



FAO's renewed commitment to a hunger-free Horn of Africa

Djibouti | Ethiopia | Kenya | Somalia | South Sudan | Sudan | Uganda



In early February 2012, thanks to good rains and a strong multisectoral humanitarian and development effort, we were able to declare an end to famine conditions in Somalia.

The crisis in Somalia and in the rest of the Horn of Africa, however, is far from over. If we do not sustain our efforts and build on our recent gains, we risk another crisis. In just over a decade, the Horn of Africa has suffered three droughts, followed by severe crises. Each time, the international community agreed that long-term measures were needed to prevent another tragedy. But each time, good intentions were washed away when the rains finally came.

We cannot let history repeat itself.

FAO has renewed its commitment to realizing a hunger-free Horn of Africa by working with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and local and international partners in the framework of the Comprehensive Africa Development Programme (CAADP) and in nationally – and regionally-led initiatives.

In our interventions we are linking relief and longer-term development; strengthening early warning systems and ensuring they trigger early action; building drought resilience for improved food and nutrition security; contributing to the development and implementation of food security policies; and scaling up successful programmes such as cash-for-work activities that help stimulate local markets and production of smallholder farmers and pastoralists.

We cannot prevent drought, but working together we can prevent drought from becoming famine.

José Graziano da Silva
FAO Director-General



for a world without hunger

Key Facts:

- About 80 percent of the people in the Horn of Africa rely on agriculture and livestock as their primary source of income. It is therefore vital to invest in building their resilience to future droughts and other crises, whether through support to agriculture or to exit strategies that enable them to adopt alternative livelihoods.
- It is not only drought but also vulnerability to drought that has thrown the region into repeated food crises. While we need to respond to the short-term crisis, long-term investment in drought resilience is the only sustainable solution.
- We need to ensure that communities are better prepared to respond to disaster risks through early warning, disaster risk reduction and management and safety net programmes.
- Sustained investment in agriculture, infrastructure, education and health is key to building resilience.
- Successful programmes and innovations should be scaled up.

FAO's activities in the region

Immediate response

- Cash- and voucher-for-work programmes help families meet immediate needs while stimulating local production and markets. They also involve communities in rehabilitating rural infrastructure such as roads, water reservoirs and irrigation channels. Since July 2011, almost 130 000 households in Somalia have received USD 19.4 million through the cash transfer programme. FAO has assisted 15 000 drought-affected households in Kenya through voucher programmes, and nearly 31 000 households in Djibouti through cash-for-work activities.
- FAO is providing seeds, fertilizers, tools and training to farmers in time for the main planting seasons. In Kenya, FAO is promoting small-scale irrigation technologies and supporting community-based drought tolerant seed bulking systems, while in Sudan and South Sudan, it is working to strengthen local seed production.
- Pastoral and agropastoral households in Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti are benefitting from fodder production and livestock vaccination and treatment services. In Somalia, FAO is vaccinating 20 million animals against peste des petits ruminants (of which 7.5 million were also vaccinated against contagious caprine pleuropneumonia), while in Kenya FAO is working to improve the immunity and resilience of six million livestock through vaccination campaigns, de-worming and multivitamin injections.

Policy response

- FAO supports IGAD in promoting policies for building resilience in pastoral communities (e.g. the regional CAADP Compact and support for the IGAD Regional Platform on Disaster Resilience and Sustainability).
- In South Sudan, FAO is helping the country develop an agriculture and food security strategy as well as strengthening the institutional capacity of its Ministry of Agriculture.
- In Ethiopia, FAO is supporting the capacity development of the Ministry of Agriculture's Planning and Programming Division.
- FAO organized a subregional policy consultation in Addis Ababa in March 2011, bringing together key stakeholders to begin developing sound policy responses to high and volatile food prices. The first national policy consultation on high food prices was held in Uganda in December 2011, while others are planned for Kenya, Sudan and South Sudan in 2012.

Investment response

- FAO continues to work with regional and country stakeholders and development partners to put together investment programmes aimed at improving the resilience of (agro)pastoralist communities. Work will start shortly on designing a World Bank-financed regional programme covering Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda.
- FAO supports the African Development Bank in developing investment programmes in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan. African Development Bank investments in Somalia will scale up some of FAO's successful programmes.
- FAO supports IGAD and several countries in the Horn of Africa to develop common Country Programming Papers and Regional Programming Frameworks to enhance drought resilience in the region.

For further information: www.fao.org/crisis/horn-africa

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