

## Updated Briefing note on Haiti and FAO in Haiti (22/11/2012)

Since January 2010 FAO (together with partners such as WFP and many others) played an important role in the **post-earthquake emergency operations** in the agriculture and food security sectors. As a result the food security situation significantly improved in 2010 and 2011. However, most post-earthquake financing was in support of other sectors.

**In 2012, Haiti suffered three natural disasters:** a drought in May-July, a tropical storm (Isaac) in August and a hurricane (Sandy) in October. These disasters increased the number of severely food insecure people to over 2 million, around 20 percent of the population, most of who live in rural areas. ***In the most affected communities over 50 percent of households are now severely food insecure*** (see below map). The food security crisis is set to worsen because of the damages caused to standing crops and infrastructure. The centre of gravity of Haiti's crisis has shifted from the urban areas to the rural areas.

To respond to the crisis, FAO and the Government are seeking \$74 million over the next 12 months to help rehabilitate the country's agricultural sector. These funds would be used for activities ranging from the rehabilitation of irrigation schemes and rural access roads to treatment of river banks and gullies, planting of mangrove trees along the coast line to provision of agricultural inputs, rehabilitation of local seed production, and strengthening of milk production and transformation centres,; as well as training on disaster preparedness to mitigate the loss of crops, livestock and assets.

Out of the \$74 million joint action plan, FAO has so far secured \$2.7 million, with indications of a further \$5-6 million in the pipeline from different donors. FAO will implement both short and medium term projects in response to the current crises, ranging from immediate relief activities to activities that have a longer term economic and environmental impact. Key is the combination of both economic and environmental activities in the same areas and communities. FAO also continues to assist Government institutions in the sector to build their capacities to assess the agricultural and food security situation; to formulate policies, strategies and programmes, and monitor their implementation

**Haiti imports 60 percent of its food requirements** and it is difficult for Haitian farmers to be competitive given three main elements: (a) open markets and low import tariffs (3 percent) compared to the rest of the region (12 percent ); (b) very low agricultural productivity and poorly functioning agricultural input and output markets and value chains; (c) a poor enabling environment (agricultural credit, agricultural services, land tenure, environmental degradation, natural disasters, climate change, etc.).

**FAO has provided technical and financial support**, and has also assisted the Government in the preparation of the Agricultural Development Policy (2010-2025), the National Plan for Agricultural Investment (2010-2015) and the National Plan for Food and Nutritional Security (2010-2015). FAO field project delivery peaked in 2010 at around \$23 million, was reduced in 2011 to about \$6 million, and is expected to be around \$10 million for 2012.

Emphasis is increasingly on development programmes and capacity building rather than emergency operations, and this is reflected in **FAO's Country Programme Framework for Haiti (2013-2016)**, which – under the overall objective of improved food security and increased rural incomes – has four priority areas:

- (i) strengthen capacities to formulate and pursue food and nutrition security policies and strategies;
- (ii) promote agricultural value chains through agricultural support services and investments;
- (iii) increase natural resources management capacities and climate change resilience; and
- (iv) strengthen capacities to manage and mitigate risks, disasters and food crises.

The cooperation of the **Rome based UN agencies** in Haiti is increasing, in particular between FAO and WFP. A growing number of donors have indicated that they would prefer to finance programmes in Haiti that include the government, FAO and WFP.

### Map of food insecure communities in Haiti

(jointly presented on 9/11/2012 by WFP/FAO and UNICEF to the Humanitarian Country Team).

