehensive national social protection systems are an essential component of resilience policies. Social protection can help to respond to shocks and emergencies. Social protection can also proactively contribute to building livelihood resilience when synergies between social protection, agriculture, environmental sustainability and employment are considered and actively pursued through intersectoral cooperation and adaptable design, implementation and evaluation. Given the synergies in terms of objectives and the potential cost effectiveness of such approaches, there are strong reasons to continue to invest in these types of intersectoral approaches for resilience.

#### ***Bridging emergency-development gap***

22. Using emergency interventions to introduce new practices, technologies and models going beyond standard assistance to recovery of lost assets helps improve livelihood resilience through climate smart practices, productive inclusion and other measures that create sustained impacts. Awareness of risks and willingness to change also enable the incorporation of changes into standard practices at local level. Emergencies, especially when they are large scale, can generate opportunities for institutional innovations, such as the creation of intersectoral coordination mechanisms or

normative changes leading to an improved institutional architecture. These critical changes will only be possible if emergency response and recovery decisions are backed by adequate risk analyses.

#### ***Risk informed livelihood diversification strategies***

23. Despite the improvement of risk analysis and monitoring, risk and uncertainty are still high. Programmes that contribute to diversifying livelihoods to diversify risk work best, for instance, combining agricultural- and non-agricultural-related livelihoods, such as rural tourism or local handicraft. The approach involves technical assistance to identify such options, providing inputs, training and ensuring adequate and sustainable market linkages. Another critical element for livelihoods resilience is strengthening the quality and quantity of employment in agrifood systems in rural and urban areas as well as non-agricultural rural employment. This objective also implies considering the necessary public and private investments for enhancing workers' skills, sectoral and territorial technological innovations and adoption, and public and private partnerships for exploring bioeconomy-related opportunities and community nature-based solutions.

### **IV. FAO'S TECHNICAL APPROACH**

24. FAO promotes an integral approach to resilience. Understanding and addressing the interconnected AFS' risks is key to building resilience within their different components.

#### ***Information systems and evidence***

25. In anticipation of disasters, FAO supports the design and implementation of multirisk monitoring and early warning systems, with efforts to mainstream an inclusive and gender-responsive approach, facilitating anticipatory action, emergency preparedness and response, aligning with the global Early Warnings for All initiative. To inform decision-making processes, FAO has developed the DIEM Hub. This platform is centred around primary data collection, focusing on the impact of shocks on food security and agricultural livelihoods.<sup>33</sup> Additionally, FAO emphasizes the importance of scientific and technological innovations in enhancing data for decision-making and technical assistance.

#### ***Supporting multisectoral governance***

26. FAO is dedicated to strengthening governance frameworks for the effective management of multiple risks. Efforts are focused on supporting evidence-based decision-making, promoting multisectoral collaboration for coordinated resilience and risk management actions, and improved financing mechanisms. It adopts a proactive approach to risk management, utilizing risk assessments to foster resilience at local, national and regional levels. FAO supports the development of inclusive and coherent multi-risk policies, strategies and programmes. It also promotes the establishment of multi-actor coordination platforms and mechanisms, enhancing collaborative efforts in risk management.

#### ***Addressing underlying vulnerabilities in planning***

27. FAO works on identifying and facilitating the implementation and scale-up of resilient best practices to prevent and mitigate risks, incorporating indigenous and local knowledge. FAO also focuses on addressing underlying causes of vulnerability, promoting context-specific solutions through improved social protection systems; the economic inclusion of women, youth and Indigenous Peoples; the productive inclusion of rural small and medium enterprises and family farmers; and investments in efficient and sustainable agricultural practices.

28. In disaster and crisis situations, FAO is committed to delivering timely and cost-effective assistance for the protection of agricultural livelihoods. This aid is crucial for saving agriculture and food-based livelihoods, as well as related AFS, which ultimately contributes to saving lives. These efforts are part of the "build back better" strategy, which aims to improve long-term resilience,

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<sup>33</sup> Results from this initiative are already available for Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti and Honduras. This information contributes to the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) [IPC - Integrated Food Security Phase Classification \(ipcinfo.org\)](https://www.ipcinfo.org), a key global tool for monitoring acute food insecurity.



ensuring an intercultural and gender sensitive approach, as well as mainstreaming a risk management approach in reconstruction, development and climate strategies.

## V. PRIORITY AREAS OF INTERVENTION

29. Resilience is a specific focus on FAO's strategic framework. Areas of intervention that are deeply connected with enhancing AFS resilience are described in the following Programme Priority Areas:

Programme Priority Area	Main actions
BL1: Gender equality and rural women's empowerment	a. Economic inclusion policies with a transformative gender approach.
BL2: Inclusive rural transformation	a. Inclusion of the poor and all rural livelihoods in strategies related to climate change, technological advancements and food system transitions. b. Enhance the inclusion of rural women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and people of African descent. c. Strengthen the coherence between social protection and social, economic and environmental policies. d. Inclusive and efficient rural governance mechanisms. e. Evidence and good practices to strengthen the socioeconomic inclusion and environmental resilience.
BL3: Agriculture and food emergencies	f. Comprehensive early-warning systems for multiple hazards and sectors with standards for effective and inclusive anticipatory action and preparedness. g. Assistance to restore and recover rural livelihoods, food security, agriculture assets and production in disaster, socioeconomic crises and conflict contexts. h. Promotion of a humanitarian-development nexus integrating the "building back better" principles.
BL4: Resilient agrifood systems	a. Strengthen risk and impact data and information systems for risk transfer, and resilient rural and agricultural investment. b. Scale-up of proven vulnerability and risk reduction measures at field level. c. Improve the coherence and coordination between social, economic, environmental and climate policies.
BL5: Hand-in-Hand (HIH) Initiative	a. Design, implement and monitor rural investment plans and mobilize financing.
BL6: Scaling-up investment	a. High-impact investment strategies and investment agreements b. Extend the set of public goods and services for the economic and social development of rural societies.

30. To provide an integral technical approach to resilience, other Programme Priority Areas related to the Regional Priorities 1, 2 and 3 are key. This is the case of *better production* (BP)4: Small-Scale producers' equitable access to resources; *better nutrition* (BN)2: Nutrition for the most vulnerable;

*better environment* (BE)1: Climate change mitigating and adapted agrifood systems; and BE2: Bioeconomy for sustainable food and agriculture.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

31. The LAC region is grappling with food security and nutrition challenges exacerbated by structural inequalities and socioeconomic crises, global conflicts, governance issues and climate change leading to more frequent and intense impacts of disasters that disproportionately affect vulnerable populations, agricultural production and food security.

32. To successfully address the current and future challenges, the LAC region needs to foster inclusive and resilient agrifood systems, equipped with the necessary measures to preserve their core functions and ensure food security and livelihoods for the millions of people that depend on them. To achieve this overarching goal, FAO proposes the following recommendations:

- (a) Improved data and analysis: (i) measuring and understanding multiple risks; (ii) enabling effective responses and resilience building at local, national and international levels; (iii) enhancing early warning systems.
- (b) Coherent social, economic and environmental policies: (i) multiple risk governance; (ii) strengthening intersectoral synergies; (iii) developing technical capabilities and measures related to prevention and adaptation across all domains of agrifood systems, with particular focus on climate change; (iv) integral inclusion of vulnerable groups and enhancement of collective action; (v) timely, effective and context-specific investments.
- (c) Mainstreaming resilience in development and climate strategies: (i) continue reducing socioeconomic related risks and vulnerabilities, such as poverty and inequality, through inclusive rural transformation; (ii) building inclusive, intercultural and gender-responsive anticipatory action; (iii) developing a humanitarian-development nexus, integrating the “building back better” principle.

**Appendix 1****Highlighted regional experiences**

33. Technical assistance, inputs and training for resilient value chain including practices for climate-adaptive agriculture were promoted and standardized across four countries as part of the COVID -19 response, addressing the impacts of the socioeconomic shock of COVID 19 with a multi-risk (economic/climate) perspective.
34. Projects that restore degraded ecosystems through adaptive agroecosystem management, in order to protect water sources and stimulate aquifer recharge, have been implemented in four countries. By improving access to water and building local capacity to manage natural resources sustainably, small-scale farmers will be more resilient to the impacts of climate change.
35. The intergovernmental organization PLACA<sup>34</sup> supported by FAO (Secretariat) which brings together Ministries of Agriculture of 16 countries across LAC to strengthen climate adaptation and mitigation, has adopted early warning systems as a key component of their agenda.
36. Subregional and regional mechanisms have been strengthened to prevent and control transboundary pests and diseases, in collaboration with the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health (OIRSA). In one country, technical capabilities to manage Fusarium Wilt (Tropical Race 4) were improved, including missions to the country, reviews of national action plans and biosafety training workshops for producers and technicians.
37. Agroclimatic risk technical groups for improved early warning and decision-making are functioning widely in two countries and they are being scaled up in several others.
38. Agricultural insurance for smallholders through public or public/private partnerships in five countries.
39. Adaptative social protection in one country and shock-responsive social protection in another, as well as roadmaps to advance towards anticipatory social protection in three countries.
40. Strengthening resilience capacities with a gender perspective, considering the role of women in non-traditional resilient production chains in six countries.

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<sup>34</sup> Climate Action Platform for Agriculture in Latin America and the Caribbean (PLACA). Website: <https://accionclimaticaplaca.org/en/>