During the past 20 years, floods and droughts have caused almost 700 billion USD of total economic damage. Farmers living in water scarce areas urgently need access to innovative financing mechanisms to boost investments in order to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and enhance their resilience. Such mechanisms include new funds targeting climate change adaptation and mitigation, co-financing and the provision of insurance or guarantees by financial institutions.

Investments play a critical role but are only one element of the puzzle. Unlocking funds is fundamentally about building trust and about creating and capturing value that can induce a virtuous cycle of sustainable economic development. Investments are also required in developed countries to upgrade ageing water infrastructures that were designed and constructed without taking into account impacts of climate change.

We cannot afford to wait. FAO and WASAG partners are working towards creating opportunities for smallholder farmers in Cape Verde and the Sahel region and mobilizing investments to become more resilient to climate change and improve access and efficient management of water.