



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



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CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION, SOCIAL PROTECTION AND RESILIENCE



CISTERNS FOR THE SAHEL

In the Sahel, climate change exacerbates irregular rainfall and climatic shocks, such as repeated droughts and floods. The consequences are devastating for the poorest rural households, who struggle to cope with these shocks and see their vulnerability worsen. Efficient and sustainable management of water resources is more than ever a priority to improve the resilience of vulnerable communities.

ONE MILLION CISTERNS FOR THE SAHEL INITIATIVE

The ambition of the programme “One million cisterns for the Sahel” is to promote and facilitate the introduction of rainwater harvesting and storage systems for vulnerable communities, especially women. The objective is to enable millions of people in the Sahel access safe drinking water, have a surplus to enhance their family agricultural production, improve their food and nutrition security and strengthen their resilience. It is inspired by the “Program One Million Cisterns” implemented in Brazil through the “Zero Hunger” program. South-South cooperation with the Brazilian civil society organization Articulação no Semiárido Brasileiro (ASA) is facilitated by FAO.

Beneficiaries

Rural vulnerable communities in arid and semi-arid regions affected by climate shocks, with focus on women

Integrated approach

Water, climate-smart agriculture, cash transfers, capacity building, gender, using the principles of agroecology

Pilot countries

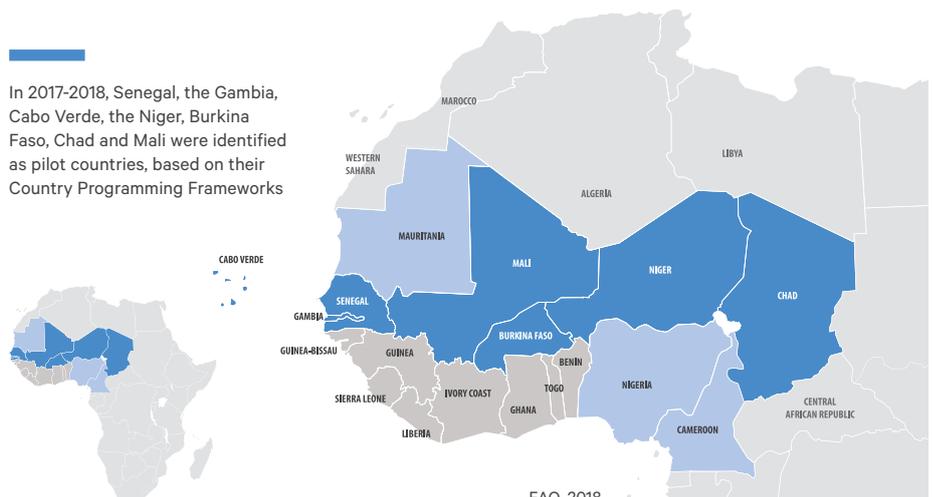
Senegal, the Gambia, Cabo Verde, the Niger, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali

Sustainability

Training for the empowerment of communities and local partners



In 2017-2018, Senegal, the Gambia, Cabo Verde, the Niger, Burkina Faso, Chad and Mali were identified as pilot countries, based on their Country Programming Frameworks



FAO, 2018



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Climate change is a major challenge for rural populations in the Sahel. Its effects have an impact on the demand and the availability of water for agriculture, affecting populations exposed to repeated climatic hazards. Smallholder farmers are among the most vulnerable. Small-scale irrigation and agricultural water management as a whole are now essential to strengthen their resilience to the increased climate variability.

Contact

Coumba Sow,
Head of Resilience Team West Africa/Sahel
Dakar, Senegal
FAO-REOWA@fao.org

An integrated approach for a sustainable impact:

→ WATER ACCESS

To ensure better access to clean water during the dry season, these harvesting and storage systems are aimed to collect water during the rainy season - June to October - for its use during the dry season - November to May.

→ CAPACITY BUILDING

Local communities are trained in the construction, the use and the maintenance of cisterns, thus becoming qualified for civil construction works and infrastructure maintenance to enable income diversification and improved housing conditions. They are also trained on good water management techniques. Training courses on adaptation to climate change in agriculture and agroecology are also organized, in synergy with farmers' field schools programmes and Dimitra listening clubs (for rural women).

→ INPUTS FOR CLIMATE-RESILIENT AGRICULTURE

The agroecological inputs provided are determined in consultation with communities and adapted to local conditions. Vegetable production is used for self-consumption and sales, with the aim of improving nutrition levels and incomes.

→ SOCIAL PROTECTION

Communities participate in the construction of cisterns through cash-for-work activities and the use of local materials is promoted. The selection of beneficiaries is done in synergy with existing national social protection programmes by paying specific attention to gender.



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