



The Gambia and FAO

Partnering to achieve food security and nutrition

Since the establishment of the FAO Representation in the Republic of the Gambia in 1978, FAO has provided vital support to the development of agriculture and natural resource sectors in the country. The Organization has implemented more than 120 projects, also facilitating policy formulation and the development of programmes and projects to improve production, productivity, food quality and national technical and institutional capacities. In 2014, the Gambia achieved the Millennium Development Goal hunger target – halving the proportion of people who suffer from hunger in the country by 2015.



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS IN THE GAMBIA

Established in 1978, the FAO Representation in the Gambia is pleased to be celebrating its 40th anniversary.

Building to capacity for a livestock census

FAO and the Department of Livestock Services (DLS) have joined hands in conducting a national livestock census. A TCP-supported intervention helped to strengthen the Department of Livestock's staff capacity to conduct the census as well as paving the way for future censuses to be conducted on a regular basis. The objective is to obtain an accurate assessment of the livestock sector's contribution to the national economy (currently estimated to be about 30 percent of the agricultural GDP and approximately 10 percent of the national GDP). Census results will inform planning, policy formulation and legislation. They will also be useful for the newly established National Livestock Policy Hub, thereby enabling the country to capitalize on the sector's full potential.

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Matching FAO's expertise to the Gambia's development priorities

FAO assistance in the Gambia is shaped by the 2018-2021 FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF), which is centred on four priority areas:

- Enhance enabling environment and capacity development for increased, sustainable and diversified agricultural and fisheries production and nutrition.
- Sustainable natural resources management for climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Strengthened food and agriculture and natural resources value chains for income generation and employment creation.
- Strengthened resilience and capacities for disaster risk reduction and management and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Jointly developed with the Government and other development partners, the CPF reflects relevant priorities in key national development policies, including the **National Development Plan (NDP) (2018-2021)**. The CPF contributes to global environmental and sustainable development commitments, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (COP 21). It is fully aligned with the UN Development Assistance Framework for the Gambia 2017-2021.



Supporting artisanal fisheries

Fisheries is one of the major sources of food, employment and income in the Gambia. It is therefore important to ensure sustainable management and utilization of fisheries resources with a view to enhancing the subsector's contribution to the nutritional, economic and social well-being of the country's growing population.

To this end, FAO is working closely with the Department of Fisheries providing technical support. As part of FAO's efforts in this sector, a comprehensive review of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector and the development of a Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector Strategy 2016-2020 was completed in 2016. The strategy will guide the Government, private sector, civil society, and development partners in decision-making for policy and investment choices, while promoting the sustainable management and utilization of fisheries resources.

This intervention is being complemented by a two-year TCP project implemented by the FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Department together with several Telefood projects, all designed to build small-scale fisheries capacity in the country. Through these initiatives, around 200 fisher folk are receiving training in improved fishing techniques, fish handling and processing skills, quality control and fish waste management.

Enhancing commercial poultry production

The Gambia spends huge sums of foreign currency on imports of poultry and poultry products. To counter this trend, in 2016, FAO and the Department of Livestock Services collaborated in strengthening the capacity of smallholder farmers to address a critical production gap. In 2014, the importation of poultry meat was 9 504 tonnes (for an estimated value of US\$2 198 717). In the same year, 3 722 tonnes of eggs, valued at US\$840 616, were imported. Local production of poultry meat and eggs was estimated to be 1 120 and 850 tonnes, respectively.

A one-year FAO-funded TCP project has supported the establishment of 24 commercial poultry production schemes, including 19 broiler and five layer farms owned by poor and vulnerable households. The intervention is envisaged

to produce 65 tonnes of poultry meat and 605 000 eggs, helping to satisfy the domestic food demand, increase household incomes, improve nutrition and health, and reduce rural poverty as well as the national imports bill.

This initiative is complemented by another successful example of collaboration between FAO, the Department of Livestock and the Ministry of Women's Affairs. Launched in July 2016, a one-year project supported by the Africa Solidarity Trust Fund (ASTF), is addressing the critical shortage in livestock feed.

It is seeking to empower women entrepreneurs to establish small-scale feed mills equipped with grinders and mixers. The participants will receive training in feed production and feed mills management as well as in entrepreneurship.

"Our responsibility is growing day by day, and today our mission and mandate remain more relevant than ever."

José Graziano da Silva,
FAO Director-General

Strengthening food and nutrition security through climate-smart agriculture

An EU-funded MDG 1c project launched in 2013 was another example of highly successful collaboration between the Department of Agriculture, the European Union, FAO and communities. It directly supported more than 10 730 small-scale farmers (90 percent women) in four administrative regions of the Gambia, enabling them to increase their resilience to climate change and improve their food and nutrition security. Success factors include the provision of high-quality inputs, ploughing services and training in Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), including strengthening of participants' skills in group management.

The project established eight community gardens, equipped with multi-purpose centres, solar systems and overhead tanks fitted with a water reticulation network and a Californian system to ensure an adequate water supply without generating greenhouse gases. In a bid to promote diversification and resilience in agricultural production, improved cassava varieties are also grown in these gardens, which are delivering high-value marketable produce.

Project participants have reported increased food security and incomes and stronger farmer-based organizations.

