



**Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations**

Regional Office for Africa

**QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER**

FOR A HUNGER FREE AFRICA



## FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa lauds FAO's achievements in 2015

The year 2015 was indeed a good year for programmes by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and its partners.

Among the FAO success stories yielded during the year were the operations of the Africa Solidarity Trust Fund (ASTF) which yielded significant gains. So far, 30 countries have been supported with the fund, with up to US\$14 million.

ASTF-supported projects are not FAO programs, but projects that belong to the countries and are supported by African countries and governments.

It is necessary, therefore, that colleagues in FAO ensure that the national country authorities know they are part and parcel of the implementation and that those to be supported are actually deriving some benefits from the Fund.

"The DG and the FAO management have very clearly agreed that this fund must not be used for study tours, workshops, and travel but should support those activities that will benefit the populations directly", Mr Tijani stated.

Another significant point of achievement for the FAO during the year under review is that the campaign for food security and nutrition security, gained much emphasis in 2015 hand in hands – that it is not only just the food quantity that matters but the quality as well, which has to go along with the nutritional qualities of the foods eaten. According to the Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative, FAO with other partners had been echoing that message for quite some time, and in 2014 FAO in partnership with the World Health Organization organized the International Conference on nutrition "which has been applauded and we are following up on the recommendations". Moving forward



Mr Bukar Tijani, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa

to the early part of 2016, the African Union has requested, as a resolution, FAO and the African Development Bank to conduct a special rice summit to develop a sustainable rice development rice systems in Africa.

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## FAO urged to speed up establishment of global commission on agricultural statistics



AFCAS opening meeting, from left: Mr Attaher Maiga, Ms Geraldine Mukeshimana, Mr Yusuf Murangwa and Mr Josef Schmidhuber

Delegates to the 24th session of the African Commission on Agricultural Statistics (AFCAS) in Kigali, Rwanda, agreed on the need for a global structure on agricultural statistics to provide a more visible and higher-level platform for national agricultural statistical needs.

The session reiterated the need to establish a Global Commission on Agricultural Statistics. It was noted during the discussions that the lack of comprehensive global governance on agricultural statistics has affected to a

large extent the development of the sector.

The delegates unanimously agreed that a global structure on statistics will provide a more visible and higher-level platform for providing national inputs and expressing statistical needs, opportunity for knowledge exchange/interaction across regions, eliminate duplication across the existing bodies among others. The Kigali meeting deliberated on issues such as the new World Programme for

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## FAO and USA sign USD 87 million grant to support health

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and USA have signed in Rome, Italy, a new global grant agreement of USD 87 million to support the implementation of the Emerging Pandemic Threats (EPT-2) and Global Health Security Agenda (GHS) programme.

Jose Graziano da Silva, FAO Director-General, and the US Ambassador in Rome signed the grant agreement at FAO headquarters in October 2015. The GHS aims to accelerate progress toward a world safe and secure from infectious disease threats whether naturally occurring, deliberate, or accidental, and to promote global health security as an international priority.

The EPT-2/GHS programme will support capacity building to detect early and respond rapidly to emerging disease crises threatening animal and human health for a period of 5 years (2015-2019). The rapid growth in human population, and economic development in many African countries, are generating increased demand for livestock products. Globally,

livestock represents about 43% of the agricultural GDP, and contributes significantly to food and nutrition security, livelihoods and economic development. While growth in livestock sector presents significant opportunity to the smallholder livestock farming communities to improve their livelihoods, there is also evidence that if this growth is not well managed, significant risks of high impact infectious diseases and food safety hazards may arise.

The negative impacts of these risks may even be more enhanced in the context of recurrent humanitarian crisis and conflicts, massive population displacements, regular disasters (droughts, erratic rainfall, flooding and locust) which characterize Africa. The resurgence of H5N1 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in West Africa in 2014, the threat posed by the MERS-CoV disease in the Horn of Africa and the epidemic of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) in West Africa demonstrate the urgent need to address the drivers of disease emergence, persistence, and spread to better define preventive measures. FAO recognizes the importance of tackling zoonotic threats at source,

considering the existing and evolving livestock farming systems in target countries. It is expected that the EPT-2/GHS will enable FAO to leverage significant additional funding from other partners and donors. This will result in enhancing the capacity of the FAO decentralized offices to support broader challenges of animal health and livestock development.

The EPT-2/GHS programme was launched in Nairobi (12-13 February 2016). A similar event is scheduled in Abidjan (9-10 February 2016) for West and Central Africa. Following the launches, country-level planning exercises will be conducted to develop detailed work plans and related budgets. The target countries in Africa include: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan and Togo.



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This stems from the fact that rice has become a major crop commodity and provides for the diet of millions of Africans. It also provides a lot of employment apart from several other businesses within the rice value chain.

“So in 2016 FAO and its partners will be championing this and this will be concurrently done or conducted by NEPAD/NPCA along with the African Union, the main regional body,” Mr Tijani said.

In 2016, FAO will also be conducting its 29th Africa Conference for Africa which is the highest governing body for Africa where Ministers for Agriculture and other related areas such as fisheries, water and livestock will converge in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, from 4 to 8 April, 2016 to discuss issues and to take stock of what has been achieved so far, based on the recommendations made by the Ministers for FAO to implement.

Further to that, FAO will continue to support its partners, with the spotlight on the private sector, which is becoming



Mr Bukar Tijani, FAO Assistant Director and Regional Representative for Africa, in a handshake with H.E. Mr Saad Seddik, Tunisian Minister of Agriculture, Hydraulic Resources and Fisheries, the Chairman of the 28th Session of FAO Regional Conference

more relevant to the Organization. “I believe that going further, we will continue to collaborate with our partners; we will also continue to maintain and strengthen our partnerships”, Mr Tijani emphasized.

Recently, FAO issued guidelines on partnering with the private sector, as it is also partnering with civil society, academic and research institutions among others.

## FAO urged to speed up establishment of global commission on agricultural statistics



Gender statistics in agriculture and food security was also high on the agenda. FAO presented its revised and published guidelines for agricultural census, the World Programme for Census Agriculture (WCA) to member countries

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Census of Agriculture (WCA) 2020, the proposal to harmonize and synchronize agricultural censuses across regional communities, progress made on the System of Economic and Environmental Accounting for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (SEEA-Agriculture), and the state

of food security. Gender statistics in agriculture and food security was also high on the agenda. FAO presented its revised and published guidelines for agricultural census, the World Programme for Census Agriculture (WCA) to member countries. Every two years, the African Commission on Agricultural Statistics (AFCAS) meets to discuss issues pertaining to food and agricultural

statistics in Africa. The AFCAS, made up of 54 FAO member countries, was established as a statutory body of FAO in 1962 and has been operational ever since. It brings together senior agricultural statistics experts from various African countries as well as experts from different regional and international institutions with the aim of reviewing the status of food and agricultural statistics in the region and advising member countries on the development and harmonization of agricultural statistics.

The 24th session saw the active and enthusiastic participation of 77 delegates from 20 member countries and five institutions. The Commission held very fruitful and insightful discussions all geared towards the realization of stability and sustainability in production of agricultural statistics across the Africa region.

The meeting was an opportunity for FAO to share with countries its activities since the last AFCAS which was held in 2013. Certain key messages came across very strongly at the end of the four-day meeting and were adopted by the Commission as part of its recommendations for the 24th Session.

## The Caisses de résilience approach strengthening resilient livelihoods across FAO Strategic Framework

An estimated 0.7 billion smallholder farmers, who mainly depend on their own production and natural resources, are increasingly facing multiple threats and crises that affect their lives and livelihoods on a daily basis. These challenges require innovative solutions and crosscutting synergies to support resilient livelihoods.

Since 2007, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) together with its partners has piloted a rural community-driven approach in Uganda called *Caisses de résilience* (CdR), which reflects a new way of thinking for FAO's resilience agenda. The approach promotes an integrated way of programming by working simultaneously on three mutually reinforcing dimensions: technical, financial and social. The objective is to engage and empower rural smallholders to leverage their existing capacities to better manage risks and seize local opportunities. The CdR approach works mainly with women's associations or farmers' groups that are an entry point for strengthening members' capacities with an impact on their livelihoods beyond project timeframe.

### Seizing financial opportunities

An important part of the CdR approach is to facilitate access to financial services to support income generation and allow stability and inclusive growth thanks to

cash availability and investment. Most of the women's associations or farmers' groups opt to initiate or further strengthen what is commonly called savings and loan schemes (S&L), whereby each member contributes to a common fund from which they can borrow money at a minimal interest rate. In an emergency or post-emergency context, the implementation of conditional cash transfers or cash-for-work activities under a given project can increase members' capacity, which will in turn allow them obtain greater loans and develop income-generating activities.

### Technical empowerment

Building on FAO's existing portfolio, CdR aims to strengthen the technical skills of members to encourage the implementation of good agricultural and environmental practices, through a practical learning methodology. The groups themselves define key priorities they want to work on, such as seed systems, post-harvest handling, nutrition-sensitive agriculture, community animal health, natural resource management, etc.

### Contributing to social cohesion

The groups or associations promote solidarity and facilitate experience sharing. Every group prioritizes the key social aspects conflict management, (gender-based violence, etc.) that would like to address depending on the context. The group dynamics also facilitate learning and

dissemination of good practices on nutrition, women empowerment, adult literacy, and community-based social protection, such as the social inclusion of vulnerable households. In Guinea Bissau, CdR will assist with the legalization of women's associations in order for members to better access more formal services. The improved financial resources positively influence food consumption and increase household expenses on social services, such as health or education.

### Adaptation to various contexts

CdR has proven to be flexible and adaptable to various contexts, providing FAO and partners with the opportunity to address needs ranging from emergency situations to development challenges. The approach has been initiated in around ten countries in the Horn of Africa, Sahel, West Africa and Central America. Outcomes have demonstrated the strengthened resilience of poor rural households, and results include: increased sustainable production, diversification of livelihoods, reduced malnutrition and women's empowerment.

In northern Uganda, CdR supported returnees to restore and stabilize their livelihoods and food and income security.

In the Sahel region, CdR is bringing together FAO and partners by building on each one's comparative advantages through nutrition training, food and agricultural production support and reinforcement of the tontine, which is also an S&L mechanism.

The Central African Republic has mobilized funding for similar activities, specifically targeting women's associations, focusing on contractual seed production activities to boost the initial S&L capital and restore their livelihoods.

In Liberia, during the Ebola virus outbreak crisis, women's associations saw their S&L schemes completely depleted due to the quarantine measures. FAO contributed to the Ebola awareness campaign by contracting women's associations to sensitize neighbouring communities and members used the money earned to recapitalize their S&L.



The *Caisses de Résilience* approach aims to strengthen the technical skills of members to encourage the implementation of good agricultural and environmental practices, through a practical learning methodology

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## The Caisses de résilience approach strengthening resilient livelihoods across FAO Strategic Framework

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### Partnerships and future opportunities

The CdR approach calls for and facilitates partnerships with government and resource partner initiatives, such as the Great Green Wall, the Peacebuilding Fund, the Global Environmental Facility and the Global Alliance for Resilience, as well as with Non-governmental Organizations for advocacy and field implementation. Between 2014 and 2015 nearly USD 15 million was mobilized and invested in CdR-related programmes, which were mainly supported by resource partners,

including the European Union and Department for International Development (DFID).

In Guinea Bissau, FAO is leading the preparation of a joint programme with the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women to support women's associations and rice production.

Various ongoing initiatives, such as the Great Green Wall or the Niger's "les Nigériens nourrissent les Nigériens" initiative (I3N), form an excellent basis for the CdR approach to promote inclusive and

sustainable growth when complemented with social interventions on nutrition and social protection.

### Prerequisites for successful implementation

In the process of scaling up, it is important that strategic partnerships are established within and beyond FAO and at local level to develop and strengthen capacities. Investment costs range between USD 300 and USD 400 per household, which is a small amount to build capacities and promote self-reliance for sustainable development based on resilient livelihoods.

## Zimbabwe takes action on out-of-date pesticides

The Government of Zimbabwe, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has embarked on a countrywide inventory of the chemicals to determine the exact extent of the problem of out-of-date pesticides.

The exercise started with training on how to undertake an inventory exercise following international best practices that was conducted in Harare in November.

Trained personnel from the government, the academia, private sector, regulatory authorities and the standards body embarked on a stock-taking exercise across the country which is expected to be complete by January 2016.

Developing countries are custodians of an estimated half a million tonnes of aged pesticides. Often these chemicals are stored outdoors in leaking containers, which seep into the soil and water posing severe threats to both the environment and public health.

The contamination of ground water and soil pose danger to both human beings and livestock through, inhalation of vapours or drinking of contaminated water.

In some cases such pesticides have caught fire leading to serious environmental damage and loss of property. Cases of pilferage have been recorded in Zimbabwe and elsewhere from poorly secured obsolete stockpiles,



FAO's international work on obsolete pesticides involves identification of obsolete stocks (inventory), safeguarding, disposal and helping countries to prevent further accumulation

and the stolen pesticides being sold to unsuspecting farmers and users resulting on crop damage and or failure.

A lack of statistics and inability to quantify the amount of obsolete pesticides as well as financing the entire exercise are the major challenges that hinder prospects for chemicals disposal.

Irvin Kunene, the Director of Environment in the Ministry of Environment, Water and Climate said training personnel was a critical step as it prepared those who were to undertake the actual stock take.

Mr Kunene acknowledged the importance of the exercise saying it was

"important as we want to protect humans and the environment." Disposal will prevent further accumulation.

FAO's international work on obsolete pesticides involves identification of obsolete stocks (inventory), safeguarding, disposal and helping countries to prevent further accumulation.

"The only way we can permanently eliminate the dangers posed by old and unwanted pesticide stocks is to make sure that no more stocks accumulate. That is why it is essential to understand the reasons behind the build-up of existing obsolete pesticide stockpiles", said Ivy Saunyama, FAO pesticide risk reduction consultant.

## Sustainable Development of the Small Ruminants Sector (PPR)

Côte d'Ivoire is preparing an integrated and inclusive strategy for the sustainable development of the small ruminants sector.

In the context of the sustainable development of the small ruminants sector in Côte d'Ivoire, the Ministry of Animal Resources and Fisheries (MIRAH) in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) organized on 15 and 16 December 2015 in Grand Bassam a national consultation on the sustainable development of the small ruminants sector in Côte d'Ivoire.

The general objective of this consultation was to contribute to the implementation of the global strategy for the control of the Peste de petits ruminants (PPR) and sustainably improve the performance of the small ruminants sector for food and nutrition security. The meeting was intended to follow up on the recommendations of the International Conference for the Control and Eradication of PPR held from 31 March to 2 April 2015 in Abidjan, which had led to the launching of the FAO-OIE Global Program for the Control and Eradication of the Peste des petits ruminants.

The consultation saw the participation of 55 people from the Cabinet, Regional and Central Departments of MIRAH, FAO, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Swiss Centre for Scientific Research, the Felix Houphouët Boigny National Polytechnic Institute, the Ministry



The general objective of this consultation was to contribute to the implementation of the global strategy for the control of the Peste de petits ruminants (PPR) and sustainably improve the performance of the small ruminants sector for food and nutrition security

Delegate to the Prime Minister in charge of Budget, the Interprofessional Fund for Agricultural Research and Council (FIRCA), the National Agency for Rural Development Support (ANADER), the Military Veterinary Services, private Veterinarians, the Ministry Delegate to the Prime Minister in charge of Economy and Finance and the French Development Agency (AFD).

Dr. Zoumana Meité, Director of Cabinet representing MIRAH, noted that there were significant imports of animal protein and emphasized the need for an appropriate strategy against PPR in accordance with the commitments made at the International Conference in Abidjan.

Germain Dasylyva, FAO Representative in Côte d'Ivoire, recalled the support given to the MIRAH. Moreover, he reiterated the importance of inclusive information sharing for a national approach with a view to an integrated improvement of the sector, which will include a national strategy for the control and eradication of PPR.

The workshop recommended the establishment of a technical committee for the formulation of the national strategy for the development of the small ruminants sector, for the control and eradication of PPR and emerging and transboundary diseases, and for the harmonization of the control of PPR in the countries of the sub-region.

## THE 29TH FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA (ARC)

The FAO Regional Conference for Africa, held every two years, will take place in Côte d'Ivoire from 4 to 8 April 2016, at Sofitel Abidjan Hôtel Ivoire.

The Regional Conference is a high-level consultation on issues specific to the region and the priority areas which should be taken into account in preparing the Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium, as well as in relation to longer-term programme objectives of the Organization to the needs of the region.

The 29th Regional Conference will be jointly organized from 4 to 8 April 2016 by the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and FAO, and will be attended by Ministers and Senior Officials from Member States, partners and Civil Society Organizations in Africa. The theme of this year's Conference is: "Transforming African Agri-food Systems for Inclusive Growth and a Shared Prosperity."

### HIGHLIGHTS

The Regional Conference is a high-level consultation on issues specific to the region and the priority areas which should be taken into account in preparing the Programme of Work and Budget for the next biennium, as well as in relation to longer-term programme objectives of the Organization to the needs of the region.



## BURUNDI: Focus on Learning and Nutritional Rehabilitation Homes (FARNs)



The integration of these approaches has contributed to the presence of many varieties of vegetable in households and in the local market

The integration of agriculture and nutrition is at the center of some FAO and UNICEF interventions in Burundi under the Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) project implemented in the communes of Kiremba, Marangara and Tangara in the Ngozi province. FAO is particularly concerned with agricultural production in the fight against malnutrition among vulnerable populations. In this project, UNICEF uses agricultural production, especially vegetables generated by this innovative technology, for nutrition education through the Learning and Nutritional Rehabilitation Homes (FARNs). The approach has achieved significant results and impacts.

### A project as a result of the integration of different approaches

For actions to be integrated in a project or program, there should be a number of actors intervening in its focus area. In the case of the Scaling-Up Nutrition project, the approaches or actions used are the Farmer Field School approach, the FARN approach and the kitchen gardens approach.

FAO's role in this project is to promote a nutrition-sensitive agriculture, including growing high nutritional value vegetables through the kitchen gardens, and to strengthen smallholders' capacity

through the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) centered on nutrition. These actions are in line with FAO Strategic Objective aimed to increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises. Other Strategic Objectives seek to reduce rural poverty; enable inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems; and contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

The project's focus of intervention are children under five years, girls of childbearing age, pregnant women and nursing women who receive support from the project, since they are the group of people most vulnerable to malnutrition. Kitchen gardens are small plots established within the family yard. They help produce highly nutritious vegetables available almost all year long and readily accessible. Their proximity and size allows for easy maintenance. The Farmer Field Schools serve to provide training to the beneficiaries in the kitchen gardens' techniques and maintenance, vegetable production, small-scale livestock farming as well as general knowledge on nutrition.

### The integration process

The integration process of these approaches starts by identifying key stakeholders at the community level;

then, proposed solutions to the identified causes are developed with the communities in a participatory manner. These solutions are then discussed in meetings involving volunteer mothers called "light-mothers," community health workers, agricultural instructors, collines' leaders and Colline Development Committees' leaders.

### Tangible results and impact

According to Mohamed Hama Garba, 58 FFS and kitchen gardens facilitators, including agricultural instructors, community health workers and light-mothers, have been trained under this project. This training contributed to the creation of 53 field schools with some 1,590 people (30 members per FFS) in the three communes where the project is implemented. In addition, 34,484 kitchen gardens and 62 FARNs are already set up in areas where there are already field schools. A considerable number of households will be reached. The initial goal was to reach 5,000 households by the end of the project. This number is already far exceeded in less than two years of the project implementation.

The integration of these approaches has contributed to the presence of many varieties of vegetable in households and in the local market. Households participating in the FFS and which attended the FARNs consume several types of vegetables. The nutritional status of children who have attended the FARNs has also improved. Fewer relapses were also recorded in children who attended these homes. With the harvests from the FFS, beneficiaries have set up small funds that allow them to buy additional ingredients for cooking demonstrations.

On the coverage of this integration, about 1,600 households are members of FFS in the three communes where the project is implemented and 6,500 households have at least one child who attended a FARN. This high number testifies to the massive support for this integrated approach.

## Seed fair eases drought effect in Malawi



FAO supports farmers in Malawi with seeds as part of an emergency agricultural programme

assessment after the floods aimed at strengthening the local seed systems through seed fairs by providing assorted seed varieties to 55,000 food insecure households in Balaka, Chikwawa, Nsanje, Neno, Phalombe, Zomba, Thyolo and Chitipa districts. The number of households covered was the largest in the country to date.

Each beneficiary got a voucher amounting to K10, 500 (\$15) of which a maximum of half was meant to be spent on cereal seed (maize, sorghum or millet seeds).

The remaining half was for legumes and vegetable seeds. A farmer got four kilograms of cereal seeds, two kilograms of legume seeds and one kilogram of vegetable seeds.

The government's role in the seed fairs included the identification and briefing of the agro-dealers, identification and registration of the beneficiaries, inspection and approval of the seed quality before opening the market each day, and monitoring the activities on the market day.

"These are some of the key roles which we played as a ministry in the whole exercise apart from managing logistics like communication, transport and public address system necessary for a successful

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The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has implemented an emergency agricultural programme by providing seeds to farmers in eight of 25 affected districts in Malawi.

The programme is being supported with funds from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), under the Government of Malawi's 2015/16 Food Insecurity Response Plan.

Fierce floods in January 2015 wreaked havoc across many districts in the country

as large swathes of crop land were destroyed and livestock washed away, damaging over 64 000 hectares of crop fields, leading to declaration of a State of Disaster by the President.

Furthermore, the production cycle of farm families in the affected districts was severely affected by prolonged dry spells which worsened the food security outlook.

FAO partnered the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) to conduct a seed security

## Liberian Farmers Form Climate Change Network

FAO supports networking among climate change adaptation agriculture farmers

Farmers on the Climate Change Adaptation Agriculture Project in Bong County, Central Liberia, in late December 2015 established a network to serve as the key platform for communication, information, and knowledge sharing and the enhancement of climate change adaptation agriculture in the County, Liberia and beyond.

The network comprises farmers who are participating in the climate change project in Garmue, Bellemue, Foequelleh, and Gbarnga-Siaquelleh communities. The main objectives of the network, known as Climate Change Network, include:

- Future collaboration well beyond the farmer field school sessions;
- To support research by providing information to enrich studies;



Mr Kanie Merfee of FAO helping to conduct the election in Bong County

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## Eco-Dairy Training Center (EDTC)

### The project

The Eco-Dairy Training Center (EDTC) is a Government of Eritrea project supported by FAO at Hamelmalo Agricultural College (HAC), located 12 kilometers to the north of Keren. The purpose of the project is to contribute and improve livelihoods of livestock keepers in Eritrea, through training in modern technologies and skills for sustainable increased milk production.

### The Stakeholders

The project was launched in July 2012 with the active support of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), Hamelmalo Agricultural College (HAC), public and private sector dairy stakeholders. The Agricultural Extension Division of the Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for the project execution in close collaboration with HAC and the Anseba Zoba and Sub-Zoba administrations. FAO Eritrea is responsible for project operational matters. The Rural Infrastructure and Agro-Industries Division (AGS) at FAO headquarters in Rome is the Lead Technical Unit responsible for providing the required technical inputs. HAC and the SDFA are considering the possibility of combining their efforts and setting up a joint dairy enterprise that could produce 1500 litres of raw milk into various dairy products on daily basis. Sound governance and management practices and a basic producer milk scheme incentive are to be included in, and piloted under, the business plan between HAC, EDTC and SDFA.

The inauguration ceremony was held on 3 December 2014, in the presence of the Ministers of Agriculture, Finance and Marine Resources, and all the stakeholders.

### Training Provided

The trainers were practically and technically qualified to perform on and off-the field training programmes. Moreover, they were capable of providing residential dairy training.

Trainees were requested to simulate the training presentation in EDTC on 'Clean Milk Production.' Some 23 presentations were made by different trainees during the training of trainers programme. The TOT trainees were composed of 2 lecturers, 6 graduate assistants and 4 outstanding college students. To date, the EDTC has provided training on a 4-credit-hour course



To improve the livelihoods of livestock keepers in Eritrea through training and production

titled 'Dairy and Cattle Production,' to around 140 students in a Diploma programme in the Departments of Animal and Veterinary Science. Another group, comprising of degree programme students, took a 2-credit-hour course on 'Dairy Processing' in the second semester of 2015.

Furthermore, the EDTC has hosted 50 high school graduates from Warsai Yikalo Secondary School, as part of their educational field trip. Mechanical Engineering students from Eritrean Institute of Technology also visited the dairy production machinery, as a continuation of their theoretical classes. To ensure continuous operation of the Eco-Dairy Training Center, training and production are of utmost importance to all the stakeholders. In addition, Hamelmalo Agricultural College could set up a certificate or diploma programme on Food/Dairy Technology.

Milk obtained from the College farm and Sutura Dairy Farmers Association (SDFA) was processed into seven major dairy products: cream, butter, butter milk, whole milk, skimmed milk, cheese and yoghurt (flavoured and set). In all, 444 litres of milk, of which 204 litres was from the college farm and the remaining from SDFA, was processed. One of the main objectives of the EDTC project was to train the trainees at 3 levels:

1. Dairy production training on 5 products-production processes.
2. Dairy processing training on 11 diversified products processing.
3. Dairy laboratory management training on 12 product-quality tests.

In the first week, the trainees were fully dependent on the trainer for production. However, two weeks into the training, the trainees were able to carry out processing with minimum guidance from the trainers. Two trainers were recruited to set up and commission the dairy plant, install a laboratory and train staff that could test the quality of milk and milk products. Another trainer arrived to continue the established activities, train personnel further, in order to lay a firm foundation for the Eco-Dairy Training Centre. Processing and production equipment for the Eco-Dairy Training plant was successfully completed for commercial production and operation.

The concerted efforts of all stakeholders involved in the project have culminated in the success of the implementation and smooth operation of the undertaking. All partners have been diligent in performing their tasks, laying a solid foundation for future endeavours.

## Seeds fair eases drought effect in Malawi

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seed fair," explained Osmund Chapotoka, District Agricultural Development Officer for Phalombe.

"I am happy I have bought seeds that I wanted such as maize, pigeon peas and vegetable seeds; this is a big relief to my family," Bayison Zikachepa, a 37-year old mother of four from Solijala village in Jenala Traditional Authority said.

"The seed fairs ensured farmers accessed high quality, certified seed of the right variety, which isn't always a guarantee when farmers buy seeds on their own from vendors," Ms Lodovica Tranchini, Concern Universal's Humanitarian Coordinator said. She further pointed to the critical role seed

research scientists played to ensure quality seeds were available on the market.

Matthew Pickard, Save the Children Country Director in Malawi and Peter Pangani, The Catholic Development Commission (CADECOM) of Malawi Secretary, both commended the efforts of FAO and the partners involved, describing the seed fairs as crucial to the farmers as they provide farmers with needful seed at the right time apart from offering an array of varieties from which farmers can choose from. Other implementing partners included CADECOM, Save the Children, Project Concern International (PCI), Concern Universal and Community Partnership for Relief and Development (COPRED) and the Government of Malawi's Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development.



Photo Credit: ©FAO

## Liberian Farmers Form Climate Change Network



Photo Credit: ©FAO

Climate Change Network Members in Bong County during the election of interim leadership

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- To share information, ideas, and do connections to resource and other related people
- To advocate for climate change farmers and approaches: and
- To mobilize support (money, training, inputs and other resources) for climate change adaptation for farmers.

After much deliberation, election was held for an interim leadership to conduct

the day-to-day affairs of the network for four months after which a formal structure would be set up. It will endeavor to follow all protocol for the formal establishment of the Climate Change Network for Agriculture Adaptation in Bong County. The elected Chairperson, Yarmah Paye, pledged to work hard with other farmers "in climate change network for us to achieve our objectives together."

The Chaplain, Augustus Konisear, praised the Ministry of Agriculture and FAO for the project. "MOA and FAO have trained and worked with us for three years. This is

the time for us to work hard to bring food security even in different weather conditions that are strange to us. In a way, we are scientists for ourselves and we are tired of eating imported food."

Climate Change Adaptation Agriculture Coordinator at the Ministry of Agriculture, speaking earlier, encouraged the farmers to embrace the wisdom of the Network. "This Network begins to work with people in cooperatives, and other groups will also benefit through knowledge-sharing," he stated.

He then urged them to operate the group as a "formal network that is registered and incorporated with leadership structure, and identified a program to work on." He further expressed that the Network should work to bring farmers together to link with farmer field schools in Liberia and other countries to improve their lives.

Climate Change Adaptation Agriculture farmers in Grand Gedeh, the twin County to Bong, that is also benefiting from the project will form their network and elect officers later this year. The project started in 2012 as a pilot exercise to introduce Liberian farmers to various coping mechanisms of farming methodologies, as a way of preparing them to cope in cases of weather and climate changes in the future.





The 68th UN General Assembly declared 2016 the International Year of Pulses (IYP) (A/RES/68/231).

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has been nominated to facilitate the implementation of the Year in collaboration with Governments, relevant organizations, non-governmental organizations and all other relevant stakeholders.

The IYP 2016 aims to heighten public awareness of the nutritional benefits of pulses as part of sustainable food production aimed towards food security and nutrition. The Year will create a unique opportunity to encourage connections throughout the food chain that would better utilize pulse-based proteins, further global production of pulses, better utilize crop rotations and address the challenges in the trade of pulses.

**1 Etymology**  
**Pulse**  
 The word pulse originates directly from the Latin *puls* meaning "thick gruel, porridge, mush."

**2 Pulses vs. Legumes**  
**Legume** refers to the plants whose fruit is enclosed in a pod.  
**Pulses** a subgroup of the legume family; refers only to the dried seed.

**3 Crops of ancient origin**  
 Pulses have been an essential part of the human diet for centuries.  
 The agricultural production of beans, chickpeas & lentils dates back to 7000 - 8000 B.C.

**4 Versatile ingredient with long shelf life**  
 Pulses can be stored for months without losing their high nutritional value, providing increased food availability between harvests.  
**A key ingredient** in many national and regional dishes such as:  
 • Baked beans • Daal  
 • Chilli • Falafel

**5 Part of the vital web of biodiversity**  
 Intercropping with pulses increases farm biodiversity and creates a more diverse landscape for animals and insects.

**6 Foster sustainable agriculture and soil protection**  
 The nitrogen-fixing properties of pulses can improve soil fertility, which improves and extends the productivity of farmland.

**7 Highly water efficient**  
**Water efficiency of pulses compared to other protein sources:**  
 1 kg Daal (split peas or lentils) 50 litres  
 1 kg Chicken 4 325 litres  
 1 kg Mutton 5 520 litres  
 1 kg Beef 13 000 litres

**8 Unexpected ally against climate change**  
 Pulses species have a broad genetic diversity from which climate resilient varieties can be selected.  
 By producing a smaller carbon footprint pulses indirectly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

**9 Economically accessible and multipurpose**  
**Pigeon peas & Bambara beans**  
 Can be cultivated in very poor soils and semi-arid environments.  
 Farmers who cultivate pulses have the option to both eat and/or sell their harvest.  
 Crop residues from grain legumes can also be used as animal fodder.

**10 A powerful superfood**  
 Zero cholesterol  
 High content of iron and zinc  
 Rich in nutrients  
 Gluten free  
 Source of protein  
 Low glycemic index  
 Low fat content  
 Rich in minerals and B-vitamins  
 Source of dietary fibre

## What are pulses and why are they important?

Pulses are annual leguminous crops yielding between 1 and 12 grains or seeds of variable size, shape and colour within a pod, used for both food and feed. The term "pulses" is limited to crops harvested solely for dry grain, thereby excluding crops harvested green for food, which are classified as vegetable crops, as well as those crops used mainly for oil extraction and leguminous crops that are used exclusively for sowing purposes (based on the definition of "pulses and derived products" of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations).

Pulses crops such as lentils, beans, peas and chickpeas are critical part of the general food basket. Pulses are a vital source of plant-based proteins and amino acids for people around the globe and should be eaten as part of a healthy diet to address obesity, as well as to prevent and help manage chronic diseases such as diabetes, coronary conditions and cancer; they are also important source of plant-based protein for animals.

In addition, pulses are leguminous plants that have nitrogen-fixing properties which can contribute to increasing soil fertility and have positive impact on the environment.

PHOTOS: 2015 AT A GLANCE



Photo Credit: ©FAO/Samuel Creppy

FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, Mr Bukar Tijani, officially launching the Regional Overview of Food insecurity Report 2015



Photo Credit: ©FAO/Samuel Creppy

Panel Discussion on the State of Food Insecurity in Africa during the official launch of SOFI 2015



Photo Credit: ©FAO

Mr Bukar Tijani, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, at the XIV World Forestry Congress, 2015



Photo Credit: ©FAO/Samuel Creppy

Flag Raising Ceremony at the 2015 World Food Day celebration in Accra, Ghana



Photo Credit: ©FAO

Mr Mallam Issah and Mrs Lydia Sasou received their medals from Mr Bukar Tijani, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, during the 2015 Farmers' Day in Bolgatanga, Ghana



Photo Credit: ©FAO/Samuel Creppy

Technical Seminar: Convergences between the FAO Strategic Framework and La Via Campesina Field Activities in Africa