



## MARHABA

Welcome to the September issue of FAO Sudan's newsletter. This month the agricultural season is progressing well and we are hopeful of successful sorghum and millet harvests. Like the cyclical nature of the seasons, all things end and I would like to take this opportunity to inform you that I am leaving Sudan to take on a new posting as FAO Representative in Cameroon. The last three years in Sudan have been an exceptionally rewarding time for me, and I have been pleased to work closely with our government, UN and NGO partners to work towards improving the lives of Sudan's poorest people. There is still much to do in Sudan, and my replacement will be ready for this challenge. The FAO office in Sudan will announce the new FAO Representative closer to their official appointment. For now, please enjoy this month's newsletter. In this edition you'll find information on FAO's latest activities as well as food security and livelihoods news. As always, the newsletter is also an open platform for all our partners and you're invited to contribute.

Mai Moussa Abari

FAO Representative Sudan

## AGRICULTURAL SEASON UPDATE

It is now the staple crop (millet and sorghum) growing season in Sudan, and the above-average rains so far have raised hopes of a successful harvest. The Federal Ministry of Agriculture has estimated an increase of 20 to 25 percent in land under cultivation compared to 2011. However, some areas that have suffered heavy flooding are expected to witness reduced yields, such as in Kubum in South Darfur where much of the cultivated fields were destroyed. The rains have also increased the potential for desert locusts to migrate from North and West Africa into Sudan. For livestock, the rains have meant pasture growth has been good and hafirs and dams are filled. There have been no major animal disease or crop pest outbreaks reported so far.

## COUNTING DOWN TO WORLD FOOD DAY 2012

World Food Day is marked around the world on the 16<sup>th</sup> of October each year, the date when the Food and Agriculture Organization was established in 1945. FAO Sudan is busy making plans for special events in this country next month in collaboration with the federal and state Ministries of Agriculture to mark World Food Day. Find out about this year's theme on the last page.



*A sorghum crop in Central Darfur*

**“The current situation in world food markets, characterized by sharp increases in maize, wheat and soybean prices, has raised fears of a repeat of the 2007-2008 world food crisis.”**

**- FAO, WFP, IFAD**

## NEWS: WORLD FOOD PRICE WARNING

FAO, the World Food Programme and the International Fund for Agricultural Development have made a joint appeal for swift, coordinated action to prevent another food price shock.

The three UN agencies' leaders have released a joint statement which in part reads, “The current situation in world food markets, characterized by sharp increases in maize, wheat and soybean prices, has raised fears of a repeat of the 2007-2008 world food crisis. But swift, coordinated international action can stop that from happening. We need to act urgently to make sure that these price shocks do not turn into a catastrophe hurting tens of millions over the coming months”.

In 2007-2008, the price of maize soared by 74 percent and rice prices climbed 166 percent. There have been three international food price spikes in the last five years, caused by a combination of droughts, major floods, increased diversion of food stock for non-food purposes and increased financial speculation on food commodities.

FAO's Director-General José Graziano da Silva, the President of IFAD Kanayo F. Nwanze and the Executive Director of WFP Ertharin Cousin have urged countries to avoid panic buying and refrain from imposing export restrictions. “We have thus adopted a twin-track approach which supports long-term investments in agriculture, notably smallholder agriculture, while ensuring that safety-nets are in place to help poor food consumers and producers avoid hunger, asset losses and poverty traps in the short run,” the statement reads.

The full statement is available by contacting FAO Sudan's Communications Officer [Zoie.Jones@FAO.org](mailto:Zoie.Jones@FAO.org)

## Food Security Facts

Sudan's sorghum prices are, on average, double last year's prices and about 150 percent above the five-year average (source: FEWSNET)

Even in a good year, global grain production is barely sufficient to meet growing demands for food, feed and fuel.

Globally, there are 80 million extra mouths to feed every year.

One third of food produced in the world is wasted or lost to spoilage, damage and other causes.



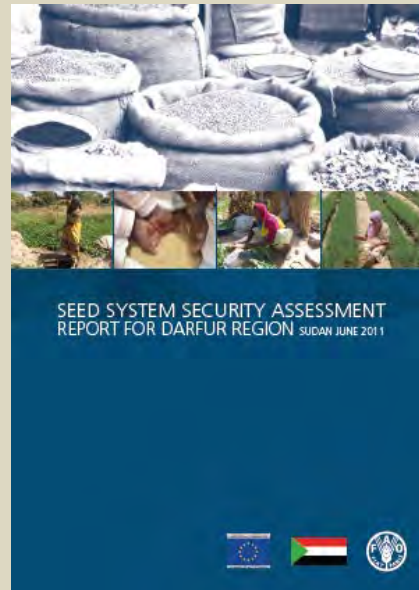
## FSL UPDATE

This month two of FAO's technical officers Salah Mohamed and Mahmoud Dafalla briefed the Khartoum Food Security and Livelihoods meeting on the findings and main recommendations of the Darfur Seed System Security Assessment Report. The report was recently published and covers information collected in Darfur in 2011.

The officers told the meeting that multiple indicators relating to the access, availability and quality of seed in Darfur suggest that seed security overall is normal and projected to remain so in the near future. However, vulnerability exists particularly among internally displaced persons, returnees and woman-headed households. In spite of the positive seed security situation and the potential to stimulate agricultural development, the negative elements of insecurity, short and erratic rainfall and other biotic factors could put Darfur at high risk of sliding into acute seed insecurity.

The report recommends that direct seed distribution only be used in exceptional situations such as where there is total crop failure and/or displacement due to conflict.

FAO is involved in a range of activities to support the security of household-level seed supply in Darfur. For example, under a USAID-funded project that ended earlier this year, FAO supported the Agriculture Research Station in South Darfur to strengthen its variety maintenance and seed multiplication capacity. Support provided to ARS included the provision of equipment for multiplying and testing seeds, and for expanding and improving their seeds storage capacity. During the support period, ARS produced 13 metric tonnes of improved sorghum and groundnut foundation seeds that were adapted to the local environment. ARS also trained 60 farmers on seed production and conservation techniques, and those farmers are expected to share their knowledge in their social circles. The improved seeds will be distributed to approximately 800 farmers who have also been trained



Printed copies of the seed security report are being distributed to partners in Khartoum and Darfur.

You can also download the report here:

[http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/tc/tce/pdf/Darfur\\_Report.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/tc/tce/pdf/Darfur_Report.pdf)

in the production of certified seeds, so the cycle will continue. With FAO's support, ARS now encourages farmer-to-farmer dissemination of improved, early maturing sorghum and ground nut seed varieties to help build strategic reserves of seeds at household level.

## NEWS: REGIONAL FOOD SECURITY WORKSHOP

Around 80 delegates from across the Near East attended the Regional Multi-Stakeholder workshop on Food Security and Nutrition held at Khartoum's Corinthia Hotel this month. The workshop was organized by FAO's Regional Office for the Near East based in Cairo, in collaboration with the Committee on World Food Security (CFS).

The workshop was in response to a recommendation made by the 31st Session of the FAO Regional Conference for the Near East, held in Rome in May, which called for identifying food security and nutrition priorities in the region. Those priorities will then be presented at the 39th Session of the Committee on World Food Security next month. The outcomes of the workshop will be circulated to our partners when they are finalized.



## World Food Day October 16th, 2012

**This year's World Food Day will be marked under the theme 'Agricultural Cooperatives: Key to Feeding the World'.**

### **What is a cooperative?**

A cooperative is an association of women and men who come together to form a jointly owned, democratically controlled enterprise that helps members achieve their shared economic goals. They're called cooperatives, producer organizations, self-help groups, producers unions or chambers of agriculture, to name a few.

### **How do cooperatives fight hunger?**

Cooperatives contribute to food security by helping small farmers, fisher folk, livestock keepers, forest holders and other producers access the information, tools and services they need. This allows them to increase food production, market their goods and create jobs, improving their own livelihoods and increasing food security. Through practices like group purchasing and marketing, farmers gain market power and get better prices on agricultural inputs and other necessities. Cooperatives also help farmers to innovate and adapt to changing markets.

### **FAO supporting cooperatives in Sudan**

FAO's Sudan Productive Capacity Recovery Programme-Capacity Building (SPCRP-CB) has helped small-scale farmers in Blue Nile, South Kordofan, Red Sea and River Nile states join together and cooperate through its Farmer Field Schools and Small Business Groups. The

Farmer Field Schools support farmers to share agricultural knowledge through on-farm learning. The schools also empower farmers to form groups and associations which give them greater shared resources, economies of scale and market negotiating power. SPCR-CB also supports small-scale farmers to form Small Business Groups to access markets and develop a rural enterprise. The groups help members to share resources and give them increased collective bargaining power. SPCR-CB is funded by the European Union.



### **Cooperatives in Numbers**

An estimated 1 billion people worldwide are members of cooperatives.

In 2008, the top 300 cooperatives turned over US\$1.1 trillion.

It is estimated that smallholders can provide much of the extra food needed to feed more than nine billion people by 2050.