



## SUB REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EASTERN AFRICA (SFE)

# In Brief

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### FAO renews its commitment to a “Hunger free Horn of Africa”

In just over a decade, the Horn of Africa (HoA) has suffered three droughts, followed by severe crises – the most recent reaching its height in 2011. While the horn of Africa may not currently be experiencing a famine situation an estimated 16.1 million people are still in need of humanitarian assistance.

A twin track approach is needed to respond to the current situation taking into account the immediate needs of vulnerable populations and marginalized communities, while addressing the underlying causes and challenges to promote development.

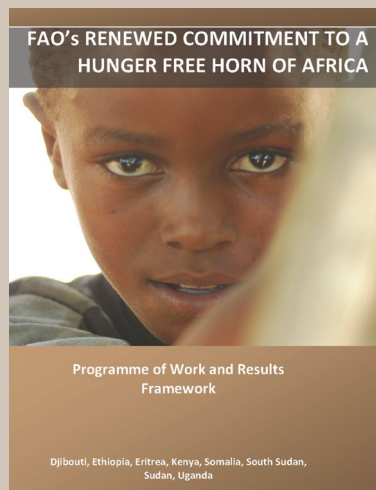
FAO has renewed its commitment to the HoA, building on good practices and lessons learned from past experiences. FAO's renewed commitment to the HoA is not a new programme or initiative, but a means of exploring opportunities to deliver better and provide more effective support to its partners, including governments, regional economic communities, as well as other development partners and local organizations. In other words, it is a commitment for FAO to be a better partner.

While responding to the immediate needs, it is imperative that we recognize the importance of African-led principles and frameworks such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) to develop medium to long-term food and nutrition security strategies. At the same time, it is important to support institutional strengthening and capacity development to reinforce coping mechanisms as well as, promote increased investments through various mechanisms such as Country Programme Papers (CPPs).

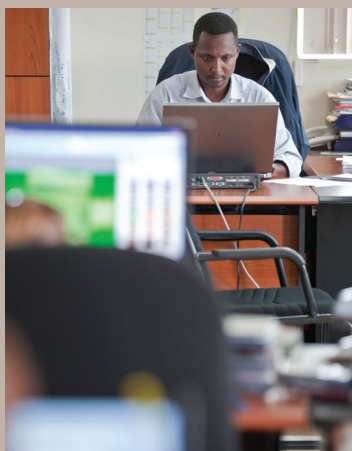
Achieving food and nutrition security in the HoA is a challenge too great for FAO or any government to overcome alone. It must involve civil society, private enterprises, international agencies, and the governments of developing and developed countries. Above all, the people themselves need to be empowered to manage their own development.

Castro Camarada

FAO Subregional Coordinator for Eastern Africa



### Spatial information for better natural resource management



Since the advancement of computer data processing and growth of spatial data management systems, application of geographic data is becoming indispensable. Understanding the wide application of geographic data in the process of planning and management of natural resources, the Food and Agriculture Organization – Subregional Office for Eastern Africa has started collecting and storing spatial data sources covering the Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Rwanda, Uganda, Eritrea and Tanzania.

The geo-database has been utilized as a main data source for day-to-day map production and spatial modeling activities. Among the main activities has been the production of two detailed model maps. The first model was aimed to determine land degradation risk level in three countries. Whereas, the second model was developed to determine suitable areas for inland Nile tilapia production. Other maps produced include: livestock density and export routes; large scale investment lands in Africa and eastern Africa; Livestock trade corridor along Ethiopia, Somalia, Djibouti and Kenya borders; Rangelands and forest cover of Eastern Africa; Watershed base maps just to mention a few.

The spatial database has proven to be reliable, easy to use and economical source of tailored information that has already proven useful in enhancing better resource management.

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# Improving meat trade between the Horn of Africa and the Gulf



The Horn of Africa including, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Djibouti and Uganda is home to approximately 336 million ruminants. Livelihoods and by default the economy of the people, are inadvertently very reliant on livestock-based production and trade. In addition to having high livestock production, these countries are also relatively close to the Middle East market, which has a very high demand for these products. Currently, the horn accounts for 39 percent of the annual animal requirements in the Middle East and as little as 6 percent of the meat required. This is far below the potential especially considering the resource base, proximity to the market and adaptation to the taste of the animals.

FAO Subregional office for Eastern Africa has been working with the countries to ensure that livestock value chain actors in the Horn of Africa remain competitive while increasing their share in this very important market. Understanding the challenges and emerging requirements of these markets is imperative for this, hence FAO conducted an assessment in meat and livestock markets in two major importing countries in Middle East (Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates).

Jamal, is a successful meat importer who sources meat from various parts of the world. He explains some of the few problems he faces within his trade. "One of the major problems I have with the meat coming from various suppliers in the horn, is that the provisions are both inadequate and inconsistent. In addition to this, I sometimes fear for the quality of the meat when it arrives here: the temperature of the meat is not optimum, carcass have less fat cover and in some cases the meat is even discoloured. The general quality of the packaging material also needs to be improved". Several other traders in the locations visited echo his sentiments.

Feedback and observations from Jamal, other importers and regulatory bodies will be used to assist and capacitate relevant actors and development partners in the horn countries to adjust their operations with the aim of improving livestock and meat trade to the Gulf countries, and indeed beyond.

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## Accessing and managing water better

If events in the Horn of Africa in 2011 are anything to go by, then it is no secret that farmers are finding it harder and harder to simply growing enough food to feed their families let alone for the markets. Accessing water to grow crops and for animals can be a daunting task when it hardly ever rains and temperatures more often than not sore to well over 30 degrees almost all year round.

What farmers need are practical solutions to accessing and managing water better. The Agriculture Water Solutions project – Financed by the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation and being implemented by FAO and other partners - is helping farmers by identifying, evaluating and recommending a variety of agricultural water management solutions. Working closely with IMWI and IDE, FAO is ensuring that these solutions are not just limited to technologies but also the necessary supporting policies, financing arrangements and assistance with associated business models, are incorporated.

The use of simple water lifting devices to capture water from the ground and bring it to the surface, is one such innovation. Nigusie Abera is a smallholder vegetable farmer in Sendafa, Ethiopia. Three years ago, Nigusie invested USD 90 on a locally produced hand powered pump which enabled him to harvest water from a far as 30 meters deep. He is very pleased with his investment and says it has paid off. "During the wet season, I rely on the rain. However with this pump I am now able to grow cabbages all year round unlike before when I used to farm for only three months". With his surplus earnings, Nigusie has been able to buy fertilizer to increase his yield and an ox to help him plough his larger cereal farm.

The frequency and severity of extreme weather events globally will increase over time due to climate change. The long-term outlook for the region indicates that temperatures will increase with rising greenhouse gas emissions globally, a trend already apparent based on historical data in the region. Water resources will have to be managed better and the lessons learned such projects could provide a sound basis for smart interventions.

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SFE wishes to thank the following development and resource partners for their valuable ongoing support:



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