



Federal Ministry
of Food
and Agriculture



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Empowering Agriculture for Global Food and Nutrition Security

The 15th anniversary of the Bilateral Trust Fund with FAO



Dear Readers,

It is possible to achieve successes in the fight against hunger! Since 1990, the number of people suffering from hunger has fallen by over 200 million people. Yet around 793 million people around the globe are still afflicted by hunger and chronic malnutrition. We still have a long way to go to reach our goal of eradicating hunger in the world. On top of this, rapid population growth, the implications of climate change and the migratory movements triggered by destitution and wars are exacerbating the challenges. In this context, it is the international community's responsibility, both in political and financial terms, to enforce the human Right to Food on a global scale.

By adopting the Agenda 2030 and its sustainability goals and by ratifying the Paris Climate Change Agreement, the Federal Government has committed to taking a proactive approach to the challenges of our times. Agriculture has a central role to play in this regard, because a productive, sustainable and resilient agricultural sector is key to safeguarding food security all over the world.

The Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) is an important strategic partner for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in its efforts to improve the global food situation. My Ministry has supported the FAO for many years, both financially and ideologically.

Fifteen years ago, the Bilateral Trust Fund (BTF) was founded with the aim of launching beacon projects to move forward innovative strategies for improving food security and for fighting undernutrition and malnutrition internationally, supra-regionally and in partner countries.



“A productive, sustainable and resilient agricultural sector is key to safeguarding food security all over the world.”

Since then, we have used BTF funds to promote over 100 projects with a total budget of over EUR 121 million. Building on the Fund's regional priority areas in Afghanistan and Sub-Saharan Africa, we have widened our support since 2016 to also cover South-East Asia. This brochure, marking the BTF's 15th anniversary, is the first in a series of publications that we will be publishing to set out our previous track record, our current engagement and our future tasks, for we will continue in the years to come to strongly support and promote the worldwide realisation of the human Right to Food.

I hope you will find this brochure both enjoyable and informative.

With best regards,

Christian Schmidt, Member of the German Bundestag,

Federal Minister of Food and Agriculture





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The cover features a green background with a white rectangular area in the center. The top left corner shows a blue sky with white clouds, and the bottom left corner shows a close-up of brown soil with some green plants. A green diagonal hatched pattern is visible on the right side of the white box.

Seed money for food security projects

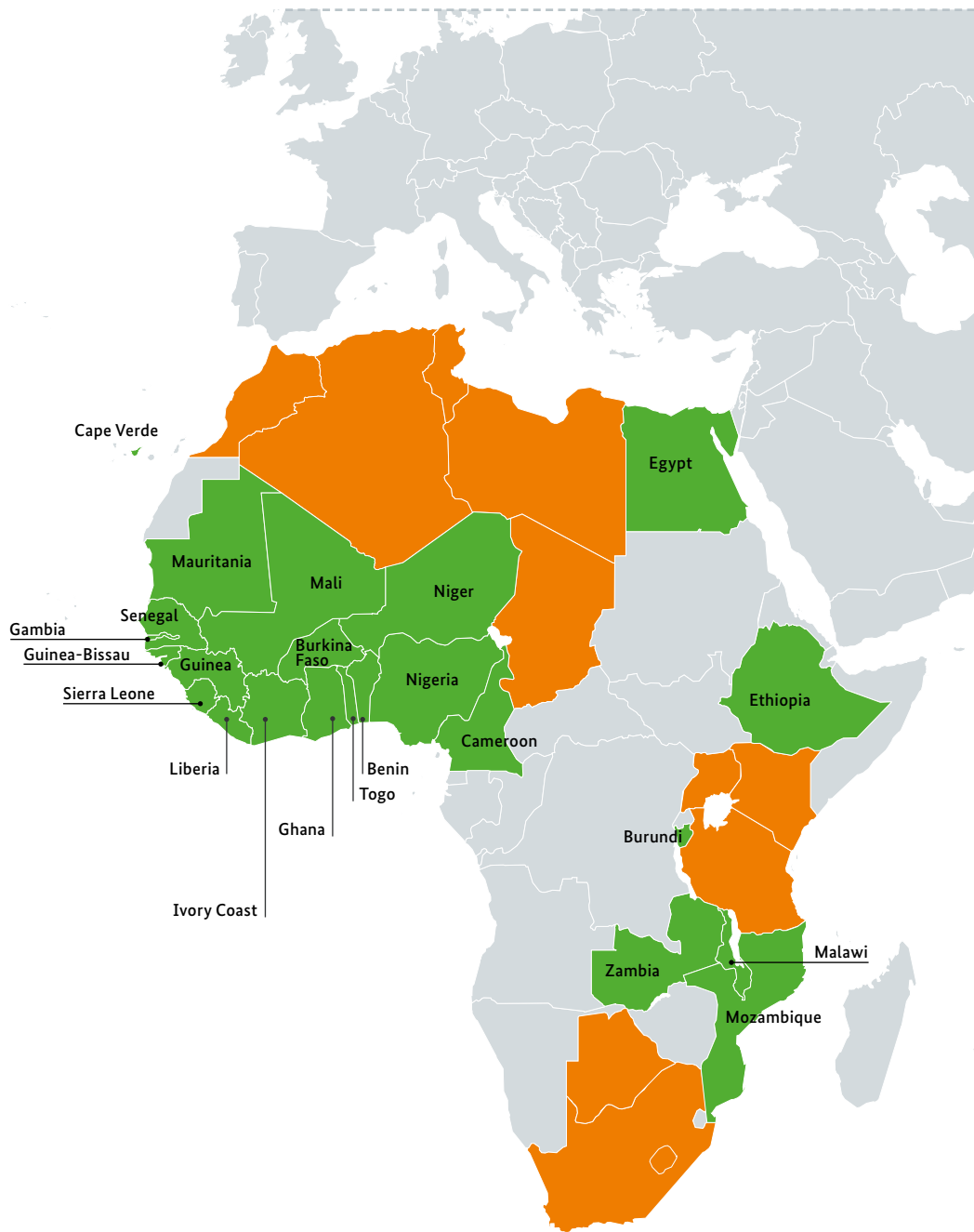
*The Bilateral Trust Fund
at a glance*



The Right to Food is a human right. Yet more than 793 million people worldwide are currently suffering from hunger and chronic malnutrition. This is where the work of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) starts. At present, FAO has 194 member states, along with the European Union. Germany is the third largest contributor, with only the U.S. and Japan contributing more. FAO advises its member states on developing appropriate political guidelines for food security and a regulatory and institutional framework for sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry.

- In addition to the set contributions as FAO member state, with the foundation of the Bilateral Trust Fund (BTF) in 2002, the federal government provides additional voluntary funds on an annual basis, for instance, EUR 10 million in 2017.
- As lead ministry for food security issues, the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) provides these funds to support FAO in strengthening its function as a knowledge organisation and in contributing to an improvement of the global food situation.

- The idea behind the Fund: FAO is provided with seed money to develop projects with innovative concepts and strategies and to create a favourable environment that can be adopted and disseminated by other donors. Comparatively low investment in selected key areas of food security (averaging EUR 1.5 million per project over a period of three years) can thus have great impact.
- The federal government has thus supported a total of 100 projects with BTF funds between 2002 and 2017 (overall volume: EUR 121 million). The focus has been on Afghanistan and Sub-Saharan Africa, and since 2016 also on South-East Asia.
- The projects are aimed at developing innovative strategies to ensure food security and prevent undernutrition and malnutrition and thus at better anchoring these topics in international debates and cooperation as well as promoting their implementation within FAO and the partner countries.
- The thematic priorities of the BTF are:
 - policy framework for the concrete implementation of the Right to Food and access to land and natural resources;
 - strategies for sustainable food security and general education in nutritional issues in rural and urban areas, with a particular view to the important role of women;
 - sustainable agricultural production and strategies of the agricultural sector to adapt to climate change, as well as the development of a bioenergy and bioeconomy sector that is closely linked to food security issues.
- Further information on the BTF and the projects is available online at: www.bmel.de/en-btf





BTF Regional Focus:

Afghanistan, Sub-Saharan Africa, South-East Asia

Current projects in 29 countries
(shown on the map with names).

Projects carried out since 2002 in 45 countries:

Afghanistan, Egypt, Algeria, Ethiopia, Botsuana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central Africa, Chad, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Mali, Marocco, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Tunesia, Uganda, Zambia, Brazil, Cambodia, China, Haiti, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Mongolia, Nepal, Peru, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand.

1 *The basis: The Right to Food*

*Policy framework
for food security*

People need to be able to feed themselves according to their needs. To this end, they must either have the possibility to produce their own food or they must obtain sufficient income in order to buy food.

This is stated in the Right to Food. However, no other human right is violated as frequently as this one. Unless it is embedded as a central subject in countries' national policies, it is seldom realised in a sustainable manner. The "Voluntary Guidelines to support the progressive realisation of the Right to Food" summarise the regulatory and institutional framework that is needed to actually enforce this right. These guidelines were adopted by the FAO Member States in 2004. They provide important guidance for more governmental responsibility and good governance in the fight against hunger and malnutrition.

BMEL gave substantial support to the development of these voluntary guidelines and has, right from the outset, championed this rights-based approach to food security via the Bilateral Trust Fund. BTF projects assist developing countries in strengthening the Right to Food in their political agenda and in creating suitable political, legal and institutional conditions. At international level, BMEL has worked to ensure that the Right to Food was embedded, as a cross-cutting issue, in the objectives and organisational structure of FAO.

Implementing the Right to Food

Policy advice and capacity development

In addition to Afghanistan as a priority country, BTF also prioritises support for countries in Sub-Saharan Africa in adopting agricultural policies, programmes, strategies and investment plans that focus on nutrition and implement the Right to Food. Regional actors have realised that agriculture needs to be geared even more towards sustainable food security.

BTF funds are used in a targeted manner here in order to assist the development programme of the African Union (NEPAD, New Partnership for Africa's Development) in its rural development initiative in Sub-Saharan Africa. The CAADP initiative (Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme) is currently one of the driving forces in Africa for food security and development of the agricultural sector. Thirty-five African countries have already developed strategic road maps with recommendations aimed at systematically incorporating the nutrition issue in their agricultural policies and investment plans.

The challenge now is to support the countries in implementing these recommendations for nutrition-sensitive agriculture, developing relevant capacities and acquiring experience on which strategy works best in which agro-ecological and social context. To date, BMEL has provided EUR 23 million in BTF funds to support 17 FAO projects aimed at realising the Right to Food, EUR 7 million of which went to the CAADP initiative alone.



Right to Food needs good financial management

Pilot projects in Ghana and Malawi

Many African countries are involved in the CAADP initiative and have already drawn up agricultural investment plans focusing on food security. However, it is frequently difficult for them to structure their financial budgets so as to ensure that the plans developed under the CAADP process are adequately funded and that there is sufficient capacity available for implementation.

This is due to poorly developed implementation structures, weak staff capacities, a lack of coordination among the different state and non-state actors and limited opportunities for the stakeholder groups to participate in political life. This is where the BTF project on “Improving capacities for the implementation of nutrition-sensitive investment plans” comes into play. It builds on the outcome of three previous BTF projects and supports the Ghanaian and Malawian governments in turning political will into concrete action.

To this end, the necessary staff, organisational and financial capacities are being built up on a pilot basis by state and non-state actors. This is intended to enable politics, administration and civil society to establish efficient management of public finances and develop effective monitoring of public expenditure on agriculture and food security. Civil society groups are also involved in the project in order to ensure that the funds end up at the right place. They are trained in critically monitoring the use of public spending.

The experience from Ghana and Malawi will be reviewed and assessed and is to serve as a blueprint for other countries and donors on how adequate public funds can be budgeted for agriculture and food security even in view of scarce resources.



Voluntary good governance

Responsible governance of tenure of land and natural resources

The access to land and natural resources is key to realising the human Right to Food. Without rights to access and use, i.e. secure access to land, water and other natural resources, the rural poor, in particular, face the risk of losing their livelihoods.

In 2012, the FAO Member States therefore adopted the “Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests” (VGGT). The Guidelines strengthen the rights of small-scale farmers and, at the initiative of Germany, especially those of women and girls. And they lay down minimum standards for land investments made by the private sector and governments that take the human right to adequate food and rights of the local population into account. The VGGT thus constitute a further important step towards implementing the Right to Food and towards global food security.



BMEL provided EUR 2 million in BTF funds for the development of the VGGT and has supported FAO so far with a further EUR 7 million for its implementation at county-level. Thus technical guidance documents, training and online tutorials have been developed in BTF projects in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ethiopia, Nepal and Mongolia that enhance understanding of the Voluntary Guidelines and place stakeholders in a position to make them easier to apply and implement them. In this context, Sierra Leone has developed into a priority country.

Since 2012, the governments in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Mongolia and their partners have received support in promoting the Right to Food and improving public nutrition. Under a national programme for commercial smallholders, development plans are being implemented at district level, with projects on nutritional education, crop diversification, school gardens, processing of crops and investments in labour-saving technologies. In the Senegal river basin, a further BTF project is assisting the three riparian countries of Senegal, Mauritania and Mali in dealing fairly with the growing demand for land and water resources.



Regulated fairly for everybody

Land and water management in the Senegal river basin

The Senegal river basin harbours great potential for the three riparian states of Mali, Mauritania and Senegal. The unused land along the river is ideally suited for agricultural purposes. Therefore, competition among farmers, pastoralists and private enterprises over access to land, pastures, water, fish and forests is becoming increasingly intense. To provide legal certainty for everybody, the three riparian states are now pinning their hopes on the VGGT and have asked FAO for its support, for disadvantaged groups such as smallholders or women, who have so far lacked vested land tenure or land use rights, are particularly vulnerable to the danger of losing their livelihoods.

The BTF-funded project is therefore aimed at designing national acts and procedures so as to establish harmonised and recognised tenure and use rights with equal access for everybody in the countries. The accountability of public and private investment in agriculture is also to be improved.

In this regard, the BTF project primarily focuses on the regional dialogue among all beneficiaries, which is to be held on a transnational platform involving all local and regional interest groups. In order to build up the necessary capacity for this, policy-makers will undergo training together with representatives from farmers' associations, women's and youth organisations and other actors of civil society.

A local monitoring mechanism will also be established. This will involve decentralised groups monitoring progress on the ground and forwarding their feedback and recommendations from local level to the national and regional levels.



2 *The target: Adequate and balanced*

Food and rural development

Globally speaking, they produce the lion's share of foodstuffs. Local and regional nutrition are, literally, in their hands. And yet hundreds of millions of African and Asian small-scale farmers are among those who are so poor that they are hardly able to adequately feed themselves and their families. Hunger and malnutrition are most widespread in the rural regions of developing countries.

Yields produced without modern methods and with only the simplest farm equipment are barely high enough to ensure subsistence in precisely those places where the future of global food security is about to be decided. Small-scale farm families lack fertile land, sufficient water, adequate energy supplies, seeds, fertilisers and feedingstuffs. And there is a lack of advice, knowledge, capital, functioning infrastructure such as roads to markets and granaries for storage; additionally, there are insufficient options for generating added value along the entire food chain, from the raw product, processing and transport to local and international marketing.

Nevertheless, small-scale farm families in emerging and developing countries offer the greatest potential worldwide for productivity and yield increases and thus for ensuring global food security. What is needed for them to be able to evolve from pure self-sufficiency to a situation where they are able to produce extra to sell on the market is an enabling agricultural policy, investments in sustainable agriculture and rural development and good governance that bears in mind the rights of small-scale food producers and especially those of women. For while women bear the brunt of work in the fields, they have hardly any rights and access to land: 90 percent of the global arable land is in the hands of men.

All BTF projects run by BMEL with FAO therefore focus on promoting family farming as a main issue, with special attention being paid to women. BTF projects support smallholders, for example, by funding socially, economically and ecologically sustainable cropping methods that support agrobiodiversity and provide long-term conservation of clean water, fertile soils and forests. In these projects, agricultural extension services, farmers' associations and agricultural co-operatives work together to impart knowledge, improve market positions, open up financing opportunities and help farm businesses develop, providing key economic impetus for rural regions.

Food security at local level

BTF engagement in Afghanistan

Afghanistan has, from the outset, been a priority country for BTF. With its focus on agriculture and food security, the Fund makes a vital contribution to the development of the country. In 2002, it soon became clear in a first joint BMEL and FAO project that greater support was needed to enable the Afghan Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) to improve the food situation in the country. In 2005, a project entitled "Supporting Food Security, Nutrition and Livelihoods in Afghanistan" was therefore initiated.

This project paved the way for an integrated approach to mainstreaming nutrition-relevant aspects in the Afghan agricultural sector, including working on government policies, strengthening multi-sectoral cross-departmental collaboration, promoting development of technical skills in the government and in non-governmental organisations and concrete support for communities in securing livelihoods and providing nutrition education. The Household Economics Directorate was established at MAIL as a central specialised directorate-general for food security; this was funded by the "Strengthening the Role of Women in Agriculture and Food Security" project.

To date, all other BTF projects on food and nutrition security have built on the achievements of this basic project. Between 2002 and 2016, EUR 34 million went into a total of 25 projects in Afghanistan. The Afghan government and its civil society partners are currently receiving support in translating the “Food for Life” programme on food security into practice. The programme is to be continued in 2017, endowed with a further EUR 1.2 million.

Over the past 15 years, BTF projects have made a major impact on the development of the Afghan agricultural sector. The seed money approach proved to be very successful in the process. Relevant international donors considered many of the projects, for example on seed production, irrigation policy and development of the milk industry, to be the way ahead and therefore took action to disseminate them. The initial investments in selected key sectors, averaging EUR 1.5 million, have thus yielded considerable results.





Strong women for secure food supplies

A national consulting scheme for women in the agricultural sector

Systematically empowering women has become a key political issue in Afghanistan. Supporting them also means ensuring their families' food security because women, more or less everywhere, bear the brunt of work in agriculture and in households.

The Home Economics Department at the Agriculture Ministry serves as a catalyst for gender-sensitive agriculture. The specialised directorate-general, which is mainly staffed by women, aims to strengthen private households. BTF funds have enabled the staff to be enlarged from 5 to 67 employees. An initial project developed concepts on how nutrition in private households could be secured and enhanced, for example via schemes on nutrition counselling, by processing of foodstuffs into higher-grade products or by growing vegetables and fruit in kitchen and school gardens.

The follow-up project on "Strengthening the Role of Women in Agriculture and Food Security" has now firmly established these successful concepts in organisational and institutional terms. With BMEL support, the Home Economics Department has set up an official agricultural extension service for women that meets their specific needs and taps their potential. In September 2015, the Agriculture Minister adopted the National Strategy for Women in Agriculture that had been developed for this purpose.

The extension service is aimed at improving the livelihoods and thus nutrition in households in economically and socially disadvantaged rural, peri-urban and urban areas. The centrepiece of the project comprises three agricultural training and development centres in selected provinces. Here, women learn about innovative technologies and new income opportunities and receive support for better food production and nutrition. Further centres are being planned in 18 provinces.

Greater knowledge about a healthy diet

Nutritional education and information in Sub-Saharan Africa

According to FAO, 793 million people worldwide were suffering from hunger in 2016 – a number larger than the combined population of the European Union, Russia and Japan. Far more, approximately two billion people to be precise, are either undernourished or malnourished and suffering from “hidden hunger”, i.e. a deficiency of vitamins, trace elements and minerals such as iodine and iron.

This is why BMEL is not just promoting projects aimed at a sustainable increase in agricultural production. Many projects are also about dietary education and supporting people's efforts, especially those of mothers, to feed themselves and their children in a more balanced and healthy way. To this end, two projects have established a comprehensive dietary education and information scheme in Africa. A BMEL-funded needs assessment on “Nutrition Education and Communication (NEAC)” showed that university education on how to plan and implement effective information strategies was still very patchy. In response to this, BMEL provided FAO with funds for the development of training and online courses and a wide range of information material



Education aimed at improving nutrition

Training of multipliers in nutrition education

Studies show that nutritional education and information alone are able to significantly reduce malnutrition and undernutrition in communities. Yet skilled personnel are needed to conduct effective awareness building measures that will also result in behavioural changes.

Funded by BTF, FAO has to this end developed a training programme for seven Anglophone countries and six Francophone countries in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Together with partner institutions, FAO has devised locally adapted training modules using regional best practices and incorporated them into the curricula of local universities. “Education for Effective Nutrition in Action” (ENACT) can be used in Bachelor and Master degree courses and comprises 120 instruction units. The courses can be used either online or in face-to-face courses or in a combination of the two.

The target group for the FAO ENACT initiative includes multipliers such as students from nutrition-related subject areas (nutrition, agriculture, education, health, community development work) and staff of governmental extension services, non-governmental and aid agencies.

“Training of trainers” courses on the training of teachers, which have been developed with regional African training centres and are also available there, ensure further dissemination. As a by-product of ENACT, a module on curriculum development has also been conceived that is addressed at institutions that wish to offer their own courses on nutritional education tailored to local needs. All results and products are also freely available on the project’s own website. The course is currently being adapted and taken up by universities in Sri Lanka and Honduras. BTF is providing fresh funding to support the extension of this course to also cover India.



3 *The answer: Resource- conserving and nutrition- sensitive*

*Sustainable agriculture
and climate change*

Climate change has hit countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, South and South-East Asia particularly hard, and especially small-scale farmers. And it is these small-scale farmers that are of particularly vital importance for local and global food security. Climate change has a direct impact on the volume of their output. This poses great challenges for agriculture.

Will it be possible to adequately feed more than nine billion people in 2050? The key to this lies in an agricultural sector that is sustainable, climate-friendly and, at the same time, highly productive;

- that knows how to wisely adapt to climate change and, at the same time, reduces its greenhouse gas emissions;
- that practices careful stewardship of natural resources such as soil, water and forests;
- that uses seeds and cropping methods in production that are adapted to the respective site;
- that provides more targeted support for women as small-scale farmers and breadwinners for their families;
- that seizes the opportunities offered by bioenergy and bioeconomy while giving priority to food security.

Political strategies pursued by sustainable agriculture for rural and urban development must respond to this, giving particular attention to the approximately 475 million small-scale farm families worldwide that only have very limited access to new technologies, markets and financing opportunities.

In the 2002-2017 period, BMEL supported a total of 27 FAO projects on this subject area with BTF funds totalling EUR 23 million. The projects strengthen the governments of partner countries in developing the necessary guidelines and policy framework in order to promote sustainable family farming. At the same time, the countries are called upon to integrate food security as a main subject area in their existing climate-related and agricultural programmes and policies.

Resource-conserving and site-adapted

Sustainable Agriculture

At present, roughly twelve million hectares of agricultural land are being lost in the world each year – as a result of over-grazing, unsuitable cultivation methods, erosion, road building and urban construction. If this trend were to continue unabated, harvests would fall by up to twelve percent in the next 25 years. Yet to have any chance of meeting the demands of a growing global population they need to rise by around two-thirds by 2050.

It is therefore a key concern for BTF to press ahead with sustainable production and, for this purpose, to develop site-adapted production methods in order, for instance, to prevent soil erosion and manage scarce water resources efficiently as well as to strengthen infrastructures and communication paths in rural regions.





Under the title “Save and Grow”, FAO published guidelines for politics as early as 2011 that, for the first time, presented an ecosystem approach to sustainable intensification of small-scale farming. The “Save and Grow” approach is based on the following pillars: conservation agriculture, improved soils, locally adapted seed varieties, integrated plant protection and efficient water management; it is thus also a key element of the FAO’s “Climate-smart Agriculture” initiative.

Whereas such sustainable cropping practices are now largely known and recognised in the countries, these countries lack experience and strategies to also create, alongside the ecological framework, the political, economic and social framework needed to implement “Save and Grow”.



Ecologically sustainable and highly productive

“Save and Grow” in pilot countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia

On one side organic but insufficiently productive agriculture, on the other side conventional and higher-yielding agriculture. The “Save and Grow” approach breaks with this old paradigm. The ecosystem-based approach to sustainable intensification of agriculture stands for efficient small-scale farming without high greenhouse gas emissions and exploitation of natural resources: ecologically sustainable and, at the same time, highly productive.

BMEL has, since 2016, allocated EUR 2 million to finance a FAO project that is implementing the “Save and Grow” approach in the pilot countries of Zambia and Kyrgyzstan and that is steadily developing the project in a country-specific manner. The project builds on other FAO activities in these countries and implements the shift to sustainable and climate-friendly smallholder production of maize and wheat, the staple foods in these countries. This is to be achieved with adapted production systems, soil-conserving agriculture, long-term mechanisation, training of multipliers and innovative extension services run by farmers themselves.

Transitional strategies are being developed to this end at regional and national levels. This provides policy-makers and practitioners with the tools they need to prioritise and implement sectoral policies, production practices and technologies on the basis of analysed location-specific conditions, risks, vulnerabilities and adaptation options.

Lower levels of gases that damage the climate

Agriculture adapted to climate change

Climate change poses a threat to agricultural development and thus food security especially in the poorest and most vulnerable countries. FAO responded to this as early as 2010 by launching the MICCA Initiative (Mitigation of Climate Change in Agriculture). According to MICCA, there is no solution to climate change without agriculture being included. The initiative is therefore aimed at building capacity around the globe to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases in the agricultural sector and to adapt agricultural production to the already existing effects of climate change.

Embedded in the MICCA initiative, BMEL funded two projects that have developed a system for recording and assessing greenhouse gases in the agricultural sector and drawn up options for their reduction. The projects are now internationally acclaimed as important elements for climate change mitigation and sustainable economic development in the farming sector.



First the facts, then the strategies

The first database to record agricultural emissions

How can we cut the emission of greenhouse gases in agriculture if we do not know exactly where and in what quantities they are being produced? The answer has now been provided by a database that is integrated into FAO's statistical system. The database was established under the BTF project on "Monitoring and Assessment of Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Mitigation Potential in Agriculture (MAGHG I)". The project established a system in FAO member states designed to identify and assess greenhouse gas emissions and possible mitigation options and to transmit them to a central database.

In accordance with the motto "First the facts, then the strategies", the follow-up project MAGHG II is supporting countries in building capacity to minimise the damage and risks caused by climate change. The project intends to place member states in a position to identify and assess greenhouse gas emissions and possible mitigation strategies and to feed them into their national reports in order to thus successfully apply for funds relating to agricultural mitigation measures from different climate funds. The conditions for this are good since the Paris Climate Agreement of December 2015 focuses specifically on mitigation policies that are targeted at sustainable rural development and the fight against hunger and poverty. All in all, BMEL has earmarked EUR 3.3 million in BTF funds for both projects.



Not at the expense of food and nutrition

Bioeconomy and bioenergy

Are our food supplies secure when more and more fertile soil and precious water are being used for the production of biofuels? The food versus fuel competition is becoming more intense in developing countries. Governments are therefore seeking strategies to harness the potential for making the industry more bio-based without in the process jeopardising people's food supply.

In times of climate change, the issues of food security, sustainable use of natural resources and energy supplies are inextricably linked. On the one hand, the rising demand for agricultural feedstocks harbours great potential for innovation and development, notably for rural areas. On the other hand, a booming bioeconomy that produces, processes, uses or trades in sustainable resources can become direct competition for food production and cause new dependencies and environmental problems.

The shift towards a bio-based economy will not succeed without integrated protection of the environment, climate and biodiversity, taking into account food security. Many states, including industrial and emerging countries such as Brazil, China, India and South Africa, are currently working out bioeconomy strategies and concepts or have already presented them.

A study drawn up under a BTF-funded project has analysed over 20 already existing concepts and strategies with a view to their sustainability and compiled the outcome in a publication (How Sustainability is addressed in official Bioeconomy Strategies at International, National and Regional Levels – An Overview) to enable FAO to provide its member states with competent advice in developing sustainable bioeconomy strategies. Subsequently, principles and criteria for formulating sustainable bioeconomy strategies were developed as part of the project. These are to form the basis for the “Sustainable Bioeconomy Guidelines” that FAO intends to draft in a second project phase from 2017 onwards in order to assist its member countries in preparing national bioeconomy strategies.

An extensive analytical tool is already being successfully employed that FAO - funded from BTF - had submitted as early as 2006 to draft sustainable bioenergy strategies. With the BEFS programme (Bioenergy and Food Security), FAO assists its member states in strengthening the issue of food security in bioenergy policies at international, national and regional levels. Concrete steps taken on the ground address policy advice, imparting of knowledge, the transnational exchange of experience and the strengthening of decision-making powers of all institutions, enterprises and civil society representatives engaged in the bioenergy sector. The BEFS approach has met with positive response around the globe, including international institutions such as the World Bank and is in demand in many countries.



Plenty of fuel *and* plenty of food

Linked to food security: strategies for bioenergy

A sound decision-making basis is needed in order to be able to make a well-founded assessment of risks and opportunities in the bioenergy sector and to develop relevant strategies. Projects related to “Bioenergy and Food Security” (BEFS) assist policy-makers to do just that in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Since 2006, BMEL has funded eleven different FAO projects in this regard in the order of EUR 9 million so far.

As a first step, a newly developed comprehensive analytical framework with the necessary surveying and evaluation instruments has been applied and examined in pilot tests in three countries. With its special focus on food security, the analytical procedure takes account of all economic, ecological and social aspects of sustainable bioenergy strategies. Policy-makers are thus able to assess the potential of, for instance, planned investments in biofuels and what impact they will have on the food security of a country.

In a follow-up project (BEFS Rapid Appraisal Tool – BEFS RA), the extensive analytical framework has been optimised and complemented by a more cost-efficient analytical fast-track procedure that also provides indications as to which priority issues require a more in-depth analysis.

Given that there has been a strong increase in demand for this fast-track procedure in African member states, FAO has, since 2016, established a pool of external experts for Africa in a further BTF project. Trainers from renowned African institutions receive training in order to subsequently disseminate the simplified BEFS-RA approach.





PUBLISHER

Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture
Division 622
Wilhelmstraße 54, 10117 Berlin
E-Mail: 622@bmel.bund.de

CONTACT

Dr. Susanne Schlaack
Annika Eberlein
Division 622

CO-OPERATION PARTNERS

Federal Office for Agriculture and Food – Division 323

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
GmbH – G520

STATUS

January 2017
BTF Series of Publications, edition 1

LAYOUT

Jeanette Geppert, konzept & design, Frankfurt

TEXT

pfiff - Pressefrauen in Frankfurt
Veronika Utz (GIZ)
Annika Eberlein (BMEL)

PRINTED BY

Druck- und Verlagshaus Zarbock GmbH & Co. KG, Frankfurt

PHOTO CREDITS

Front page: © FAO/Seyllou Diallo, page 3: Photo Bundesminister Christian Schmidt, © BMEL, page 4/5, © FAO/Daniel Haydouk, page 7, © FAO-WFP/Ricci Shryock, page 10/11, Weltkarte, © GIZ, page 15, © FAO/IFAD/WFP/Petterik Wiggers, page 16/17, © FAO/Marco Longari, page 18/19, © FAO/Isaac Kasamani, page 23, © FAO/Danfung Dennis, page 24/25, © FAO/Giulio Napolitano, page 26/27, © FAO/Riccardo Gangale, page 31, © FAO/Marco Longari, page 32, © FAO/Marco Longari, page 34/35, © FAO/Simon Maina, page 37, FAO/Giulio Napolitano, page 38/39, © FAO/Paballo Thekiso

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