

We have the pleasure to refer to your letters of 9 August 2019, which refer to the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing, and the protection of human rights for the elderly. It is with great pleasure that we respond to your email, as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) fully recognizes the important role that older generations play in agriculture and rural development. In times of economic uncertainty and food crises, labour markets are more important than ever as they serve a dual purpose – both as the motor of the economy and the breadbasket of a country. Ensuring that older generations continue to have access to agricultural labour markets, and ensuring that they also have reliable social protection, is paramount to achieving development that works for all.

Regarding our activities, FAO has a robust programme on [Decent Rural Employment](#), which focuses on the rural labour market in agriculture. Focus areas of our work on employment includes youth employment, green jobs, namely ways in which employment can help reduce adverse effects of climate change and natural resource depletion, migration and agriculture, child labour, working conditions, and social protection. With respect to your request, FAO has not had a specific focus on the elderly age group; however, we regularly assess ways that we can build our portfolio to include other important areas in rural employment, including areas such as the supply chains and employment, sector challenges, disabled people and importantly, the elderly.

FAO has also prioritized social protection as one of its core pillars to reduce rural poverty, accelerate progress around achieving zero hunger and promoting resilient livelihoods. FAO works to enhance the adequate coverage of social protection in rural areas, taking into account age specific, as well as livelihood vulnerabilities. Acknowledging the social but also the economic impacts of social protection programmes, FAO has supported countries across regions to enhance the coherence between social protection, agriculture, rural development and climate adaptation, supporting the progressive move from subsistence to economic inclusion. FAO acknowledges the changing nature of agriculture and rural development in the face of new demographic trends, and support the scale up of social protection programmes that can respond to poor rural households move towards economic inclusion processes.