



**Development Fund
Organisational Strategy
2021-2030**



Photo: The Poppe

**Building rural resilience
and local empowerment for food
security and diversified livelihoods**

Opposite page: Girl with sweet potatoes. Kavuzi, Malawi.

Introduction

For more than 40 years, the Development Fund has collaborated with local communities and organisations to improve both food security and income generation of highly vulnerable and marginalised rural communities and small-holder farmers. Hundreds of thousands of small-scale farming households have received our support to develop resilient livelihoods and eliminate hunger, malnutrition and poverty in their communities.

This approach to development is recognised and well-proven, yet support from governments and donors to boost small-scale agriculture's role in sustainable food systems has been lacking. Our diversified approach is increasingly important as climate change, conflict, pandemics, depletion of natural resources, marginalisation and a dysfunctional food system cause increased hunger and extreme poverty. Rural people are the most vulnerable to climate change, yet they are the ones that have done the least to cause them. That is why DF calls for climate justice and climate resilient development.

This summary of the Development Fund's organisational strategy outlines our ambitions towards 2030. It aligns our goals with the 2030 Agenda and especially with the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 2: No hunger.

The Development Fund's main goal is for small-scale agriculture communities to become resilient and be part of sustainable food systems. To achieve this, we need to improve food security and nutrition, raise and diversify incomes and empower social organisations in rural communities.

The Development Fund aims to double its impact over the next decade, mainly by expanding support to rural communities in the countries where we already have a presence: Ethiopia, Somalia, Malawi, Mozambique, Guatemala and Nepal. We will also advocate for Norway and other rich countries to double their efforts to eliminate hunger and malnutrition in the world.

The challenges

Conflicts, economic slowdown, climate change, degradation of natural resources and the Covid-19 pandemic are key causes of rising global hunger. The latter has emerged as a new, reinforcing cause. In poor countries, more extreme weather from climate change adds multiple stressors on land, particularly affecting the rural poor. Two thirds of undernourished people in the world work in agriculture, and rural populations in low-income countries suffer significantly more from food insecurity than their urban counterparts.

About 80% of the world's extremely poor and 75% of the relative poor live in rural areas. Most of the people who live in extreme poverty work in agriculture. The reasons for this extreme poverty are many, including: small agricultural plots; low rates of productivity; low diversification of income; limited or no access to credit and markets; vulnerability to natural disasters; degraded natural resources; little or no access to education, health and other public services. The world is far off from achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of less than 3% of the global population living in extreme poverty and no extreme malnutrition by 2025.

Small-holder farmers provide up to 80% of food consumed in large parts of the developing world. But the rural poor often do not benefit from new technologies and cannot access markets to boost their productivity and income, simply because they lack resources and knowledge. Increasing support to marginalised rural communities is therefore critical for the reduction of extreme poverty and for improved food security.

Supporting small-holder farmers access to and strengthening their rights to freely use plant genetic resources is critical to maintain agro-biodiversity, which strengthens climate adaptation and increases yield. Ecosystem restoration and sustainable climate-adapted agricultural intensification for the poorest populations are identified internationally as two of the most viable options to increase productivity, halt degradation, foster ecosystem service recovery, generate increasing incomes and sequester carbon.

Our goals, vision, mission and values

The Development Fund's overarching goal is:

Small-scale agriculture communities become resilient and part of sustainable food systems.

To realise this goal, we have three objectives:

- 1) improve food security and nutrition
- 2) raise and diversify incomes
- 3) empower and include social organisations in rural communities.

Our tagline is:

«Fighting hunger and injustice together».

- **Our vision** is a sustainable and just world with freedom from hunger, poverty and marginalisation.
- **Our mission** is to work with marginalised people in rural communities to end hunger, poverty, and injustice by strengthening climate adaptation, biodiversity and sustainable food systems. We respect local assets and needs and empower people to drive their own development.
- **Our ambition** as an organisation: by 2030 the Development Fund shall be widely regarded as the expert on food security, biodiversity and climate adaptation in developing countries, and as one of the most effective organisations with well-documented results.

The four values that guide us are:

Sustainability: We base our work and choices on the principle of sustainable development, improving people's livelihood environmentally, economically and socially.

Solidarity: Our work is based on the principle of solidarity with marginalised people. We recognise their struggles and support their rights.

Equality: We work to create a just world based on equal opportunities for everyone, human rights, mutual respect and democratic principles. We recognise the innate worth of all people and the value of diversity. We practice these principles in our everyday work.

Integrity: Our aim is to be honest, transparent and accountable at all levels to ensure the effectiveness of our actions and the use of our resources.

In addition to these values, the Development Fund has strict requirements regarding the ethical behaviour of our staff and partners through our Code of Conduct, anti-corruption policy, do-no-harm approach, and commitment to promote gender equality, non-discrimination and a human rightsbased approach.



Small scale coffee farmer. ASOCUCH, Huehuetenango, Guatemala.

Photo: Carlos Zaparolli

Elevator pitch for Development Fund Norway

1st floor:

The Development Fund supports poor rural households in their efforts to produce sufficient and nutritious food in a world with increased hunger and climate change.

2nd floor:

For more than 40 years, we have worked in some of the world's poorest areas that are most vulnerable to climate change. We work together with local communities to achieve lasting change and increased justice so they can overcome hunger, withstand difficulties and achieve positive development. We reach

more than 1 million people in rural areas in Africa, Asia and Central America.

3rd floor:

Our holistic approach combines a wide range of sustainable solutions to build resilient rural communities. Together, we increase food production through climate adapted agriculture, community seed banks, agrobiodiversity, improved soil management, access to water and the sustainable management of natural resources. We work to strengthen the knowledge, rights and income of small-holder farmers.

Theory of Change

Our overall aim is to enhance the resilience of rural communities and contribute to the development **of sustainable food systems** that ensure food security and nutrition for all, while also ensuring the economic, social and environmental bases of food production. This means, according to FAO, that the system is profitable along all steps of the value chain (from “farm to fork”), generates broadbased and equitable benefits for all members of society and has a positive or neutral impact on the environment. **Resilience**, or the ability to withstand or recover quickly from crisis conditions such as pandemics or extreme weather events caused by climate change, is key to achieving sustainable food systems.

Our approach puts **small-scale farming and pastoral communities** at the centre of sustainable food systems. In developing countries, poverty and hunger are over-represented among small-scale farming and pastoral communities due to resource scarcity, marginalisation and increasing effects of climate change. Furthermore, specific groups within rural communities, including women, youth and people with disabilities, face barriers that increase their vulnerability. Addressing these inequalities is a fundamental part of building the foundation for sustainable food systems.

The social, economic, and environmental challenges faced by rural communities are complex and interrelated. We take an **integrated and holistic approach** to addressing these challenges. The figure to the left shows the main strategies that we believe can be used to increase the resilience of rural communities and their position in sustainable food systems. This requires improving both **material living conditions** of vulnerable groups, increasing knowledge and capacity and working to change **social norms and governance systems**.

The Development Fund works to improve food security and nutrition and increase and diversify incomes in rural communities. **Improving food** production is key element in the strategy. This helps cover more of the household’s food requirements and generates surpluses for sale. With climateadapted farming practices small-scale farmers and pastoralists can strengthen their seed and livestock management systems and improve management of soil, water and forest resources. We support cooperative marketing and business development and the **diversification of income sources**. Support for savings

and loans groups is also an effective way to increase the access to capital of rural women, youth and other marginalised groups, whether this is used for income through small shops, handicrafts, bike/motorcycle repair services, or sales of agricultural products that are less dependent on climate variations.

Many of these solutions require fundamental shifts in social and governance systems.

A key objective is to promote **empowered and inclusive community organisations**.

They have the capacity to plan, innovate and implement solutions that respond to diverse needs as well as advocating for good government services and pro-poor policies. We promote this through multiple strategies. These include the Climate Adapted Village (CAV) approach, which promotes collective mobilisation to identify vulnerabilities and develop climate adaptation plans for the community.

We will continue to help **women achieve equal rights, more control over resources and participate on equal terms** with men within their households and communities. Ending all forms of discrimination against women, girls and other disadvantaged groups is a fundamental pre-condition to the achievement of resilient rural communities

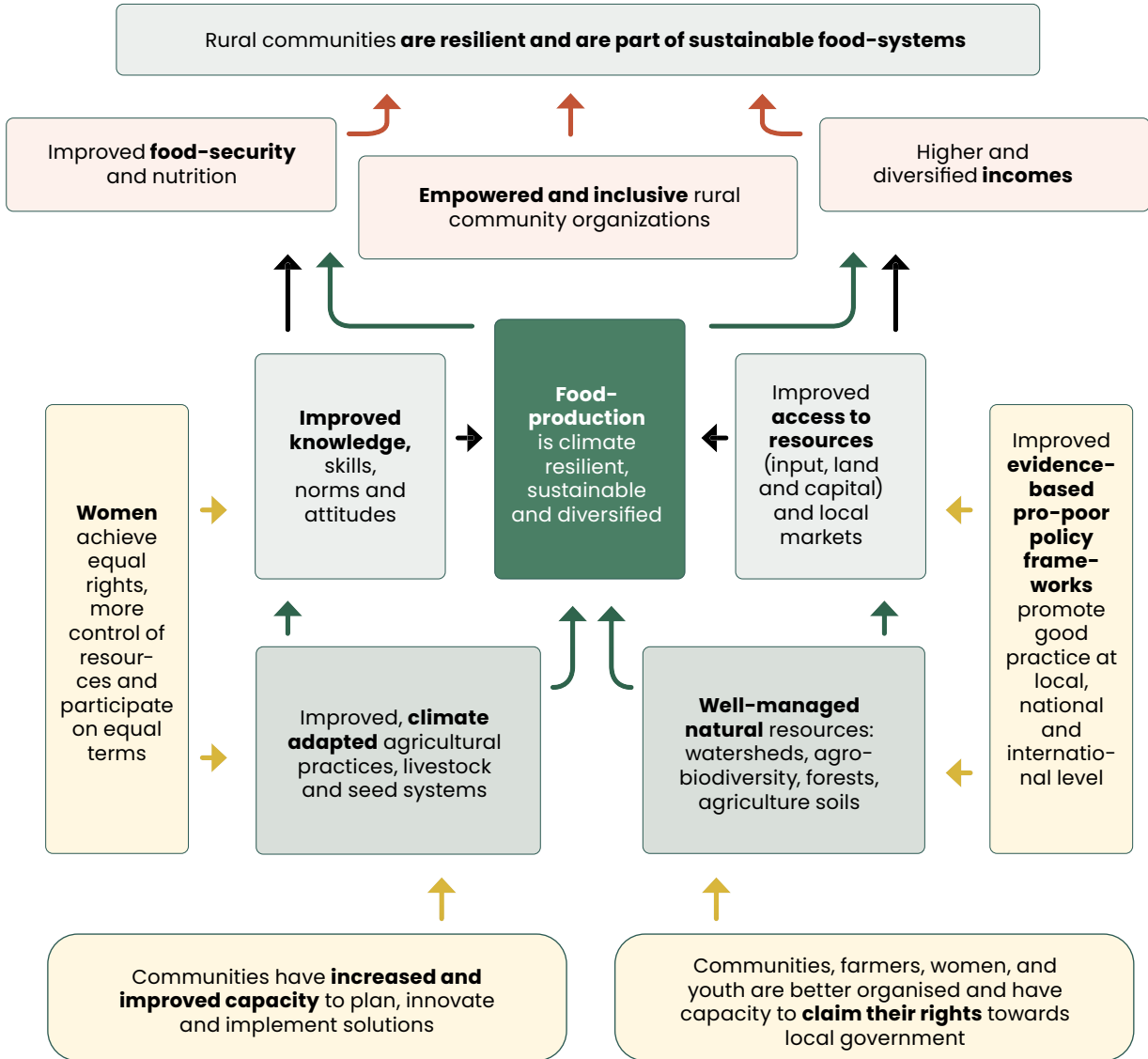
and sustainable food systems. To increase gender equality, the Development Fund focuses on women and other disadvantaged groups (i.e. marginalised ethnic groups, landless youth) for various programme activities to empower them economically and increase their leadership skills. This increases women's status while building their self-esteem and sense of achievement. Our work towards broader shifts in norms and attitudes will continue, including the promotion of equitable policies and affirmative actions within community organisations and reinforcing messages of gender equality and social inclusion through awareness-raising campaigns. This work can help strengthen the position and influence of women within their households and communities.



Woman in rainforest. REDD, Oromia, Ethiopia.

Photo: Harald Herland

Theory of Change



Our programme approach from 2021 to 2030

The Development Fund's main target group is rural agriculture communities in selected developing countries, mainly food producers, small-holder farmers, agro-pastoralists, and pastoralists. Many of them are custodians of important natural endowments and local ecological knowledge. Our priority is to support rural communities in remote or underserved areas in developing countries where other development actors are less present. In addition, we work to empower people within rural communities who for various reasons experience marginalisation and discrimination, mainly women and youth.



Farmer feeding a pig. CAV, Nepal.

Photo: Harald Herliand

Thematic approach and priorities

The Development Fund has extensive experience and competence in approaches and methodologies that have proven to be efficient and successful to improve food security, build resilience, and develop sustainable food systems.

Seed security

Following a community-based agrobiodiversity approach, we support measures such as community seed banks, participatory variety selection and participatory plant breeding to increase seed security. Through this participatory approach, farmers' and communities are empowered and their contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources is recognised. We also advocate for the realisation of farmers' rights to seeds in international and national policy frameworks.

Climate resilient agriculture:

Training of farmers in climate adaptation techniques such as soil conservation measures, crop diversification, crop rotation and agro-forestry are important measures to increase farmers' adaptive capacity. We engage farmers actively in the testing and

promotion of these techniques through participatory approaches such as the lead farmer model and farmer field schools.

Climate Adapted Villages (CAV):

Through participatory vulnerability assessments, local communities develop climate adaptation plans which are implemented with local and external resources. The adaptation plans include measures at community or watershed level, as well as adaptation measures at farmers' fields.

Sustainable management of natural resources:

Sustainable land management is important for the conservation of natural resources, including water, forest and biodiversity. We also support participatory forest management approaches to reduce deforestation and forest degradation, while strengthening forest dependent communities and indigenous people's user and ownership rights.

Micro-finance and income generating activities:

Saving and loan groups and other micro credit schemes provide access to small loans that enable farmers, and in particular women and youth, to establish small businesses or other activities for income generation. We also support farmers' cooperatives and associ-

ations to engage in value addition and improve access to markets for their members.

Gender equality:

We support the economic, social, and political empowerment of women through increased access to participation in saving and loan groups, access to credit, income generating activities, training in climate adapted agriculture techniques, and increased participation and influence in decision making processes at household, grassroots organisations and community levels.

Youth empowerment:

We involve youth actively in our programme through training in climate adaptive agriculture, income generating activities and the establishment of youth clubs that advocate for youth's rights.

Social mobilisation and strengthening of civil society:

Strengthening of grassroots organisations, farmers' cooperatives and associations, and other civil society organisations is an important part of our work to empower local communities and their influence in decision-making processes. We also support farmers' and civil society organisations policy work at local, national and international levels.

Our roles, partnerships and alliances

In addition to collaborating closely with civil society at national and grass-roots level, we also partner with other key stakeholders such as research institutions, government institutions and the private sector. We will aim to play complementary roles, initiate joint advocacy efforts or act as watch-dog when governments overstep the rights of their citizens. Our local partner organisations will continue to play a key role in the implementation of our programmes.

Our work will continue in the six countries where we were present in 2020: Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Somalia, Nepal and Guatemala. These are among the least developed in their regions and the need for the support of the Development Fund is high. We may consider expanding to one or two new countries during the period.

Organisation

We aim to develop a modern and agile organisation that is fit for purpose working as one strong body across all offices.

Funding 2021–2030

Institutional funding, both in Norway and internationally, is linked to private and corporate funding. Our ambitions for the growth of these funding sources should be matched and supportive.

- We will develop a comprehensive fund-raising plan for 2021–2025 for both private and public funding to ensure a step-by-step and well-coordinated approach to double the funds raised towards 2030 from 2018 levels.
- We will reduce the dependency on funding from the Norwegian government by significantly increasing levels of international and private funding.

Communication

We aim to develop a communication strategy for 2021–2025 and significantly increase our visibility amongst our stakeholders and the general public and thereby strengthen our brand recognition.

Opposite page: Modelfarmer holding a plate of vegetables. Mpingu, Malawi.





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