



Sector Project

Rural Development

Challenges

Despite progress in recent decades, 80% of people affected by extreme poverty worldwide live in rural regions. Especially the growing young population in rural areas lacks prospects: Shortage of jobs, lack of access to land, capital and education, inadequate opportunities for political and societal participation, weak institutional structures and poor infrastructure are major constraints for a sustainable development.

On top of the social challenges, the overexploitation of natural resources such as soil, water and biodiversity and the impacts of climate change are further exacerbating the precarious situation in rural areas and entire agricultural and

food systems. This is leading to conflicts over natural resources and land and increasing rural poverty.

Sustainable rural development therefore remains central to combating poverty and preventing crises and conflicts. Coherent policies and programmes, cross-sectoral action and transformative approaches are needed so that people in rural areas can have viable prospects, generate income and obtain a healthy diet – without exceeding planetary boundaries. This is how the great potential of rural areas can be utilised and the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda can be achieved.

Our objective

Concepts for a sustainable transformation of rural areas are mainstreamed into international and national policy processes and programmes.

Our key topics

- ➔ **Rural regional development** promotes cross-sectoral, territorial approaches with the aim of overcoming spatial disparities in a context-specific manner. Coherent regional and land-use planning that incorporate the connection between rural and urban areas increase resilience to external shocks. Local institutions are strengthened, and societal participation improved. New income-generating opportunities can be provided for people in rural areas. The alternative development approach helps small farmers in drug crop cultivation areas to overcome their dependence on illegal economic activities.
- ➔ **Agroecological transformation** focuses on sustainable agricultural and food systems, placing a particular emphasis on integrated territorial development approaches that preserve or restore natural resources. Further goals comprise increasing diversity in agricultural production, reducing damaging external inputs, promoting recycling management and supporting local and regional circular economy. Essential principles here include context-specific implementation, local knowledge, co-creation and responsible governance.
- ➔ **Good rural governance and access to land** addresses responsible land policy that creates improved access to land and secure land tenure rights for the rural population. Improved legal frameworks, measures to fight corruption and the promotion of transparency, for example, may play a key role in this. An emphasis is placed on particularly disadvantaged groups, indigenous people, women and youth.
- ➔ **Protection and sustainable use of natural resources** revolves around protecting biodiversity and ecosystem services in agricultural landscapes, using them sustainably and restoring them. This can strengthen the resilience of the rural population to the negative impacts of climate change and simultaneously promote low-emission land use. Different interests in land are to be balanced and the path towards sustainable food systems paved. Further topics are integrated water resource management, bio-based economies and food losses.

Budget and term:

EUR 13 million/August 2021 – July 2024

Commissioned by:

German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Combined financing:

Organizzazione internazionale italo-latino americana (IILA) on the topic of 'Alternative development in drug crop cultivation areas' as part of the EU-funded 'Cooperation Programme between Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union on Drugs Policies' (COPOLAD III)



Our Approach

The Sector Project Rural Development advises the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) on issues of rural development, thus promoting the dissemination of systemic, transformative and cross-sectoral approaches. It supports BMZ in mainstreaming concepts for a sustainable transformation of rural areas in policy processes and programmes. To this end, it cooperates with regional and global initiatives as well as organisations in partner countries. Co-financing from the partner organisation IILA supports the projects engagement in the topic 'Alternative development in drug crop cultivation areas' along the implementation of the EU-funded COPOLAD III project.

The sector project works along three fields of action, with gender-transformative and digital approaches playing a key role throughout:

Policy and strategy advice: The project advises BMZ along the formulation of policies and strategies, development of its thematic portfolio and for positioning as a relevant stakeholder. It continuously observes the international policy debate, analyses and comments on academic and policy processes and provides evidence-based findings from international research.

Strategy development, evidence and innovation: In addition, it analyses practical implementation experiences, develops

innovative methods and concepts, and actively contributes to design relevant knowledge platforms and networks. It develops knowledge products and uses them to mainstream relevant thematic content into the German development portfolio.

Learning, networking and knowledge management: Via learning and exchange formats, the project supports international development organisations and their partner institutions to build capacities. It promotes the elaboration of new approaches and helps disseminating proven ones.

Our topics

- Rural regional development
- Alternative development in drug crop cultivation areas
- Good rural governance and access to land
- Agroecological transformation
- Management of natural resources and biodiversity
- Climate change and rural development
- Integrated water resources management
- Food losses
- Bioeconomy and bioenergy

Further information: <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/104357.html>

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Rural Development and
Agriculture Division (G500)
Friedrich-Ebert-Allee 32+36
53113 Bonn
Germany

Contact:

Andreas Lange (andreas.lange@giz.de) and
Boris Büchler (boris.buechler@giz.de)

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