Yemen and FAO

Partnersing to improve food security and nutrition and increase resilience of vulnerable rural and peri-urban households

The FAO Country Representation in Yemen opened in 1990. Since then, FAO has provided support to farmers, herders, and fishers and supported the improvement of agricultural production and productivity in the country. FAO is also working with the Yemeni authorities in an effort to reach the goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Matching FAO’s expertise to Yemen’s development priorities

FAO assistance in Yemen is shaped by the 2013-2017 FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF), which identifies five priority areas for technical cooperation:

- Policy development, strategic planning and strengthening of agricultural information systems
- Improved efficiency of the agri-food sector and enhanced agricultural and fishery production and productivity, food safety and food security and nutrition
- Development and conservation of natural resources and their sustainable management and efficient utilisation
- Value addition, agro-processing and marketing, and promoting the private sector’s role
- Sustainable livelihoods and enhanced food security and nutrition for the most vulnerable farming, fishing and rural communities and improved DRR and emergency management

The Plan of Action (2018-2020) is currently guiding FAO’s interventions at country level.

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Promoting food security in an insecure context

The project Developing a national food security information system in Yemen was funded by the European Union (EU) with the objective to develop and strengthen the technical capacities of government partners in food and nutrition security data collection, analysis and communication. Food Security Information Systems (FSIS), the Food Security Technical Secretariat (FSTS), and FSIS Governorate Focal Units (GFU) were established by the Programme.

Additionally, the project played a leading role in the implementation of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) programme, which provided a set of standardized tools and procedures as a common language for classifying and analysing the severity of food insecurity and malnutrition. The IPC analysis, periodic food security updates and monthly market prices monitoring were instrumental in supporting informed decision-making for humanitarian organizations, donors and government institutions.
Finally, the project strengthened country ownership, participation, coordination and stakeholder buy-in by, enabling informed decision-making, supporting national and local institutions, while providing accessible information.

Through the regular and periodic products generated by the FSIS programme, decision-makers were able to make informed and timely decisions, which helped to address ongoing emergencies in the country, and to save lives and protect and support livelihoods.

To date, FSIS governorate focal units, led by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC), are facilitating data collection, sharing information on food security and nutrition at governorate and district levels. Food insecure rural and urban households have benefited greatly from the well-targeted and gender-sensitive policy and programme responses. With the overall improved food security governance, availability of data, and information and analysis, government and development partners are able to initiate and continue strategies that reinforce and build household resilience to food security threats.

**Project: Developing a national food security information system in Yemen, GCP/YEM/035/EC. Project funded by the EU (6 million EUR, 2013-2017)**

**Supporting decentralized supply and water use management in the Sana’a Basin**

The project aims at reducing groundwater abstraction from the Tawilah sandstone aquifer towards more sustainable levels. This is promoted through multi-stakeholder negotiations to preserve and improve rural and urban livelihoods, while considering the importance of long-term water supply for drinking and farming purposes.

The key first-year outcome was the creation of 38 Water User Associations (WUAs) composed of 11 286 members. 32 percent of the members were women. The project supported 42 rainwater harvesting projects. Furthermore, 19 workshops provided training to strengthen technical and coordination skills in water management. Additionally, the project enhanced the sustainability of WUAs through the provision of greenhouses. Along with training on protected agriculture, WUAs will be able to utilise these greenhouses to secure cash flow, allowing farmers to gain access to seeds and agricultural tools via microfinance projects in the form of soft loans. The project also managed to resolve a 15 years old conflict over water usage, freeing much needed water to farmers in order to expand land under irrigation and recharge groundwater wells.

**Project: Supporting decentralized supply and water use management in the Sana’a Basin, GCP/YEM/036/NET. Project funded by the Kingdom of the Netherlands (US$5 million, 2014-2018)**

**Enhanced rural resilience**

The Enhanced Rural Resilience in Yemen (ERRY) programme is designed to enhance the self-reliance of rural people and communities, and assist them to better cope with crisis, risks and shocks through support to livelihood stabilization and recovery, local governance and improved access to sustainable energy sources. The joint programme is implemented in the four governorates of Hajjah, Al Hudeidah, Lahaj and Abyan.

The Programme carries out its activities to improve agricultural productive assets of rural livelihoods, strengthening resilience and promoting economic self-reliance. The Project supports farmers in crop and livestock value chain improvement to increase food production (cereal grains and milk), income and self-employment. The key strategy employed is cooperation between farmers with crop and livestock value chain input and supply and technical experts focusing on efficient practices in crops, vegetables, and livestock management.

The project has so far reached positive impacts, especially in improving the value chains in a protracted crisis context, and particularly in increasing milk production and improving hygiene. Improved animal feeding and sorghum production, as well as training of farmers and Government officers are other important aspects. Additionally, the Programme has introduced two new feeding technologies based on an improved utilisation of local feeding resources (feed blocks and sugar molasses) as strategic feed supplements.

**Project: Enhanced Rural Resilience in Yemen (ERRY), OSRO/YEM/504/EC. Project funded by the EU (US$8.5 million, 2016-2019)**