What’s new?

September and October are traditionally busy months for FAO, a period marked by a string of high-level events - such as World Food Day and the Committee on Food Security (CFS) - and the release of flagship FAO publications. Consequently, members of the RISE team were heavily involved in conferences, missions and seminars as both participants and organizers at FAO Headquarters and abroad – we share a few highlights below:

- **The Rural Finance team represented FAO in Ethiopia, Togo, China and Algeria.** The African Microfinance Week (SAM) in Ethiopia brought together investors, researchers, banks, and governments and other professionals from the sector to discuss microfinance issues and the development of financial inclusion in Africa. Trainings and conferences in Togo, China, and Algeria focused on weather-based insurance and Agricultural Value Chain Finance.

- **CFS Side-events: Spotlight on the Territorial Approach and FAO-Dimitra.** Both teams were the protagonists of two high-level side-events to discuss the territorial approach as a means for rural-urban transformation and food security in Africa and the impacts of the FAO Dimitra Clubs in improving food security and nutrition.

- **RISE, and ESP’s Gender Team with India’s Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) promoted and organized a joint training and knowledge exchange in Ethiopia to support women’s entrepreneurship and participation in agri-business and value chains, and examine specific socio-economic constraints faced by women producers to improve their livelihoods in Ethiopia and India.**

- **RISE and the Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) programme facilitated a farmer-to-farmer exchange and a training in India to build producers’ capacities to initiate innovative agroforestry practices and exchange of experiences among Nepalese and Indian farm and forest organizations.** The events were an important opportunity for building transnational solidarity and skill-sharing among women-led rural institutions.

Mr. Hafidi, one CFS Side Event panelist, highlighted the important role of agri-food infrastructures as an opportunity for small-scale producers to access the increasing urban food demand and to promote inclusive rural-urban transformations.

With this in mind, the RISE team together with the CBL Division organized a visit to the Agri-food Centre of Rome (Centro Agroalimentare di Roma -CAR-) to provide a concrete example of a food hub that has reduced logistic costs drastically for roughly 270 producers and organizations operating through the CAR, who are now connected to the urban market of Rome.

**“Territorial agri-food infrastructure is key to rural development”**

Mr. Brahim Hafidi, President of the regional council of Souss-Massa in Morocco during visit to the Agrifood Centre of Rome on 12 October, 2017.

©FAO/M.F. Doyen
Recent RISE resources and publications

VIDEO | Déveloplement des cooperatives en Egypte, Tunisie et Maroc was realized in the context of a study tour of cooperatives in Brittany (France) in July 2017 with the aim of enhancing the political dialogue and capacity building of agricultural cooperatives in Egypt, Tunisia and Morocco. Available in French with English subtitles.

IN THE PIPELINE...

Events and Meetings
An FAO-SEWA Workshop on linkages between nutrition, food security and agriculture in November in Ahmedabad, Gujarat (India) will serve to assess the nutritional needs of rural institutions; learn from experiences related to nutrition in food security and agriculture in the Gujarati context, and to design a nutrition-sensitive food security and agriculture intervention.

International Scientific Conference on Living Territories, Montpellier (France), 22-24 January 2018. This conference constitutes a step forward towards the strengthening of the international alliance and will provide an opportunity to share the cutting-edge knowledge and evidence on the implementation of territorial approaches in both developed and developing countries.

Publications & Multi-media:
Rural Finance publication - Agricultural Investment Funds for Development: Descriptive Analysis and Lessons from Fund Management, Performance and Private-Public Collaboration
FAO-Dimitra and Germany’s international news channel Deutsche Welle (DW) in Senegal. The German broadcaster flew to the Tambacounda Province in Senegal to capture on film the ways in which the Dimitra Clubs address climate change and gender issues. TV Programme will be released shortly.

COMING SOON
Social Network Analysis for Territorial Assessment of Food Security and Nutrition Systems (FSNS): A Methodological Approach aims to support countries in improving inclusiveness and sustainability in FSNS.

IN PRACTICE
FAO and the Royal Tropical Institute (KIT) presented an assessment of producer organizations (POs) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (WBGS) that focused on POs’ agribusiness capacity and their interplay with institutional environment.

Results highlighted the most critical factors that influence the performance of Producer Organizations (POs) as well as their needs and opportunities for developing capacities for sustainable business planning and service provision.

These findings will inform an intervention framework to strengthen PO capacities and improve support services to enhance their competitiveness and market access.

MISSIONS CARRIED OUT BY THE RISE TEAM

- China: 15-25 September
  Training course “Innovative Solutions and Policies Facilitating Access to Finance in the Agro-Food Value Chain”

- Togo: 02-06 October
  Rural Finance team supported the facilitation of a five-day training on Agricultural Value Chain Finance for 58 policy makers, commercial and development banks’ officers, finance practitioners and medium agribusiness entrepreneurs from 12 countries.

- Ethiopia: 09-13 October
  Rural finance at the African Microfinance Week (SAM)

- Senegal: 18-28 October
  Backstopping mission in a number of Dimitra Clubs in the Tambacounda Province where a GEF-funded Project is being implemented to improve climate-resilient rural livelihoods, using the Dimitra Clubs’ approach with the Farmer Field School methodology.

- Algeria: 23-24 October

©FAO 2017