



SUB REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EASTERN AFRICA (SFE)

In Brief

Vol. 1 Issue 1 Nov. 2011-Jan. 2012

Welcome to "In Brief" the Newsletter of FAO Sub-regional Office for Eastern Africa.

The Sub-regional Office for Eastern Africa of the Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO/SFE) was established in 2007 as part of the agency decentralization initiative. It serves Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda. Based in Addis Ababa, SFE office is staffed by a multi-disciplinary team of technical and policy advisors in different sectors.

As FAO's Subregional Coordinator for Eastern Africa it gives me great pleasure to launch this edition of "In Brief", the first of a planned series of quarterly newsletters which will provide development partners and other stakeholders with up-dated information on the sub-regional office's activities.

This "In Brief" is published in the early recovery phase of the recent Horn of Africa crisis which was triggered by a region-wide drought.

Host governments and the international community have long recognized the importance of focusing on medium and long term development in order to build resilience to external shocks. This is particularly important at a time when the threat of climate change looms larger.

FAO plays a crucial role as the world's lead agency for food security and agricultural development and I wish to reaffirm the Organization's commitment to continue its support for a food secure East Africa region.

Castro Camarada

Coordinator, Sub regional Office for Eastern Africa and Representative to Ethiopia, AU & ECA

FAO's Value Chain Initiative Demonstrates Smallholders can Benefit from National and Intra-regional Markets and Value Addition



Since 2007, FAO has been supporting value chain development for nine selected commodities (cassava, honey, maize, milk, passion fruit, palm oil, pineapple, potatoes and rice) to enable smallholder farmers and value chain actors in Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda to be more competitive on local, national and regional markets. Funded by the Government of Italy, this USD 9 million initiative has increased food security through increased household income by increasing knowledge and skills in accessing input and retail markets. For example, cross-border trade of milk, passion fruit and pineapple has increased within the Eastern Africa Community (EAC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

For more information on this, contact: Susan.Minaae@fao.org

Despite Recurrent Drought, Experts Agree that East Africa Has Enough Water

Mention has been made in this edition of "In Brief" of the impact of the Horn of Africa drought on smallholder farmers and pastoralists. Supported by FAO/SFE and the International Water Management Institute, water specialists from around the region gathered in Nairobi on the 24-25 November 2011 to assess short and longer-term water related constraints to development in the region. Supported by studies and researches experts agreed that the Eastern Africa sub-region has adequate water resources to support increased agricultural production, and this resources are not accessible as the result of inadequate infrastructure and water delivery services. IWMI adopted the term "economic water scarcity" to properly describe the situation in the Horn of Africa, where adequate investments, especially aiming to increase the water storage capacities, can reverse the recurrent situation of water scarcity on the ground. Experts emphasized that investments should be coupled with a proper enabling policy environment. Key outcome of the meeting was a draft declaration urging local governments to develop policies and strengthen institutions related to agriculture water management. An in-print FAO working paper will shortly be published which will include policy recommendations for improving agricultural sector water infrastructure, best practices, and policies for coping with water scarcity in Eastern Africa.

For more information contact: Leone.MagliocchettiLombi@fao.org



Building a More Competitive Fish Trade in IGAD Countries



Building a more competitive and efficient fish trade in East Africa region is the purpose of the recently launched FAO Technical Cooperation Project entitled "Support to Capacity building to promote formal marketing and trade of fish and fish products from and within the Horn of Africa" which is being implemented in close partnership with the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD).

Fisheries experts, relevant institutions and private sector stakeholders are being supported by the project to identify opportunities, tackle constraints and therefore strengthen the fish trade in the seven countries of IGAD - Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda - through a series of stakeholder consultation workshops organized by FAO.

The project is also launching a series of national fish marketing and quality assurance studies at national and regional level, in order to identify gaps in post-harvest handling and better target interventions to improve the quality of fish and fish products in regional markets. Once opportunities and constraints are identified, priority actions will be set in each country and appropriate technical and capacity building support will be provided.

For more information, contact: Davide.Signa@fao.org

Improving Livestock Trade in the Horn of Africa: Training Kits Launched

Trade and export of live animals from the Horn of Africa to the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt is estimated to be worth USD 1 billion annually and helps support millions of households in the region.

In order to help strengthen this trade, FAO/SFE livestock team has concentrated efforts in developing the capacity of the different actors such as institutions, chambers of commerce and the private sector. FAO/SFE has prepared tailor-made training kits on livestock trade competitiveness that include import requirement, quality standards and trade certification issues.

In addition relevant information from the main importing countries (Egypt, Saudi Arabian and United Arab Emirates) has been collected to inform the training kits modules. The training kits will be used in the next few months to deliver high quality training to six target countries.

For more information, contact Emmanuelle.GuerneBleich@fao.org



FROM THE THE FIELD

Improving Nutrition through High Yielding Sweet Potatoes to Food Insecure Districts of Ethiopia

FAO Ethiopia is collaborating with the International Potato Center (CIP) to multiply up and distribute over 15 million high quality, sweet potato vine cuttings to 12,100 households in 10 food insecure districts of Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region. The sweet potato vine are not only cuttings disease-free but they are also drought tolerant. The three most high yielding varieties that are being distributed are: Awassa-83, Kulfo and Tulla. Two of these varieties Kulfo and Tulla are 'orange fleshed' and have the additional benefit of being high in vitamin A and therefore helping to address chronic vitamin A deficiency in the areas where they are being distributed. FAO Ethiopia is also working to multiply-up other planting materials from other root and tuber crops including cassava, Irish potato, and taro. These crops will also be distributed to food insecure smallholder farmers to help them boost household production and also diversify their cropping patterns. Early impact assessments confirm high levels of interest from neighboring districts as smallholder farmers see the benefits from the programme.

For more information contact: Wondimagegne.Shiferaw@fao.org

SFE in The Media

- FAO calls on Africa to improve poor food, agriculture statistics (Agence de Presse Africaine) <http://www.apanews.net/photo/fr/photo.php?id=162720>
- FAO Identifies Strategic Priorities for Livestock Development in Eastern Africa (by Walta Information Center) http://waltainfo.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=354:fao-identifies-strategic-priorities-for-livestock-devt-in-eastern-africa-&catid=70:international-news&Itemid=309
- Ethiopia working on agricultural statistics (Afro FM 105.3) http://www.afro105fm.com/index.php/news_magazine/local_news/7175.html
- Amhara region is losing 60 million Birr per year through illegal fish market (Bekur) <http://www.amma.gov.et>

SFE wish to thank the following donors and partners for their valuable support on the initiatives mentioned in this issue:



FAO Subregional Office for Eastern Africa (SFE)

CMC Road Next to ILRI
P.O.Box 5536 Addis Ababa Ethiopia
Tel: +251 11 6478888
Fax: +251 11 6478800
FAOSFE@fao.org
www.fao.org