United Kingdom and FAO

Partnering to build sustainable livelihoods and food security

The United Kingdom is an active and innovative resource partner, providing indispensable support to FAO activities aimed at shared food security and agricultural development goals. The Department for International Development has traditionally provided substantial extrabudgetary support to FAO’s activities in livestock and fisheries development, including major sustainable livelihood initiatives. Resilience-building and rehabilitation interventions are an important feature of cooperation today.

Promoting climate-smart agriculture in Zimbabwe

As Zimbabwe’s economy continues its remarkable recovery following almost a decade of recession, FAO is helping the country’s most vulnerable people to produce more food, access new markets and expand into new agricultural enterprises. With about 70 percent of the rural population reliant on agriculture, unexpected crises in the sector — including erratic rainfall or sudden rises in food or input prices — are a threat to the country’s transition towards development. FAO plays a key role in supporting Zimbabwe’s recovery by promoting sustainable production technologies that help to raise farmers’ yields, facilitating greater access to markets and monitoring the food security situation.

To support these efforts, DFID is contributing US$48 million to an FAO project under the Zimbabwe Livelihoods and Food Security Programme (LFSP): “Climate-Smart Agriculture for Improved Productivity, Nutrition and Income Security for Smallholder Farmers in Food- and Nutrition-Insecure Districts”.

FAO’s interventions will mainly focus on the Agricultural Productivity and Nutrition (APN) component of the overall Programme, which has been financed by DFID for a four-year period (ending in 2017). The aim is to raise smallholder farm productivity by introducing improved, climate-smart agricultural practices; increasing access to finance and markets; and promoting production and consumption of safer and more nutritious foods. APN is the cornerstone of the Programme, and is specifically expected to improve food, nutrition and income security among target smallholder households. APN activities will generate and communicate evidence to influence policy as well as public and private sector investments.

Supporting efforts to reduce hunger and malnutrition in developing countries

The main channel for the United Kingdom’s financial support and technical assistance to FAO is the Department for International Development (DFID). The following areas of direct relevance to FAO’s mandate are included under the framework of DFID’s policy on “Hunger and Malnutrition in Developing Countries”:

- Improving nutrition for mothers and children in poor countries, including scaling up nutrition-specific interventions to address the immediate causes of undernutrition
- Improving agricultural productivity in developing countries, including safety net and cash transfer programmes, and efforts to help farmers in Africa and Asia grow more of the food they need
- Researching the best ways and working with international partners to reduce hunger and malnutrition in developing countries, including support for the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) and the New Alliance for Food and Nutrition Security

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Focus on rehabilitation and resilience building

The world’s 2.5 billion people who depend on agriculture for their livelihoods often bear the worst impact of conflicts, natural disasters, pests and other devastating emergencies. In less than a decade, DFID has contributed around US$99 million to resilience and rehabilitation projects led by FAO. DFID’s support to FAO’s rehabilitation and resilience-building activities can be illustrated by the following interventions:

- **In the South Sudan** — FAO’s emergency response programme directed livelihood support to crisis-affected populations, improving access to food and protecting livelihood resources.
- **In Somalia** — vulnerable households were received resilience-building assistance, enabling them to anticipate, resist, recover from external pressures and shocks.
- **In the Philippines** — typhoon-affected households received assistance through income-generating and food production activities aimed at restoring fisheries, aquaculture and post-harvest livelihoods.
- **In Pakistan** — assistance helped restore food security and agriculture-based livelihoods for 72,900 vulnerable farming households affected by recurring floods in the districts of Sindh and Baluchistan.

Improving statistics for evidence-based policies

In 2012, DFID became one of the pioneering donors of the FAO-managed Global Trust Fund that supports the Global Strategy for Improving Agricultural and Rural Statistics. A partnership between key international organizations, the World Bank, the African and Asian Development Banks, the UN Commission for Africa and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Global Strategy aims to improve developing countries’ statistical capacities to design more effective food security and agricultural and rural development policies.