



COM/SCHA/REC/003/FINAL

Turkistan, 28 September 2021

COMMISSION ON SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

EIGHTH MEETING

“SOCIAL CONDITION IN RURAL AREAS OF THE TURKPA MEMBER COUNTRIES IN A PANDEMIC SITUATION”

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Parliamentary Assembly:

Taking into account the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas dated on 21 January 2019, the WHO Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) advice for the public updated on 1 December 2020, the 8th Presidential Summit of the Turkic Council on April 10, 2020 on global response on a pandemic,

Accepting the global thesis that Social development is about improving the well-being of every individual in rural society so they can reach their maximum potential even during a pandemic (it is collective responsibility to ensure the vitality of rural areas by the strengthening rural social life, by the supporting farmers, peasant families with many children, young farmers, women, elder people and disable persons in agriculture as well as boosting rural innovation and digitisation in a pandemic situation etc.),

Recognizing the enormous potential of rural territories of the TURKPA member-countries as a means of developing a unique social-cultural space in Turkic-speaking countries,

Understanding that Social protection systems need to be expanded in response to COVID-19 to protect lives and livelihoods in TURKPA member-countries' rural areas,

Stressing that peasant women and other rural women play a significant role in the economic survival of their families and in contributing to the rural and national economy, including through their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy,

Realizing the benefits of cooperation of the TURKPA member-countries, their exchange of information and joint action directed to improve and simplify life of rural citizens in a pandemic situation,

Taking into account the needs and specificities of rural populations, in particular vulnerable subgroups such as women and girls, indigenous people, people with disabilities, the elderly, migrants and seasonal workers, need to be considered when designing and operationalizing new or expanded measures,

Accepting that protecting and supporting livelihoods will require the combination of social protection interventions to protect income and prevent negative coping strategies, and measures to support production throughout the agri-food system (e.g., distribution of seeds, animals, fishing nets, other inputs; training; market access; public purchases from small producers) while ensuring that occupational safety and health measures are put in place and accessible,

Recommends the National parliaments on the following issues:

- 1) *to take efforts* aimed at expanding efficient regional and bilateral cooperation among member countries on rural areas (by supporting common legislative e-platforms, drafts of model laws, workshops, seminars, meetings, co-producing, rural festivals, common projects and other types of events in TURKPA member-countries);
- 2) *to support* any kind of research data on rural social life; *to investigate* legislation of each country-member of TURKPA in rural social life taking into account force majeure as a pandemic;
- 3) *to add* to the current legislation or future model laws the social content relating the reaction on a pandemic like hygiene, “social” distance, curfews, travel restrictions, permission requirements on entering into and existing from the cities, part-time work, working from home, 14-day required quarantine for the travellers, and a general call for all to “stay home”, postpone of taxes and payments, governmental and volunteer social programs, mobile medical services, electronic medical consultative services for rural territories, social support of families with many children, young farmers, women, elder people and disable persons in agriculture, boosting rural innovation and digitisation in a pandemic situation; *to implement* social insurance measures (sick leave, health insurance provision or subsidized premiums, contribution waivers, expanded pension programmes or benefits);
- 4) *to strengthen* the efforts on collaboration on social measures and technologies to support small-holder vulnerable farmers, herders, fisherfolk and foresters, and those

- involved along food between Turkic-speaking countries, to study experience of each country;
- 5) *to mobilize* local networks of health care workers and pharmacists local network responses and volunteer programmes to help rural communities face the effects of COVID-19;
 - 6) *to monitor* the tendency to increase prices that could be hard for population during in a pandemic, including rural areas;
 - 7) *to simplify* regulatory norms for peasant in taxes and bank loans payments; to reconsider tax policy for agricultural producers, partial exemption from payment of income taxes, exemption from sales taxes, any other preferences;
 - 8) *to speed up* investments in digital infrastructure and supporting eco-system to increase the uptake of digital tools in rural areas, *to think* in perspective about four-lateral Conceptions that will contribute the co-producing of high-quality agricultural technologies on the TURKPA member-countries territories;
 - 9) *to be conscious* of the enormous potential of TURKPA cooperation on Rural Festivals (including online regime);
 - 10) *to encourage* exchanges of specialists and their common activities in the field of agro technologies;
 - 11) *to organize* various dialogues between national agro companies of TURKPA member-countries on social subjects;
 - 12) *to establish* Turkic Agro Academy programme (including e-training) for farmers, with a particular focus on women and youth; *to work out* an agricultural management system for producers and agricultural commodity consultants in agriculture using remote sensing technologies, high precision satellite navigation, geoinformation systems, and machine learning technologies;
 - 13) *to provide* Farmer Registration System applications via e-government without visiting Provincial Directorates;
 - 14) *to be conscious* of the need to support the creation of a stronger educational infrastructure in rural areas;
 - 15) *to promote* diversification of the labor market in rural areas in a pandemic as social tool to improve life;
 - 16) *to develop* Concept of modern social housing in rural areas;
 - 17) *to support* volunteer services working for the elderly, lonely pensioners, disabled people, socially vulnerable groups in the countryside during a pandemic in rural areas;
 - 18) *to grow* a list of open source software and hardware solutions to assist medical staff in rural areas and donate 3D-printed medical devices to different local hospitals in the country; *to create* digital map of hospitals; *to set up* a free phone line, where expert therapists are available to provide support and initial psychological care to people struggling to manage their mental health during the quarantine;
 - 19) *to protect access* to primary sector inputs (fertilisers, pesticides), covering the costs of marketing and logistics for agricultural product exporters;

- 20) *to establish* vouchers for direct and guaranteed multi-family vouchers through the specialized Rural Development Voucher Program Office (the price of electricity and heating, natural gas, water, sanitation and fuels cannot be increased) to ensure that services cannot be suspended in the event of non-payment;
- 21) *to provide* financial assistance in the framework of e-government platform, allowing businesses and self-employed individuals to pay off their debt with the possibility of delaying the first payment;
- 22) *to collect* citizens' opinion on the post-COVID-19 world in order to develop a draft law "On sustainable development of rural areas";
- 23) *to develop* veterinary and phytosanitary safety in rural areas; *to support* an idea of mobile medical trains for remote rural areas;
- 24) *to provide* mobile medical complexes and medical trains, as well as Mobile veterinary laboratories for rural areas;
- 25) *to develop* preschool children, continue to receive distance education under special preschool programs;
- 26) *to work out* social programs for children: a) children from one to six years old - in the period of targeted social assistance assignment (once a month a set of products, once a quarter a set of household chemicals); b) children from six to eight years old - during the respective school year, it includes the following: - a set of school uniform or athletic apparel and a set of writing instruments; - single hot meal during the school year;
- 27) *to provide* health care organizations with mobile teams of medical staff;
- 28) *to create* Call-centers' work through the involvement of resident doctors of medical universities to prevent the spread of CVI in rural primary health care organizations;
- 29) *to consider* the issue of possible common road map to create an effective medical care model for the rural population, to improve access to medical care, staffing, construction of facilities in the village, and digitalization of rural healthcare;
- 30) *to implement* virtual E-post cards for online service in rural areas.