



Strategic Framework

for Economic Development



Overview

The COVID-19 Pandemic has significantly affected our global economy over the past 2 years. The world experienced the worst global economic recession since the Great Depression¹.

According to the UN approx. 255 million full-time jobs were lost during worldwide lockdowns . Many vulnerable populations were forced back into poverty. Young people and women in the workforce were impacted the greatest by the ongoing crisis, and decades of progress in gender parity have vanished.

While the global economy is slowly recovering, there are still large portions of vulnerable populations that have been forgotten and are continued to be marginalized in the recovery. IDRF recognizes the need for sustainable economic recovery in a post-pandemic world that is equitable for all.

IDRF has identified key focus areas and crosscutting themes that need to be addressed to accelerate sustainable economic development in the regions IDRF operates. The listed focus areas are consistent and align with Sustainable Development 5: Gender Equality, Sustainable Development Goal 8: Decent work & Economic growth and Sustainable Development 10: Reduce Inequalities.

IDRF will utilize the Sustainable Livelihood Framework to guide the design and implementation of all Economic Development interventions (see [Technical Guidance section for more details](#)).

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





1. Develop and Promote sustainable agriculture & livestock Programs for Sustainable Livelihoods

Food Security and livelihoods are increasingly at risk with climate change, global conflicts and economic instability. Especially the resource-dependent agriculture sector, which employs an estimated 2.5 billion people worldwide³. By 2050, global food production needs to increase by 70% to feed an estimated 9 billion people⁴. There needs to be a transformation of existing patterns of production and consumption to ensure responsible and sustainable use of resources.

Sustainable agriculture and farming are key to ensuring present food and livelihood demands are met without contributing to harmful systems that create a more vulnerable world for future generations. Using a systems approach that is holistic and inclusive, IDRF aims to achieve long-term food security and livelihood for vulnerable populations. Sustainable agriculture and farming can help alleviate poverty and build more resilient communities.

IDRF aims to focus on :

- Revive and protect local agriculture and livestock systems and transform them to become sustainable means of livelihood
- Promote Climate-smart agriculture production practices to reduce the risk of production/income loss from climate change impacts
- Promote innovative methods of farming within regions with limited land and water resources
- Promote Livelihood diversification through crop production & livestock diversification, and social enterprise development
- Promote Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge & ownership of sustainable agriculture and farming practices & methods



Sustainable agriculture and farming are key to ensuring present food and livelihood demands are met without contributing to harmful systems that create a more vulnerable world for future generations. It can also help alleviate poverty and build more resilient communities.

1.1 Agriculture and Climate Change

Agriculture activities are one of the highest contributors to Climate Change. Agricultural activities accounts for one-fifth of all greenhouse gas emissions and is a primary cause of biodiversity loss⁵. Agriculture also is highly affected by the climate crisis. Food production globally are at risk from increased droughts, extreme weather patters and increased pests' infestation.

IDRF recognizes the importance of streamlining climate change mitigation and adaptation measures within agricultural activities. IDRF is committed to working with famers and agricultural communities worldwide to ensure our project and programming promote resilient climate responsive solutions to ensure sustainable outcomes.



1.2 Gender and Agriculture

Addressing gender equality is vital to alleviating global hunger and malnutrition. Women are key contributors to global agriculture and food systems. They account for almost half of the world's farmers⁶. If women are given equitable access to agriculture assets, education and markets, as men would increase food production and decrease global hunger numbers by 150 million people⁷. To transform existing agro-food systems, having the participation, engagement and leadership of women in agriculture are imperative.

To advance women's equitable participation in agriculture, IDRF aims to:

- Provide capacity-building resources and training for women farmers
- Establish and strengthen equitable access to markets for women farmers
- Promote women's agricultural ownership and leadership opportunities



2. Address Gender Parity and Gender Pay Gap in the workforce

On average, worldwide, more men than women participate in the labour force. In 2020, that was evident, with 74% of men participating in the workforce compared to 47% of women⁸. Southern Asia accounts for the largest gap in the labour force with 54%, followed by Northern Africa at 47%⁹. Women also spend 3 times as many hours on unpaid domestic and care work as men, this number has significantly increased during the pandemic¹⁰. This has led to a widening of the gender parity and pay gap. Consistently working more work hours every day can significantly affect women's physical and mental health and well-being.

Furthermore, women's participation in the labour force is limited to low to mid-level positions. Women held only 28% of managerial positions in 2019, with Northern Africa and Western, Central and Southern Asia accounting for the largest disparity at 13%. The consistent underrepresentation of women is also evident in the top managerial positions, with only 18% of enterprise CEOs being women¹¹.

It is vital that discriminatory and harmful social views that are limiting equal and equitable participation in the workforce for all are dismantled. IDRF believes every person has the right to equal and equitable participation in Economic Development and has the right to receive equal pay for equal work. Addressing gender parity and the gender pay gap helps to build a more equitable world where every person is able to realize their full potential.

IDRF aims to focus on :

- Promote the inclusion of women in the workforce by investing in gender-inclusive job skills training for emerging industries
- Promote equal pay for socially undervalued sectors with a focus on women and girls across the global south.

3. Promote small and medium-sized enterprises and support informal sector workers

Prior to the global pandemic, 2 billion people worked in the informal employment sector, which was approx. 60.2 % of the total global employment¹³. With the onset of the pandemic, more than 75% of informal workers (1.6 billion) were severely affected by lockdown measures¹⁴.

Informal workers saw their sources of income heavily reduced and eliminated with little to no social protection coverage. The informal sector workforce is at high risk of poverty and faces great challenges in recovering their livelihoods in the recovery phase of the global pandemic. Overall, the global pandemic triggered economic crises across the world, leading to job losses and declining incomes, especially for small-scale industries.

According to the World Bank, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) represent about 90% of business globally and are key contributors to job creation and economic development¹⁵.

Formal SMEs account for up to 40% of GDP for emerging economies – a number that is even higher when the informal SMEs are included¹⁶. With an estimated 600 million jobs needed by the year 2030, SMEs will be vital in growing the job market for developing countries and emerging economies. IDRF recognizes the importance of supporting the development of SMEs and the protection of informal sector workers.

IDRF aims to focus on :

- Establish and promote social protection measures for informal workers through micro-loans and recovery programs
- Develop and support business innovations for SMEs that are sustainable and socially inclusive
- Provide access to relevant marketable life and business development skills training



Annex

Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

Originally developed by DFID and adapted by Sustainable Livelihoods Canada. The sustainable Livelihoods approach seeks to gain an accurate and realistic understanding of people's strengths and capacity to achieve positive livelihood outcomes. The approach captures the many effects of social and economic exclusion on people's lives and identifies how they can be best supported to move out of poverty towards resilience and livelihoods. The framework centers on 4 dimensions: Vulnerability Context, Assets, Stages of Livelihood Development and Policy & Institutional context.

- Physical Assets : the "basic needs" of an individual such as housing, food access to information etc.
- Social Assets : the "social connections" that re required or the support gained from people to draw upon to achieve an individual's goal.
- Human Assets : the "Skills and employability" of an individual, which includes skills, knowledge, education and leadership capability.
- Personal Asset: the "personality or cultural identity" of an individual that shapes values and beliefs. It can include self-confidence, self-esteem, motivation etc.
- Financial Assets: the "money or financial" inputs needed to access sustainable livelihood, It can include financial security, financial knowledge etc.
- Stages of Livelihood Development: refers to where an individual is at and explores the development of asset creation and livelihoods strategies that are uniquely suited to people's current stages and contexts. It includes 6 stages:
 - Destabilized/Stabilized
 - Engaging
 - Foundation Building
 - Transition
 - Consolidation
 - Sustainable Livelihood
- Policy & Institutional Context: refers to the context provided by institutions and their current policies, which aids in identifying the constraints and opportunities each institution presents, and develops strategies to build a more enabling policy environment towards sustainable livelihoods outcomes.

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