



# The Latin America and Caribbean Advantage

Family farming – a critical success factor for resilient food security and nutrition

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## Acknowledgements

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# Abbreviations

ASAP	Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme
CELAC	Community of Latin America and the Caribbean States
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EMBRAPA	Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MERCOSUR	Southern Cone Common Market (Mercado Común del Cono Sur)
REAF	Specialized Committee on Family Farming
RET	renewable energy technology
SCCF	Special Climate Change Fund
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SSTC	South-South and triangular cooperation
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WFP	World Food Programme

# Foreword

The region of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) has made great strides in reducing hunger and poverty thanks to a positive macroeconomic environment and policies favouring the most vulnerable families. Today, however, the region is seeing an economic slowdown and there has been an increase in poverty over recent years (FAO, 2018a). Hunger, poverty and lack of opportunities in LAC remain concentrated in rural areas, among small-scale farmers and especially among indigenous peoples, women and youth. While 26 per cent of the region's urban population is poor, 46 per cent of the region's rural population lives under the poverty line – almost double. This has been the case since at least the beginning of the 1990s (ECLAC, 2019a). LAC is facing a rapid and profound process of rural transformation and a major challenge is to make this transformation inclusive and tackle growing inequality (IFAD, 2016a).<sup>1</sup> Worryingly, the landmark report *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2019* highlights that, after years of improvement, food insecurity and malnourishment are on the rise (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, 2019). Around 188 million people suffered from food insecurity in 2018, of whom 55 million suffered from severe food insecurity. The poor rural people often bear the brunt of the malnutrition and poverty burden, but with the right support the region's 60 million family farmers can be the key to improving outcomes in these areas. These are the women and men whom IFAD targets to make the ambitious goals of Agenda 2030 a reality.

This report presents IFAD's experience in contributing to global goals in poverty and hunger eradication, social inclusion and environmental sustainability, and climate change adaptation and mitigation, through investments and policy engagement in LAC. This regional report in IFAD's Advantage series reflects IFAD's commitment to bringing investments closer to countries and reaching the most vulnerable, with a focus on women, youth and indigenous peoples. The challenges faced by the region suggest that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a massive but critical undertaking that cannot be achieved without investing in rural development and in the most vulnerable people. IFAD believes that inclusive and sustainable rural transformation cannot happen without women, men, young people and indigenous peoples as change agents as well as partners on the ground. Indeed, IFAD is going further than mainstreaming individual issues and aiming for much greater "transformational" synergy between the integration of climate change, nutrition and women's and youth empowerment for holistic programming that leverages their synergies and minimizes trade-offs and risks. One without the other is a recipe for short-term benefits only, but by investing across all mainstreaming areas we are truly laying the ground for long-term sustainable returns.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the LAC Equity Lab of the World Bank, inequality has decreased for most countries over the last 15 years, although in some it still remains high. Source: [www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/lac-equity-lab1/income-inequality/inequality-trends](http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/lac-equity-lab1/income-inequality/inequality-trends)

By 2021, the LAC region aims to have mainstreamed environmental sustainability and climate in 100 per cent of projects. Moreover, 25 per cent of funding for investments is to be climate-focused, 25 per cent of projects are to be gender-transformative, 50 per cent of projects are to be nutrition-sensitive and 50 per cent of projects are to mainstream youth. These ambitious targets are framed by Agenda 2030, and IFAD is reaching out to partners, including family farmers themselves, to help achieve the potential of this region.

In this report, the introduction summarizes key issues faced by family farmers in LAC, with a focus on IFAD's mainstreaming themes of climate change and the environment, nutrition, gender equality and youth empowerment, and indigenous peoples. It gives an overview of IFAD-supported actions in the region in relation to these themes. Four case studies give concrete examples of how IFAD is adopting an increasingly integrated approach to support smallholders, and the final section looks ahead towards achieving targets in IFAD's Eleventh Replenishment period (IFAD11) and beyond.



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## Introduction

### **Firm foundations for rural transformation**

The region of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) is home to around 658 million people (ECLAC, 2019b), of whom around 18 per cent live in rural areas (FAO, 2018b). Women make up approximately half the rural population, of which indigenous women comprise 20 per cent (FAO, 2017). Approximately 107 million people in the region, equivalent to 17 per cent of the total population, are young people, of whom 20 per cent (21 million) live in rural areas.<sup>2</sup>

The LAC region has been making important gains thanks to positive macroeconomic and environmental policies favouring vulnerable families, for example in reducing extreme poverty and improving the rights of women. Income inequality dropped between 2002 and 2014 (OECD, 2019). LAC is the only region in the world that has halved both the proportion of people who suffer from hunger (the target set in the Millennium Development Goals) and the absolute number of people who suffer from hunger (the target set at the World Food Summit of 1996) (ECLAC, FAO and ALADI, 2016). LAC is a net exporter of food and produces enough food to meet the caloric

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<sup>2</sup> It is worth stating that national statistical figures about rural and urban population in national censuses in most countries in LAC are based exclusively on the number of inhabitants of the localities, e.g. in Mexico any locality with more than 2,500 inhabitants is considered urban, whereas in Argentina a locality with more than 2,000 inhabitants and in Nicaragua a locality with more than 1,000 inhabitants is considered urban. This could contribute to an underestimation of the size of rural areas, as other variables (e.g. population density or proximity to highly populated urban centres, which is used for example in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] definition) are not considered.



needs of its population, but equal access to and use of these resources remains a challenge. The reduction of poverty and hunger has had a positive effect on nutrition, with significant improvements seen in child malnutrition indicators (ibid.).

The region is home to rich natural resources. It has more than 5 million km<sup>2</sup> of arable land, 20 per cent of the world's proven oil reserves, 23 per cent of the world's forest areas and between 60 and 70 per cent of all life forms on Earth. It receives 29 per cent of the world's rainfall and contains about 30 per cent of the world's renewable water resources, which also represent some 70 per cent of the entire American continent's reserves. The wide range of biodiversity, including ecosystems, and other assets such as minerals and land found in the region offer opportunities and the potential to support livelihoods and a good quality of life for its population well into the future. Encouragingly, there is a clear trend in Latin America and the Caribbean towards addressing pressing environmental issues, including improving access to water and sanitation, phasing out ozone-depleting substances and expanding the network of protected areas (UNEP, 2016).

Farming is still the main economic activity in rural areas and the main source of employment for the economically active population in these areas. In particular, there are an estimated 17 million family farms in LAC, which represent around 60 million people, 80 per cent of all farms and 35 per cent of the cultivated land in the region. Family farming contributes 40 per cent of total agricultural output and generates over 60 per cent of jobs related to agriculture in the region (ECLAC, IICA and FAO, 2015a). Family farming contributes not only to the availability of food and to the supply of fresh produce, raw materials and inputs, but also to value addition at the local level through rural agro-industries. Depending on their asset base, access to markets and services, and other factors, these small family farms can be highly efficient in generating sufficient levels of production and income (IICA, 2017). Family farming also provides an economic stimulus at the territorial level, especially for households performing commercial farming activities. Significant increases in productivity have been achieved by the region's family farmers thanks to new technologies and more resistant crop varieties (ECLAC, IICA and FAO, 2015b).

Rural women represented 20 per cent of the agricultural labour force in the region in 2010, and indigenous women make up around a fifth of rural women in the region. Women's roles in agriculture have been expanding considerably, for example in agricultural labour where their average participation rate in the region jumped from 32.4 per cent in 1990 to 48.7 per cent in 2010 (FAO, 2017). Rural women are a key asset for growth in LAC, according to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).<sup>3</sup> The Brazil Declaration emphasizes that in LAC women play a key role in family farming.<sup>4</sup> It also highlights their important role in preserving biodiversity through seed recovery and agroecological practices. Approximately 107 million people in the region, equivalent to 17 per cent of the total population, are young people, although there are variations between countries. Of these, approximately 80 per cent live in urban areas and approximately 20 per cent

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3 See [www.fao.org/in-action/agronoticias/detail/en/c/501669](http://www.fao.org/in-action/agronoticias/detail/en/c/501669)

4 Regional Refugee Instruments & Related, Brazil Declaration and Plan of Action (Brasilia: Regional Refugee Instruments & Related, 2014), [www.refworld.org/docid/5487065b4.html](http://www.refworld.org/docid/5487065b4.html)

(21 million) live in rural areas. Young people constitute a tremendous force in the fight to reduce poverty, since they can be developed and so halt the intergenerational perpetuation of poverty (ECLAC, 2008). With a population of some 50 million people, the 826 indigenous peoples living in the region are a precious source of multidimensional diversity. Their agrifood systems, traditional diets and sustainable natural resource management systems constitute key resources for achieving a world without hunger.<sup>5</sup>

### **The challenge of making rural transformation inclusive**

Despite the undisputed progress, the LAC region faces significant challenges in agriculture and rural development and in delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as set out in Agenda 2030.

The region is seeing an economic slowdown and there has been an increase in poverty over recent years (FAO, 2018a). It is facing a rapid and profound process of rural transformation and the challenge today is to make this transformation inclusive to help reduce poverty (IFAD, 2016a). Greater national income is not automatically leading to higher levels of well-being for all and income inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient of per capita family income, has slightly increased for the first time since 2002 (OECD, 2019). Inequalities also exist along territorial and sectoral axes, with poverty and lack of opportunities concentrated in rural areas, among small farmers, and among certain groups – mainly women and indigenous peoples. Persistent poverty in rural areas is closely related to a twin-track transformation of the rural environment. On the one hand, a highly competitive agricultural and rural sector has developed, with access to quality land, technology and export orientation. On the other hand, small producers generally lack access to technology, resources, public and private services, and infrastructure.

Climate change is a major threat in the region, disrupting farming and weather patterns. Its impact in LAC will be considerable because of the region's economic dependence on agriculture, the low adaptive capacity of its population and the geographical location of some countries (ECLAC, FAO and ALADI, 2016). Drier soils and heat stress are projected to reduce productivity in tropical and subtropical regions, and increased salinization and desertification are expected in arid zones of Chile and Brazil. Rainfed agriculture in semi-arid zones will also face greater crop losses. When it comes to fisheries and aquaculture, more frequent storms, hurricanes and cyclones are set to harm Caribbean aquaculture and fishing. But there are some opportunities – for example, in temperate areas of LAC, soybean, wheat and pasture productivity is likely to increase (FAO, 2018c). The devastating El Niño event that began in 2015 was one of the worst on record and its impact continues to be felt in the Central American Dry Corridor, compounding the damage from two consecutive years of drought. As a result, millions of people are food-insecure in hard-hit countries like El Salvador and Guatemala. Although the region accounts for just 13 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, LAC is the second-largest producer of agricultural emissions globally, surpassed only by Asia

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5 See [www.fao.org/americas/prioridades/pueblos-indigenas/en/](http://www.fao.org/americas/prioridades/pueblos-indigenas/en/)

(Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2016); this means that lower-emission agriculture and rural development models present important opportunities to contribute to the goals set out in the Paris Agreement in 2015.

Despite impressive progress in tackling malnutrition, there are still over 31 million undernourished people in the region (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, 2019). The region has seen increases in overweight and obesity rates owing to changes in consumption patterns in favour of diets with less nutritional quality among other factors. Rising food prices have reduced the purchasing power of households and the quantity and quality of food that they are able to buy, with the poorest households not only directly but also disproportionately affected because they spend a larger share of their income on food. After decades of progress, poverty has once more been on the rise since 2014, making social goals, such as food and nutrition security, harder to achieve. Hunger, malnutrition, lack of micronutrients, overweight and obesity have a greater impact on people with lower income, women, indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants and rural families (FAO and PAHO, 2018).

Rural women lag behind men in access to resources and growth opportunities, which affects their well-being and that of their families, especially in terms of food security (CELAC, 2016). In LAC, as elsewhere in the world, and despite concerted efforts by many governments, rural women are held back from fulfilling their potential in contributing to climate change adaptation and mitigation, more sustainable management of natural resources and agricultural development in pursuit of the SDGs. Lack of access to productive assets and related capacity development, a heavy work burden and a limited voice in decision-making from the home to the community and policy spheres remain major impediments. In some countries, such as Chile and Jamaica, 30 per cent of farms are headed by women, but the general regional pattern is that women-headed farms are smaller and on lower-quality land.<sup>6</sup> Yet the “feminization” of agriculture due to outmigration of men from rural areas presents an important imperative for tackling these inequalities if the region’s agricultural development is to be sustainable.

Rural youth in LAC are an especially vulnerable group, a situation that is aggravated in women, indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants. The lack of opportunities in rural areas causes these young people to migrate to cities in larger proportions than adults, which has important consequences for their places of origin. Rural youth have less access to education than their urban counterparts, in part owing to the lack of household income, which can lead families to decide that a young person must work. The lack of relevance of educational curricula to their needs and interests is another factor that leads rural youth to either drop out of school or migrate to cities (IFAD, 2019a).

Notwithstanding increasing recognition of their role in conservation, the proper use and care of biodiversity and their multiple contributions to sustainable development, indigenous peoples have faced increasing challenges over recent decades (FAO, 2018a). LAC is arguably the region of the world that has advanced the most towards the constitutional and legal recognition of indigenous peoples’

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6 See [www.fao.org/americas/noticias/ver/en/c/473028/](http://www.fao.org/americas/noticias/ver/en/c/473028/)

rights to land and tenure rights. Nevertheless, significant challenges remain at the regional level to close the gap between rights affirmed on paper and the reality of exclusion that indigenous peoples continue to face. Conservation policies that violate indigenous peoples' land and tenure rights, such as megaprojects for infrastructure and energy generation, the impacts of agro-industry, ranching and large-scale monoculture activities and the theft of ancestral knowledge from indigenous peoples for commercialization are creating severe challenges (Indigenous Peoples Major Group for Sustainable Development, n.d.). Indigenous and Afro-descendent people from the region face higher levels of poverty and food and nutrition insecurity than the rest of the population. Stunting is greater in the indigenous population; for example, in Ecuador in 2012, 42 per cent of indigenous children lived with chronic malnutrition compared to the national average of 25 per cent, while in Guatemala between 2014 and 2015 stunting affected 61 per cent of indigenous children and just 34 per cent of non-indigenous children (FAO and PAHO, 2018).

### **IFAD in LAC**

IFAD has been working for almost four decades to empower poor rural people and increase agricultural production in the region. The current portfolio responds to the key issues highlighted above and today includes an increasing focus on the full and complementary integration of mainstreaming themes of environmental sustainability and climate, nutrition and food security and women's and youth empowerment, as well as indigenous peoples. Policy engagement and South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) continue to be strong IFAD comparative advantages in "inclusive and sustainable rural transformation" (IFAD, 2016b), and IFAD is well positioned to support the region in revitalizing its progress to meet the SDGs.

IFAD is supporting a total of 39 projects (35 ongoing and 4 approved projects) from its three regional hubs in Brazil, Panama and Peru. The top focus areas were access to markets, production and community development. Investments total US\$1.8 billion, of which US\$738 million is from IFAD. Total cofinancing is US\$1.1 billion, of which US\$732 million is from domestic partners. The LAC portfolio has also mobilized financing and partnerships in the private sector to link farmers up with value chains and, furthermore, 20 grants, 13 of which span several countries, totalling over US\$26 million, to stimulate innovation, capacities and partnerships as well as to promote South-South learning and partnerships.

In line with IFAD's overarching development goal to invest in rural people to enable them to overcome poverty and achieve food security through remunerative, sustainable and resilient livelihoods (IFAD, 2016b), key priorities in the region are to strengthen the value chains that link small farmer producers and their organizations to markets and consumers. In response to the enormous challenges facing young women and men living in rural areas in the region, IFAD is supporting numerous initiatives to provide training, encourage entrepreneurship and boost the creation

of decent jobs both on and off the farm. IFAD also supports efforts towards greater financial inclusion and making credit more readily available to family farmers. IFAD is also investing in projects that enable smallholder farmers to adapt to climate change, including through its Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP). The region has also appointed a focal point for each of the mainstreaming issues.

In this report, the introduction summarizes key issues faced by family farmers in LAC, with a focus on the mainstreaming themes. It gives an overview of IFAD-supported actions in the region, touching on the mainstreaming themes of climate change and environment, nutrition, and gender and youth, as well as indigenous peoples. In addition, this section presents IFAD actions in policy engagement and in forging innovative partnerships and also the impacts of IFAD-supported investments, including through some “witness statements”. Next, four case studies give concrete examples of how IFAD is adopting an increasingly integrated approach to support smallholders in Bolivia, Brazil, Grenada and Haiti, and the final section looks ahead towards achieving targets in IFAD’s Eleventh Replenishment period (IFAD11) and beyond.

### **Innovative climate action**

In line with increasing climate commitments at IFAD, the LAC region saw a steady increase in climate finance from 2010 to 2015 from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), including from the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) established by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and IFAD’s flagship programme to channel climate and environmental finance to help smallholders: ASAP. As of 2018, climate financing from the GEF/SCCF, Green Climate Fund and ASAP alone – without counting IFAD loans and grants supporting environmental sustainability and climate action – totalled almost US\$69 million for the region. The projected total available funds is expected to increase to US\$80 million by 2020.

Furthermore, LAC plans to contribute US\$67 million in IFAD climate finance towards the Fund’s corporate goal of programming 25 per cent of the IFAD11 programme of loans and grants in climate-focused activities. Preliminary assessments of five projects in LAC indicate that the region is more than half way towards achieving its goal. To date, Cuba’s Agroforestry Cooperative Development Programme (PRODECAFE) is the first LAC project to have been approved under IFAD11, with 22 per cent validated as IFAD climate finance. An example of a climate-focused project is in Bolivia, where a currently closing project (see case study) is being scaled up; the new project aims to increase the incomes and resilience of 44,000 rural families, with a special focus on women, youth and indigenous peoples, who are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change in the south.<sup>7</sup> The second phase of ASAP (ASAP2) is also supporting innovative approaches to help smallholders boost resilience to climate change – see Box 1.

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<sup>7</sup> The Constructing a Culture of Resilience Against Climate Change for Rural Families in Bolivia project (CAMBIOSUR) is under design. Currently, financing is expected from IFAD, the government and the beneficiaries.

## Box 1: ASAP2-supported climate innovation in LAC

### **Building a resilience model for family farmers**

IFAD has identified the need for a family farming-focused resilience model that takes account of environmental, climate, economic and nutrition dimensions. It has developed a family resilience model to reduce the impacts on the families of shocks and stresses and help them recover faster and even improve their lives. A “resilience scorecard” monitors progress through a set of quantitative indicators that can be easily integrated into standard project monitoring and evaluation procedures such as baseline surveys, as well as profiling families at different project stages. The IFAD approach was developed to fill a gap: most methods for measuring resilience focus only on climate shocks and stresses, are complex and are not easy to adopt at the project and household level. In comparison, the IFAD resilience scorecard measures resilience at the family level, and can help to assess changes in families’ resilience over time and disaggregated across different resilience factors. This is expected to make it easier to identify the priority resilience factors in future interventions. The model is already being tested in the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Cuba and Nicaragua before refinement and scaling up across the region.

### **Understanding the economic returns of investments in renewable energy technologies (RETs)**

Clean energy is fundamental to improving the lives of poor rural people and increasing agricultural outputs, and IFAD is committed to expanding support for it. IFAD is therefore developing an economic model that captures the benefits and costs in a way that IFAD-supported projects can easily adopt, with a view to expanding support for RETs at scale. In the LAC region, Brazil and the Dominican Republic have been selected as pilots along with three other countries across the world – their different contexts will be important in developing a flexible model. In Brazil, the Dom Hélder Câmara II project supports small-scale biodigesters and an “Environmental Incentive Fund” promoted 169 sustainable land management practices including biodigesters, ecostoves and beekeeping. In the Dominican Republic, IFAD has started promoting investment in solar energy to reduce emissions from agriculture in its Rural Economic Development Project in the Central and Eastern Provinces (PRORURAL Centre and East). The governments in both countries have also adopted policies promoting RETs and to reduce greenhouse gases.

To further support countries to meet their Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement of 2015 to urgently curb global warming, IFAD has also embarked on a grant-based partnership with FAO to access its expertise in conducting full assessments of greenhouse gas mitigation potential of 65 IFAD investments. Furthermore, FAO will provide specialist working papers to support project designs. In LAC, projects in 11 countries will benefit from this support.<sup>8</sup>

IFAD is also building on a long-standing partnership with GEF and its experience leading the Integrated Approaches Pilot (IAP) programme in Africa. Through a new partnership with FAO and led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), IFAD will contribute to the Food, Land Use, and Restoration (FOLUR) Impact Programme, which aims to transform food and land use systems and help countries reconcile competing social, economic and environmental interests by moving away from unsustainable sectoral approaches. GEF support will help countries meet the growing demand for increased crop and livestock production while tackling the risk of further expansion of farmland into natural high-biodiversity habitats and forests, erosion of genetic diversity, overexploitation of land and water resources, overuse of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and greenhouse gas emissions. The programme will directly benefit around 5 million people, including indigenous peoples, and have a strong gender focus. In LAC, this Impact Programme will cover Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico and Peru and focus on the coffee and beef value chains. IFAD's support will focus on Peru and the coffee value chain, reaching around 1.3 million people. Also in Peru, IFAD will partner with FAO and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) under the Amazon Sustainable Landscapes Programme to find more sustainable approaches; the programme also covers Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana and Suriname. The project will support the conservation of healthy and functional forests and wetlands and their carbon stocks, preventing greenhouse gas emissions and generating sustainable and resilient local livelihoods.

In this report, the projects in the case studies in the following pages all help farmers to adapt to climate change and increase environmental sustainability, and they also generate co-benefits to climate change mitigation, for example through improved agricultural practices such as agroforestry.

## **Nutrition**

With support from the Government of Canada, IFAD renewed its commitment to nutrition, as distinct from food security, through its first dedicated action plan, 2016-2018. The LAC region has accordingly stepped up mainstreaming of this urgent issue from 29 per cent of approved projects classed as nutrition-sensitive in 2015 to 75 per cent of projects approved in 2018 considered nutrition-sensitive.

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<sup>8</sup> Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Grenada, Haiti, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Peru.

An analysis of seven project design reports during IFAD10 revealed that over 66,000 families (54 per cent of total beneficiaries) were expected to benefit from nutrition-related activities. Projects approved between 2016 and 2018 have one or more nutrition-related indicators at different levels; all have a nutrition indicator related to dietary diversification and/or diet quality in the project logical framework or related documents.

Most nutrition-sensitive projects have included interventions on behavioural change communication and nutrition education, which helps to translate livelihoods and crop/livestock initiatives into more diversified and better-quality diets for the whole family. This was followed by investments in food production for home consumption and local markets, then policy dialogue and coordination with actors in other sectors to achieve an enabling environment and multisectoral approach.

The case studies all contain examples of nutrition-sensitive actions. For example, the project featured in the Bolivia case study aims to increase the availability of nutritious and diverse foods in local and broader food systems despite the negative impacts of climate change. The project is building on local agrobiodiversity and diversification as a climate change adaptation measure to promote home gardens that include local horticultural and medicinal plant species and communal seed banks to be used and exchanged between families, thus increasing resilience and delivering nutrition benefits to indigenous communities. The Haiti case study highlights how nutritional benefits are a criterion for crop selection, while integrated homestead farming is a key strategy in the Grenada case study. Another project, in Guyana and not featured in the case studies, is working to improve consumption patterns of more nutritious foods and is a good example of how IFAD is working to mainstream nutrition into inclusive agricultural value chains, which make up a significant part of IFAD's global portfolio. IFAD has adopted a nutrition-sensitive approach in its theory of change and has developed tools for measuring its success.

### **Gender equality and women's empowerment**

IFAD has developed a gender strategy to support investments in the region. The strategy is based on the three strategic objectives of IFAD's Policy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, namely economic empowerment, equal voice in decision-making and equitable workloads. There are many examples of how IFAD is working to mainstream gender and empower women in LAC. Of note are the region's efforts in "gender transformative" investments. IFAD sees gender transformative projects as those that create opportunities for individuals to actively challenge structural and social norms which perpetuate inequalities between women and men, promote positions of social and political influence for women in communities and address power inequities between women and men. Box 2 gives an example from Colombia, where rural women contribute to longer-term peace.



## Box 2: Colombia's peacebuilding project for rural women

La Amistad (Friendship) is the name of a women's group in Colombia supported by the IFAD-funded Trust and Opportunities Programme (TOP), which won the 2017 IFAD Gender Award for the region. The project boosts incomes and improves working conditions for extremely poor rural families by empowering disadvantaged indigenous and Afro-descendant women and men; this is essential to lasting peace in Colombia, which is rebuilding following 50 years of conflict.

Local associations of indigenous and Afro-descendant women have started a wide range of income-generating and post-conflict reconciliation activities, including ecotourism, tailoring, agrifood enterprises and environmental rehabilitation. They are also replacing illicit crops with food crops. As women's confidence and skills increase, they are venturing into areas that were previously male domains, including livestock raising. TOP gives high visibility to such women, who drive change in their communities and set the scene for a transformation of gender relations in the community and beyond.

*Building Rural Entrepreneurial Capacities Programme: Trust and Opportunities – Colombia.*

A cooperative of indigenous women in Guatemala, which has reached international markets, is another example how IFAD is working to mainstream gender and empower women in LAC, showing that women's economic empowerment can extend beyond the home and community levels. Mujeres Cuatro Pinos is the first women's cooperative in Guatemala to export products directly to markets in the United States and Europe. By offering a broad range of social and economic services that encourage women's empowerment, the cooperative has also helped 70 per cent of its members escape poverty and its successes are spreading across the region. With support from an IFAD grant, the Mujeres Cuatro Pinos cooperative has promoted access to credit, technology, inputs and markets to its 250 members, and it also offers health services, training, day care for children and an accelerated elementary school programme – with scholarships – where members or their families can finish their schooling. For the Kaqchiquel women members, these services translate into life-changing opportunities.

One innovative approach is to go beyond community levels and to address gender norms within the household. IFAD is a pioneer of "household methodologies"<sup>9</sup> because it believes they are effective in tackling gender norms in a way that works for all family members. IFAD believes that women's empowerment cannot be achieved without a change at the household level, involving all members, whether old or young, male or female. These approaches can help to ensure economic empowerment

<sup>9</sup> For more information and IFAD's toolkit, see [www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/40253899](http://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/40253899)



These women belong to a group called *Agricultores Respaldados por Dios* (Farmers Supported by God), and their cows, *Princesa* and *Lucero*, give them milk and meat, thanks to support from the Building Rural Entrepreneurial Capacities Programme: Trust and Opportunities in Colombia (see Box 2).

©IFAD/Xavier Cervera/Panos

for women and also increase their voice in key household and even community investments. The Haiti case study in this report, for example, shows how the project will adopt household methodologies to embed learning and challenge discriminatory gender norms as well as improve intergenerational relations. The methodology is also implemented in an IFAD-supported project in Guatemala as part of a global programme to improve rural women's economic empowerment.<sup>10</sup>

Government support and policy can also make a difference when it comes to transforming gender relations, and a project in Uruguay is a good example of where this has been helping to grant women co-ownership of land to tackle gender gaps in terms of access to this fundamental asset. Supported by the project's technical experts, the government modified calls for proposals to benefit rural women and, at the start of 2018, the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries noted an increase in women's participation in production projects from 19.8 per cent in 2013 to 42.1 per cent in 2017, and that 47 per cent of institutional strengthening plans had gender-focused activities or actions with groups of women. This has been underpinned by institutional strengthening, and a training system has been in place since 2015 for more than 200 government and private-sector professionals.

Looking ahead, three out of four new projects in 2019 are also aiming for gender-transformative results in Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Peru, so the region is well on track to achieve the IFAD global target for IFAD11, which commits to 25 per cent of its programme of loans and grants to be gender-transformative.

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10 The Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in Guatemala programme, which was integrated with the IFAD-financed Sustainable Rural Development Programme for the Northern Region (PRODENORTE), and part of the global Joint Programme Rural Women Economic Empowerment. The Joint Programme received generous support from the governments of Norway and Sweden, and involved all Rome-based United Nations agencies as well as the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). Success stories from Guatemala and other countries can be found here: <http://mptf.undp.org/document/download/18719>

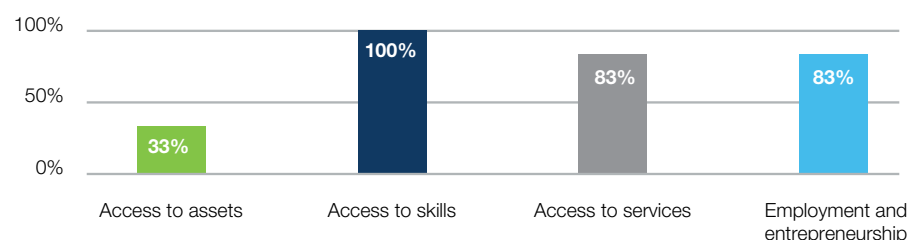
## Youth

IFAD's LAC Division has been prioritizing youth in its strategies, projects and programmes since 2006. An assessment of projects in LAC financed during IFAD's Ninth Replenishment period (IFAD9, 2013-2015) showed that, in response to the issues outlined above, over 40 per cent of projects assessed were youth-sensitive. All of these youth-sensitive projects included capacity development and over 80 per cent also addressed young women and men's lack of access to assets and services and fostered their employment and entrepreneurship prospects – see Figure 1.

The region has been very active in promoting improved economic prospects for young people, supporting the development of youth-friendly policies and enhancing young people's participation in local, national and regional decision-making processes by supporting rural youth organizations and policy dialogue processes. For example, the grant Promoting Young People's Entrepreneurship in Poor Rural Territories (Juventud Rural Emprendedora), implemented in Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Peru and Venezuela from 2011 to 2016, resulted in a regional youth network with 3,000 participants from all over Latin America. This organization has contributed to the enhancement of partnerships and the exchange of information, experiences, tools, best practices and innovations in rural enterprise development among rural young people across the continent. In El Salvador, for example, IFAD contributed to the foundation of the National Association of Rural Youth of El Salvador (now known as AREJURES) network in 2015. This rural youth network now includes more than 3,000 members from all over the country, many from poor communities that benefited from an IFAD-funded project – see the "witness statement" on Roberto Martinez, recently a young leader in AREJURES, below. These networks have strengthened the leadership and entrepreneurial skills of rural youth, helped them establish partnerships with the private sector and access public and private funds, and, ultimately, improved their employment opportunities.

Today, the region continues to emphasize youth engagement and is working to increase further the number of youth-sensitive projects. All four projects planned for 2019 are to be youth-sensitive, so that LAC is already well placed to meet the corporate target of half of all projects approved in the Eleventh Replenishment period (IFAD11, 2019-2021) to be youth-sensitive. Indeed, one project, to be approved in 2019, will be primarily focused on youth – the successor project to the Rural

**Figure 1: Types of actions in youth-sensitive projects in LAC during IFAD9**



Source: LAC Division portfolio review 2019.

Economic Development Project in the Central and Eastern Provinces (PRORURAL Centre and East) in the Dominican Republic is closely aligned with IFAD's recently launched Rural Youth Action Plan. It will also promote inclusion and resilience to climate change and natural disasters such as hurricanes Irma and Maria that hit the Dominican Republic in September 2017. IFAD has also been investing in grants to identify what works and new ways of working with young people in LAC – see Box 3.

**Box 3: IFAD regional grant Promoting Young People's Entrepreneurship in Poor Rural Territories in Latin America and the Caribbean**

An IFAD grant to Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala and Peru (2012-2016) aimed at contributing towards poverty reduction among rural youth by improving their capacity to access rural development initiatives relevant to their livelihood strategies. Specific objectives were to (i) generate and disseminate information and updated knowledge on the situation of rural youth in selected countries and territories, emphasizing their understanding and learning from their own livelihood strategies, demands and aspirations; (ii) further policy dialogue in favour of the interests of rural youth and streamline current IFAD instruments; (iii) identify and cofinance innovative microenterprises by rural youth, with at least 50 per cent of the resources invested in initiatives headed by young women; and (iv) generate useful lessons and learning to enhance the role of youth in their territories. The programme had three components: knowledge management, advocacy and policy dialogue, and learning and scaling up of innovations.

One of the results was that young people had greater space for dialogue with key institutions and a voice in policy-making, as well as shaping development interventions, especially in El Salvador and Colombia, where youth networks were created and nurtured. In El Salvador, the network became a formal legal entity, with more than 3,000 young people as members. In Colombia, the network had 2,200 members in 70 local branches and managed to raise more than US\$2 million from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. A "Learning Investment Fund" benefited 56 youth-led enterprises with 537 young entrepreneurs.

Source: International Fund for Agricultural Development, *IFAD's Engagement with Rural Youth* (Rome: International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2018).

## Indigenous peoples

IFAD's support to the region includes a special emphasis on indigenous peoples. From the IFAD portfolio there are 20 ongoing projects<sup>11</sup> targeting indigenous peoples and several projects in LAC have a particular focus on indigenous peoples. In addition, the Indigenous Peoples Assistance Facility (IPAF) has approved 11 projects in the fifth project cycle focusing on youth. The IPAF projects approved will be implemented in 11 countries including 20 different indigenous peoples.<sup>12</sup> The projects will cover the following thematic areas: land tenure, territory protection and monitoring, ancestral practices, promotion of indigenous knowledge in indigenous food systems, food security, traditional agricultural and forestry management systems, strengthening indigenous culture and identity, climate change mitigation, family farming and income generation.

IFAD is furthermore supporting a regional organization in empowering Afro-descendant communities in Latin America. This is done through a grant for activities in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru with the aim of fostering greater economic and social inclusion. The US\$1,750,000 IFAD grant was awarded to Fundación Activos Culturales Afro (ACUA), and participating communities gained the skills to preserve long-forgotten crops and food traditions by developing small businesses to sell products in larger markets. The grant especially targeted women, who remain the guardians of tradition in Afro-descendant communities. The grant has resulted in more productive technologies, such as new machines for processing coconuts. It has also led to the development of new products, including flour from papachina, a local vegetable, and a pesto made from regional aromatic herbs. New knowledge about biodiversity has also led to innovative partnerships. In collaboration with Slow Food, a global organization dedicated to preserving local culinary traditions, over 180 Afro-descendant families joined together to protect the black crab – an important ingredient in local cuisine. By the end of the grant, all 44 cultural enterprises supported by ACUA were considered sustainable, with incomes that had increased by nearly 50 per cent. Additionally, 22 of their products with cultural identity are now being sold in national markets and department stores. The grant also strengthened Afro-descendant organizations, with membership increasing by 24 per cent over the lifetime of the project. In recognition of its achievements, the grant received the IFAD Grant Award for Innovation. ACUA's approach has been replicated by other development partners, such as the Global Environment Facility, the United States Agency for International Development and the Government of Colombia.<sup>13</sup>

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11 In the following countries: Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Honduras, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Mexico, Nicaragua and Peru.

12 Pijao, Yanacona, Emberá, Dobida, Wounan, Nasa, Misak, Inga, Kamentsa, Cubeo, Kichwas, Nahua, Lenca, Maya Ch'orti, Mixes, Chinanteco, Zapotecos, Miskites, Mayagnes and Fischcat peoples.

13 For more, see the IFAD story "Recovering lost traditions" at [www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/story/asset/39017648](http://www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/story/asset/39017648)



“When we started going back to grow traditional plants, men would contemptuously say: ‘Here come those women with their chit-chat about the herbs’, says Teófila Betancurth, president of the Chiyangua Foundation, an Afro-descendant organization supported by ACUA. “Now that families are making their living out of that, men seek us out to learn about our crops and agriculture techniques,” she says. “Women in our community are food producers, peacebuilders and those who care for our environment.”

©IFAD/Angele Etundi/ACUA Foundation

The case study on Bolivia in this report is another example of how IFAD seeks to preserve traditional knowledge for future indigenous generations and build their climate resilience, and the section on impact also includes an example from Mexico of IFAD support for better indigenous livelihoods.

### **Policy engagement**

IFAD has a long history of policy engagement in the region, both at the country level and at the regional level. Most of the countries in which IFAD operates in the region are middle-income or high-middle-income countries (with the exception of Haiti). These countries have undergone extensive structural and/or rural transformation. Yet the region also struggles with inequality, and poverty and malnutrition are on the rise again. In this context, IFAD supports governments to make major shifts in policies needed to make sure that their transformation is inclusive. This includes expanding high-quality public services to rural areas, formulating targeted policies and making investments to support marginalized groups, and including local authorities and civil society in the process. Indeed, IFAD’s role has been one of creating a space for and brokering dialogue for diverse groups, notably for family farming, gender equality and youth inclusion as well as indigenous peoples. A review of IFAD’s policy engagement found that the region had the greatest number of country strategies in which policy engagement was articulated as a priority and the largest proportion of grants focusing on policy. For example, “rural dialogue round tables” are exactly that – a policy discussion space for rural organizations and the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries among other actors. Originating in 2001 following an agreement with the Government of Uruguay under the Rural Uruguay Project, rural dialogue round tables continue to play a key role in IFAD-supported actions. Today, there are over 40 rural dialogue round tables involving about 20,000 people and bringing together around 500 farmers’ organizations, agricultural employees and other sectoral representatives.

#### Box 4: IFAD-MERCOSUR\* initiative sows seeds of family farming

Small, family-based farms make up the vast majority of all farmers in MERCOSUR countries, yet they have not always benefited from services and incentives in agricultural policy – indeed, the concept of family farming has not always been valued or even recognized, as it is today. The expanded MERCOSUR has been key to this process, particularly through its establishment of the Specialized Committee on Family Farming (REAF) and later the Family Farming Fund, administered by FAO.

The REAF emerged from an IFAD grant in 2000 to foster dialogue and action on public policy between the governments and family farmers' organizations. The main thrust was to identify, agree on and articulate public policies for family farming, addressing the root causes of poverty and territorial development for rural areas as core elements of inclusive structural and rural transformation. Critically, IFAD supported REAF in promoting and reaching a common definition of the concept of family farming, which led to broader recognition and inclusion in national budgets. Further phases focused on systematizing the lessons learned and replication of the REAF experience in 10 Latin American countries and in Southern Africa. IFAD-supported SSTC activities were implemented along with the consolidation and expansion of the REAF platform and in collaboration with the Community of Latin America and the Caribbean States (CELAC)'s regional integration process. IFAD's support throughout this process has contributed significantly to the creation and consolidation of national policy platforms for family farming. Exchanges between countries have led to the analysis, development and sharing of public policy for family farmers, often after being tested in IFAD-supported projects. IFAD has since continued to advocate for the importance of family farming in the region, including lobbying and institutional support for the campaign by the World Rural Forum leading to the declaration by the UN General Assembly of 2014 as the International Year for Family Farming and 2019-2028 as the International Decade for Family Farming, initially championed by the Government of Costa Rica.

\* MERCOSUR: Common Market of the Southern Cone (*Mercado Común del Cono Sur*).

The approach was adopted by law in Uruguay in 2007<sup>14</sup> and addresses multiple concerns of rural people ranging from connectivity, energy and drinking water to health, education and land law. Rural dialogue round tables also develop projects presented to the Directorate of Rural Development (established with IFAD support), including on issues that are exacerbated by climate change such as animal health, land use and management, the use of agrochemicals, and agricultural insurance.

More recently, a policy brief to support dialogue and consider the gender equality and cultural approach in policies for food security, productivity and rural development has recently been produced by IFAD and the FAO, with inputs from the

14 Law No. 18,126, enacted on May 12, 2007.

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), based on the Mexican experience.<sup>15</sup> In Colombia, El Salvador, Ecuador and Mexico, Rural Dialogue Groups (RDGs) were established with funding from an IFAD regional grant to promote evidence-based dialogue on priority issues between civil society and government; RDGs led to the development of the Law on Land and Rural Development in Colombia, the Strategy for Rural Well-being in Ecuador and the Development Strategy for Coastal Areas in El Salvador. The groups consist of 10-30 influential individuals representing civil society organizations, the business sector, intellectuals, non-governmental organizations and members of the government, who convene to discuss issues that have been excluded from government agendas. Each group is jointly convened by the national government and a civil society organization. A follow-up grant project seeks to consolidate the Rural Dialogue Groups as independent and legitimate groups with the capacity to propose and support policy change in ways that benefit poor rural people.

As the United Nations Decade of Family Farming starts, IFAD's support in the region is as relevant as ever – see Box 4 for details of one of IFAD's seminal policy achievements in support of family farming in the region.

### **IFAD working in partnership**

The LAC region is expanding its partnerships with other organizations to achieve more impacts for family farmers, and it is also stepping up SSTC between countries to support innovation, new partnerships, knowledge-sharing and scaling up of proven approaches.

The case studies show a broad range of cofinancing partnerships including the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Caribbean Development Bank. In other countries, such as Belize and Haiti, the Green Climate Fund and Global Agriculture and Food Security Program are emerging partners, and IFAD continues to work with other organizations through major GEF-supported programmes (such as FAO, UNDP and UNIDO). IFAD is also working with the private sector in the region, including companies such as Hilton, Lindt & Sprüngli and Subway, to source food products directly from farmers and on inclusive value chains development. National and federal governments as well as smallholders are key partners, and the region had the highest domestic cofinancing ratio between 1995 and 2017 (IFAD, 2018a).

Another important approach to partnerships is through SSTC, and IFAD has established in Brazil a dedicated regional centre to promote new initiatives. In 2018, young beneficiaries of IFAD-supported projects in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria participated in a learning exchange programme in Brazil focused on climate-resilient post-harvest management of cassava. The exchange programme was held in partnership with the Brazil-Africa Institute and the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA). The Adapting Knowledge for Sustainable Agriculture and Access to Markets programme connects agricultural specialists from EMBRAPA to IFAD-funded projects throughout the region to help alleviate technical bottlenecks during implementation. EMBRAPA was one of the partners in

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15 Available at [www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/41195962](http://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/41195962)



### Box 5: Collaboration between Rome-based United Nations agencies of FAO, World Food Programme and IFAD in LAC

In 2017, the three Rome-based United Nations agencies (RBAs) signed agreements to establish a regional system of collaboration with the common objectives of Zero Hunger, eradication of extreme rural poverty and the promotion of resilient rural communities better adapted to climate change. A flagship collaborative initiative is The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2019, which also reports on the LAC region.

All three RBAs developed joint initiatives in Haiti, Colombia and Guatemala to test the new collaboration framework and they have also agreed to jointly assess the drought situation in the Dry Corridor of Central America and Haiti. In the Dominican Republic, they are working on a resilience initiative with the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development for the improvement of governance and resilience to climate-related shocks at the local level, and in Honduras IFAD is preparing a proposal for a project that supports 15,000 smallholder producers, where the World Food Programme (WFP) would partner to support linkages between smallholder farmers initiatives and national social protection programmes.

the IFAD-supported initiative the Agricultural Innovation Marketplace (MKTPlace), which connected countries in this region and Africa for joint research into common priorities. Just over a fifth of the projects involved 10 countries in the region, and the initiative resulted in over 1,000 germplasm sample exchanges between Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and French Guyana, as well as African countries; over 100 events in 19 countries took place and more than 120 publications were generated. IFAD has also supported the scaling up and out of the MKTPlace.<sup>16</sup>

### Results and impact in LAC

At the end of the day, what matters most is the impact that IFAD-supported investments can achieve, and IFAD closely scrutinizes its performance in delivering impacts.

IFAD's Independent Office of Evaluation (IOE) plays a key role in evaluating performance at project, country and thematic levels. These evaluations are critical to further strengthening performance in future investments. A recent example of a project evaluation by IOE is in Belize, where IFAD's support to the national credit union movement to boost access to financial services for poor rural farmers and microentrepreneurs was considered timely and relevant. It focused on capacity development at the micro level (through credit unions) and meso level (through the Belize Credit Union League), providing technical assistance and introducing an innovative member share account incentive scheme to attract new rural members to the credit unions.

<sup>16</sup> Read more in Heinrich et al., *Agricultural Innovation Marketplace – South-South Cooperation Beyond Theory* (Brasilia: Agricultural Innovation MKTPPlace, 2016).

The poor rural people who joined credit unions as a result of the programme enjoyed modest improvements in incomes, assets, quality of life, on- and off-farm economic activities, education and health. The evaluation found that access to credit union financing alone is unlikely to significantly improve agricultural productivity or rural enterprise performance, and that complementary agricultural extension and enterprise development services are needed (IFAD, 2019b). An example of a country strategy and programme evaluation is that of Peru, which evaluates six IFAD-supported projects implemented between 2002 and 2016. The projects reached more than 233,700 rural people, 44,500 more than initially planned. The evaluation shows that the reduction in rural poverty was especially significant in Sierra Norte, where it was reduced by 22 per cent, and in Sierra Sur, where it was reduced by 12 per cent. Among the recommendations are to work more closely with the poorest people and to reach the most marginalized areas (IFAD, 2018b).

The LAC region is also contributing to an innovative IFAD initiative to assess impact at the corporate level. IFAD's Impact Assessment Initiative uses a critical mass of project-level impact assessments to evaluate whether or not observed changes in outcomes among project target groups can be attributed to IFAD development projects. This goes beyond simply comparing areas with projects and areas without projects (control groups) or comparing indicators before and after projects, which often fails to account for factors that may contribute to observed changes such as economic factors, natural disasters or conflict. Impact assessments in LAC have so far been carried out in Bolivia, Brazil and Mexico.

The impact assessment of the Forestry Development Project in the Southern States (Campeche, Chiapas and Oaxaca) (DECOFOS) project in Mexico's southern states identified that the project had created 2,180 green jobs, exceeding targets by 25 per cent. Over 16,000 rural households improved their livelihoods through DECOFOS support. The project contributed to the sustainable use of the rich natural resources in local forests, which represent an important sociocultural asset for indigenous communities that depend on them for provisions such as food, water, timber and medicinal plants. In addition, 57 rural microenterprises were supported. When it comes to women's empowerment, 33 per cent of organizations supported by the project increased the number of women in management positions. Women also benefited from the 144 technology transfer projects to promote clean energy, such as wood-saving stoves. The stoves were also good for the environment, generating a saving of 30 to 60 per cent on firewood consumption. Greenhouse gases were also the focus of eight community brigades that were trained to implement climate change mitigation measures and monitor carbon levels. In addition, 128 agroforestry modules were developed, benefiting 2,632 people and contributing to the recovery of approximately 1,280 hectares of degraded land and land previously devoid of vegetation (IFAD, 2018c).

In Bolivia, the impact assessment focused on the Plan VIDA<sup>17</sup> project from 2011 to 2016 to address extreme poverty through increased incomes and assets of rural people in Potosí and Cochabamba. A gender-sensitive participatory community planning approach and campaigns to provide identity cards fundamental to land and credit access were two social inclusion strategies adopted by the project. The assessment found that the strongest impacts were seen among livestock farmers, probably owing to the interlinked nature of their activities. This suggests that focused projects with more interlinked components may lead to higher impacts overall. Key project impacts included a 21 per cent increase in agricultural income per year, a 12 per cent increase in productive assets and a 3 per cent increase in durable assets. A 4 per cent increase in dietary diversity was observed for those engaged in livestock. Interestingly, the study found little or no impact on social capital indicators – seen together with qualitative evidence, this suggests that, in Bolivia, social capital can be considered a contributor to rather than a result of project success (IFAD, 2018d).

An aggregated corporate analysis drawing on all the IFAD10 projects selected for assessment is also forthcoming.

### Impact for individuals

IFAD is a people-centred organization and this is why it provides systematic implementation support and emphasizes knowledge management, keeping a pulse on the impact that IFAD-supported projects and programmes are having on individual women and men. Below is a small selection of examples of how IFAD is changing the lives of individuals in LAC.



*Sustainable Rural Development Programme for the Northern Region (PRODENORTE), Guatemala.*

©IFAD/Estibalitz Moras Dimas

**Rosa Maria Maquin** is a young indigenous farmer in the Seseb community of San Agustín Lanquín, Alta Verapaz, in Guatemala. She cultivates traditional crops such as corn, cardamom and beans. Reminiscing about her childhood, Rosa recalls how her community enjoyed a warm climate from February to October, with light rains throughout the year. Rosa remembers that when she was a child the days were cooler and corn crops were more productive. Now, however, she feels that the rains

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<sup>17</sup> Plan VIDA-PEEP to Eradicate Extreme Poverty – Phase I. This project is designed within the framework of the government’s Plan to Eradicate Extreme Poverty (PEEP), which harmonizes the actions of various groups involved in reducing poverty and is part of Bolivia’s Plan Vida, a comprehensive anti-poverty effort. It targets 18,000 poor rural households of Quechua and Aymara origin living in the country’s northern Potosí and southern Cochabamba regions.

are more sporadic and heavier. Rosa, together with other members of the Q'eqchi' people, enjoys a unique relationship with nature, which has helped maintain the crystal waters in culturally important places such as the caves of Lanquín and the renowned Semuc Champey natural monument. Today, to help her and her family move out of poverty despite a changing climate, Rosa is also learning new techniques to promote crops such as cocoa and tangerines and to recover plants such as the Balam, an endangered species. She and others in her savings group have learned the importance of maintaining a forest system that provides shade and nutrients for their crops, promotes moisture in the Cahabón River nearby and absorbs greenhouse gases that are contributing to the hotter, drier and more unpredictable weather that is making their crops less productive. Rosa is a young community "promoter" and an example for others in land conservation, livelihoods diversification and animal health. Technical support helps her take better care of their chickens, which means extra income from their sale.



*Sustainable Development Project for the Rural Communities of Semi-arid Zones (PRODEZSA), Mexico.*

©IFAD/RIMISP

**Aurelia Zapata** lives in Ejido Tuxtepec in the municipality of Ramos Arizpe. Together with her family, she has been growing *candelilla* since an IFAD-supported revegetation project began. This has helped improve her family's nutrition and economic situation. "We produce 40 kilos every two weeks, and with what they pay us for the *candelilla*<sup>18</sup> we earn around 80 Mexican pesos per kilo. My husband pays for the fruit, I pay for the errands, and we save some money for other needs or emergencies. My son also supports his family."

In the semi-arid zones of Mexico's North and Mixteca regions, about 35,000 poor people are participating in the project, which was launched in 2015 and is cofinanced by IFAD and the Spanish Food Security Cofinancing Facility Trust Fund in coordination with the Government of Mexico. The project aims to strengthen the sustainable use of non-timber forest resources and increase the incomes of the men and women engaged in the project. The project is promoting rural development on 12.4 million hectares and targeting 1,555 groups of people. It has created, equipped

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18 For wax and candles.

and strengthened 62 rural microenterprises and incorporated new areas into forest management programmes, thus allowing the sustainable supply of raw materials for processing and marketing. It has also boosted human and social capacities, using technical and managerial training workshops to promote sustainable production and access to rural markets and businesses. With the support of the project, rural families are growing native species such as lechuguilla (used in the manufacturing industry), oregano (for the production of oils) and candelilla as potential sources of income and employment.



*IFAD grant, El Salvador.*  
©IFAD

**Roberto Martinez** was the president of the IFAD-supported National Assembly of Rural Youth of El Salvador, now known as AREJURES, until late 2017. He saw first-hand how young people can drive development. The institution advocates for young people to be included in community associations and municipal departments, and has achieved rural youth representation on several national committees. Members have represented AREJURES at international workshops, including the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in New York. “We not only think of ourselves, but we are thinking about how to organize ourselves to achieve some common objective,” he said. “These are the things that make our life change, little by little.”

By providing opportunities for partnerships, training and entrepreneurship, AREJURES is boosting a national agenda of democratic participation and economic opportunity for young women and men. With 13 departmental networks across the country, AREJURES is the leading youth network in the densely populated nation. 60 per cent of its members are women and AREJURES includes the Committee of the National Council of Indigenous Youth of El Salvador (CONAJIS). IFAD funded the network’s establishment and now supports its operations. In a country with marked inequality, AREJURES focuses on empowering its members at community, national and international levels. AREJURES has also inspired other countries in the region and IFAD is now working with the Central American Integration System to support the rural youth agenda in seven other countries.



*Economic Inclusion Programme for Families and Rural Communities in the Territory of the Plurinational State of Bolivia (ACCESOS), Bolivia.*

©IFAD/Juan Manuel Rada

**Elsa Vidaurre** is a young farmer in Villa Abecia, a small town in the Cintis Canyon located in Chuquisaca, Bolivia. Elsa had to migrate to the city of Tarija as soon as she finished school, where she struggled to work and raise her small child alone. On a visit to her parents, she found out about an IFAD-supported programme, and decided to return to Villa Abecia and aim for a better quality of life. She joined a group of women and submitted to IFAD their project to secure the necessary funding. Now she is in charge of a production line and dreams about studying food engineering. She is the president of a group of 10 women collecting traditional fruits and transforming them into various value-added products.

One of these products is a natural juice of seasonal fruit, which they process and pack into sachets in a small factory built by the local government. This juice is being sold as a part of the school meal programme in Villa Abecia, and also in nearby towns. Elsa and her group have managed to get the necessary licences with the help of the IFAD programme. All the women are mothers between the ages of 25 and 40, and most of them raise their children alone. The school meal programme is very important for them as it is a way to guarantee food security and nutrition, and Elsa says that her group is glad that they can feed children in their communities with the same nurture and care with which they feed their own. The programme has assisted over 30 projects promoted entirely by women in Elsa's region. Most of these women migrated to the city when they were very young but have now returned to rural areas since they have the opportunity to make a better living.

### Case studies in this report

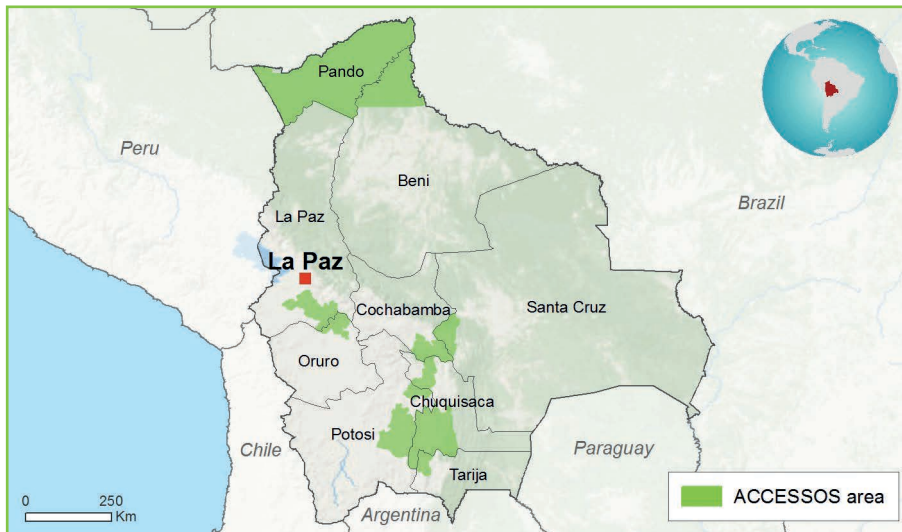
The four case studies in the following pages briefly present IFAD's work from the current and recently completed portfolio. Each case study is about an IFAD-supported intervention that tackles all mainstreaming themes: women's and youth empowerment, environmental sustainability and climate change, and nutrition. The case studies are from Bolivia and Brazil, as well as Grenada and Haiti in the Caribbean. These countries are at various stages of development, specifically in terms of structural and rural transformation. For example, Bolivia is an example of a country that has experienced a high degree of structural transformation but a low degree of rural transformation,<sup>19</sup> whereas Brazil has experienced a high degree of both structural and rural transformation.<sup>20</sup> Each case study summarizes the development challenges which the IFAD intervention addresses, then outlines the project response and presents key results and expected impacts. The case studies focus on specific aspects, with an emphasis on mainstreaming themes, rather than attempt to portray the totality of actions or results.

As well as these case studies, other reports in the IFAD Advantage series also contain further experiences from the region.

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19 International Fund for Agricultural Development, *Rural Development Report: Fostering Inclusive Rural Transformation* (Rome: International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2016), Table 3.4. The report defines rural transformation as "involv[ing] rising agricultural productivity, increasing commercialization and marketable surpluses, and diversification of production patterns and livelihoods. It also involves expanded decent off-farm employment and entrepreneurial opportunities, better rural coverage and access to services and infrastructure, and greater access to, and capacity to influence, relevant policy processes". All of this leads to broad-based rural (and wider) growth, and to better managed, more sustainable rural landscapes. Structural transformation is defined as "both a cause and an effect of economic growth. It involves rising productivities in agriculture and the urban economy, a change in the composition of the economy from a preponderance of agriculture to industry and services, rising involvement in international trade, growing rural-urban migration and urbanization, and the realization of a demographic transition from high to low birth rates. It leads to profound political, cultural, social and environmental stresses, which must be managed for long-term sustainability."

20 International Fund for Agricultural Development, *Creating Opportunities for Rural Youth: 2019 Rural Development Report* (International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2019), Figure M. The report also identifies Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Peru and Suriname as experiencing a high degree of structural/rural transformation, and Paraguay as experiencing a low degree of structural transformation and a high degree of rural transformation.



# Bolivia: blending traditional knowledge with science for climate action

## Key facts

Project name	Economic Inclusion Programme for Families and Rural Communities in the Territory of the Plurinational State of Bolivia (ACCESOS)
Dates	2013-2019
Financing	Total US\$58.9 million: US\$18 million IFAD loan, US\$10 million grant financing from IFAD’s ASAP, US\$9.7 million from the Government of Bolivia (national and subnational, US\$14.9 million from the Spanish Food Security Cofinancing Facility Trust Fund (Spanish Trust Fund) and US\$6.3 million from beneficiaries
Target groups	112,000 vulnerable household members in 16 municipalities, with an emphasis on indigenous communities, women and youth

## Development challenges

The project area has a combined rural population of Quechua, Aymara and campesino households characterized by high and extreme poverty levels. The area includes a wide variety of ecosystems with fragile, threatened or degraded natural resources, and rural development is highly vulnerable to climate change.<sup>21</sup> When consulted, community

21 Most targeted municipalities have a climate change vulnerability index of “high” to “very high” according to a methodology developed by CARE, the Climate Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis (CVCA), which was used to understand the vulnerabilities, capacities and needs of rural communities in 20 priority municipalities.



members were concerned with climate variability, drought, frost, hail and floods, which badly affect crops and livestock. However, they were also interested in opportunities generated by increasing temperatures in the highlands such as growing fruit trees, which have a higher market value than traditional crops. The poorest and most populated regions of the highlands (Altiplano) and valleys are subject to deforestation for firewood because alternatives are not readily available. This reduces carbon mitigation potential and affects livelihoods, leading to the loss of crops, livestock and infrastructure and increased conflict over scarce resources.

Water is increasingly scarce, and keeping livestock alive is getting difficult – in addition to the immediate nutrition impacts of losing out on meat and milk, a related complication includes a lack of manure for communities to use as an effective natural fertilizer. Most smallholders simply do not have access to commercial fertilizers, and without livestock manure they find that crops are not growing as well. This includes crops like the staple potato, once the pride of the project area in terms of variety and a rich source of nutrients. Families cannot grow enough potatoes to feed themselves, let alone to sell. As a result of all this, prospects for young people, especially from indigenous communities, are very limited, so many abandon farming and rural areas.

With regard to nutrition, a baseline survey for the project found the prevalence of severe child malnutrition in children under 5 years of age to be between 6 and 17 per cent for stunting, wasting and underweight. Women's malnutrition is also of concern, and the project design noted that women have heavy workloads and therefore need more energy, but that cultural practices mean that they miss out on precious calories as they prefer to give up food so that their families can eat better.

### **IFAD-supported action**

Improved agronomic practices and land rehabilitation have been two key strategies for increasing resilience to climate change impacts on the livelihoods of rural communities with social and nutrition co-benefits. This included identifying and disseminating knowledge about indigenous adaptation practices, which have potential for replication. Georeferenced "talking maps", a visual and inclusive form of natural resource mapping that is especially suitable in areas with low literacy, have been bringing together science and traditional community knowledge to identify key issues as well as adaptation techniques and priorities. These efforts led to an inventory of options for financing, and funding has been released through a system of local competitions, or *concurso*s, which has already been tested in other IFAD-funded projects. *Concurso*s have proven to be a successful mechanism to encourage communities to engage in sustainable management of ecosystems and its natural resource base. ACCESOS-ASAP has been building on this mechanism to embed community-driven adaptation priorities into local planning. The project has also been encompassing proposals to diversify local economies through complementary, environmentally friendly activities like rural tourism, which allows households to buy what they do not grow.

The project has had an important gender equality focus, including with regard to indigenous women and men. A Gender and Social Inclusion Strategy prioritized the equal access of women, youth and indigenous peoples to financial services, markets, productive assets and decision-making. Furthermore, it set out to influence the transformation of relations between men and women. Alliances with UN Women and various non-governmental organizations enabled the project to access their gender expertise. The project emphasized the equal participation of community members, including women, and communities were encouraged to decide on their own priorities for funding, according to various criteria that were agreed with them. These criteria included social criteria, and specifically “contribution to improvements in community health, nutrition and education”. For example, the *concurso* conditions have meant that indigenous women have been involved and even managed funding directly – this could be considered a “transformative” strategy because such joint decision-making is not the social norm.

One example of highly relevant traditional knowledge proposed and adopted in the project is the case of the *quthañas*, a water harvesting system used by the Aymara people, which collects water through small dams. The project integrated them in a larger scheme that includes the construction of basins, ponds and small and medium dams at family/group level in watersheds, intended as adaptation measures to overcome the lack of water availability due to climate change.

The project has also been building on local agrobiodiversity promotion as a climate change adaptation strategy with biodiversity co-benefits. Building on traditional agroecosystems, such as the *aynokas* (vertical sections of the watershed in which, each year, a different crop is communally grown) and the *sayanas* (family lands usually close to houses used by the families to complement the production of the *aynokas*), the project has promoted home gardens, with local horticultural and medicinal plant species and communal seed banks to be used and exchanged between families for income generation as well as food security and nutrition.

An assessment commissioned by IFAD estimated the expected benefits of the “with project” scenario compared with a “without project” scenario with respect to climate change mitigation potential. These benefits stem mainly from carbon sequestration through the rehabilitation of forested areas. In comparison, the “without project” scenario envisages an increase in forest degradation and emissions of over 200,000 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents. Benefits are also generated by the improved management of annual crops, such as onions, beans and groundnuts, as well as better water management (CCFAS, FAO and IFAD, 2015).

The main approach with regard to nutrition has been to increase the availability of nutritious and diverse foods in local and broader food systems despite the negative impacts of climate change on soil quality and water availability. Better nutrition for the community was also a criterion for selecting community climate-resilient proposals to be financed. The overall nutrition indicator for the goal of the project was the reduction of child malnutrition by 30 per cent, and specifically:

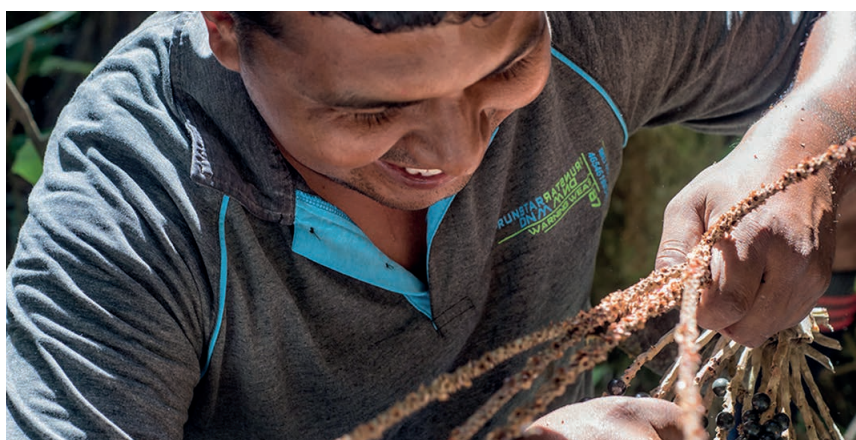
- Percentage of children with low height for age (stunting): severe malnutrition reduced to 11.9 per cent and moderate malnutrition reduced to 13.3 per cent.
- Percentage of children with low weight for height (wasting): severe malnutrition reduced to 4.9 per cent and moderate malnutrition reduced to 10.5 per cent.
- Percentage of children with low weight for age (underweight): severe malnutrition reduced to 4.2 per cent and moderate malnutrition reduced to 8.4 per cent.

### **Project results**

- As of May 2019, the project had almost reached its target of 131,642 people receiving project services, or 37,612 families including 19,678 headed by women. Just over 1,292 groups and 1,812 communities in vulnerable zones received project services.
- With regard to *concursos* in particular, over 1,180 groups took part, and participants aged between 18 and 28 years comprised around 17 per cent of *concursos* participants, while women comprised 43 per cent. Over 5,900 people have taken financial training through the programme and more than 470 smallholder savings groups have been set up. Over 5,000 people – over half of them women – have become involved in off-farm activities, including the production of bread, wine, cheese, dried fruits and meats, handicraft work, tourism and local services. Over 1,000 marketing groups had women in leadership positions.
- Approximately 20,000 people had built their resilience to climate change, of whom around half were women, and almost 4,700 hectares of degraded land were restored and rehabilitated, while 3,400 hectares were already under climate-resilient agricultural practices. Almost 20,000 group members were engaged in environmental sustainable management as well as climate risk management activities and over 500 ecosystems and biodiversity management groups with women in leadership positions. Around 3,400 hectares of farmland under water-related infrastructure were constructed/rehabilitated. In 2019, climate-related losses of crops such as grapes, peaches, potatoes and beans had been reduced by an average of 20 per cent. The programme has financed the development of 55 talking maps and helped 16 municipalities across the Amazon and highlands to incorporate risk management and climate adaptation into their territorial planning, innovating climate adaptation policy in the field. Over 4,231 families were receiving new or improved climate information services.
- A short documentary produced by IFAD shows an example of how the project has been supporting one Bolivian village whose main water source had dried up. As their potato yields fell correspondingly, many young people left the village in search of work. The documentary *Bolivia: Potatoes in Peril* examines how the project has been working with the village to construct irrigation canals and develop new irrigation techniques that can improve the future of the potato crop there. A technical report by the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) (CCFAS, 2015) also examines the assumptions on which IFAD has based the climate change

strategy and validates IFAD-identified climate threats to potatoes (increased temperatures, changes in growing seasons, increased incidence of extreme weather events) and solutions (introduction of more appropriate and hardy varieties of potatoes, and more sustainable practices, with yields maintained or even increased). The report also added further suggestions for consideration. Another short film, *Climate Knowledge from the Ancestors*, is part of the project's efforts to document and inventory traditional knowledge that can be passed down to future generations.

#### Box 6: Tiny traditional fruit packs a nutritious and economic punch



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**Misael Campos** is a young collector in the Trinchera community of the municipality of Porvenir in Pando, Bolivia. Every day Misael and three young collectors climb up palm trees 30 metres high to harvest asaí, a small dark fruit classified as a superfood and known as “purple gold”.<sup>\*</sup> They collect up to 40 kg a day, which means climbing up at least six palm trees. For Misael, asaí represents the secret of the resilience of the people in his community, and also a powerful means to preserve the forest.

Passionate about preserving the Amazonian forest, he had seen for years how the palm of asaí was knocked down to obtain the palm tree bud and the heart of the palm commonly called *palmito* in Bolivia. But he also knew that the palm branches with the tiny fruit were also important. When he moved back from the city with his wife, he decided that collecting and processing asaí held the key to a better future for his family and for the forest. The Collectors and Producers of Amazonian Fruit Association of Trinchera was created with other young families. With the support of ACCESOS and others, including their community, they established a small factory to process asaí pulp and send it out to markets in the city of Cobija and further afield in Bolivia. They also set up an asaí bar in Cobija and participate in food fairs around Bolivia, carrying the message about the benefits of this fruit and how it can preserve their forests and their children's futures.

<sup>\*</sup> *Euterpe oleracea*. A fruit from the Brazilian Amazon region, its pulp has been found to be rich in essential minerals like calcium, iron, manganese and zinc. The fruit can be eaten fresh, made into juice or can be an ingredient in various products like beverages. Source: [www.b4fn.org/countries/brazil/](http://www.b4fn.org/countries/brazil/)



## Brazil: water works wonders for empowerment and climate adaptation

### Key facts

Project name	Productive Development and Capacity-Building Project (“Paolo Freire” Project PPF) <sup>22</sup>
Dates	2013-2024
Financing	Total US\$94.92 million: US\$32.15 million from IFAD, US\$8 million from the Spanish Fund, US\$39.82 from the Government of Brazil and US\$14.95 million from smallholders
Target groups	60,000 households or 175,000 direct beneficiaries, of whom 40 per cent are women and 30 per cent are young people

### Development challenges

Since 2012, the worst drought in the last 100 years has gripped Brazil’s north-eastern semi-arid region, including the semi-arid State of Ceará, which has a tradition of severe or prolonged droughts – climate change is set to exacerbate this situation. For the 9 million inhabitants, of whom around 23 per cent are rural,<sup>23</sup> this drought weighs heavily on their efforts to move out of poverty. Although the state, like most of

<sup>22</sup> PPF: “Projeto de Desenvolvimento Produtivo e de Capacidades” – Projeto Paulo Freire.

<sup>23</sup> Source (based on 2010 census): [www.citypopulation.de/php/brazil-regiao-nordeste-admin.php?adm1id=23](http://www.citypopulation.de/php/brazil-regiao-nordeste-admin.php?adm1id=23)

the country, has successfully reduced poverty, the poverty rate is still more than twice the national average and even worse among the rural population, over 40 per cent of whom are living in poverty. In the semi-arid region, unequal land distribution is also a probable factor in poverty: in rural areas, and family farms are small. In addition, few households have managed to intensify production to compensate for this shortfall in space, and links between farms and markets are still very fragile.

In 2013 and despite improvements since 2009 as a result of concerted government action, only about 65 per cent of the state population was food secure and 12.5 per cent suffered from moderate or severe food insecurity (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, 2014); the north-eastern region also has higher rates of micronutrient deficiencies and less household dietary diversity than other areas, especially among particularly vulnerable parts of the population including children, women and indigenous peoples (United Nations System Standing Committee on Nutrition, 2013).

According to the 2017 Agriculture Census, women represent 35 per cent of the rural workforce and the proportion of women in charge of production has grown to around 19 per cent (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, 2018). In the north-east of Brazil, rural women's contribution to household income was over 50 per cent, yet close to 30 per cent of women in the north-east region did not have access to regular water supply<sup>24</sup> and government-supported agricultural credit does not generally reach the poorest women in rural areas (Gukovas et al., 2016). Poverty among young people has declined in recent years in the north-east, including for youth in agriculture and in rural areas – but around 35 per cent of young people in agriculture remained in poverty in 2013, and unemployment is a challenge for them (International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth, 2016).

### **IFAD-supported action**

The IFAD-supported "Paulo Freire" Project is being implemented in the 31 poorest municipalities in the state of Ceará. The project aims to (i) increase the capacities of rural people and their organizations to identify and solve their problems, develop leadership skills and participate in local decision-making processes, (ii) strengthen productive initiatives led by groups by increasing their capacities in developing rural businesses and facilitating their access to markets, including public purchases in institutional markets, and (iii) foster sustainable production while adopting agroecological practices that contribute to climate change mitigation. These aims are implemented through a package of capacity development for beneficiaries, service providers and government partners, and through financing participatory development and productive business plans.

A strategy and action plan on gender and youth empowerment guides the entire project and gender-transformative approaches have also been introduced, such as training women in jobs traditionally considered for men. Women's – including young women's – capacities as leaders and trainers have been fostered, and community sensitization on the importance of equitable approaches have targeted

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24 Analysis of the 2010 population census – see <https://agenciadenoticias.ibge.gov.br/en/agencia-press-room/2185-news-agency/releases-en/12686-asi-gender-statistics-show-women-have-made-headway-in-the-brazilian-social-and-economic-scenario>

men as well as leaders. To back this up, women's rights have been explained and *cadernetas agroecologicas* (agroecological logbooks; see photograph) were piloted to capture the economic contribution women make to their households. Given the high incidence of violence against women in the project area, the project has integrated this issue across various capacity development initiatives. Among other measures, all senior positions at the project management unit are held by women, including the director position.

Measures targeting youth include capacity development for income generation activities and accessing land, as well as prioritization in all project actions. The project has recruited 192 young social mobilizers at the community level and, in return for a monthly scholarship, they help to engage young people in activities. This model has now been adopted at the state level. Similarly, vulnerable communities including the Afro-Brazilian *quilombolas* and landless people have been specifically targeted.

A central thrust and primary climate change adaptation measure has been increasing access to water, and the project has been disseminating water access technologies, including cisterns for households and schools to provide safe drinking water throughout the year and safeguard people's health. The project has also piloted mobile water treatment units, which convert surface water from lagoons and pits into drinking water of very good biological and mineral quality. Another initiative was the implementation of a grey water re-use system (called *bioágua familiar*) to complement investments in cisterns, building on a successful pilot in an earlier project. Normally managed by women, this technology was designed to enable households to diversify production into vegetables, fruit, medicinal plants and fodder, for both sale and consumption. All three water interventions are small-scale, so-called social technologies, adapted to the situation of poor rural households in the region, and have low cost and maintenance requirements. They are also built by the families themselves, with the support of technical assistance field teams.

While the project was initially designed with food security focus rather than a nutrition focus, it is nevertheless contributing significantly by improving water supply and the local availability of more diverse foods sources for more household dietary diversity, including fruit and vegetables that contain essential micronutrients and animal proteins from goats and sheep. In 2019, the project was reviewed with a nutrition lens and some potential actions were identified to further strengthen this dimension. These actions include (i) building on Brazil's megadiverse biodiversity and promoting neglected and underused crops rich in nutritional value, such as the macuaba fruit (*Acrocomia aculeata*) and tucumã (*Astrocaryum aculeatum*),<sup>25</sup> (ii) specific focus on adolescent and young women's nutrition, (iii) capacity development for families to improve further food processing, for the home and for sale, to maximize nutritional value, and (iv) nutrition education in communities and schools.

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25 See [www.b4fn.org/countries/brazil/](http://www.b4fn.org/countries/brazil/) for benefits.

## Project results

- The project has so far reached over 50,900 families, or 85 per cent of the project target. Of these, 14,579 families have received support to better access public services and 23,559 out of a planned 30,000 families have been receiving continuous technical and specialized assistance. 600 communities have received project services and almost 300 technical assistance providers have been trained to help rural youth to improve their entrepreneurial skills and access to land. Almost 17,500 families have benefited from 529 productive investments projects.
- The project has worked hard to give rural women and men access to and benefits from profitable economic activities. 28,000 farming families are headed by women and 43,000 women are engaged in poultry, small ruminants, pig breeding and backyard gardens among other activities. On average, income has increased by 61 per cent for them, and just over three quarters of those women are now also diversifying into other income-generating activities. To bring about these achievements, 600 community-driven development plan and 529 business plans were developed and 300 extension workers recruited with an explicit focus on gender, as well as youth and social inclusion more broadly.
- With regard to reaching the most marginalized and vulnerable communities, almost 1,000 *quilombola* families, 100 indigenous families and over 28,000 female-headed households have been reached so far, with 334 women in leadership positions. More than 8,700 youth-headed households have also been reached. Although most goals have been met or exceeded, the project is stepping up efforts to reach indigenous and younger communities. A recent mission identified that targeting mechanisms have proved very effective, and that arguably one of the project's greatest contributions has been the improvement of social capital and community cohesion, which also translate into greater access to social and economic services, such as access to credit and market access mainly through local fairs. The project is developing a methodology to document outcomes, especially related to household assets, income, food security, agricultural productivity, empowerment, access to markets and natural resources.
- The project is building over 5,000 water cisterns for households, schools and production purposes, and over 60 grey water re-use systems have so far been built. The latter are helping to significantly improve sanitation in and around households. Moreover, some 13,300 families have also benefited from counterpart actions related to access to water thanks to government interventions. Families have been particularly appreciative of project actions relating to water, citing reductions in workload and better water quality as major direct benefits. Another technology implemented by the Government of the State of Ceará is an "ecological septic tank" (*fossa verde*) system, also called a "bioseptic garden" (*canteiro bioseptico*), which allows for the re-use of sewage water in irrigation.
- Water-related investments have enabled families to develop backyard gardens with small poultry, fruit and vegetables, and investments in sheep and goats as well as better processing equipment have supported better food quality.



- Although 529 investment plans are being implemented, reaching almost 17,700 families and representing 110 per cent of the project's target, this area will receive further support to increase progress on the implementation of additional plans as well as marketing envisaging sustainability and higher incomes.
- Encouragingly, uptake of environment-friendly and climate-resilient agricultural has been significant, with 529 investments applying agroecological, soil conservation or sustainable management practices in the Caatinga biome – 110 per cent of the target; over 23,500 family farms have also adopted innovative agroecological farming practices. These have resulted in more natural fertilizer use, and techniques such as intercropping. Productive investments coupled with technical support have facilitated a forage storage strategy that will help reduce pressure on native vegetation, particularly during the dry season. The environment has also benefited from 115 eco-efficient stoves and 30 biodigesters to generate renewable energy and mitigate climate change.
- The project services were extremely well received, and the state has requested a second phase or additional financing, for which IFAD is in dialogue with partners to prepare a cofinanced project to reach more family farmers in an extended area of Ceará.



## Grenada: creating opportunities for entrepreneurial young women and men

### Key facts

Project name	Climate-Smart Agriculture and Rural Enterprise Programme (SAEP)
Dates	2018-2024
Financing	Total US\$12 million: US\$6.4 million IFAD loan, US\$2 million from the Government of Grenada, US\$3 million from the Caribbean Development Bank, US\$0.33 million from the Grenada Investment Development Corporation and US\$0.27 million from beneficiaries
Target groups	7,500 individuals from 7,500 poor households; 75 per cent of beneficiaries are expected to be young people, and 50 per cent women, with priority given to young female heads of households and single mothers

### Development challenges

Two of the main vulnerabilities of Grenada are common to small island development states: high levels of youth unemployment and high exposure of agricultural production to climate change. Grenada is very vulnerable to the anticipated impacts of climate change and is already experiencing changes in its climate system, evidenced by increased incidence of drought, longer dry seasons, shorter rainy seasons, increased temperature, coastal degradation and intrusion of saline water into

aquifers (UNFCCC, 2015). The expected impact of climate change on agriculture is an increased risk of crop failure, with rainfed subsistence farmers especially vulnerable to the impacts of drought, pests and diseases.

Another important constraint for agriculture is the ageing farming community using traditional technologies. Young people are not attracted to agriculture and consider that there are better prospects in urban areas. The lack of skills of rural youth makes it difficult for them to find jobs, and rural communities are deprived of the energy and innovation that young members could provide. As a result of young men migrating from their communities, there is also a high percentage of single mothers who interrupt their education to sustain their children, which reduces their chances of accessing better jobs and poses an additional burden on their families.

The Grenada Country Food and Nutrition Security Assessment for 2012 considers low-income families, children and adolescents with little education and unemployed youth to be among those most likely to be vulnerable to food and nutrition insecurity. The traditional diet based on foods grown by people has shifted, and poor people have changed their diet to a less healthy but cheaper combination of foods. Obesity, a risk factor for poor health and reduced longevity, has been on the increase, as well as iron deficiency anaemia.

### **IFAD-supported action**

A focus on youth as a driver of inclusive and sustainable change is central to IFAD's strategy for reducing poverty in Grenada. The participatory project design process for SAEP involved discussions with young people, which indicated that, even though agriculture is strongly stigmatized as "dirty and back-breaking", many young men and women are interested in farming if (i) it is profitable, (ii) it has a quick turnover, (iii) it uses modern technology and (iv) training is available. These insights provided the basis for targeting young people to take up climate-resilient agriculture. Furthermore, the project builds on a successful predecessor,<sup>26</sup> which outstripped targets for microenterprises remaining operational two years after being established, with 250 per cent of the target small business start-ups successfully linking up to value chains. On the other hand, it proved much harder to meet wage employment targets overall, although the target for young women was well above the target at almost 70 per cent of those entering employment. SAEP is taking into account this lesson and is working to ensure that vocational skills are genuinely market-led.

A key SAEP action to reduce unemployment in rural areas is to promote sustainable self-employment, targeting youth. It will boost the entrepreneurial potential of young people with training, hand-holding and grant financing for market-led business ideas, until the business becomes sustainable, with the capacity to grow, invest and create employment. A number of businesses will be linked to new technologies in on- and off-farm production in a bid to make them more attractive for young people, such as hydroponics, aquaponics, organic production, agroprocessing, ecotourism and solar system installation and maintenance.

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<sup>26</sup> The Market Access and Rural Enterprise Development Programme (MAREP) was rated particularly highly in terms of human and social capital development.

SAEP places great importance on partnering with specialized national organizations to ensure success. The Grenada Investment Development Corporation is specialized in providing entrepreneurship and business development services and has led a Caribbean Youth Empowerment Programme. It will be a key implementing partner and provide young women and men with quality technical support to identify business ideas and get them up and running. The Grenada National Training Agency and several public and private training providers will also boost vocational skills of young people seeking wage employment. Key actors supporting youth, such as the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Religious Affairs, will promote available opportunities among youth groups; a strong communication strategy that targets youth mass media, social networks and youth organizations is intended to ensure extensive outreach and uptake of these opportunities. The Gender Department of the Ministry of Social Development and Housing is on the Project Steering Committee to ensure that this aspect remains at the fore; the project also supports gender training for staff of key implementing partners. Active measures to promote gender and youth inclusion include integrating gender and youth into the terms of reference of staff and contractors, gender- and age-specific selection criteria in calls for proposals and counterpart requirements for matching business grants and grants for climate-smart agriculture initiatives.

Life skills training is now routinely included in vocational skills training in IFAD-financed projects in Grenada; SAEP will also introduce nutrition as a new key topic, addressing the links between poverty and nutrition, gender and nutrition, healthy diets and food choices, early pregnancies and the impact on nutrition and health for mother and child, nutrition as a family issue and not only as a women's issue, and the economic burden of overweight and obesity. It includes gender dimensions, specifically how gender equality creates a better family environment as well as reduces domestic violence. Training is implemented as much as possible in rural communities to be more accessible to youth and women.

Another core strategy of SAEP is to promote the adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices, particularly targeting young farmers; more efficient water management and conservation measures in the face of changing rainfall patterns, including irrigation, rainwater-harvesting systems, terracing, drainage, mulching and small drainage works are some of the techniques promoted. Feeder roads and drainage systems at risk from increasingly extreme events will also be rehabilitated. The project will also build the capacity of farmers and young members of the community, including schoolchildren, to understand the effects of climate change in agriculture and implement climate-resilient practices. Climate-smart backyard gardens and integrated homestead farming will be promoted for food security and nutrition among the most vulnerable families.

SAEP takes seriously the risk of low levels of youth participation, so fast and effective programme services are an important mitigation strategy, as is the promotion of more technological approaches. SAEP is also tackling negative perceptions of agriculture by showcasing success stories and working with children in primary and secondary schools through activities in collaboration with the 4-H<sup>27</sup> Movement at the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, which promotes educational activities in schools.

### **Project results**

Expected impacts include the following.

- The results framework commits to supporting 400 young women and men with vocational training and 500 young people with technical support services for business start-ups, of whom 400 young people will access grant financing. In addition, at least 150 existing rural businesses will be supported with technical services to improve profits. All indicators are to be disaggregated by age and sex.
- The project has a strong gender focus, and it is expected that, overall, half of beneficiaries will be women, with a higher participation of women in the activities targeting youth: 60 per cent of youth start-ups and vocational skills training participants will be women. By establishing concrete targets for women's participation per activity and recording the information on beneficiaries disaggregated by sex, SAEP is committed to keeping in constant focus the issue of gender equality and empowerment.
- 3,000 farmers and young members of rural communities will have a better understanding of climate change and how to adapt to its impacts, with access to opportunities for adopting climate-resilient agricultural practices. The indicator of "farmers increase production by 20 per cent" will be disaggregated by the sex and age of the head of the household, as will all indicators of the project. For the most vulnerable, there will be support to implement 60 pro-nutrition backyard gardens.
- Additionally, the project will benefit approximately 3,000 farmers through rural infrastructure such as feeder roads, bridges and drainage works.

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27 Head, Heart, Hand and Health. 4-H is an international organization.



## Haiti: partnering to foster trust and social capital for resilience

### Key facts

Project name	Agricultural and Agroforestry Technological Innovation Programme (PITAG)
Dates	2018-2023
Financing	Total approximately US\$76.86 million: US\$10.86 million IFAD grant, US\$55 million from IDB grant, US\$10 million from Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), <sup>28</sup> US\$1 million from the Government of Haiti and US\$1.09 million from smallholders
Target groups	65,000 poor rural households in 30 communes; IFAD financing targets 12,300 households in eight communes in the South Department. Women-headed households and unemployed youth are a specific focus and 50 per cent of the beneficiaries in the South Department will be women, while 20 per cent will be young (between 15 and 24 years of age)

### Development challenges

Haiti is the poorest country in the LAC region and one of the poorest in the world, with over 6 million Haitians living below the poverty line and more than 2.5 million below the extreme poverty line. Haiti is also highly vulnerable to natural

<sup>28</sup> A multilateral mechanism to improve incomes and food and nutrition security in low-income countries by boosting agricultural productivity. It is implemented as a Financial Intermediary Fund (FIF) for which the World Bank serves as trustee.

disasters, mainly hurricanes, floods and earthquakes. When Hurricane Matthew hit the country in 2016 it caused widespread damage to crops, livestock, fisheries and rural infrastructure in the south-west, including in the South Department.<sup>29</sup> Agricultural productivity is severely harmed by erosion, which affects much of Haiti, a consequence of an alarming deforestation rate combined with inappropriate agricultural practices.<sup>30</sup> All this has very severe consequences for food security and nutrition: Haiti is ranked 113th out of 119 countries in the 2018 Global Hunger Index<sup>31</sup> and more than half of its total population is chronically undernourished, with 22 per cent of children chronically malnourished.<sup>32</sup>

A gender gap analysis by the IDB in 2015 identified that more female-headed households face severe food insecurity compared to male-headed households, with women's underrepresentation in producers' associations, workload, lack of access to education and information, smaller plots and less access to land emerging as key challenges. Young rural women and men between the ages of 15 to 24 years have few employment options, and rural youth unemployment is over 60 per cent (United Nations Population Fund, 2016).

### **IFAD-supported action**

Building on a previous programme in applied research and technology transfer supported by IDB, PITAG aims to increase agricultural income and food security for smallholder farmers in targeted areas, and the development objectives are to increase agricultural productivity and improve the use of natural capital through sustainable technologies. The theory of change of the project is that when support is provided to applied research that is based on the needs of farmers, targeted technology packages adapted to their local agroecological and socio-economic conditions could be developed that, when adopted, can lead to increases in agricultural productivity and to more sustainable and climate-smart agricultural practices. Considering the vulnerability to climate risks in the area, applied research will be underpinned by a detailed climate risk assessment to identify mitigation measures to be included in the technology packages to be developed.

To better ensure technology adoption, the project will provide subsidies for technology packages with in-kind cost-sharing mechanisms by farmers, combined with participatory extension support including long-term coaching to allowing farmers to work and learn in local groups. This approach is specifically designed to promote the participation of women and youth, and enhance social capital as a key ingredient of their resilience and for the sustainability of project impacts. IFAD will introduce farmer fields schools for technology adoption by farmers, suggesting new technologies or the improvement of existing ones, and introducing complementary dimensions such as nutrition education and diet diversification, household and farm management and environmental and other topics raised by farmers. Farmer field schools will be a key vehicle for building trust among farmers

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29 See [www.worldbank.org/en/country/haiti/overview](http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/haiti/overview)

30 See [www.fao.org/in-action/action-against-desertification/countries/caribbean/haiti/en/](http://www.fao.org/in-action/action-against-desertification/countries/caribbean/haiti/en/)

31 See [www.globalhungerindex.org/results/](http://www.globalhungerindex.org/results/)

32 See [www1.wfp.org/countries/haiti](http://www1.wfp.org/countries/haiti)

as a basis for establishing producer groups and also savings and credit groups. Specific family-focused approaches will also be introduced to embed learning and to foster greater collaboration within the broader family unit; these household methodologies<sup>33</sup> pioneered by IFAD are a proven strategy to help transform gender and intergenerational relations in a way that works for all family members.

Following a detailed assessment and prioritization exercise with farmers, two types of technology packages have been identified: the first is focused on agroforestry and perennial crops and the second on agricultural production and post-harvest equipment. Packages include “Creole Gardens”, cocoa, fruit trees and fodder, and those that meet the multiple functions of improving nutrition, empowering women and youth and enhancing climate as well as environmental resilience have been prioritized. These packages will be updated each year to reflect experience. The development of agroforestry systems will promote reforestation of watersheds, contributing to healthy ecosystem services, as well as carbon sequestration to combat climate change.

Working in partnership with the IDB and the GAFSP in the coordinated way requested by government and central to Agenda 2030 will enable IFAD to achieve a greater impact for Haitians in moving forward from an emergency-oriented approach. IFAD is bringing to the partnership its strengths in social capital development, youth and women’s empowerment, and environmental and climate risks management, which IFAD’s experience has shown to be key to inclusive and sustainable rural development, especially in fragile states.

## Project results

Expected results at the end of the project include the following, and all relevant indicators will be disaggregated by sex and age.

- Food insecurity is reduced from 85 per cent to 50 per cent of female-headed households, and from 71 per cent to 35 per cent of male-headed households using the Latin American and Caribbean Food Security Scale.<sup>34</sup>
- With regard to nutrition specifically, the project aims to achieve a Minimum Dietary Diversity Score for Women (MDD-W)<sup>35</sup> of 5 in IFAD-supported areas.
- The project aims to increase the incomes of farming families from US\$170 to US\$268 per year, and the annual value of household agricultural production from US\$347 to US\$478, i.e. by 38 per cent.
- More than 60,000 people will benefit from improved management and sustainable use of natural capital, primarily through agroforestry technologies; IFAD support will reach 11,000 people. Of these, over 45,000 people will go on to adopt soil protection and restoration technologies (over 8,000 financed by IFAD).

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33 See [www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/40253899](http://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/40253899)

34 *La Escala Latinoamericana y Caribeña de Seguridad Alimentaria* (ELCSA).

35 MDD-W is an indicator of whether or not women 15-49 years of age have consumed at least five out of ten defined food groups the previous day or night. The proportion of women 15-49 years of age who reach this minimum in a population can be used as a proxy indicator for higher micronutrient adequacy, an important dimension of diet quality. Source: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, FHI 360, *Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women: A Guide for Measurement* (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2016).



- 3,000 farmers are expected to adopt the technologies developed with new applied research projects, and 15 applied agricultural research projects will help the development or improvement of new agricultural technologies; three will specifically target women and three will focus on climate change adaptation or mitigation.
- 26,000 women will benefit from economic empowerment initiatives, and IFAD is expecting to directly finance over 6,700 of them.



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## Looking ahead

### **Challenges and opportunities**

The preceding pages give an overview of IFAD's work in the LAC region, with a focus on IFAD's mainstreaming themes. As in other regions, there are challenges in implementing an active portfolio. For example, translating quality country strategies and project designs into results can be challenging, as project management and keeping to workplans can be a struggle in some contexts. IFAD is responding with increased and innovative implementation support, and this is paying off. In 2019, ongoing projects were rated particularly highly for targeting and beneficiary participation, partnership building and human capital and empowerment dimensions.

IFAD's presence at the country level is currently being considerably strengthened thanks to a recent decentralization drive. This initiative is also proving instrumental in building stronger dialogue and engagement at the local level with key partners, including governments, and in building effective partnerships. Today, IFAD has established subregional hubs in Brazil, Panama and Peru to deepen this engagement. Subregional hubs act as service centres equipped with technical and administrative staff to serve all or part of a region and also carry out country programme functions for a smaller group of countries. Hubs are designed to support countries that are geographically close and benefit from additional technical and administrative capacity in order to do so. Technical services for cross-cutting issues are expected to enhance operational performance, and support for procurement and financial management will improve project efficiency and overall portfolio performance.

### **More than mainstreaming**

The case studies in this report reflect IFAD's belief that "inclusive and sustainable rural transformation"<sup>36</sup> in line with Agenda 2030 and the SDGs cannot happen without supporting small farmers, rural women, men and young people, including indigenous peoples, as change agents. Given the strong evidence that climate change is already affecting all dimensions of food security and nutrition (FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, 2018), IFAD is committed to integrating climate change adaptation and food security and nutrition in its support to countries and has refreshed action plans across all of these issues. However, IFAD is going further than mainstreaming individual issues and is aiming for much greater "transformational" synergy between the mainstreaming themes for holistic programming that leverages their synergies and minimizes trade-offs and risks. With this in mind, IFAD targets at the regional level reflect those at the corporate level:

- 100 per cent of projects to mainstream climate and environment
- 25 per cent of IFAD's programme of loans and grants to be climate-focused
- 25 per cent of projects to be gender-transformative
- 50 per cent of projects to be nutrition-sensitive
- 50 per cent of projects to mainstream youth and youth employment.

As the LAC region embarks on achieving these targets, it will maximize the many opportunities arising from women's and youth empowerment, and has identified where accelerated progress is a priority. LAC will continue to pioneer innovative policy engagement and SSTC, strategically using grants for learning and building capacity, and seek additional climate and environmental finance given the high vulnerability of many countries. Finally, IFAD will continue to advocate for the unique role of family farmers in bringing the region closer to meeting the SDGs, especially to eradicate hunger and malnutrition as well as poverty.

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36 Ibid.






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