South Africa and FAO have enjoyed a close partnership since the country joined the Organization in 1993. South Africa has a dual agricultural economy, comprising a well-developed commercial sector and a predominantly subsistence-oriented sector. Assistance has consequently spanned a large range of areas, from support to agricultural development, food security and nutrition to rural economic development and natural resources management. Strengthening capacities for improving productivity and livelihoods is a constant feature of cooperation efforts.

**Food and agricultural policy support**

*Supporting policy implementation*

FAO continues to support the Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) Policy development and implementation process convened by the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. Through the Intergovernmental Technical Working Group (ITWG), supported by FAO, all line Departments now jointly develop strategies and report on progress in addressing FNS challenges.

FAO provided technical support to the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in the development and piloting of its vocational education and training strategy for agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors. The strategy aims at improving formal and non-formal training as well as designing training programmes which are market-oriented and which enhance employability.

**Voluntary Guidelines for Governance of Tenure in Land, Forestry and Fisheries (VGGTs)**

With a view to promoting responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests, FAO is supporting the Departments of Rural Development and Land and Natural Resources.

**Matching FAO’s expertise to South Africa’s development and cooperation priorities**

FAO assistance in South Africa is shaped by the interim FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF) that was developed in 2014, which is centred on three priority areas:

- **Improving food and nutrition security and food safety**, with a focus on inclusive governance, coordination and support mechanisms for improved food and nutrition security
- **Sustainable management and use of natural resources and forestry**, including strengthening of related management and institutional frameworks and improving resilience to climate change
- **Institutional capacity building**, with a dual focus on enhancing institutional and organizational capacity and strengthening South Africa’s role in South-South Cooperation

Jointly developed with the Government and other development partners, the CPF reflects relevant priorities in key national development policies, including the National Development Plan – Vision 2030, the Industrial Policy Action Plan, the New Growth Path, Operation Phakisa, the Food Security and Nutrition Policy, the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (2009) and the Rural Development Framework (2013). The CPF is fully aligned with the United Nations Strategic Cooperation Framework 2014-2017 for South Africa.
Reform, and Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in the implementation of the Voluntary guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure in the land, forestry and fisheries sectors in the context of National Food security (VGGTs). A series of national engagements with various relevant state and non-state actors towards implementation of the VGGTs in South Africa have been supported. Through FAO support, a multi-stakeholder platform has now been formed, which is tasked with spearheading the implementation of Voluntary Guidelines in South Africa.

**Building capacity in agriculture and food security**

FAO has facilitated the development of capacities of smallholder farmers through successful application and piloting of the Farmer Field School (FFS) approach in two provinces. The project resulted in the establishment of a number of model schools, which are serving as the starting point for future larger-scale investment in FFS in the country. The impact of the intervention is a contribution to the improvement of the rural livelihood opportunities of selected vulnerable communities in South Africa.

**Global knowledge transfer**

South Africa’s experience and combination of technological capacity and institutional development makes it an ideal partner to address the technological and institutional gaps in the South, particularly in the rest of Africa. Additionally, there are several areas where South Africa would benefit from the experience of other countries — hence there are mutual benefits from South-South Cooperation (SSC). The potential development of a national SSC strategy for tackling agriculture and food insecurity is a key issue, and such a strategy is in line with South Africa’s foreign policies supporting the post-2015 agenda.

The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) indicated its interest to develop the national SSC strategy that will focus on agricultural research, food security, nutrition, and capacity building. FAO has provided technical assistance to DAFF in conducting a scoping study for Agriculture and Food Security, mainly to solicit information (who, where, when, how) on the ongoing SSC activities within the country. The SSC study is expected to stimulate discussions on how to advance the recommendations of the report. It will also address DAFF’s role as an SSC gateway to establish centres of excellence.

FAO-South Africa is part of the FAO global City-to-City (CtCi) Initiative. The objective of the CtCi is to empower local governments in the sub-Saharan Africa to lead initiatives that improve food security and nutrition through city-to-city collaboration and South-South and Triangular Cooperation. The initiative aims at strengthening local governments to foster food system transformation. Moreover, as the current Southern African Development Community (SADC) chair, South Africa has been mandated by SADC to lead the research on Fall Armyworm (FAW). As part of this mandate and through FAO support, a number of agricultural personnel from the region have been trained in the management of FAW.

Minister Senzeni Zokwana and FAO Representative a.i. Lewis Hove visiting farmers affected by the Fall Armyworm in Limpopo Province, South Africa.