



FAO Philippines Newsletter

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OUR PRIORITIES

The FAO Strategic Objectives



Help eliminate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition



Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable



Reduce rural poverty



Enable inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems



Increase the resilience of livelihoods to disasters

Greetings from the FAO Representation in the Philippines! I am pleased to present to you the third quarter issue of our country newsletter.

We are more than halfway through the year and it is proving to be a busy one for FAO Philippines. We continue to support recovery and rehabilitation efforts in Marawi, working closely with government agencies and local government units, and with the generous support of our partners, the Australian Government, the Community Family Services International, and the United Nations – Central Emergency Response Fund. We have so far supported more than 10 000 farming families restart their livelihood activities through the provision of agricultural inputs such as rice, corn, and vegetable seeds, as well as fertilizer and farming tools.

We also continue to work with indigenous communities on the conservation and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity in Ifugao and South Cotabato. Our activities now focus on helping strengthen community-based enterprises through skills training and knowledge sharing on product development, value-addition, marketing, business and financial planning. These will help ensure that communities benefit from market-based incentive systems to encourage continued production of traditional rice and crop varieties.

This year also saw the Philippines formally accepting two international agreements, namely (a) Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas, and (b) Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing. FAO recognizes the Philippines' acceptance of these international agreements that will further boost efforts in ensuring sustainable management of the country's marine resources.

Likewise featured in this issue are our most recent activities on working with the Department of Agriculture (DA) to increase resilience against multiple-threats to the agriculture sector through use of innovative tools, including unmanned aerial systems or drones. We feature one of the DA staff who has been trained by FAO and is now an expert on use of these technologies to help other farmers improve their work.

We also highlight an important area of work for FAO, which is working with the government on initiatives to address threats to animal health that may impact negatively on food security. FAO recently convened an emergency meeting of animal health experts in Asia, including the Philippines, in response to African Swine Fever threat. FAO, in close coordination with the Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD), has been closely monitoring ASF situation in the region and at country level including in the Philippines.

The third quarter of the year also ushered in the rainy season, and Typhoon Mangkhut ("Ompong") was one of those that severely damaged the agriculture sector and affected thousands of farming families in Northern Luzon. Areas along the typhoon's path were mainly agricultural, and it caused disruptions in production that negatively impact the food supply for the succeeding months. DA is working with FAO on additional support to augment DA assistance to farmers to reclaim their lost livelihoods, address food security and nutrition needs, and rehabilitate damaged small-scale agriculture infrastructure.

Finally, we also launched our new partnership blueprint with the Philippines Government for the next six years, the Country Programming Framework (CPF) 2018 – 2024, which is aligned with the Philippine Development Plan and UN's Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development. With the new CPF, I look forward to taking the next steps with you, our dear partners, toward our common goals in strengthening the country's food and nutrition security, promoting the sustainable management of the environment and natural resources, while strengthening the country's resilience to the impacts of climate change, natural and human-induced disasters.

Mabuhay!

José Luis Fernández
FAO Representative in the Philippines





Farmers and fisherfolk most affected as Typhoon Mangkhut batters Luzon just before harvest season

Farmers in Santa Praxedes in Cagayan province save what is left from their rice farms after the onslaught of Typhoon Mangkhut. Harvest season was supposed to be in two weeks' time.

Farmers in northern Luzon look forward to September and October because of harvest season for the major staple crops of corn and rice. Harvest season means small-scale farmers will earn much-needed incomes to support their family's needs.

For the farmers affected by Typhoon Mangkhut, however, they will try to adjust with the income from what was left of their farms, if at all, after the typhoon struck northern Luzon on 15 September 2018. Fisherfolk have also been affected, for they were not able to go out to sea to fish days before and after the typhoon, and fishponds in inland areas have been destroyed.

Typhoon Mangkhut, locally named "Ompong", made landfall in Baggao, Cagayan. Areas along the typhoon's path are mainly agricultural, and it caused disruptions in production that will negatively impact the food supply for the following months.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) estimates that 570,521 farmers and fisherfolk have been directly affected by the typhoon. Overall damage and loss estimates have reached at least USD492 million (Php26.77 billion) on rice, corn, high-value crops, root crops, livestock/poultry, fisheries, and infrastructure, in at least 755 361 hectares of agricultural areas. Rice incurred the largest share of losses amounting to USD263 million (Php14.5 billion), followed by corn at USD150 million (Php8.17 billion), high value crops at USD63.5 million (Php 3.4 billion), and fisheries and livestock sectors at USD885 000 (Php48.1 million).

Farmers and fisherfolk bore the brunt of Typhoon Mangkhut, whose livelihoods are the most vulnerable to disasters. They suffer from foregone incomes from missed harvest, as well as disruptions in fisheries operations. The typhoon also damaged key agricultural infrastructure. If not immediately addressed, this may lead to food insecurity and malnutrition, dependence on food aid and more financial difficulties as the affected farmers and fisherfolk try to recoup and recover from their losses, which may lead them to utilize credit and financing facilities that will further increase their debts.

"Farmers and fisherfolk need timely emergency agricultural assistance, including rice and corn seeds for immediate planting for the November/December planting season. Additional support for fertilizers, vegetable seeds, hand tools, equipment for planting and harvesting, fingerlings, feeds, fishing gear and equipment are also needed to resume income-generating activities and minimize prolonged dependence on food aid," said FAO Representative in the Philippines José Luis Fernandez. "Early recovery assistance on rehabilitation of damaged small-scale agriculture infrastructure is also needed to enable productive capacities and facilitate linkage of the farmers to markets/agribusiness value chain."

To assist the typhoon-affected farmers, DA activated the Quick Response Fund (QRF) amounting to USD 11.2 million (Php 600 million) for the provision of rice and corn seeds. DA will also make available crop insurance of USD30 million (Php 1.6 billion) and emergency loans amounting to USD16.4 million (Php 880 million) to support production.

FAO support to food security and agriculture

DA is coordinating with FAO on possible support to augment DA assistance. FAO is seeking to mobilise at least USD 9 million (USD6 million for emergency response and USD3 million for early recovery) initial funding to support government efforts in assisting farmers to reclaim their lost livelihoods, address food security and nutrition needs, and rehabilitate damaged small-scale agriculture infrastructure.

With a USD60 000 (Php3.25 million) contribution from the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium through the FAO-SFERA (Special Fund for Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities), FAO deployed field staff and provided necessary support and technology (such as drones, satellite imagery and GIS mapping) in damage and needs assessments, standardization of damage estimation and reporting, development of targeted response plans, and other logistical needs. This builds on FAO's work on building resilience of vulnerable farming and fishing communities and related government capacities to both natural and human-induced disasters.

The New Zealand Government has also committed to provide USD328 750 (NZ\$500 000) through FAO in response to the needs identified under the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster of the Humanitarian Country Team's Humanitarian Response and Resources Overview. The contribution would augment the government's provision of seeds through distribution of fertilizers and provision of technical assistance, including conduct of related capacity-building, to allow affected farmers to restore agricultural activities and build resilience.



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A life's dream, realized

Family farmer-turned-government expert helps other farmers

Lowell Rebillaco (right) trains government personnel in use of new technologies for pre- and post-disaster assessments to help farmers more quickly and efficiently.

Lowell Rebillaco grew up on a family farm in the Philippines.

"When I was a child I dreamed of helping not just my family but, our neighbours, who are also farmers," Rebillaco says.

"I want to help them by improving their farm productivity so that they have more income and better access to basic necessities such as health, education, markets and can afford little bit of leisure."

As a Department of Agriculture employee, he uses innovative tools such as drones, his technical expertise in data management and project evaluation to help other farmers improve their work.

This includes advising farmers on better cropping techniques and developing reports on vegetation, crop health and, in the event of natural calamities, assessing damage to crops and livestock from floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and pests.

Rebillaco is also involved in a joint FAO-Department of Agriculture project that uses state-of-the-art drone technology to develop reports on crop size and health and speed up the process of determining the extent of damage to farmers' crops in the event of natural disasters.

"The Philippines has almost 20 typhoons every year, so our farmers experience losses from calamities. This drone program has changed our work because it lessens the time spent in the validation of the total damage caused."

Fixed-wing drones can cover up to 200 hectares in just thirty minutes, while one

person can survey roughly seven hectares a day. The images can be used to address a variety of conditions, including flooding and pest infestation and, in some cases, to lessen the impact of such threats by timing harvests appropriately. Another example is the use of drone-generated information to design irrigation canals. While Rebillaco has been able to use his expertise to help other farmers and also improve his own farming, he says that local farmers often strengthen the government's work by sharing their own knowledge and expertise.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) and FAO has an on-going project, the "Enhanced Production and Risk Management in Agriculture Decision Support System (EPRIMA)" which aims to increase resilience against multiple-threats to the agriculture sector by facilitating the Development of an Integrated Decision Support System for Enhanced Production

By working with governments to share technology and knowledge, FAO is empowering them to take action and be a part of the global goal to achieve Zero Hunger.

and Risk Management in Agriculture which includes Rapid Production Support and Risk and Damage Assessment Methodology through Remotely Piloted Aircrafts (RPAs), including unmanned aerial systems or drones.

"The average age of most of our farmers is 57, so the average time they have spent in farming is more or less 30 years. We've learned a lot from them because they're more experienced than us." He says he wants his own children to continue the tradition.



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Supporting community-based enterprises to strengthen agro-biodiversity conservation

The Philippines is one of the few mega-diverse countries in the world – it is home to thousands of globally-significant agricultural species. However, large parts of the country's globally-significant agrobiodiversity have already been lost or are under intense pressure from commercialization. Many indigenous and endemic varieties are threatened by extinction due to rapid population growth, changes in cultural values and farming practices, and climate change. These also pose significant threats to food security.

"Among the ways we can fight hunger is ensuring food security through the availability of healthy, safe, and nutritious food. FAO supports and works with various stakeholders to promote sustainable food production and enhance the conservation and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity. We see this effort as one of the ways to ensure that crop genetic diversity is conserved and sustained, and at the same time continue support to quality food production for the population," says José Luis Fernandez, FAO Representative in the Philippines.

The project Dynamic conservation and sustainable use of agro-biodiversity in traditional agro-ecosystems of the Philippines aims to enhance, expand, and sustain the dynamic conservation practices that sustain globally significant agro-biodiversity in traditional ecosystems of the Philippines.

Through the Agro-Biodiversity project, IP communities will be provided with socio-economic benefits such as market-based incentive systems to encourage production of traditional varieties, detailed market-valuation analyses to assess the marketability

of indigenous varieties as premium products, and stronger capacities for product development, value-addition, marketing, business and financial planning.

Participation of ABD farmers in the value chain is limited to activities that are done within their municipality. Most of their products are being marketed on-farm thus reducing opportunities for additional gains.

Taro, banana, and abaca are few of the identified ABD products that can promote agrobiodiversity conservation through value adding activities, such as food processing. Increasing participation to the ABD commodity value chain include direct selling of fresh taro in wholesale markets, export of bungulan banana, rope making for abaca and food processing for tomato (dried tomato), taro (chips) and bungulan (chips).

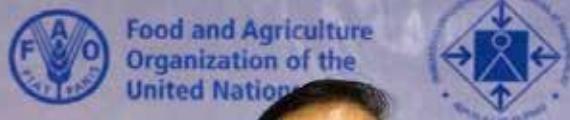
FAO initiated a Market and Value Chain Training and Consultative Workshop for the T'boli and Ubo tribes in the project's pilot sites, including the Barangays of Klubi, Lamfugon, Luhib and Tasiman.

Generally, for T'boli and Ubo tribes, farming provides them food and a minimal amount enough to provide for their daily needs including education. They do not view farming as a business that can provide them income beyond their needs. Thus, the training has provided them an opportunity to appreciate farming as a business venture. Given the basic business tools such as market and value chain analysis can help them develop ABD enterprises.

Increasing participation of agro-biodiversity farmers in the value chain of their focused commodities would increase their net income.

For example, the Lake Sebu Indigenous Women and Farmers Association (LASIWFA) is one of the organizations that FAO has trained on value-adding through food processing. Taro chips, banana chips and dried tomatoes were produced and market tested by the organization. LASIWFA is in the process of product standardization and plant establishment to sustain the products. Other products can also be developed from banana and taro, such as taro-based flour and noodles.

For all ABD commodities, processing as a value added activity increases income opportunities to ABD farmers. Since processing is another business activity for the community besides farming, skills should be developed in all aspects of the business. Furthermore, food safety requirements should be complied to penetrate markets.



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FAO, Philippines continue to strengthen partnership on achieving food security, nutrition and agricultural development

FAO Representative in the Philippines José Luis Fernández, National Economic and Development Authority Director-General and Socio-economic Planning Secretary Ernesto Pernia, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific Kundhavi Kadiresan, and other partners from the government, private sector and civil society launched the new FAO Philippines

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Philippines have launched the new FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF) 2018 – 2024, a six-year plan that will contribute to achieving greater food security and improved nutrition, and further develop the country's agricultural sector.

Kundhavi Kadiresan, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific together with the National Economic and Development Authority Director-General and Socio-economic Planning Secretary Ernesto Pernia, FAO Representative in the Philippines José Luis Fernández, and other partners from the government, private sector and civil society launched the new CPF in an event held at the UN House Manila in Mandaluyong City.

"In collaboration with development partners from the government, international development institutions, non-government organizations and the private sector, we have achieved a lot over the past four decades. But FAO and our partners also acknowledge, that there is much more to be done to ensure that every Filipino will have access to safe, affordable and nutritious food and is resilient against threats of climate change and human-induced disasters," Kadiresan said.

FAO has pledged to continue support for the strengthening of resilience of Filipino communities against the threats of climate change and human-induced disasters. FAO will also work closely with Philippine partners on promoting resilient agriculture, sustainable management of natural resources that support community livelihoods, and a common understanding of diversity and inequalities of areas affected by conflict to accelerate peace and development in Mindanao.

Secretary Pernia said the framework "does not merely indicate cooperation but also our renewed commitment and partnership for development. FAO's development experience and expertise, which match our needs and priorities, make them a strong and dependable partner in development." "Hence, this framework is focused on areas where FAO can make transformative contributions. These areas include human capital development, specifically the outcome on improved nutrition for all; economic opportunities in agriculture, fisheries, and forestry; ecological integrity; reducing vulnerability of individuals and families; and just and lasting peace."

The CPF is aligned with the priorities of the Philippine Development Plan

(PDP) 2017 – 2022, the United Nations – Philippine Partnership Framework for Sustainable Development (PFSD), the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as other national policies, strategies, and plans related to agriculture, fisheries, and forestry sector.

While reports indicate that there is enough food to feed the entire country, many Filipinos, especially children below the age of five, continue to suffer from malnutrition due to inadequate intake of food and nutrients. FAO will contribute to improving nutrition by strengthening capacities at the national and local levels on mobilizing resources, incorporating nutrition-sensitive food systems in development plans, and establishing or enhancing information systems related to food security and nutrition such as the Early Warning System-Food and Nutrition Security (EWS-FNS) and the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC).

The growth of the Philippines' agriculture, forestry and fishery sectors continues to be hampered by declining productivity and non-competitiveness, due to the limited implementation of technology, degradation of natural resources, and high vulnerability to climate change. FAO will continue to help promote the sustainable management and competitive utilization of environment and natural resources through inclusive value chains.



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FAO and NEDA staff at the launch of FAO's Country Programming Framework 2018 - 2024.

"Now, more than ever, is the time when we need to focus our investments on agriculture and rural development so that we can move forward and get back on our feet faster than the threats and disasters that jeopardise our food security and that of generations to come," Fernández said. "At FAO we firmly believe, and will continue to emphasize,

that we cannot address poverty, hunger and malnutrition, foster lasting peace and build sustainable cities and resilient communities when people's access to food and livelihoods especially in rural areas are not fully addressed."

FAO will contribute to improving access of poor rural producers, small farmers,

fisherfolks, agrarian reform beneficiaries, and other value chain actors, including indigenous peoples (IPs), to appropriate global production and post-harvest practices and technologies.

Country Programming Framework 2018 - 2024 Priority Areas



COUNTRY PROGRAMMING FRAMEWORK

2018 - 2024
PHILIPPINES



The FAO Philippines CPF 2018-2024 may be accessed here:
<http://www.fao.org/3/CA1353EN/ca1353en.pdf>

Improving food and nutrition security

Activities include:

- Incorporating nutrition-sensitive food systems in development plans
- Establishing or enhancing information systems and analytical tools related to food security and nutrition
- Evaluating related policies and programmes

Promoting sustainable and competitive production of agriculture, fisheries and forestry and management of environment and natural resources

Activities include:

- Establishing farm business schools
- Enhancing entrepreneurial skills of farmers and fisherfolk and facilitation of farmer-to-market linkages
- Supporting the development of farmers' organizations
- Building capacities for increasing sustainability and competitiveness of capture fisheries and aquaculture
- Improving access of poor rural producers, small farmers, fisherfolks, agrarian reform beneficiaries, and other value chain actors, including indigenous peoples, to appropriate global production and post-harvest practices and technologies
- Facilitating adoption of good farming practices and other technologies that can help increase farm productivity

Improving capacity to manage climate change impacts and natural and human-induced disasters (e. g., armed conflicts) including other threats and emergencies

Activities include:

- Building capacities of local government units and other stakeholders on inclusive and gender-equitable disaster risk reduction and management, and climate change adaptation and mainstreaming into national and local development plans
- Introducing mitigation and adaptation techniques and methodologies
- Provision of alternative livelihood activities
- Establishing early warning systems
- Introducing technologies such as the use of drones to accelerate pre- and post-disaster assessments

Marawi recovery efforts continue to support restoration of livelihoods of farming communities

FAO has been delivering assistance to help returning and displaced farmers that were affected and displaced by the Marawi siege to re-establish their livelihoods and food security. Working closely with partners and stakeholders, FAO has mapped out a short- to medium-term strategic response plan to restore the entire food supply and agribusiness value chains that will help transform Marawi and other affected municipalities into resilient families and communities.

FAO works with the Government's Task Force Bangon Marawi as a member of the sub-committee on business and livelihood and coordinates with the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries-Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (DAF-ARMM), Department of Agriculture, Department of Trade and Industry, Mindanao Development Authority, Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP), Provincial Government of Lanao del Sur, City Government of Marawi, IDP representatives (agrarian and non-agrarian reform beneficiaries), and other stakeholders.

Under a convergence initiative, FAO is also working with the World Food Programme DAR, DAF-ARMM, Department of Social Welfare and Development and other partners in the restoration and rehabilitation of the agriculture and agri-based livelihoods of agrarian reform beneficiaries in Marawi and other affected areas.

Stabilizing food security through improved access to food and economic activities

With a \$850,000 support from the UN-Central Emergency Response

Fund, FAO has been implementing the project "Improve Food Security Through Access to Food, Livelihood Restoration and Increased Agricultural Capacities" which aims to ensure food security and restore agricultural agriculture and fishery livelihoods of internally-displaced populations (IDPs) and host families in farming communities adjacent to Marawi City. These areas include the municipalities of Ditsa-Ramain, Marantao, Piagapo, and Saguiaran.

FAO held an Inception Workshop for the UN-CERF project on 12 July, to ensure that stakeholders are informed about the project's objectives and outputs. Through this initiative, FAO will assist at least 2800 households from IDPs or host families through the provision of agricultural inputs to ensure food security and restore livelihoods until December 2018. These inputs include planting materials (rice, corn, vegetable seeds), small machineries, poultry/livestock (chickens, ducks, goats), fish cages, gill nets, fishing paraphernalia, fertilizers.

FAO has also partnered with the Australian Government and the Community and Family Services International (CFSI) to implement an agriculture-based livelihood assistance initiative in response to the humanitarian crisis brought about by the Marawi conflict.

FAO staff and Australian Embassy officials meet with local government partners in Iligan City.

The support for enhancing agri-based livelihoods of internally displaced farmers is part of a broader AUD2.5 million (around PHP100 million) package of assistance funded by the Australian Government and being implemented by CFSI.

CFSI's assistance aims to support protection, psychosocial, and urban and agri-based livelihood benefiting 4,000 households (20,000 persons) displaced by the crisis in Marawi City, and the Municipalities of Ditsaan Ramain, Marantao, and Piagapo in Lanao del Sur. CFSI directly implements the first two components in all areas, and the urban livelihood in Marawi City. FAO is implementing the agri-based livelihood component benefiting 2,500 households, including agrarian reform communities, in the three municipalities from May 2018 to September 2019.

FAO Representative in the Philippines, José Luis Fernandez, says, "FAO welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with the Australian Government and CFSI to support rebuilding Marawi. The complex, varied and dynamic situation in conflict-affected areas in Lanao del Sur requires area-specific responses to address food security and economic recovery needs of the people displaced by the conflict, especially the most vulnerable and those with special needs."





Empowering Indigenous Women

Women group meeting on their Lusongay (Bayanihan) for their farm development discussing their farm situation and income specially after returning back from displacement.

The Philippines has consistently ranked "high" in the Global Gender Gap Index and is, in fact, the only Asian country that has made it to Top 10 in terms of gender parity.

To be able to effectively address and close the gender gaps, it is important to look at the different dimensions of the ranking and identify the underlying causes of the increases and drops of the country's scores over time. In 2017, the Philippines dropped from 7th to 10th place and the major contributing factors to this drop in the ranking are worsening wage inequality, and health and survival gaps, among others. The gaps are even more pronounced in rural communities, largely agricultural areas, where the poorest live. This includes the indigenous peoples (IPs), particularly women and children.

For many indigenous women, engaging in decision-making processes comprises little to no part of their daily schedules. Their active participation in economic and social activities is hampered, due to both internal and external factors such as low self-esteem, lack of recognition of their rights, and gender-based violence.

Empowerment plays a key role in increasing indigenous women's activeness in decision-making, especially on issues that affect themselves, their families and communities.

FAO's support

In line with their objectives to eradicate hunger, promote food security and nutrition, enhance agricultural production and productivity, and promote agricultural adaptation and mitigation to climate change and reduce disaster risk, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) partnered with SILDAP (Silingang Dapit

sa Sidlakang Mindanao) – Southeastern Mindanao, Inc. The collaboration intends to enhance awareness of indigenous women of their rights, and to increase their participation in agricultural production and entrepreneurship development through community-based activities.

Specifically, the project aims to create spaces and avenue for women to build their capacities on different legal instruments in order to improve security of tenure, recognize their rights to land, territories and natural resources, raise their awareness on women's role in the community, increase their participation in economic activities to generate income for their families, and reduce violence against women in the community. In this manner, their needs will be addressed in pursuit of the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 1 Ending Poverty, SDG 2 Ending Hunger, SDG 5 Gender Equality and SDG 10 Reduction of Inequalities with its underlying principles of "leaving no one behind".

Since January 2018, the project has trained more than 100 women in four IP communities in the provinces of Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental, and Compostela Valley.

In efforts to give the women a stepping stone into the world of community development, they received para-legal training on indigenous women's rights to land, territories and natural resources. The partner communities were able to establish a women's group, electing their own set of officials who are tasked to oversee the continuation of the project and to further encourage participation in food production and community development.

Aside from the para-legal training, the women were trained on agricultural production,

particularly with food crops and small farm animals. The importance of ensuring the production of food for their families and generating income from their own farms were greatly emphasized during this stage of the project, along with the significance of farm planning.

The women were given the opportunity to share their practices on the different stages of food production. The participants were given demonstrations on the asexual propagation of calamansi and cacao and on breeding corn and squash. This encouraged the women to adopt the methods, with some even imparting this newfound knowledge to their children. FAITH (Food Always in the Home) gardening was introduced, informing the women of which crops needed only minimal maintenance. After the training, participants were assigned to have their own farm planning especially for short-term food crops such as vegetables and corn for the food of their families and possible income for the surplus products.

Another key activity is the conduct of an orientation on how to prepare relevant documentation, which helped the community leaders to be familiarized with the information they needed to gather and to identify the required materials for its implementation. The women were assigned to focus on their experiences on the project such as their progress, skills learned and strategies applied.

The high participation rate of IP women in the implementation of the project in the four (4) partner communities contributes to strengthening the important role being played by women in agriculture development.



FAO recognizes Philippines efforts to ensure sustainable management of marine resources

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) recognizes the Philippines' acceptance of two international agreements that will further boost efforts in ensuring sustainable management of the country's marine resources.

The Philippines is a global center of marine biodiversity and boasts one of the longest coastlines in the world. The country is among the top fish producers globally, according to FAO's 2018 State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture report.

The Philippine Government has formally accepted the following: (a) Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas (The Compliance Agreement), and (b) Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing (PSMA). The two agreements were approved by FAO Member States and entered into force in 2003 and 2016, respectively.

The Compliance Agreement aims to enhance the role of countries and guide them in strengthening control over their vessels to ensure compliance with international conservation and management measures, in accordance with the relevant rules of international law as reflected in the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. This Agreement also emphasizes that countries are responsible for ensuring that none of their vessels are fishing on the high seas unless authorized, and that they can effectively exercise their responsibilities to ensure their vessels comply with international measures. The maintenance of records of fishing vessels, international cooperation, and enforcement are also covered extensively by the provisions of the Agreement.

The Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), on the other hand, is the first binding international agreement that specifically targets IUU fishing. It lays down a minimum set of standard measures for Parties to apply when foreign vessels seek entry into their ports or while they are in their ports. The PSMA aims to prevent, deter and eliminate IUU fishing by preventing vessels engaged in IUU fishing from using ports and landing their catches. Through this, the PSMA reduces the incentive of such vessels to continue to operate while it also blocks fishery products derived from IUU fishing from reaching national and international markets.

"Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing continue to be a major threat to our marine resources, as well as to the well-being and resilience of fishing communities whose livelihoods and food

security depend on this vital sector," FAO Representative to the Philippines José Luis Fernandez said.

"The effective implementation of these international instruments ultimately contributes to the long-term conservation and sustainable use of living marine resources and marine ecosystems. FAO stands ready to support governments, including the Philippines, in their capacity to formulate sound measures to combat IUU fishing, and promote management and development of the fisheries sector."

The healthy status of world fisheries and aquatic resources as well as the well-being of fishing communities and fisher workers is central to FAO's policy work, its Blue Growth Initiative and FAO's Strategic Programme to Reduce Rural Poverty, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.





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FAO convenes emergency meeting of animal health experts in Asia in response to African Swine Fever

Antibiotics are becoming less effective in both humans and animals - overuse and misuse are largely to blame.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) held a three-day emergency meeting last 5-7 September in Bangkok to examine the most recent developments in China following the outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) in the country, and propose a regional response to the threat that ASF could spread to other countries in Asia.

The specialists – veterinary epidemiologists, and laboratory experts – as well as other senior technical staff, directly involved with regulatory aspects of disease prevention and control planning, came from 10 countries with geographical proximity to China, and perceived to be at risk of a transboundary spread of ASF. The participants were from Cambodia, China, Japan, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Thailand, and Viet Nam. Experts from outside of the region and from the private commercial swine sector also attended the meeting.

Outbreaks of African Swine Fever have occurred in Europe and the Americas as early as the 1950's and through the 1980's. However, in 2007, a new introduction of ASF occurred in the Republic of Georgia, which then spread to neighboring countries and deeply affected Eastern Europe.

African Swine Fever new to Asia – and a significant threat

In Asia, ASF was first detected at a pig farm in the Siberian region of the Russian Federation in March 2017. In China, the virus was discovered in the country's northeast at the beginning of August this year. Since then, five additional cases have been reported in other areas of China as much as one thousand kilometers apart. China produces more than half of the world's pigs and, while it poses no direct threat to human health, ASF can devastate the swine population. In its most virulent form, it is 100 percent fatal to the animals who contract the virus.

Calls for a coordinated regional response in East and Southeast Asia

"It's critical that this region be ready for the very real possibility that ASF could jump the border into other countries," said Wantanee Kalpravidh, Regional Manager of the FAO Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) in Asia. "That's why the emergency meeting was convened – to assess where we are now – and to determine how we can work together in a coordinated, regional response to this serious situation."

In order to reach a consensus on the way forward, this emergency meeting will also review recent research studies and technologies and consider lessons from the most recent and ongoing episodes of ASF in Europe in the aftermath of its introduction since 2007. Representatives from the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) were also present at the meeting.

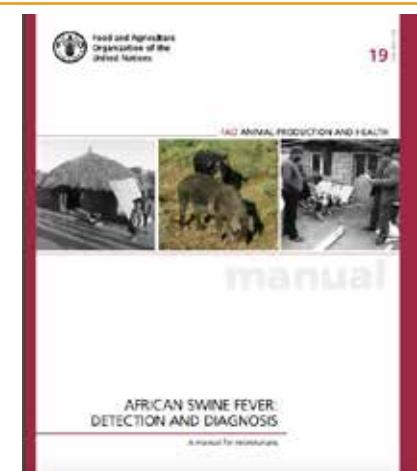
"It's very important to understand how this virus has spread, historically, within the pig and wild boar populations in other regions of the world, so that we can adapt and tailor appropriate responses and determine the correct course of action needed here in this region," said Juan Lubroth, FAO's Chief Veterinary Officer. "Perhaps more critical in terms of risk is the likely role of pork and pork product traffic through production and market chains – whether fresh or cured commodities" he added.

The emergency meeting concluded with the establishment of a regional stakeholder network with defined roles and responsibilities. The will identify and prioritize the actions that are required for countries to take in the short, medium and longer term.

FAO, in close coordination with the Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD), has been closely monitoring ASF situation in the region and at country level including in the Philippines. During the regional consultation, a risk profiling tool was developed

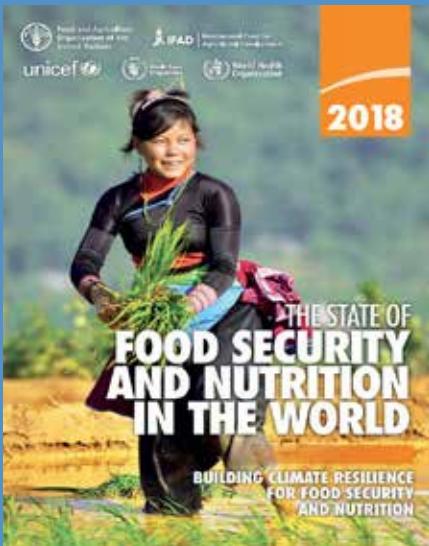
to help in preparedness measures looking at five risk pathways, namely: live pigs, pig products, wild boars, fomites and tick vectors.

While the Philippines remains free of the disease, the DA and FAO are ensuring that preparedness measures are in place. Under the leadership of the Department of Agriculture-Bureau of Animal Industry (DA-BAI), the Philippine government has been coordinating with relevant stakeholders to strengthen efforts against the disease's incursion in the country, including enforcing strict measures on food quality and safety in all international and domestic airports and seaports.



In 2017, FAO published "African Swine Fever: Detection and Diagnosis. A manual for veterinarians". The manual provides general information on the disease and its causes, including epidemiology, transmission pathways and geographic distribution. The purpose of the manual is to provide veterinary professionals, paraprofessionals, and laboratory diagnosticians with the information they need to promptly diagnose and react to an outbreak or case of ASF. Pig farmers, hunters and forest managers will also benefit from reading it. The publication is available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/i7228EN/i7228en.pdf>.

2018 State of Food Security and Nutrition



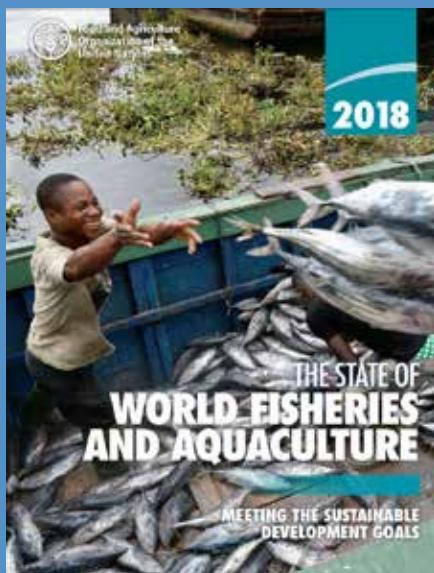
We need to do more and do it better if we all want a world without hunger

New evidence in The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2018 confirms a rise in world hunger: the number of people who suffer from hunger has been growing over the past three years, returning to levels from almost a decade ago. Multiple forms of malnutrition are evident in many countries: adult obesity is growing even as forms of undernutrition persist.

The reports says that climate variability and extremes are key drivers behind this rise, together with conflict and economic downturns, and are threatening to erode and reverse gains made in ending hunger and malnutrition.

Developed thanks to the collaboration of FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO, SOFI 2018 reveals new challenges on the road to Zero Hunger, while setting out urgent actions needed to achieve the goal by 2030.

For more information visit: www.fao.org/publications/sofi

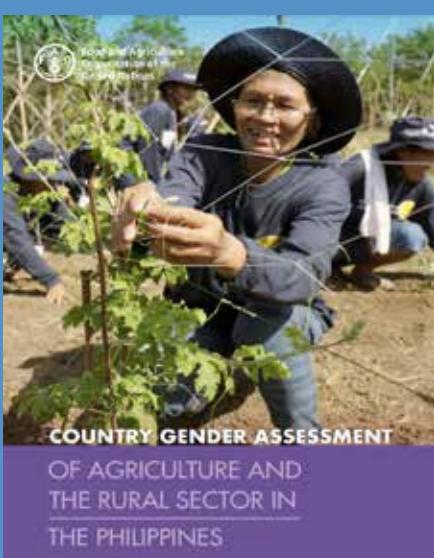


2018 State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture

The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2018 highlights the critical importance of fisheries and aquaculture for the food, nutrition and employment of millions of people, many of whom struggle to maintain reasonable livelihoods.

Total fish production in 2016 reached an all-time high of 171 million tonnes, of which 88 percent was utilized for direct human consumption, thanks to relatively stable capture fisheries production, reduced wastage and continued aquaculture growth. This production resulted in a record-high per capita consumption of 20.3 kg in 2016. Since 1961 the annual global growth in fish consumption has been twice as high as population growth, demonstrating that the fisheries sector is crucial in meeting FAO's goal of a world without hunger and malnutrition.

Read more here: <http://www.fao.org/state-of-fisheries-aquaculture>



Country Gender Assessment of Agriculture and the Rural Sector in the Philippines

The Country Gender Assessment (CGA) for agriculture and the rural sector in the Philippines was commissioned by FAO in October 2017, primarily to inform the gender-sensitive country-level planning and programming of FAO, and to contribute to the implementation of the FAO Policy on Gender Equality at country level. The objective of the present CGA is to analyse the agricultural and rural sector of the Philippines from a gender perspective at the macro (policy), meso (institutional) and micro (community and household) levels.

A number of the recommendations are targeted to transform the cultural and social norms that undervalue women and girls. These include initiatives that support women's and men's important role in family health, food security and nutrition (i.e. improved food preparation practices, nutrition education and access to safe drinking water). While taking care not to promote stereotypes, these initiatives can increase rural women's and men's access to resources, know-how, including use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), and income generation, especially projects that reduce labour and time burdens in unpaid care, domestic and community work.

The Assessment also identifies stakeholders, partners and inter-institutional mechanisms that FAO Philippines can further explore to help bridge gender gaps and promote gender equality in the agriculture and the rural sector. The full report is accessible here: <http://www.fao.org/3/CA1345EN/ca1345en.pdf>

FAO Representation in the Philippines

Email: FAO-PH@fao.org

Website: www.fao.org/philippines

Twitter: @FAOPhilippines



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