



FAO IN THE NEWS

Daily news briefing : 11 August 2004

Asian-Pacific fisheries threatened by over fishing

10 August 2004

The Press Trust of India Limited

New York, Aug 10 (PTI) Asian-Pacific fisheries, a vital source of food and crucial for the economies of the region, are threatened by over fishing and a resulting decline in the abundance of more valuable species, the UN food agency has said.

In a new report, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said the region is the world's largest producer of fish, for both aquaculture and capture fisheries, which account for 91 per cent and 48 per cent of total world production, respectively, and improved management is required in order to secure the sector's future.

FAO cites a study by the WorldFish Centre, an international resource organisation belonging to the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, which suggests that over the last 25 years the amount of fish available in some Asian-Pacific areas has declined by between 6 and 33 per cent. In a few instances, the drop has been as steep as 40 per cent over five years.

Changes in the composition of fish resources have also occurred, it noted

Recent studies estimate that the amount of trash fish being landed now exceeds 60 per cent of the total marine production from the South China Sea, about 60 per cent of the catch in the Gulf of Thailand, 30 per cent to 80 per cent in Vietnam, and 50 per cent in trawl catches from western Malaysia.

"Demand is fast outstripping supply and prices are expected to rise, resulting in greater incentives to target these fish and aggravate the over-fishing problem in the area," FAO said.

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Panafrican News Agency (PANA) Daily Newswire: More locusts expected in West Africa, says FAO.

10 August 2004

Panafrican News Agency (PANA) Daily Newswire

Dakar, Senegal (PANA) - The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)'s emergency locust control centre has announced that a new wave of swarms of locusts will probably appear in West Africa in the weeks ahead.

According to the FAO centre, in a press release issued through the Senegalese Crop Protection Department, many swarms have escaped from control operations in the spring reproduction zones of North Africa and migrated towards West Africa where they have reached the pasturelands and crop areas of the Sahel.

These swarms have scattered over a vast area spreading from Senegal to Niger and have now reached Chad, the centre said.

At the moment, the situation was very serious in Mauritania and swarms infiltration continues in Senegal, it added.

The Mauritania Locust Control Centre (CLAA) is said to have sent a radio message to the Senegalese Crop Protection Department, informing the latter about the very serious locust invasion it is currently facing in the country.

Huge areas are infested in Mauritania which do not have sufficient means to control the devastating insects, the message said.

In Senegal itself, 19 swarms were reported in Louga, Matam and Saint Louis regions from 1 to 8 August. Thus, from the start of the invasion reported on 23 June to date, 40 swarms have been registered.

All in all, 38,344 hectares have been infested with locusts in Senegal and the Crop Protection Department has disclosed that 15,440 hectares have been sprayed in efforts to get rid of the insects.

Thirteen DPV motorised units are operating in the key infested localities of Matam, Linguere, Podor, Richard Toll, Bakel.

Some 250 soldiers and 45 fire-fighters trained by the DPV have been drafted to help in the exercise.

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Biblische Plage über Westafrika

11 August 2004
Blick

NOUAKCHOTT. Ungeheure Heuschreckenschwärme verdunkeln den Himmel. Wo sich die Insekten niederlassen, fressen sie alles ratzekahl. Eine Million Menschen sind von einer Hungersnot bedroht.

Das muslimische Westafrika wird von der achten biblischen Plage heimgesucht - von der Wüstenheuschrecke. Sie frisst täglich zwei Gramm, was ihrem Körpergewicht entspricht. Ihre riesigen Schwärme können eine Fläche von mehreren Quadratkilometern bedecken und bis zu 100 km am Tag zurücklegen.

Rund 80 Prozent der Ernte seien bedroht, erklärte Mohammed Lemine von der mauretanischen Landwirtschaftsvereinigung. Es geht um die Hirsefelder wie auch um die für den Export bestimmten Wassermelonen und Erdnüsse. In Gambia wurde der Notstand ausgerufen.

Rund 110 Millionen Franken kostet die Bekämpfung der Plage mit Flugzeugen und Pestiziden. Bisher stünden aber erst 12 Mio. zur Verfügung, erklärt die Welternährungsorganisation FAO. Bis zum Jahresende werden Schäden von über 300 Millionen Franken erwartet.

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UN Appeals for \$97 Million to Help Get Food to Kenya

10 August 2004
All Africa

Aug 10, 2004 (UN News Service/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --

The United Nations today appealed for \$97 million to help get food and basic supplies to Kenya, which is suffering from an agricultural crisis and where 2.3 million people need emergency assistance.

The appeal, launched in coordination with the Kenyan Government and international and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), covers the next six months through February 2005 and focuses on six key areas: food, health and nutrition, water and sanitation, education, agriculture and livestock, and coordination and support services.

Kenya is suffering a massive crop failure due to irregular rainfall patterns and contamination of grain reserves by aflatoxin, a toxin created by grain mould, prompting President Mwai Kibaki last month to declare a state of emergency. Food production in five of the country's seven provinces will account for only roughly 40 per cent of what is needed this year. Of the 2.3 million people in need of emergency relief, 1.8 million require general food distribution and 500,000 school children take part in the school feeding programme. The total amount of food needed for the next six months is about 166,000 tons.

In addition to distributing food to the most severely affected areas, the UN appeal seeks to distribute seeds to areas with high crop loss, prevent measles through a massive vaccination campaign, increase efforts in ongoing nutritional programmes, rehabilitate water sources, retain children in school through school feeding programmes and provide curative measures for livestock.

UN agencies currently working with the Government to improve the situation are the World Food Programme (WFP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP).

For its part, FAO asked for \$3.6 million to cover four emergency farming projects to help rural families threatened by hunger. "With the short-season rains coming in October, vulnerable households do not have the capacity to assure their future well-being without assistance. FAO sees the need for urgent intervention to preserve and rebuild the livelihoods of affected people and to reduce the causes of food insecurity," said Bruce Isaacson, the agency's representative in Kenya.

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Der Himmel verdunkelte sich

VON JOHANNES DIETERICH (JOHANNESBURG)
11 August 2004

Frankfurter Rundschau

Der Nordwesten Afrikas wird von einer Heuschreckenplage biblischen Ausmaßes heimgesucht / Eine Million Menschen vom Hunger bedroht

Die Szene hatte etwas Apokalyptisches an sich. "Der Himmel verdunkelte sich", berichtet eine Augenzeugin aus der mauretanischen Hauptstadt Nouakchott, "plötzlich wurden die Straßen von einer rötlich-braunen lebendigen Lawine überschwemmt, und die Bäume neigten sich unter der Last unzähliger Insekten." Als der Spuk nach wenigen Stunden vorüber war, hatten die Bäume keine Blätter mehr, der Rasen im Stadion Nouakchotts war weggefressen und den Garten vor dem Präsidentenpalast hatten die Hüpfer in eine Halbwüste verwandelt.

Mauretanien ist nur eines von einem halben Dutzend westafrikanischer Länder, das derzeit von einer Heuschreckenplage heimgesucht wird: In dem Halbwüstenstaat sollen bereits eine Million Hektar Farmland von den Grashüpfern verwüstet worden sein. Was sich gegenwärtig in diesem Teil des Kontinents zusammenbraut, kann nach Einschätzung von Experten noch schlimmere Ausmaße annehmen als die letzte große Heimsuchung durch Heuschrecken. Als 1987 eine große Heuschreckenplage in Sudan ausbrach, endete sie erst zwei Jahre später in Indien. Damals hatten die Insekten 28 Länder überfallen; hunderttausende Menschen wurden in den Hunger getrieben; die Jahrhundertseuche kostete damals umgerechnet fast eine halbe Milliarde Dollar.

Die Lage sei "heute genauso ernst wie damals", warnt Keith Cressman von der Welternährungsorganisation FAO: "Es könnte sogar noch schlimmer werden." Außer Mauretanien haben die Heuschrecken bereits Mali und Niger angegriffen, in Gambia, das zu 70 Prozent von der Landwirtschaft lebt, wurde der Notstand ausgerufen und der senegalesische Präsident Abdoulaye Wade brach seinen Urlaub ab. FAO-Angaben zufolge könnte die Plage eine Million Menschen in den Hunger treiben: Sogar die sudanesischen Darfur-Provinz, wo sich derzeit nach UN-Einschätzung ohnehin die "schlimmste humanitäre Krise der Welt" abspielt, ist in Gefahr, von den sich mit einer Geschwindigkeit von bis zu 300 Kilometern am Tag ausbreitenden Insektenschwärmen in Mitleidenschaft gezogen zu werden.

Zur Bekämpfung der Heuschrecken benötige Mauretanien mindestens 15 Flugzeuge und 640 000 Liter Insektenvernichtungsmittel, teilte das Landwirtschaftsministerium in Nouakchott mit. Doch es stehe lediglich ein Flugzeug zur Verfügung. Die Regierung des islamischen Staates hatte die internationale Gemeinschaft bereits im vergangenen Monat um Hilfe gebeten: Bisher habe jedoch lediglich Algerien mit der Entsendung eines Insektenbekämpfungs-Teams reagiert. "Die Situation ist äußerst kritisch", sagt der Chef des mauretanischen Heuschrecken-Zentrums Mohamed El Haceu Ould Jaavar: "Wenn wir keine Hilfe aus dem Ausland bekommen, wird das ein Desaster für die gesamte Region werden." Verheerend wirkt sich vor allem aus, dass die Plage mit der kürzlich begonnenen Regenzeit zusammenfällt: Die Insekten drohen sämtliche Jungpflanzen zu vernichten, die nach der Aussaat derzeit sprießen.

Regen hat Vermehrung begünstigt

Als Grund für die Entstehung der Plage verweisen Experten auf außergewöhnlich starke Regenfälle in der Region im vergangenen Oktober. Sie begünstigten eine gewaltige Vermehrung der Insekten, die ihre Eier in feuchten Sand legen. Von Westafrika aus zogen die Heuschrecken in die nordafrikanischen Länder Libyen,

Marokko und Algerien, von wo sie jetzt - mit dem Beginn der Regenzeit - nach Westafrika zurückkehrten. "Es ist wirklich tragisch", so die Sprecherin einer Hilfsorganisation in Nouakchott: "Nach einer langen Dürreperiode hatten wir in diesem Jahr endlich wieder gute Niederschläge. Und nun drohen die Heuschrecken alles zu vernichten." Auch Mauretaniens riesige Viehbestände sind bedroht: Das 2,8 Millionen Einwohner zählende Land verfügt über insgesamt 17 Millionen Kühe, Ziegen und Kamele, deren Futter nun Opfer der Heuschrecken zu werden droht.

In Ermangelung von Vernichtungsmitteln bleiben der mauretanischen Bevölkerung nur archaische Mittel im Kampf gegen die Heuschrecken: In Nouakchott gingen die Hauptstädter mit Löffeln und Töpfen auf die Straße, um die Schwärme mit Lärm zu verjagen, während Experten Landbewohner aufriefen, Gruben zu graben und die Heuschrecken mit Blättern anzulocken. In der Grube gelandet sollen die Insekten zertrampelt, verbrannt oder ersäuft werden.

Indessen appellierte die FAO an die Regierungen der Industrienationen, Soforthilfe zur Bekämpfung der Plage zur Verfügung zu stellen. Der Organisation stünden derzeit nur neun Millionen Euro zur Verfügung, es seien jedoch mindestens 70 Millionen Euro nötig.

Biblische Plage~ Und Jahwe sprach zu Mose: Strecke deine Hand aus über das Land Ägypten wegen der Heuschrecken, dass sie über das Land Ägypten heraufkommen und alles Kraut des Landes fressen, alles was der Hagel übrig gelassen hat. Und Mose streckte seinen Stab aus über das Land Ägypten, und Jahwe führte einen Ostwind ins Land selbigen ganzen Tag und die ganze Nacht. Als es Morgen wurde, da trieb der Ostwind die Heuschrecken herbei. Und die Heuschrecken kamen herauf über das ganze Land Ägypten und ließen sich in dem ganzen Gebiet Ägyptens nieder, in gewaltiger Menge; vor ihnen sind nicht derart Heuschrecken gewesen wie diese, und nach ihnen werden nicht derart sein. Und sie bedeckten das Angesicht des ganzen Landes, so dass das Land verfinstert wurde; und sie fraßen alles Kraut des Landes und alle Früchte der Bäume, die der Hagel übrig gelassen hatte; und es blieb nichts Grünes übrig an den Bäumen und am Kraut des Feldes im ganzen Lande Ägypten. Und der Pharao rief Mose und Aaron eilends und sprach: Ich habe gesündigt gegen Jahwe, euren Gott, und gegen euch! 2. Buch Mose, Kapitel 10, Verse 12 - 16 Mit freundlicher Genehmigung des R. Brockhaus Verlags Wuppertal aus der Bibelübersetzung "Unrevidierte Elberfelder".

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Zähne des Windes

VON KARL-HEINZ KARISCH
11 August 2004
Frankfurter Rundschau

Nach der fünften Häutung beginnt die Katastrophe. Aus Hüpfern werden geflügelte Wüstenheuschrecken. Afrikas ärmsten Ländern droht eine Plage, doch noch gibt es kein effektives Gegenmittel.

Glück gehabt. 1875 zog die letzte Heuschreckenplage über Deutschland hinweg. Seitdem sind die gefräßigen Insekten meist in Afrika geblieben. "154 Schwärme sind für Deutschland historisch dokumentiert", berichtet Professor Hans-Jörg Ferenz vom

Institut für Zoologie an der Martin-Luther Universität in Halle-Wittenberg. Sie gelangten über das Mittelmeer via Spanien und Italien bis in die nördlichen Breiten.

In Ferenz' Labor wird derzeit an einer neuen Waffe gegen die Massenvermehrung von Heuschrecken gearbeitet, die allerdings gegen die aktuelle Plage in Afrika nichts mehr ausrichten kann. Die Hoffnung richtet sich in die Zukunft. Der Insektenkundler hat bei der Beobachtung des Liebeslebens der afrikanischen Wüstenheuschrecke entdeckt, dass die Männchen erst in Großschwärmen einen Duftstoff absondern. Dieses Pheromon stößt konkurrierende Männchen ab. "In diesem Fall haben wir den glücklichen Umstand, dass es sich bei dem Duftstoff um Phenylacetonitril handelt, eine Chemikalie, die sehr preiswert ist und bereits in geringsten Konzentrationen wirkt", berichtet Ferenz. Die Wissenschaftler hoffen, mit dieser sexuellen Verwirrungsstrategie die Fortpflanzung deutlich reduzieren zu können. Leider seien aus finanziellen Gründen die Forschungsanstrengungen sehr zurückgefahren worden, berichtet Ferenz. Er erforscht seit vielen Jahren an Heuschrecken das Fortpflanzungsverhalten von Insekten.

Nach der katastrophalen Plage Ende der 80er Jahre habe man untersucht, ob die Bildung von Großschwärmen auch durch Pheromone gesteuert werde. "Diese Hoffnungen haben sich leider nicht erfüllt", berichtet der Zoologe, der seit vielen Jahren mit der UN-Ernährungsorganisation FAO zusammenarbeitet. "Umweltfreundliche Alternativen zu den Insektiziden müssen bei uns entwickelt werden, den afrikanischen Ländern fehlt hierzu das Geld", sagt er. Die jetzt betroffenen Länder zählen zu den ärmsten Afrikas, die sozialen und politischen Folgen einer neuerlichen Katastrophe sind nicht abzusehen, dürften aber gravierend sein.

Bereits 1986 richtete die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) in Eschborn das Projekt "Heuschreckenbekämpfung" ein. Neben der Einrichtung von Warndiensten wurde gemeinsam mit der Biologischen Bundesanstalt in Darmstadt ein biologisches Präparat entwickelt. Es handelt sich dabei um Sporen eines Pilzes mit dem Namen *Metarhizium anisoplia* (Maa), der nur Heuschrecken infiziert und sie tötet. Der Einsatz der Lösungen stößt allerdings auf Vorbehalte. Die Sporenlösung ist teurer als chemische Bekämpfungsmittel, zudem ist der Einsatz komplizierter. Da der Pilz hitzeempfindlich ist, ist sein Einsatz im glutheißen Afrika nur in den frühen Morgenstunden möglich.

Ursprünglich soll die Wüstenheuschrecke *Schistocerca gregaria* (Zähne des Windes) aus Amerika stammen. Mit dieser Theorie überraschte der US-Biologe Hojun Song im Juni die Fachwelt. Seine Untersuchung zur Aufspaltung der Arten erscheint recht plausibel, denn die anderen rund 50 Arten der Gattung *Schistocerca* leben in Amerika. Und unüberbrückbar ist die Entfernung zwischen den Kontinenten nicht. 1988 konnten Wissenschaftler einen Schwarm Wüstenheuschrecken beobachten, wie er 5000 Kilometer über den Atlantik flog.

Normalerweise leben Heuschrecken vereinzelt und zurückgezogen. Erst wenn es in den Halbwüsten Nordafrikas mehrfach hintereinander kräftig regnet, beginnt die biologische Zeitbombe zu ticken. Die Weibchen legen nun in rascher Folge jeweils 50 bis 100 Eier in den feuchten Sand, aus denen nach drei bis vier Wochen so genannte Hüpfer schlüpfen. Erst nach der fünften Häutung werden sie zu geflügelten erwachsenen Tieren. Das reichhaltige Futterangebot führt zur Massenvermehrung der Wüstenheuschrecken. Sobald sie ihre Umgebung kahl gefressen haben, rotten sie sich zusammen und starten kurz nach Sonnenaufgang zum großen Flug. "Sie

wandern mit dem Wind, sobald es was zu fressen gibt, gehen sie runter und legen in großer Menge Eier in den Boden", berichtet Zoologe Ferenz. Bislang sind die Möglichkeiten, die Plage aufzuhalten, minimal. "Noch niemals ist einer der schadenstiftenden Schwärme mit seinen vielen Millionen Tieren vom Menschen gestoppt worden."

Auch diesmal werde man darauf hoffen müssen, dass die günstigen Lebensbedingungen für die Wüstenheuschrecke von der Natur selbst beendet werden. Danach sieht es derzeit leider nicht aus. Obwohl große Flächen mit Pestiziden besprüht worden sind, konnten riesige Schwärme entstehen, die bei gutem Wind bis zu 300 Kilometer am Tag zurücklegen können. Die FAO-Experten befürchten, dass Heuschrecken-Schwärme westwärts bis nach Tschad und Sudan weiterziehen.

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Huambo: FAO Assists 67.000 Peasant Families

10 August 2004
All Africa

Huambo, Aug 10, 2004 (Angola Press Agency/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --

At least 60.744 families from the inland districts of Huambo province in central Angola are being assisted by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) with various horticultural seeds.

Started late in June this year, the assistance aims at securing the beneficiary peasants, mostly newly relocated families, with the necessary means to survive over the 2004/2005 season.

FAO representative, Antonio Camuty, said that 4.065 kilograms of horticultural seeds have so far been distributed, out of the 4.077 planned.

The source said the seeds are being distributed through local and foreign Non-Governmental Organisations.

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Wirtschaft und Umwelt

Heuschrecken schrecken UNO

D.J.
11 August 2004
(c) 2004 taz, die tageszeitung

BERLIN - taz | Die UN-Agrarorganisation FAO hat zu verschärften internationalen Anstrengungen zum Kampf gegen die Heuschreckenplage im westafrikanischen Sahel-Gürtel aufgerufen. 50 bis 80 Millionen Dollar seien in den nächsten zwei Monaten erforderlich, um die weitere Ausbreitung der Wanderheuschrecken einzudämmen, aber bisher seien nur zehn Millionen Dollar bei der FAO eingegangen und weitere zehn Millionen zugesagt, sagte die Organisation in Rom. In den

vergangenen Wochen sind Abermillionen Heuschrecken, die südlich der Atlasberge in Marokko und Algerien schlüpfen, in Mauretanien, Mali, Niger und Senegal eingefallen. Besonders dramatisch ist die Lage in Mauretanien, wo 80 Prozent der Ernte vernichtet wurden und die Tiere in der Hauptstadt Nuakchott sämtliches Grün gefressen haben, sogar den Rasen des nationalen Fußballstadions. Ohne eine systematische Bekämpfung seien die Lebensgrundlagen von Millionen Menschen in einer der ärmsten Regionen der Erde bedroht, warnt die FAO. D.J.

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Locust Invasion Intensifies in Africa

10 August 2004
LiquidAfrica Holding Limited

The number of desert locust swarms invading cropping areas in Mauritania, Senegal and Mali from Northwest Africa has increased in the past two weeks, according to the latest locust update published by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

In Northwest Africa, where intensive control operations have been in progress since February, there are signs that the situation is improving, FAO said.

No swarms have been reported in Chad or Darfur, Sudan, but the risk there remains high. There is a potential danger that swarms could also reach Burkina Faso, FAO warned.

More aid needed

So far, \$9 million of emergency assistance has been pledged. FAO has contributed nearly \$2 million from its own resources and donors have provided \$7 million. In addition, each affected country has contributed substantially to the locust campaign.

Several countries have appealed for additional international assistance that is urgently required to supplement the major national efforts already made and to prevent the situation from developing into a plague.

Locusts in the Sahel

In mid-July, numerous swarms were seen moving south in the Adrar region of central Mauritania, causing damage to date palms. Most of the swarms dispersed throughout summer breeding areas in southern Mauritania. Others continued east and south into northeastern Senegal and western Mali.

As good rains have fallen throughout the Sahel and ecological conditions are favourable, large-scale breeding will commence shortly, causing locust numbers to increase further in West Africa.

Control campaigns in the Sahel are being organized, but are hampered by a lack of available resources and the difficulty of locating and treating the highly mobile swarms. In 2004, control operations treated a total of 182 000 hectares (ha) in Mauritania and 900 ha in Senegal.

Nine countries met in Algiers to discuss regional locust control campaigns that are required this summer.

Northwest Africa

Intensive ground and aerial control operations continued in Northwest Africa where more than 5 million ha have been treated so far this year.

However, by mid July, there has been a decline in the number of hectares treated in Morocco and Libya. This suggests that the situation is starting to get better in both countries and should become calm in the region over the next few weeks.

Facts about locusts

All efforts should be made to use the most environmentally friendly products and properly calibrated spray equipment to minimize risks to the environment and human and animal health, FAO said.

FAO is actively encouraging field trials on the use of alternative products such as biological pesticides.

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Swaziland: Another Food Crisis Year

10 August 2004

All Africa

Mbabane, Aug 10, 2004 (UN Integrated Regional Information Networks/All Africa Global Media via COMTEX) --

By next year over a quarter of Swaziland's 970,000 population will again require food aid to survive, according to a joint report released by the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP).

"Poor agro-climatic conditions, characterised by late onset of the rainy season and below-average cumulative rainfall, have undermined Swaziland's cereal harvest for the fourth consecutive year," said the Crop and Food Supply Assessment Special Mission.

The FAO/WFP mission followed a government declaration of a state of national emergency late last year, and its appeal to the international community for assistance. It found that an estimated 262,000 people would be in need of food aid by the beginning of 2005 - 15,000 more than after the 2003/04 agricultural season.

The investigators noted that Swaziland's food production suffered again this year from erratic rainfall, which started late and then became so heavy in mid-season that it threatened budding crops. Farmers heeding the government's call to exercise caution when they planted did not cultivate until late, or planted fewer crops, while others had to plant their fields twice.

Swazi farmers were ill prepared to bear such an expense. In a country where two-thirds of people live in chronic poverty, mostly on small communal farms, a lack of

funds compromised agricultural production: farmers were unable to purchase the previously subsidised fertiliser and improved seeds in sufficient quantities.

"Farmers are becoming less able to afford the cost of fertilisers. The major commercial supplier indicated that this year's fertiliser use may have been down to as low as 9,000 mt nationally, from a high of nearly twice that figure 10 years ago," said the report.

"Similar to the situation with fertiliser use, hybrid seed use took another precipitous decline in 2003/04," investigators found. Hybrid maize seed use reached a peak of 4,000 mt nationwide in 1995/96, but after government stopped providing free seeds to farmers, only 1,153 mt were used in 2001/02. The figure was halved to 600 mt last year.

The FAO/WFP report noted systemic problems underlying Swaziland's food crisis: "There is no doubt that food insecurity in Swaziland is the result of long-term chronic structural decline; the situation is not transitory and is not likely to disappear after one or two seasons of favourable rainfall. Economic decline has locked large sections of the population of Swaziland into a downward spiral of poverty and food insecurity for the long term."

With an agriculturally based economy - four out of five Swazis have agriculture-related jobs or are subsistence farmers on Swazi Nation Land - the food production crisis is acutely felt throughout the population.

The report added that AIDS was exacerbating the food security crisis by robbing small landholder households and commercial agricultural plantations of workers.

Maize dominates the fields of small landholder farmers. Drought-resistant cassava and other crops that could mitigate the food shortage, such as cotton, groundnuts, pumpkins and sweet potatoes, are infrequently grown.

FAO/WFP estimated 2003/04 maize production at 60,000 mt - about 13 percent below last year's crop and down from the 107,000 mt achieved five years ago. Except for the middleveld, where decent rainfall permitted about a 2 percent increase in fields under cultivation,

Cereal supply/demand balance for 2004/05

Swaziland's three other provinces had less land under cultivation this year than the year before, and a total area under cultivation (54,470 ha) that was the lowest since the 1980s.

Swaziland, which once was self-sufficient in food production and exported surpluses regionally, now imports 60 percent of its food requirements even in non-drought years.

Prices for cereals began to rise early this year, soaring to 45 percent above the five-year average and seriously affecting poorer people.

Even "gift giving", a traditional social coping mechanism during times of emergency when better off relatives help family members in drought-stricken areas, was down

70 percent from a normal year, signalling nationwide stress caused by the food crisis.

The report faulted the government's agricultural policy for contributing to the food shortage.

"The government of Swaziland has encouraged sugar cane production on irrigated TDL [title deed land] in order to improve its foreign exchange earnings through exports of sugar-based products. Meanwhile, the production of maize remains mostly on non-irrigated SNL [Swazi Nation Land]. However, with recent changes in weather patterns that have severely affected grain production on rain-fed lands, the country's ability to meet its cereal requirements through commercial imports is being taxed," the report said.

The report recommends a "targeted approach" to food aid. Of primary importance are mitigation efforts for HIV/AIDS, followed by direct support to households without food or access to the agricultural inputs required for this year's planting season. Depending on rains, early spring planting may commence as early as next month.

"The cereal import requirement in 2004/05 marketing year (April/March) is estimated at 132,000 mt, of which an estimated 100,000 tonnes are expected to be imported commercially. With food aid in stock and in the pipeline estimated at about 10,000 mt, the uncovered deficit for which international assistance is required is estimated at 22,000 mt," the report concluded.

Abboulaye Balde, WFP country representative for Swaziland, told IRIN, "The fact that an independent group of experts came up with these numbers will help government, NGOs and even the WFP to agree on the same statistics - we can chart a course of action together."

Balde said WFP would concentrate its activities in the drought-prone lowveld and dry middleveld. "The report is national in scope, so it will alert other agencies and government that there are problems to be addressed in other parts of the country."

The 2003/04 agricultural season was the second consecutive year when cumulative rainfall was well below average, and the fourth consecutive year in which erratic rainfall patterns led to below-average national maize production, according to the report.

A meteorologist with the National Weather Service told IRIN that some parts of the eastern lowveld were no longer suitable for cultivation, due not only to diminished rainfall but population pressures exerted on marginal land, which had led to deforestation and desertification.

For the FAO/WFP report: <http://www.fao.org/docrep/007/j2678e/j2678e00.htm>

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New Vision (Uganda) - AAGM: East African Countries Fail to Sign Genetic Plan.

Reuben Olita
20 July 2004

New Vision

UGANDA, Kenya and Tanzania are among countries that have not signed an agreement to set up an international fund to support the conservation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

Only seven countries have signed the Global Crop Diversity Trust Establishment Agreement from three of the five Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) regions.

Cape Verde, Egypt, Jordan, Togo, Morocco, Syria and Samoa have signed.

The Trust will become a legally independent organisation upon the signature of the seventh member, as long as at least four are developing countries and provided they are from at least five of the FAO regions.

The Trust will support the upgrading of important collections, help build the capacity of countries to maintain them and will contribute to their maintenance.

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Criquets : dix neuf essaims ont percé les frontières en une semaine

10 August 2004

All Africa

Dix-neuf essaims de criquets pèlerins sont passés entre les mailles du dispositif de lutte mise en place par le Sénégal entre le 1 et 8 août dernier, selon la Direction de la protection des végétaux qui s'appuie sur les informations fournies par la Fao.

Ce qui a porté à 40, le nombre d'essaims signalés dans le pays depuis le 23 juin dernier. Ces dix neuf essaims ont infesté les régions de Matam, de Louga et de Saint-Louis. Et la Dpv annonce de nouvelles invasions dans les prochaines semaines. Mais déjà une lutte acharnée est en train d'être menée contre ces bestioles redoutées par les paysans sénégalais en particulier. Ainsi, à en croire la Dpv, 13 unités motorisées de cette direction, sont en action : cinq sont positionnées à Matam, trois à Linguère, deux à Podor, deux à Richard Toll et un à Bakel. Pour les moyens humains, 250 militaires et 45 agents du groupement national des sapeurs pompiers ont été formés le 6 août dernier par la Dpv pour faire face à ces criquets. Parmi eux, cent militaires sont déployés à Saint-Louis, 50 militaires à Bakel, cinquante à Podor 50 autres en plus des 45 agents des sapeurs pompiers à Matam. Sans compter que 800 militaires sont en train d'être formés à Saint-Louis et, à Matam, des jeunes des Associations sportives et culturelles subissent aussi la formation.

La prospection n'est pas pour autant abandonnée. Quinze équipes de prospections sont à pieds d'oeuvre pour traquer les criquets pèlerins où qu'ils se trouvent.

Ces essaims ont également pénétré une plus vaste zone allant du Sénégal au Niger en passant par la Mauritanie. La Dpv n'exclut pas un prolongement jusqu'au Tchad. Ils font partie des nombreux essaims qui ont "échappé aux opérations de lutte dans les zones de reproduction printanières du Nord-ouest pour migrer vers l'Afrique de

l'Ouest où ils ont atteint les pâturages et les zones de culture du Sahel", soutien le centre d'information antiacridien d'urgence de la Fao cité par la Dpv.

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UN seeks emergency assistance for Kenyan agriculture, as drought, crop failure take heavy toll

10 August 2004
M2 Presswire

NAIROBI (FAO) -- Responding to Kenya's call for international

assistance in the face of severe drought and crop failure, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has appealed to donors for \$3.6 million to fund four emergency agriculture projects to assist rural families threatened by hunger. The FAO appeal is part of the United Nations 2004 Flash Appeal for the Drought and Food Security Crisis in Kenya.

The first project, budgeted at \$550,000, will coordinate information and analysis on vulnerable populations, emergency needs of the agriculture sector and track the impact of the emergency responses. It will also help coordinate efforts of government departments, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations that will participate in the emergency response.

The second project, estimated at \$825,000, will provide essential agriculture inputs for the October planting season.

Efforts will target both the semi-arid regions of Kenya and higher rainfall areas.

A third project, to be funded at \$1.5 million will help minimize livestock deaths caused by opportunistic diseases and parasites. It will also ensure water access to core breeding stock and a subsidized destocking programme that will provide meat to emergency food distribution programmes in affected regions.

Kenya has been facing one of the worst aflatoxin outbreaks in the world because of poor post-harvest management and storage of cereals, according to the FAO. This grain mould makes cereals unfit for consumption and has led to more than 100 deaths since May 2004. In response, FAO's fourth project, valued at \$750,000, will support community aflatoxin prevention strategies and promote alternative storage options prior to the next harvest.

According to Bruce Isaacson, FAO Representative in Kenya, "With the short-season rains coming in October, vulnerable households do not have the capacity to assure their future well-being without assistance. FAO sees the need for urgent intervention to preserve and rebuild the livelihoods of affected people and to reduce the causes of food insecurity."

On 14 July 2004, the President of the Republic of Kenya declared an emergency in Kenya and appealed to the international community for humanitarian assistance to deal with crop failures and poor pasture and livestock conditions caused by poor rainfall in some areas of the country. Kenya's problems are made worse by chronic high levels of poverty and exacerbated by the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

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Plus de 67 mille familles paysannes assistées à Huambo

10 August 2004
All Africa

Huambo, Aug 10, 2004 (Angola Press Agency/AllAfrica Global Media via COMTEX) --

Soixante-sept mille 744 familles résidant dans les municipalités de la province de Huambo (centre) bénéficient, il y a deux mois, des sémences horticoles diverses, de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'Alimentation et l'Agriculture "FAO".

Débutée à la fin du mois de juin, la distribution vise à assister les familles paysannes pour la plus part récemment réinstallées durant la campagne agricole 2004/2005.

A chaque famille, la "FAO" attribue 10 kilogrammes de courge, de carotte, d'oignon et de chou, ainsi que de 5 kg de piment et de tomate.

Sans toutefois déterminer le secteur de culture, le représentant de la FAO, Antonio Camuty, a déclaré que 4.065 kilogrammes de sémences horticoles ont déjà été distribués sur les 4.077 prévus, à travers des organisations non gouvernementales nationales et étrangères.

Par ailleurs, le programme d'appui aux familles avec les semences agricoles pour la présente campagne agricole est ce mardi, au cours d'une rencontre qui r'unira les représentants de la FAO et la direction provinciale de l'Agriculture et du Développement rural, le Programme Alimentaire Mondial (PAM).

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Sudan signs agreement with FAO on supporting Darfur region

10 August 2004
BBC Monitoring Middle East

Text of report in English by Egyptian news agency MENA

Khartoum, 10 August: The Sudanese Ministry of Agriculture on Tuesday [10 August] signed an agreement with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) on supplying the western Sudanese region with seeds and agricultural services for the cattle raisers to the value of 390,000 dollars.

Sudanese Minister of State for Agriculture Al-Sadiq Khidr Umar and Abdullah Ben Yahia, the FAO representative in Sudan, signed the agreement.

FAO is keen on maintaining its activities in Darfur projects, said Ben Yahia after the signing ceremony.

Source: MENA news agency, Cairo, in English 1431 gmt 10 Aug 04

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Sudan preparing to counter possible locust invasion

10 August 2004
BBC Monitoring Middle East

Text of report in English by Egyptian news agency MENA

Khartoum, 10 August: The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry said Tuesday [10 August] that Khartoum together with the FAO and Saudi authorities have made all preparations to fight locusts if they invade.

State Minister Fatih Sa'id said Tuesday so far no locusts invasion has been detected.

Sudan and Chad are doing their best and they are cooperating to counter the locusts invasion after large swarms of locusts have arrived in the Arab Maghreb countries and Mauritania.

The insects can devour within a day food that would feed thousands of people and hundreds of livestock.

Early in August week the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) appealed for 83m dollars (68m euros) to help tackle what they describe as the worst occurrence for 15 years in north and west Africa.

"In the next couple of weeks, the situation will probably return pretty much to normal in north-west Africa, but it will get worse in west Africa, " FAO spokesman Keith Cressman told AP news agency.

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Locusts swarm across Africa

Africa correspondent Sally Sara
10 August 2004
Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) News

Agricultural officials in west Africa are appealing for international help to control the worst locust swarms in 15 years.

The locusts have severely damaged crops in several west African nations.

The swarms of locusts have already spread across more than 1 million hectares in Mauritania.

The Mauritanian Government is struggling to deal with the situation.

Clive Elliott, from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), says the locusts are continuing to breed.

"It's pretty serious and it's getting worse," he said.

"The numbers of locusts arriving in western Africa is increasing."

The locust swarms have travelled across Mali, Senegal and Chad.

The FAO fears that the loss of crops could lead to widespread hunger.

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This Day (Nigeria) - AAGM: FG, FAO Support Rice Production With N324m.

Juliana Taiwo
23 July 2004
This Day (Nigeria)

Federal Government in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) have approved a budget of \$232,000 (N324,800,000) to aid rice production in the Niger River Basin.

Minister of Water Resources, Alhaji Murktari Shehu Shagari, at the signing of the Technical Cooperation Programme project document, said the project was in line with Federal Government's programmes toward accelerated agricultural development, which is also closely linked with the current Presidential initiative on rice production that aims at import substitution and eventual rice exports.

Shagari said the project has been captured within the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) to establish investment in land and water development as a first priority to attain food security.

"The main activity being implemented is the selection of sites from a number of available, but outdated studies, out of which two suitable schemes would be selected for implementation of Pilot Projects. The project is expected to achieve three main outputs namely, an analysis of existing project proposals, a synthesis of field verification of selected, more promising proposals and two fully updated and revised scheme proposals ready for investment," he added.

In his remark, the FAO representative in Nigeria, Mr. Joseph Johnson, who represented the Director-General of FAO, Dr. Jacques Diouf, noted that the Presidential Committee on Increased Rice Production and Exports, had prepared a comprehensive programme for Nigeria to attain self-sufficiency in rice and to eventually become a rice exporter in the medium term. He said when it is considered that Nigeria has been importing over 1.24 million tonnes of rice per annum in recent years, valued to over \$256.0 million, the task to be achieved by the Presidential Committee is not an easy one.

He stressed that the fact that Nigeria is estimated to have 263km³ of surface water flowing to the sea annually, plus about 87km³ of ground water and many dams are estimated to have a capacity of 30.3km³ is a positive development.

"With this abundance of fresh water and over 61 million hectares of arable land, Nigeria really has the potential to be a major producer and exporter of rice. The FAO Director-General was therefore pleased to respond positively to the request of Federal Government to collaborate with it to accelerate rice production in the country and more specifically in the Niger Basin," he said.

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Standard Times (Sierra Leone) - AAGM: Farmers Feed School Workshop Ends in Bo.

Peter Goma
21 July 2004
Standard Times (Sierra Leone)

As a way of bracing towards food security, the ministry of Agriculture and Food Security in collaboration with FAO (Food and Agricultural Organisation) held a three-day workshop on "Farmers feed schools" at the pastoral centre in Bo.

According to the FAO consultant who co-ordinated the workshop, Madam Hire Jennifer, disclosed that 23 participants were drawn from the ministry's employees countrywide.

Madam Hire Jennifer said that the workshop aims to train ministry staff to know where we are coming from, know where we are heading, and how to move forward to achieve food security in Sierra Leone, adding that they should get feed backs and design planning meetings for district farmers and field school coordinators.

She revealed that the workshop also deliberates on the constraints facing farmers in each district and seeks to outline solutions to address these constrains.

She said that some of the constraints of the farmers include late supply of inputs, inadequate working tools, poor communication network between the national and district levels, even among colleague coordinators, and lack of cooperation between the district directors in the agriculture ministry.

She re-affirmed that at the end of the workshop participants would have acquired lots of knowledge sharing from the various regions countrywide.

The national coordinator for special programmes on food security, Mr. Sahr P. Komba revealed that FFS (Farmers Feed School) programme is geared toward training of trainees who will in turn approach the farmers within each district.

This programme, he said, brings together traditional farmers to share experiences, ideas and knowledge of farming with modern technology combined, adding that they expect the participants to understand the schedule in training farmers and outline their various concerns at regional level.

Mr. Sahr P. Komba appealed to participants to design programmes for fighting hunger and encourage farmers to produce more food to eat so as to achieve our food security dream. He also disclosed that the programme is been funded by UNDP and FAO, and the deputy minister of agriculture, Francis K. Ngebeh has being very instrumental in the project.

One participant, Mr. Amadu Sesay disclosed that they have gone through the exercise of how to train farmers at various community and the programme is an extension service rendering to farmers.

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Heuschreckenplage

Gefräßige Gefahr

http://www.stern.de/wissenschaft/natur/index.html?id=528187&nv=hp_aa

© G. Diana/AP Unbändiger Hunger: Heuschreckenschwärme im südlichen Mauretanien

Riesige Schwärme von Heuschrecken bedrohen die Ernten in Westafrika. Nach UN-Angaben sind die Insekten auf dem Weg in die sudanesischen Krisenregion Darfur. Dort könnte sich die Lage für die Flüchtlinge weiter verschlechtern.

Im Westen Afrikas droht knapp einer Million Menschen eine Hungersnot, sollten sie nicht umgehend Hilfe im Kampf gegen die Heuschreckenplage erhalten. Die Heuschreckenschwärme haben jetzt nach Angaben von UN-Mitarbeitern Tschad erreicht und sind auf dem Weg in die westsudanesische Krisenregion Darfur. Dort könnte sich die Lage für Millionen Menschen noch weiter verschlechtern, die ohnehin unter dem Krieg dort zu leiden haben.

Die Heuschreckenschwärme, die ganze Ernte vernichten können, könnten den Westen Sudans innerhalb von acht Tagen erreichen, wenn sie ihr derzeitiges Tempo von rund hundert Kilometern am Tag fortsetzten, erklärte eine UN-Sprecherin in Genf. Die Insekten haben schon schwere Schäden in Mauretanien, Mali und Niger angerichtet. In Darfur sind nach 18 Monaten Krieg zwei Millionen Menschen auf Lebensmittelhilfen der UN angewiesen. Eine Million Menschen sind auf der Flucht. Von der Regierung unterstützte marodierende arabischstämmige Banden greifen dort die afrikanische Bevölkerung an.

Hunger auf Hirse, Wassermelonen und Erdnüsse

Die Wüstenheuschrecke vernichtet sowohl die Hirse-Felder als auch die für den Export bestimmten Wassermelonen und Erdnüsse. Es drohe der Verlust von rund 80 Prozent der Ernte, sagte Mohamed Lemine von der mauretanischen Landwirtschaftsvereinigung der Nachrichtenagentur Reuters.

Die Vereinten Nationen hatten schon im vergangenen Oktober vor einer Plage gewarnt, da die Witterung mit außergewöhnlich starken Regenfällen nach vielen Jahren der Trockenheit für die Entwicklung der Tiere optimal war. Jetzt, so schätzt die Welternährungsorganisation FAO, wird die Bekämpfung rund 80 Millionen Dollar kosten. Nur neun Millionen stünden bisher bereit. Allein Niger und Mauretanien benötigen nach eigenen Angaben rund 20 Millionen Dollar, extra Flugzeuge und tausende zusätzlicher Liter Pestizide. Der Gesamtschaden könnte sich nach Schätzungen der FAO bis zum Jahresende auf 245 Millionen Dollar steigen.

Notstand in Gambia

In Gambia wurde der Notstand ausgerufen. Mit der Heuschrecken-Invasion stehen uns riesige Nahrungsengpässe ins Haus. Mehr als 70 Prozent unserer Bevölkerung sind von der Landwirtschaft abhängig, sagte der Landwirtschaftsminister.

Die schlimmste Heuschreckenplage traf Afrika zwischen 1987 und 1989. Damals waren 28 Staaten betroffen, darunter auch so weit entfernt liegende Länder wie Indien.

Ibrahima Sylla/Reuters

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Llega la agricultura de barrio a Neiva para aliviar el hambre

Agosto 10 de 2004

http://eltiempo.terra.com.co/naci/tolima/2004-08-09/ARTICULO-WEB-NOTA_INTERIOR-1763222.html

Con la implementación de cultivos en jardines, terrazas y solares, la capital del Huila busca solucionar la subsistencia de las familias más pobres.

Bajo la consigna de que el desempleo, el desplazamiento y la violencia han imposibilitado las opciones de desarrollo digno de las personas, el director de Infraestructura Rural y Medio Ambiente de Neiva, Luis Alberto Motta Delgado, planteó un proyecto de seguridad alimentaria para el sector urbano.

Se trata de una iniciativa que propone la siembra de alimentos en solares de casas, pequeños patios, áreas comunales y escuelas. Ya se está realizando una prueba piloto en un barrio de la comuna 10 de esa población, paradójicamente conocido como El Oasis.

Entre los productos que se cultivarían figuran el tomate, el cilantro, el fríjol, la espinaca, el pepino, el pimentón, la habichuela, el melón, la patilla, las plantas medicinales y aromáticas, así como los árboles frutales nativos.

En Neiva, las estadísticas por hambre resultan alarmantes si se tiene en cuenta que la ciudad es la capital de un departamento considerado agrícola por naturaleza. De la población total (unos 367.862 habitantes), se calcula que al menos 120.000 personas no tengan satisfecha la necesidad básica alimentaria, de acuerdo con el último censo del Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (Dane).

La mayor parte de ellas suple el 45 por ciento de sus requerimientos nutricionales mínimos -entre uno y dos alimentos por día- lo que origina graves problemas de hambre y desnutrición, especialmente en los niños y mujeres gestantes.

La alternativa, que beneficiaría a 600 familias en 280 huertas de las comunas 8, 9 y 10 y de estratos 1 y 2 -el 2.5 por ciento de cobertura-, también contempla asistencia técnica y capacitación en alimentación balanceada y nutritiva, así como la correcta utilización y preparación de los alimentos. Adicionalmente, instrucción sobre el componente ambiental para el manejo de los residuos sólidos y la protección del agua.

"El proyecto está incluido en el programa de gobierno Equidad e Inclusión Social, propuesto por la alcaldesa Cielo González Villa, el cual busca sacar de la marginalidad a los sectores más desfavorecidos y a las comunidades excluidas del desarrollo y la justicia social. Además promueve la participación y la organización comunitaria", dijo Motta.

La iniciativa cuenta con el respaldo de la Organización Internacional de las Migraciones (OIM), la Secretaría de Salud Municipal, el Instituto Colombiano Agropecuario (ICA) y el Instituto Colombiano de Bienestar Familiar y la comunidad de las comunas.

Los beneficiarios directos, en la primera etapa del proyecto, se calculan en 471 personas, previo censo establecido por la Red de Solidaridad Social. Los indirectos llegarían a los 159 habitantes, que se estima, conformen unas 30 familias de hogares calificados como pobres y desplazados. La inversión está estimada en 200 millones de pesos por año.

Adriana Palacio Garcés
Especial para EL TIEMPO
Neiva

Alternativa de subsistencia

De acuerdo con la Organización Mundial para la Agricultura y la Alimentación (FAO) y el Programa Mundial de Alimentos, el hambre de las familias urbanas crece al mismo tiempo que los hacen las ciudades, tanto así que el índice de pobreza en América Latina asciende al 34 por ciento. Por lo tanto, a nivel mundial, la agricultura urbana se convirtió en una herramienta contra del hambre.

La Organización de las Naciones Unidas a través de la Oficina Coordinadora para América Latina y el Caribe comprometió su colaboración al programa de Agricultura Urbana de la Administración de Neiva.

El proceso fue acompañado para el montaje de los semilleros base de aprovisionamientos de plántulas, en las comunas 8, 9 y 10.

En algunos países de América Latina en donde se han implementado proyectos similares, los resultados han sido satisfactorios. En Brasil, por ejemplo, se estima que al menos 800 especies diferentes sean cultivadas en 'huertas caseras'. En Argentina, el tipo de siembra benefició a 10 mil familias de clase media que quedaron en la pobreza a partir de la reciente crisis económica que vivió ese país. Otro ejemplo es Cuba, en donde se han producido 63.431 toneladas de hortalizas, granos y tubérculos para autoconsumo y se han generado 17 mil empleos.

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Urgent Aid To Feed 1.4 Million Hungry Angolans

Wednesday, 11 August 2004, 11:15 am

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/mason/stories/WO0408/S00077.htm>

UN AGENCY APPEALS FOR URGENT AID TO FEED 1.4 MILLION HUNGRY ANGOLANS
New York, Aug 10 2004 10:00AM

With an acute funding shortage seriously hampering efforts to resettle tens of thousands of Angolans who fled their homes during the decades-long civil war, the United Nations today appealed for urgent international aid to help feed nearly 1.5 million hungry people until the end of the year.

"We only have a few precious months to help those wishing to return home," said World Food Programme (WFP) Deputy Country Director for the southern African country, Sonsoles Ruedas. She noted that it was even more crucial that the international community steps forward now since repatriations can only take place between June and October due to seasonal rains.

"For those people who have already returned, it's going to be a battle to eke out an existence during the rainy season without assistance. I really don't know how they are going to survive," she added.

WFP has received only \$45 million – or 18 per cent – of its appeal for \$253 million to feed 1.4 million returning refugees and displaced people until the end of 2005, forcing it to slash cereal rations by half. Unless there are immediate new donations, no cereals at all will be distributed in September, when the lean season starts.

The agency estimates that it will need a minimum of \$81.5 million just for the rest of this year for those who have already returned home or are scheduled to be repatriated from neighbouring Zambia, Namibia and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), some of them after spending decades in exile.

"Many face unimaginable misery when they return home," Ms. Ruedas said. "Clean drinking water from protected sources is rare, there are very few schools or health clinics and electricity remains only a dream in vast areas of the country. Now there is also very little food, which is essential if the repatriation process is to be successful."

Less than 5 percent of all arable land is cultivated in Angola due to a combination of landmines, and lack of seeds, fertilizer and draught animals.

A recent joint assessment mission from the WFP and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) found that cereal production is growing and the number of people needing food aid is falling, but that many challenges remain for the country which has enjoyed peace and stability since April 2002, when a ceasefire agreement was signed between the government and the rebel Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA).

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CHAD: Chad appeals for US\$9 million to fight growing locust threat

http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=42615&SelectRegion=West_Africa&SelectCountry=CHAD

A plane sprays pesticide on a swarm of desert locusts devouring grazing land.

NDJAMENA, 10 Aug 2004 (IRIN) - Chad appealed to the international community on Tuesday for US\$9 million to help tackle locust swarms that have started destroying crops in the west of the Central African country.

" We fear a locust invasion before December, and we have developed an emergency action plan for the summer period running from August to December to fight locusts," Foreign Minister Nagoum Yamassoun told a meeting of donor country representatives in the capital N'djamena.

Ndoubabe Tigaye, the director of the plant protection unit of the Ministry of Agriculture, told IRIN afterwards that an intensive control campaign would have to be carried out over the next four months.

"We need 10 prospection and treatment teams equipped with 30 vehicles and 150,000 litres of pesticides to treat 200,000 hectares, we need logistics support," he said

"In the event of a real invasion, we will need to charter crop spraying planes and repair landing strips as well," he added.

To date, Chad has only four field locust detection teams deployed across its vast and sparsely populated territory, most of which is desert and dry savannah.

The Foreign Minister said locust swarms which flew into Chad last week from neighbouring Niger had destroyed 30 hectares of crops near Lake Chad and the government was checking reports that concentrations of the flying insects had been sighted near Ati, 450 km west of the capital.

«Two locust swarms destroyed 30 hectares of cultures in the Mahana village, in the Ngouri Zone [in the Kanem region, western Chad],» Yamassoun said.

Elsewhere in the Sahel belt on the southern fringes of the Sahara, locust swarms flying south from Morocco and Algeria have already caused heavy damage to crops and pasture in Mauritania, Mali, Niger and Senegal and have begun breeding there.

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ANGOLA: Improved cereal production despite obstacles

http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=42609&SelectRegion=Southern_Africa&SelectCountry=ANGOLA

The lack of funds has hampered WFP efforts to support returnees

JOHANNESBURG, 10 Aug 2004 (IRIN) - Despite improved cereal production since the end of Angola's civil war two years ago, the country remains unable to realise its full agricultural potential, according to a United Nations report.

Results from a recent joint assessment by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP) showed that less than 5 percent of arable land was cultivated because of landmines and a lack of seeds, fertiliser and draught animals.

Poor road conditions also hindered market activities and restricted access to food, particularly in the rural parts of the country.

Despite these obstacles, cereal production was estimated at 713,000 mt, a 27 percent rise above the previous five-year average, mainly from an increased area under cultivation.

As a result, about 1.12 million Angolans per month are currently expected to receive food assistance, compared to 1.4 million last year.

Meanwhile, WFP said on Tuesday that efforts to resettle tens of thousands of returnees were being hampered by lack of funds. The agency had received only US \$45 million, or 18 percent, of its two-year US \$253 million appeal to feed 1.4 million returning refugees and displaced people.

"The funding shortage is seriously undermining the resettlement process and reducing the incentive for people to return to their areas of origin," Sonsoles Ruedas, WFP deputy country director for Angola, said in a statement.

The funding shortfall had forced the UN food agency to reduce cereal rations by 50 percent, and unless there were immediate new donations, no cereals at all would be distributed in September when the lean season started.

"Many face unimaginable misery when they return home. Clean drinking water from protected sources is rare, there are very few schools or health clinics, and electricity remains only a dream in vast areas of the country. Now there is also very little food, which is essential if the repatriation process is to be successful," Ruedas added.

An estimated 166,000 Angolans are still in neighbouring countries, where some have been living in refugee camps for decades.

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SWAZILAND: Another food crisis year

[http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=42610&SelectRegion=Southern Africa](http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=42610&SelectRegion=Southern_Africa)

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Drought conditions in Sri Lanka could worsen: UN :

<http://www.123bharath.com/india-news/index.php?action=fullnews&id=7520>

United Nations, Aug 10 : The UN warned Tuesday that the next couple of months could be critical for Sri Lanka because of the worsening drought conditions in the country.

With cumulative rainfall till mid-July showing a shortfall of 30-50 percent, the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said it could seriously affect the main crop season in the Indian Ocean island country.

Without a significant improvement in rainfall, the next Maha crop season (October 2004 to March 2005) that accounts for 60 percent of the annual production would be at risk, it said in a statement.

While some districts may suffer a third consecutive crop failure, livestock would also be affected, it said.

Rainfall in Sri Lanka has been extremely low since the beginning of the last Maha season. By late February, water levels in the major reservoirs and minor tanks in Northwestern and North-Central Provinces were only 21-34 percent of their capacity.

The failure of rains has already resulted in a drop in rice production of 37-77.5 percent in some areas compared to last year, the statement said, adding that other rain-fed crops like maize, various pulses and chillies were also heavily damaged.

--Indo-Asian News Service

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U.N. seeks \$97M for Kenya food crisis

http://www.menafn.com/qn_news_story.asp?StoryId=CqrHigeidDw4TA2vUEwe

Date: Tuesday, August 10, 2004 6:01:39 PM EST By WILLIAM M. REILLY, UPI United Nations Correspondent

UNITED NATIONS, Aug. 10 (UPI) -- The United Nations Tuesday appealed for \$97 million to help get food and basic supplies to 2.3 million people in Kenya in need of emergency assistance because of a unique agricultural crisis in the East Africa nation.

Kenya's crop failure is blamed on irregular rainfall patterns and contamination of grain reserves by a toxin created by grain mold, the U.N.'s World Food Program said.

Food production in five of the country's seven provinces will account for only roughly 40 percent of what is needed this year, WFP said. Of the 2.3 million people in need of emergency relief, 1.8 million require general food distribution and 500,000 children take part in the school feeding program. The total amount of food needed for the next six months is about 166,000 tons.

In addition to distributing food to the most severely affected areas, the U.N. appeal seeks to distribute seeds to areas with high crop loss, prevent measles through a massive vaccination campaign, increase efforts in ongoing nutritional programs, rehabilitate water sources, retain children in school through school feeding programs, and provide curative measures for livestock.

Working with WFP, the lead agency, and the Nairobi government are the U.N. Children's Fund, the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization and the U.N. Development Program.

The WFP sought \$82 million for immediate food assistance and follows the July 14 appeal by Kenya's President Mwai Kibaki, who called for international emergency assistance until at least the end of January 2005 for people struggling with food shortages in the rural areas of the coast, eastern, northeastern and Rift Valley provinces.

"You only have to visit these parts of Kenya to see with your own eyes how in many cases the maize crop has wilted under the sun after the failure of the long rains in May this year -- it is now essentially useless. People are struggling to provide enough food for their families," said WFP Kenya Country Director Tesema Negash.

This year's long rains were poor in much of eastern and southern Kenya and in some northern areas. A dry spell from late April to May came at a critical stage in the crop development. Scattered showers in early June were too late for a significant recovery, resulting in near-total crop failures in many parts of the coast and eastern provinces. Pasture and grazing are already poor in much of northeastern province and parts of Rift Valley.

If the short rains are poor later in the year, an additional 1 million people will require food assistance in 2005, bringing the total needing food assistance in Kenya in 2005 to 3.3 million, WFP said.

Grain prices have almost doubled in most parts of the country while livestock prices have declined significantly. People are increasingly producing charcoal and firewood to raise money for food. There are also unusually high sales of breeding stocks of cattle, sheep and goats.

Many people are missing out on meals to preserve food stocks, and children are skipping school to assist their parents in the hunt for food, the U.N. agency said.

Wild animals are also leaving their game-park homes because of a shortage of water and are damaging vital crops.

Under the emergency operation, the school feeding program is to be expanded from the 1 million primary and pre-primary children in Kenya who already receive lunches from food supplied by WFP to include another 544,000 children in arid and semi-arid areas.

For many children in these areas, school lunches are the only meal that they eat in an entire day. School feeding reduces the number of children who drop out of classes to look for food or work, especially in times of hardship. It also cuts malnutrition and boosts school attendance and educational performance.

Before Kibaki's appeal, WFP and other aid agencies had scaled up their programs in the worst-affected districts, including Marsabit in the north. The government of Kenya has also been distributing food in many areas, but its resources are running out.

"We are facing a crisis on a massive scale which will spiral out of control at great human cost if we do not act now," said Negash. "For many Kenyans, two poor seasons in a row will spell disaster if they do not receive assistance on time."

For its part, FAO asked for \$3.6 million to cover four emergency farming projects to help rural families threatened by hunger.

"With the short-season rains coming in October, vulnerable households do not have the capacity to assure their future well-being without assistance," said Bruce Isaacson, FAO's representative in Kenya. "FAO sees the need for urgent intervention

to preserve and rebuild the livelihoods of affected people and to reduce the causes of food insecurity."

The last WFP emergency operation because of drought in Kenya ran from March 2000 to October 2002, and at its height in 2001, fed a total of 4.4 million people, including 1 million school children. This was considered to be Kenya's worst drought in 40 years.

The numbers in need of assistance are based on assessments by the Kenya Food Security Meeting, which consists of government ministries, U.N. agencies, non-governmental organizations and donors.

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Massive Locust Swarms Could Spread East From Africa Into Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan

<http://www.truthnews.net/world/2004080008.htm>

By Breffni O'Rourke, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

Vast swarms of locusts are spreading across North Africa's Sahel region, and experts fear the voracious insects could head east and north across the Arabian Peninsula into Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan, almost to Central Asia. Efforts to control the infestation at its starting point along Africa's Atlantic coast have so far been ineffective.

Prague, 10 August 2004 (RFE/RL) -- In the Bible, a locust swarm is one of the plagues sent by God to punish the Egyptian pharaoh at the request of Moses.

We know therefore that locust swarms have occurred in North Africa for thousands of years. And the horror of this plague, when whole countries are stripped bare by a suffocating mass of insects, lives on to the present day.

In recent weeks, new locust swarms have infested an estimated 6 million hectares of agricultural and grazing land in several African Sahel states, and are spreading fast.

Some 80 million locusts per square kilometer are moving eastward. The summer rainy season -- which aids the locusts' breeding habits -- mean the cloud can grow many times larger. Experts say that in times of outbreak, each generation of locusts is 20 times bigger than the last.

The official in charge of the Locust Group of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Clive Elliot, spoke to RFE/RL from Rome.

"What is happening is that there are many swarms, which have arrived in the Sahelian region stretching from Mauritania, though Mali, Niger -- and just in the last couple of days, also one swarm has reached Chad," Elliot said. "So there are many swarms in those areas, and they are the ones which escaped control operations in northwest Africa during the spring."

Elliot said this massive cloud of locusts is not yet officially classified as a "plague." For that term to be applied, the swarms have to be present in two regions. For the

moment, they are only in the western region of the Sahel. But that could change rapidly.

"We are expecting swarms to arrive very soon in Sudan. And once they are into Sudan, they are certainly capable of spreading across the Red Sea to the Arabian Peninsula, and then later on into southwest Asia," Elliot said. "It takes time, and of course it depends how successful control operations are in breaking the cycle of movement."

At risk are Iran, possibly Iraq, border regions of Pakistan, India, and southern Afghanistan.

Controlling locusts involves pesticide sprays. The FAO says it uses mainly organophosphates as sprays, and moves people and livestock away from areas about to be sprayed, in order to minimize exposure.

But, as Elliot admitted, chemical sprays can have a broader negative impact on the environment over a vast area.

"It depends on the pesticide, but yes, there are some limited effects on other animals," Elliot said. "And as they [the pesticides] kill locusts, of course they do affect beneficial insects as well. We are very conscious of this fact, and every effort is made to minimize these side effects."

In Mauritania, the first and westernmost country hit by the locusts, an estimated 1 million hectares of land has been ravaged.

Thami ben Halima is the executive secretary of the UN committee for the eradication of locusts in Mauritania and the rest of the Maghreb. Speaking from Algiers, he told RFE/RL that the situation is "extremely grave."

"The situation is bad in Mauritania, worse than last year," Halima said. "Effectively the population of pests is much greater than last year, and much more widely dispersed, and the ecological conditions for them are good."

Ben Halima said Mauritania has urgent need of more equipment -- including aircraft, spraying experts, and chemicals:

"Effectively we need much more aerial capability. That means planes and helicopters -- planes for spraying, and helicopters both for spraying and observation," Halima said. "We also need better ground capacities, and we also need much more pesticide, and protective [clothing] materials."

Mauritania, one of the poorer countries of a poor continent, has launched an international appeal for help, but so far only Algeria, Morocco, France, and Libya have responded.

The locust swarms coincide with the start of the sowing season, which means the local supply of staple foods will be put at risk if the planting cannot go ahead.

The main loss so far, according to Halima, is the natural vegetation that is essential to maintain the ecological balance in the fragile Sahara desert fringe.

"We have already lost an enormous amount of our natural vegetation, that is to say pasture, as well as treed areas, which are now vulnerable to attack from the desert. You know that trees are absolutely indispensable for [ecological] equilibrium," Halima said.

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Les organisations internationales accordent des aides au Laos

08/11/2004 -- 18:32(GMT+7)

http://www.vnagency.com.vn/NewsP.asp?LANGUAGE_ID=3&CATEGORY_ID=39&NEWS_ID=113214

Vientiane, 11 août (AVI) - La Banque asiatique de développement (ADB) au Laos a accordé, mardi à Vientiane, un crédit d'une valeur de 10 millions de dollars pour le Projet de la construction de petits ouvrages hydrauliques (2ème étape) dans les régions Nord du Laos.

Le crédit permettra au Laos de développer le système des ouvrages hydrauliques de petite envergure. La première étape du projet a été réalisée dans 11 districts de 4 provinces du Nord, en vue d'assurer l'irrigation pour 3.300 hectares de riz, d'améliorer des infrastructures et l'environnement ruraux. La 2e étape du projet sera mise en oeuvre vers fin 2004 pour s'achever en 2011.

Le même jour, un projet d'assistance au développement du marché des produits agricoles a été conclu entre le ministère de l'Agriculture et de la Sylviculture du Laos et l'organisation des Nations unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture (FAO).

Il s'agit d'un projet d'une valeur de 365.000 dollars pour la période de 2004 - 2006, déployé dans les provinces de Louang Prabang, Savannakhet et Champassak dans le but de réduire la pauvreté, de développer l'économie, de rehausser le niveau de vie de la population et de protéger l'environnement. - AVI

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Lutte anti-acridienne : La bataille est loin d'être gagnée

[http://www.lequotidien.sn/articles/article.CFM?article_id=16592`](http://www.lequotidien.sn/articles/article.CFM?article_id=16592)

11 ao6Ut 2004

Les responsables de la Fao et ceux de la Dpv s'attendent à des attaques encore plus importantes des «envahisseurs sur pattes», dont les arrivées ne semblent pas vouloir ralentir.

Le Centre d'intervention anti-acridien d'urgence de l'Organisation des Nations-Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture (Fao) a annoncé, dans un communiqué de la Direction de la protection des végétaux (Dpv) du Sénégal, parvenu mardi à la Pana, que davantage d'essaims vont probablement apparaître dans les prochaines semaines en Afrique de l'Ouest. Selon le Centre de la Fao, de nombreux essaims ont échappé aux opérations de lutte dans les zones de reproduction printanière d'Afrique du Nord-Ouest et ont migré vers l'Afrique de l'Ouest, où ils ont atteint les pâturages et les zones de culture du Sahel.

Ces essaims se sont dispersés sur une vaste zone s'étendant du Sénégal au Niger et probablement au Tchad. Actuellement, la situation acridienne est très grave en Mauritanie et les infiltrations d'essaims se poursuivent au Sénégal, a rapporté le communiqué.

Le Centre de lutte anti-acridienne de la Mauritanie (Claa) a-t-on indiqué, a envoyé un message radio à la Dpv/Sénégal pour l'informer de la situation acridienne très grave qu'elle vit. En Mauritanie, de très grandes superficies sont infestées, alors que des moyens de lutte disponibles y sont insuffisants. Au Sénégal, du 1er au 8 août 2004, dix-neuf (19) essaims ont été signalés dans les régions de Louga, Matam et Saint-Louis, portant à quarante (40) le nombre d'essaims signalés depuis le début des invasions constatées le 23 juin 2004.

Au total, 38 344 hectares sont infestés au Sénégal et la Dpv a indiqué que 15 440 hectares sont traités. Treize unités motorisées de la Dpv sont en action dans les principales localités infestées (Matam, Linguère, Podor, Richard-Toll, Bakel). Les traitements se poursuivent avec l'appui de 250 militaires et 45 agents du Groupement national des Sapeurs pompiers formés par la Dpv.

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La grande invasion

http://www.jeuneafrique.com/gabarits/articleJAI_online.asp?art_cle=LIN08084lagranoisav0

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Crevettes : gros potentiels dans l'élevage bio

http://lecourrier.vnagency.com.vn/default.asp?CATEGORY_ID=16&NEWSPAPER_ID=38&TOPIC_ID=51&REPLY_ID=19285

11 août 2004

La nature offre aux paysans vietnamiens des conditions favorables à l'élevage des crevettes en eau saumâtre. Il faut trouver une formule qui respecte la nature. Si l'élevage des crustacés est devenu depuis des années un métier ordinaire, celui des crevettes dites biologiques reste très nouveau pour les millions de paysans des régions côtières. À l'aide de SIPPO, une organisation non gouvernementale suisse spécialisée dans la promotion de l'importation, l'Association vietnamienne de la production et de l'exportation des produits aquicoles (VASEP) a développé en 2001 la première formule d'élevage des crevettes mené de façon biologique en eau saumâtre dans la province de Cà Mau. Le service d'Aquiculture de Cà Mau y a participé aussi. Des bassins ont été creusés sur 4.000 hectares de terres salées de la ferme sylvo-aquicole N184. L'expérimentation a créé des emplois pour 1.700 foyers paysans. Les crevettes de la ferme 184 sont traitées par la compagnie de transformation et d'exportation des produits aquicoles de Cà Mau (Camimex). Etiquetés "bio" et avec un certificat suisse, ces marchandises sont expédiées avec prix de 20 % supérieur par rapport aux produits ordinaires de même catégorie. Avec ce type de marchandise, le Vietnam est devenu le premier pays dans le monde à produire des crevettes d'eau saumâtre de façon biologique. L'Équateur élève aussi des crevettes bio, mais appartenant à une espèce différente, aux pattes blanches, selon Nguyen

Huu Dung, secrétaire général de VASEP. D'après Ngô Hồng Phuoc, directeur de la ferme sylvo-aquicole N184, l'élevage des crevettes bio consiste à réaliser un environnement naturel. La densité des crustacés y est largement inférieure à celle de l'élevage industriel. On compte sur un mètre carré une ou deux crevettes seulement, pour que ces dernières puissent se nourrir des planctons naturels poussant dans l'eau. Les paysans doivent, bien sûr, respecter plusieurs critères techniques très stricts. Tous les éleveurs participent à une gestion communautaire. Le paysan ne peut pas modifier l'environnement de son domaine sans autorisation de la communauté. Il s'agit d'une mesure de respect des conditions naturelles de la ferme. Les espaces verts doivent occuper jusqu'à 60 % ou 70 % de la superficie totale.

Développer la production bio à partir de l'élevage actuel

L'année dernière, les premiers containers de crevettes bio ont été expédiés en Suisse. Cette année, trois containers ont de nouveau été exportés. Les produits de la ferme 184 sont maintenant connus dans le monde. C'est pour cette raison que l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture (FAO), l'organisation intergouvernementale Infotech et VASEP ont organisé, en juin dernier à Hô Chi Minh-Ville, une conférence internationale sur l'aquaculture biologique. Quelque 130 délégués de 38 pays y ont participé. La vice-ministre du Ministère des produits aquatiques Nguyễn Thị Hồng Minh a souligné que le Vietnam présente de gros potentiels dans l'élevage des crevettes biologiques avec l'existence d'environ 500.000 hectares de bassins d'élevage de crevettes en eau saumâtre. Il est possible de transformer ces espaces, parce que les techniques actuellement utilisées sont proches de celles de l'élevage biologique. Les forêts submergées du Sud offrent des conditions favorables à l'épanouissement des crustacés. Le secrétaire général de VASEP Nguyễn Hữu Dũng reste toutefois réticent, parce que, d'après lui, le prix des crevettes bio n'apparaît pas nettement avantageux pour les paysans. Néanmoins, il faut dans tous les cas développer cette formule d'élevage, parce qu'elle est moins polluante, a jugé M. Dũng.

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Les criquets envahissent le Tchad et menacent le Darfour

AP | 11.08.04 | 01:29

<http://permanent.nouvelobs.com/etranger/20040811.FAP1528.html?0633>

<http://www.canada.com/news/monde/story.html?id=39378C31-4625-44A5-A89B-5C55F3F60226>

NOUAKCHOTT (AP) -- Les essaims de millions de criquets pèlerins qui ont déjà causé d'importants dégâts au Niger, au Mali et en Mauritanie ont atteint l'ouest du Tchad et pourraient frapper d'ici à une semaine la région du Darfour, dans l'ouest du Soudan, déjà ravagée par la guerre et siège de l'une des plus graves crises humanitaires actuelles.

Selon Elizabeth Byrs, porte-parole de l'Office des Nations Unies pour la coordination des secours humanitaires (OCHA) les criquets sont arrivés dans l'ouest du Tchad, portés par les vents, qui pourraient les conduire ensuite jusqu'au Darfour.

En fait, on ne sait pas jusqu'où iront les nuées de criquets. Mais, au rythme actuel de leur déplacement -100 kilomètres par jour-les insectes mettront une semaine à traverser les 800 kilomètres du Tchad et à atteindre la frontière soudanaise, où s'entasse les réfugiés du conflit au Darfour.

Selon la FAO, la concentration des insectes atteint 500.000 à l'hectare. De véritables tapis de criquets recouvrent les routes, les véhicules, les maisons.

Selon la porte-parole d'OCHA, le Tchad a demandé une aide internationale de 7 millions de dollars (5,7 millions d'euros) pour traiter environ 250.000 hectares gravement menacés par les insectes.

Les invasions de criquets sont périodiques dans cette région du monde mais le phénomène actuel est le plus grave depuis 1987-1989. A l'époque, la lutte contre cette véritable plaie avait coûté selon l'ONU un demi-milliard de dollars. AP

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Davantage de criquets attendus en Afrique de l'Ouest, selon la FAO

http://www.lesoleil.sn/regions/article.cfm?articles_id=40772

11 Août 2004

Le Centre d'intervention anti-acridien d'urgence de l'Organisation des Nations-Unies pour l'Alimentation et l'Agriculture (FAO) a annoncé, dans un communiqué de la Direction de la Protection des Végétaux (DPV) du Sénégal, parvenu mardi à la PANA, que davantage d'essaims vont probablement apparaître dans les prochaines semaines en Afrique de l'Ouest.

Selon le Centre de la FAO, de nombreux essaims ont échappé aux opérations de lutte dans les zones de reproduction printanière d'Afrique du Nord-Ouest et ont migré vers l'Afrique de l'Ouest, où ils ont atteint les pâturages et les zones de culture du Sahel. Ces essaims se sont dispersés sur une vaste zone s'étendant du Sénégal au Niger et probablement au Tchad.

Actuellement, la situation acridienne est très grave en Mauritanie et les infiltrations d'essaims se poursuivent au Sénégal, a rapporté le communiqué. Le Centre de Lutte Anti-Acridienne de la Mauritanie (CLAA) a-t-on indiqué, a envoyé un message radio à la DPV-Sénégal pour l'informer de la situation acridienne très grave qu'elle vit. En Mauritanie, de très grandes superficies sont infestées, alors que des moyens de lutte disponibles y sont insuffisants.

Au Sénégal, du 1er au 8 août 2004, dix-neuf (19) essaims ont été signalés dans les régions de Louga, Matam et Saint-Louis, portant à quarante (40) le nombre d'essaims signalés depuis le début des invasions constatées le 23 juin 2004. Au total, 38.344 hectares sont infestés au Sénégal et la DPV a indiqué que 15.440 hectares sont traités. Treize unités motorisées de la DPV sont en action dans les principales localités infestées (Matam, Linguère, Podor, Richard-Toll, Bakel). Les traitements se poursuivent avec l'appui de 250 militaires et 45 agents du Groupement National des Sapeurs Pompiers (GNSP) formés par la DPV.

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El 47% de la población del país sufre algún grado de desnutrición

38 litros de leche anuales consumen los bolivianos en promedio

<http://www.bolpress.com/sociedad.php?Cod=2002082134>

11 DE AGOSTO DE 2004

En promedio, cada boliviano consume 38 litros al año, es decir el 25% del consumo recomendado por la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura y la

Alimentación (FAO). Para revertir el bajo consumo, el Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos y Agropecuarios planea mejorar su producción en el marco de la Estrategia Nacional de Desarrollo Agropecuario Rural (Endar).

Entre el 26 y 29 de octubre Bolivia será sede del I Congreso Regional de Lechería de Altura, en el que participarán 300 productores, transformadores, comercializadores e investigadores de Perú, Bolivia, Ecuador, Chile y Argentina.

Los temas principales del Congreso serán el desarrollo científico de la producción lechera y la transformación y comercialización de lácteos.

El Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos coadyuva a través de un proyecto de Decreto para obligar a los municipios a comprar leche boliviana para el desayuno escolar.

El presidente de la Federación de Productores de Leche de La Paz (Fedelpaz), Eliodoro Morales, informó que su gremio constituido por cinco asociaciones de provincia produce mensualmente 90 mil litros de leche destinados a la industria nacional, al desayuno escolar y a la elaboración de queso artesanal.

Bolivia desnutrida

Según el ministro de Salud, Fernando Antezana, al menos el 47% de la población boliviana sufre algún grado de desnutrición. Antezana inauguró ayer el VII Congreso Nacional de Nutrición que tiene el objetivo de definir estrategias para resolver ese problema.

Rose Marie Chávez, miembro de la Comisión Social del VII Congreso Nacional de Nutrición, piensa que la gente se alimenta mal por sus hábitos, pues en el país hay muchas riquezas en los productos naturales. "El objetivo de este congreso es mejorar la nutrición, un compromiso para nosotros los profesionales nutricionistas de cambiar los hábitos alimentarios y la educación a nivel nacional", expresó.

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FAO inicia programa de "educación" alimentaria en comunidades indígenas de México

<http://www.radiomundoreal.fm/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=2686&mode=thread&order=0&thold=0>

11.08.04

La Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Agricultura y la Alimentación (FAO) solventará mediante el envío de recursos económicos y personal técnico, un programa definido como de "manejo del hambre" en comunidades indígenas y campesinas de 10 estados de México. El programa pretende cubrir a 300 mil familias con un monto estimado de 400 mil dólares para su implementación.

El programa de la FAO tendrá como objetivos, por una parte el de capacitar a funcionarios y técnicos mexicanos para que éstos luego desarrollen en las comunidades el pasaje a mejores prácticas y hábitos alimentarios.

Por otra parte también se dispuso que se distribuya dos envíos al mes con alimentos "de alto valor nutritivo" hacia las comunidades de 10 estados del país, entre las que se encuentran Aguascalientes, Quintana Roo, Tlaxcala, Yucatán y Nayarit. Principalmente el programa será focalizado en la región sur – sureste del país.

La ayuda consiste en la entrega de una canasta de productos básicos por un valor de 200 pesos (unos 17, 40 dólares). El acuerdo fue sellado este viernes en la sede de la FAO en la ciudad de Roma.

El organismo mexicano que acordó el programa y que estará encargado de su puesta en funcionamiento es la Secretaría de Desarrollo Social (Sedesol). Dará comienzo a partir de este mes de agosto y se extenderá hasta principios del año 2006.

La capacitación en lo que la FAO denomina como "educación alimentaria" se llevará a cabo con 124 técnicos, quienes a su vez divulgarán el modelo de hábitos y prácticas alimentarias apropiados según el organismo de Naciones Unidas a otros 900 `Xomotores que serán los que finalmente trabajarán en las comunidades.

La propia Secretaria de Sedesol, Josefina Vázquez Mota afirmó que el programa "abre una nueva posibilidad de política pública en México, porque vamos a considerar aspectos relacionados con la alimentación, pero también con la propia cultura e historia de las comunidades".

El Subsecretario de Prospectiva, Planeación y Evaluación de la Sedesol, Miguel Székely, expresó por su parte que el apoyo alimentario enviado por la FAO "permitirá cubrir el 20% del requerimiento nutricional de las 300 mil familias más pobres del país".

El Subdirector General del departamento técnico de la FAO, Henri Carsalade expresó que "proyectos similares ya se llevaron a cabo con éxito en otras regiones de América Latina, como Chile, el Caribe y Brasil, donde se está apoyando especialmente el proyecto hambre cero".

Carsalade informó además que la FAO ha apoyado numerosos proyectos de colaboración con México: durante el año 2003 fueron seis programas financiados con un monto estimado de un 1.300.000, entre ellos el de seguridad alimentaria (PESA).

El Programa Especial para la Seguridad Alimentaria (PESA) consiste en un eje importante del trabajo de la FAO y esta destinado a tratar de ayudar a los países en desarrollo, especialmente en los de bajos ingresos con déficit de alimentos a mejorar su seguridad alimentaria mediante un "incremento acelerado de la productividad y la producción de alimentos".

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PLAGA DE LANGOSTAS

http://www.peru.com/noticias/idocs/2004/8/10/DetalleDocumento_159055.asp

(Peru.com: 2004-8-10) Una plaga de langostas azota el oeste de África y la Organización de las Naciones Unidas (ONU) para la Agricultura y la Alimentación (FAO) advierte que no tiene los 50 millones de dólares necesarios para combatirla,

debido a que la comunidad internacional, hasta ahora, sólo a donado menos de la mitad.

Las nubes de insectos, algunas de hasta 40 kilómetros de largo, han descendido implacablemente sobre Mauritania, Mali, Senegal, Níger y Chad. La plaga podría alcanzar a Sudán, e incluso afectar a Irán, Pakistán e India.

En Mauritania, el 80 por ciento de las cosechas han sido destruidas y por lo menos un millón de personas están amenazadas por el hambre.

Equipos en Mauritania trabajan noche y día para contener las nubes de langostas. Se calcula que para controlar la plaga se necesitarían unos 640.000 litros de pesticidas.

La ONU comenzó a pedir fondos en octubre del año pasado para fumigar los sitios donde las langostas depositan sus larvas, en las montañas Atlas de Marruecos. Una acción temprana podría haber evitado la devastación que sufren actualmente otros países.

Con la llegada ahora de las lluvias, las langostas aumentan su reproducción en forma dramática, ya que la humedad del suelo les permite cavar túneles para colocar sus huevos.

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No controlan la invasión El apocalipsis en forma de langosta

Buenos Aires, 10 de agosto de 2004 - 11:57 hs.

<http://www3.terra.com.ar/canales/internacionales/95/95344.html>

Naciones Unidas advirtió que no tiene fondos suficientes para combatir la plaga de langostas que está devastando el oeste de África.

Más de US\$50 millones se necesitan en forma urgente para controlar la plaga, pero menos de la mitad de esa cifra ha sido donada por la comunidad internacional, advirtió la Organización de la ONU para la Agricultura y la Alimentación (FAO, en sus siglas en inglés).

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En Mauritania, el 80% de las cosechas han sido destruidas y por lo menos un millón de personas están amenazadas por el hambre.

Lucha denodada

Equipos en Mauritania trabajan noche y día para contener las nubes de langostas. Se calcula que para controlar la plaga se necesitarían unos 640.000 litros de pesticidas.

La ONU comenzó a pedir fondos en octubre del año pasado para fumigar los sitios donde las langostas depositan sus larvas, en las montañas Atlas de Marruecos. Una

acción temprana podría haber evitado la devastación que sufren actualmente otros países.

Con la llegada ahora de las lluvias, las langostas aumentan su reproducción en forma dramática, ya que la humedad del suelo les permite cavar túneles para colocar sus huevos.

En varios de los países afectados se informó que ya ha terminado el período de incubación y están naciendo más langostas.

"Si no se toman medidas urgentes, las larvas se convertirán en enjambres en dos o tres semanas, lo que complicará las operaciones de lucha contra la plaga", advirtió a la agencia EFE Mohamed Abdelahi Uld Babah, director del Centro de Lucha contra la Langosta de Mauritania.

Hambre

Plantaciones enteras de mandioca, mijo y otros cultivos están siendo devoradas por las nubes de billones de insectos. Se calcula que un enjambre de diez kilómetros de largo contiene unos 5.000 millones de insectos.

En Mauritania, un país de más de un millón de kilómetros cuadrados, en su mayoría desérticos, la desesperación se mezcla con la impotencia.

Algunos agricultores han dejado de plantar semillas. Otros, sin saber qué hacer ante el avance de la plaga, siguen haciéndolo.

"Tengo una familia grande, 20 personas dependen de mi. No tengo hijos en la ciudad que me puedan mandar dinero. Si las langostas devoran mi cultivo, será una catástrofe", dijo a la FAO Amadou Binta Thiam, un agricultor mauritano de 82 años, que aún trabaja la tierra manualmente.

Jidhoum M´Bareck, otro agricultor que trabaja con un arado tirado a caballo, sigue plantando: "No puedo quedarme con los brazos cruzados. Tengo que plantar mis cultivos aún sabiendo que las langostas se los van a comer. Unas diez personas dependen de mí para comer".

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Educación de la población rural para reforzar la productividad agrícola en América Latina

Miércoles 4 de Agosto de 2004

La Segunda

FAO, UNESCO y otras organizaciones aúnan esfuerzos en su lucha contra el analfabetismo.

La FAO anunció el lanzamiento de una campaña internacional sobre educación de las poblaciones rurales de América Latina con el objetivo de mejorar la productividad agrícola y reducir el hambre, la desnutrición y la pobreza.

La campaña se iniciará en Santiago de Chile con el taller regional "Alimentación Segura y Educación para la Población Rural", del 3 al 5 de agosto de 2004.

El taller, organizado conjuntamente por FAO y UNESCO, contará además con la participación del Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación (IICA), el Banco Mundial y la Cooperación Italiana para el Desarrollo (DGCS).

La campaña educativa para América Latina FAO/UNESCO forma parte de la iniciativa de educación global en favor de las poblaciones rurales liderada por la FAO e implementada en colaboración con la UNESCO y más de 100 asociados, incluyendo ONGs y universidades. La campaña representa una iniciativa de seguimiento a la cumbre Mundial de Johannesburgo sobre Desarrollo Sustentable realizada en 2002.

A nivel mundial, existen más de mil millones de analfabetos de los cuales aproximadamente 130 millones son niños. La mayoría de ellos viven en las regiones menos desarrolladas, donde también se concentra la mayoría de los 840 millones de personas desnutridas del planeta.

Según estudios de la FAO, la mayoría de estas personas mal nutridas y analfabetas vive en las zonas rurales de América Latina.

Las discusiones tendrán como telón de fondo un reciente estudio regional sobre educación de la población rural realizado en Brasil, Chile, Colombia, Honduras, México, Paraguay y Perú.

Por ejemplo, en Guatemala -el país con el porcentaje más alto de población rural en la región- en 1998 el promedio de escolarización para el grupo de adultos urbanos entre las edades de 25 a 59 años era de 6,5 años, mientras que para el mismo grupo etario de las zonas rurales este valor escasamente alcanzaba 1,9 años.

“La expansión y el mejoramiento de la educación pueden ser una de las formas más eficaces de reducir la pobreza, el hambre y la desnutrición. Las tasas de desnutrición se han visto reducidas ante un mayor nivel de alfabetismo, particularmente el alfabetismo entre las mujeres”, explica Lavinia Gasperini especialista de la FAO.

Estudios de investigación han demostrado que la productividad de un agricultor con cuatro años de educación elemental es casi 9 por ciento mayor que la de un agricultor sin educación alguna. Adicionalmente, si se dispone de insumos como fertilizantes, semillas nuevas y maquinaria agrícola, dicha productividad puede aumentar a un 13 por ciento.

Nuevas políticas

Un número creciente de países de América Latina ha reconocido la importancia de la educación para la población rural y ha adoptado políticas tendientes a hacerla más accesible y relevante.

Por ejemplo, prácticamente la mitad de las escuelas rurales de Colombia, ha adoptado el modelo Escuela Nueva. Estas escuelas, hacen hincapié en el aprendizaje participativo y utilizan un currículo que combina el núcleo básico nacional con módulos locales relevantes a la cultura y a las necesidades de la población rural.

Los padres y las comunidades participan activamente en las iniciativas de estas escuelas. Las tasas de deserción son significativamente más bajas y los puntajes

obtenidos en Español y Matemáticas por alumnos de tercer grado, son sustancialmente más altos que los observados en escuelas tradicionales.

En México un programa educativo, Programa de Educación Salud y Alimentación (PROGRESA), otorga subsidios en efectivo a más de 2,6 millones de familias rurales desfavorecidas, a condición que envíen a sus hijos a la escuela.

El programa también proporciona suplementos nutricionales a los niños pequeños de las familias participantes. Trascurridos tres años de operación, la matrícula para la etapa crítica que representa la transición de educación primaria a secundaria, ha aumentado en un 20 por ciento para las niñas y en un 10 por ciento en el caso de los niños.

El taller contará con la asistencia de aproximadamente 100 personas responsables de la elaboración de políticas y planes de desarrollo de los respectivos Ministerios de Agricultura y de Educación, así como por representantes de Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil.

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الفاو تنفذ مشروعاً بفلسطين بتمويل ايطالي لدعم الامن الغذائي لـ 1200 أسرة فلاحية

المحسة التي سيجيها المشروع لهم. ومن بين الأنشطة التي من المقرر أن يتضمنها المشروع إعادة زراعة البساتين بأصناف محسنة، وإستبدال البيوت (البلاستيكية) المحمية، وإقامة نظم ري وتوفير معدات الإدارة المتكاملة للأفات، وزراعة الخضراوات والأعلاف وأشجار الزيتون والفاكهة، وتجديد سقائف الحيوانات، وإعادة تأهيل المراعي من خلال بئرها من جديد وتسييجها، وحفر الآبار وإقامة نظم لتجميع مياه الأمطار، بالإضافة إلى تدريب الكوادر من القطاعين الخاص والعام على إدارة المدخلات والموارد الطبيعية بصورة مستدامة. وسيسهل المشروع في خلق فرص عمل مكثفة، وتوفير سلسلة متنوعة من الأغذية للحث على تنوع النظام الغذائي، فضلاً عن تشجيع المرأة على المشاركة في عملية التنمية. كما أنه سيحول دون أي تبيد إضافي للموارد أو الإعتماد على المعونات.

مليون شخص آخر تقريباً (30% من إجمالي السكان) القلق للتواصل لأنهم الآن في الطريق إلى الحرمان من الأمن الغذائي إذا ما ظلت الظروف السائدة قائمة. وقالت الفاو في البيان «وفي الوقت الذي ما يزال فيه الموقف السياسي والإقتصادي متقلباً وغير مستقر فإن المشروع سيتطور ويختبر عدة توجهات متجددة تتناسب والبرنامج المطلوب عاجلاً لإعادة تأهيل القطاع الزراعي طويل الأجل، كما أنه سيقبل من المخاطر ذات الصلة بإستغلال الموارد والإستفادة منها». ويهدف المشروع إلى تقديم دعم لحوالي 12 ألف فقير من سكان المناطق الريفية في كل من بيت لحم والخليل وغزة وطولكرم خلال العامين المقبلين. وسيتم تنفيذ المشروع بمشاركة وزارة الزراعة الفلسطينية. وسيستفيد المزارعون وأسراهم بصورة مباشرة من المهارات والأساليب والبنى التحتية

روما - القدس العربي: أعلنت منظمة الأغذية والزراعة التابعة للأمم المتحدة (فاو) أن نحو 1500 أسرة فلاحية في الضفة الغربية وقطاع غزة ستستفيد من مشروع زراعي رائد ستنفذه المنظمة في غضون العامين المقبلين بتمويل ايطالي. وجاء في تقرير للفاو أمس أن قطاع الزراعة ما يزال يلعب دوراً اقتصادياً واجتماعياً رئيسياً ليس فقط في تأمين فرص العمل والدخل لشريحة كبيرة من السكان الذين يعيشون في المناطق الريفية وحسب، بل إنما يسهم أيضاً بدرجة كبيرة في دعم الأمن الغذائي الذي تفاقمت حالته إلى حد كبير خلال السنوات الثلاثة الأخيرة. واستناداً إلى تقرير أصدرته الفاو مؤخراً فإن حالة إنعدام الأمن الغذائي باتت حقيقة قائمة بالنسبة لمليون وأربعمئة ألف شخص (أي 40 في المئة من إجمالي السكان) في حين تثير حالة 1,1

FAO TO IMPLEMENT A PROJECT IN PALESTINE WITH ITALIAN FUNDING IN SUPPORT OF FOOD SECURITY OF 12000 FARMER FAMILIES IN BEETHLEHM; HABRON; GAZA AND TAULKARAM.

This story is entirely based on the Arabic version of FAO press release issued on the 29th July 2004 in connection with FAO project for Gaza and West Bank at a cost of 1,5 million dollars within the next two years.

“AL-QUDS AL-ARABI” international Arabic daily newspaper of London (UK)
30.07.2004

Newsroom: <http://www.fao.org/english/newsroom/>

FAO in the News <http://intranet.fao.org/IntranetStatic/root/17847/11866/29888/34595/>

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