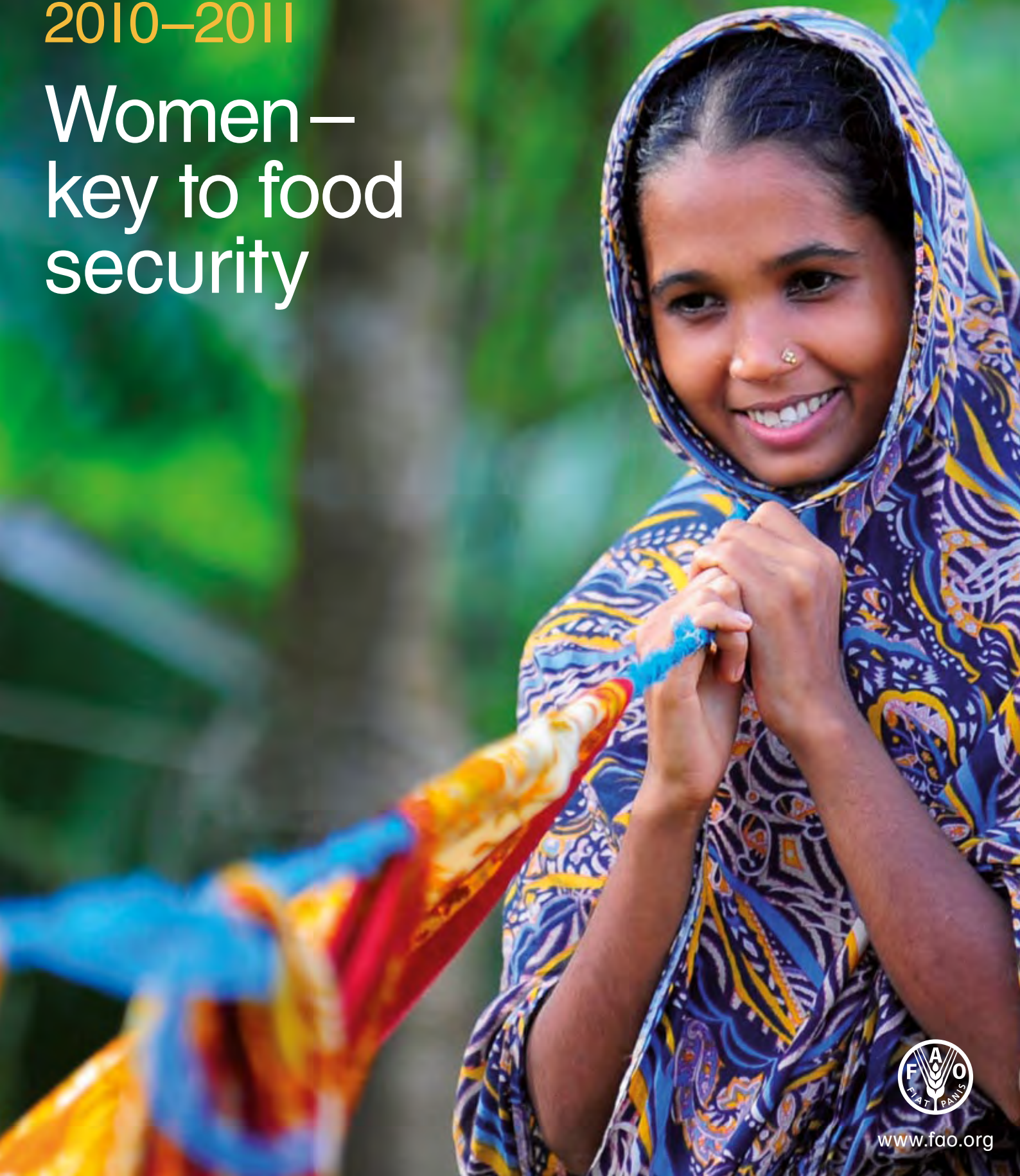


FAO AT WORK
2010–2011

Women—
key to food
security



www.fao.org



Women – key to food security

Jacques Diouf

Director-General

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Many of the world's poorest countries and regions will see their populations double in the years from 2000 to 2050, with Africa, for example, climbing from 820 million to two billion. Men and women farmers in Africa and other developing nations will therefore need to produce more than twice as much food.

This life-and-death challenge is made even more daunting by a number of constraints, including climate change with increasing temperatures, droughts and floods that displace farmers and destroy livelihoods.

However, I believe we can and will succeed. But only if the contribution of women farmers and their enormous present and future potential are recognized. And that means addressing the deep-rooted inequalities that currently impede women from gaining equal access to productive resources and services.





— “...if women had the same access to
 4 those resources as men, they would
 — produce 20-30 percent more food ...”

> FAO AT WORK | WOMEN – KEY TO FOOD SECURITY

Globally, women account for nearly half – 43 percent – of the world’s farmers, although their contribution to the agricultural labour force can be much higher – more than 60 percent in some countries. Women grow or raise much of the world’s food. They could be doing much more, if they had access to needed resources and had a voice in the decisions that have an impact on their lives and the lives of their families.

FAO’s research shows that women farmers are 20-30 percent less productive than men, but not because they manage their farms less well, or work less hard. The main reason for the gap between men’s and women’s performance is that the former have access to resources seldom available to female farmers – including land, financing and technology, among other things. In addition, women do not share fairly in benefits such as training, information and knowledge.

But if women had the same access to those resources as men, they would produce 20-30 percent more food and their families would enjoy better health, nutrition and education. If women had equal access to agricultural resources and services, food security would be greatly improved and societies would grow richer, and not only in economic terms.

Today, if men and women had equal access to productive resources in agriculture, food output in developing countries would increase by between 2.5 and four percent – enough to pull 100-150 million people out of hunger and help achieve Millennium Development Goal One on hunger and poverty reduction. Tomorrow, it would make it possible to feed a larger world.

But in many countries, existing and historically based cultural discrimination against women means that they have less right than men to own or hold land or to make decisions about their lives.

In a number of countries in North Africa and West Asia, for example, women account for fewer than five percent of landholders. And even in the region where their access to farmland is greatest, Latin America, only 25 percent of those holding land are women.

This is a complex issue, for which no single or simple solution exists. But the United Republic of Tanzania and Ethiopia, to name but two countries, have shown that requiring village land councils responsible for settling land disputes to include women can make a difference. More generally, the promotion and involvement of women’s organizations can do much to attain greater gender equality in land tenure.

One important reason why women farmers are less productive than men is that they have less time available for farm work, which they must reconcile with their roles as homemakers and caregivers. Cooking, fetching water and collecting firewood can occupy a large part of the day.



The solutions here are, relatively speaking, simpler. They encompass technology and infrastructure, including labour-saving technologies in agricultural production. Improved cooking stoves, which require less firewood and can be manufactured locally, can cut down on the time spent gathering wood.

But more important is a set of social conditions that encourages women to get access to technology and to use it, as well as better rural roads and infrastructure to facilitate trade and transport of goods.

The introduction of water sources in villages can also free women and girls to engage in other activities, as shown in Morocco where school attendance by girls rose 20 percent in areas where the water supply was upgraded.

6 — “The participation of women in
— decision-making on issues that affect
— their productive lives is essential.”



In much of the developing world, lack of education all too often prevents women from achieving their full potential, in agriculture as in other sectors. Of the world's more than 800 million illiterates, some 60 percent are women, a major handicap given the increased level of technical competence required of farmers in poor countries to double their production over the next four decades.

Governments should focus on increasing school enrolment for girls and on promoting women's participation in adult literacy programmes. Initiatives offering women or girls financial incentives to attend schools or join courses have proved successful in Mexico and Pakistan.

One reason why women produce less than men is that they have less money to invest in their farms. They have less access to credit because their lack of land tenure means they have little to offer as collateral for loans. Micro-financing programmes have proved they can be very effective in overcoming this constraint. Women and men having equal rights to enter into financial contracts is a crucial first step.

Investments in agriculture in developing countries need to increase by 50 percent by 2050 to feed growing populations. But in order to help effectively achieve greater food security, investments need to take into consideration the specific needs of women in agriculture.

Indeed, all policies in the agricultural sector need to be gender sensitive and take into account the particular needs of men and women.

There is no one single way to achieve this, but with the political will to address gender inequality, policies can be shaped to ensure that discrimination against women ceases, that they have equal access to resources and that agricultural policies and programmes support them. The participation of women in decision-making on issues that affect their productive lives is essential.

Closing the gender gap in agriculture is a top priority both today and tomorrow. Feeding a world population set to grow to more than nine billion in the next four decades means harnessing all our energies and resources. Only the full and equal participation of women – more than half of the world's population – will set the ground for a world free from hunger. ■





FAO AT WORK

FAO field programme evolves to meet partners' needs

Over the past 20 years, FAO's activities in the field have evolved to better align with the needs of partners, resulting in significant changes in emphasis and approach. Today, field activities are based on matching national priorities to organizational objectives, while anticipating and responding to the growing number of emergencies challenging food security in poor countries.

But field activities only work in tandem with FAO's other services. For example, an FAO field project may demonstrate a promising new agricultural technique. If the government does not have the capacity to spread the use of the technique through such actions as farmer training, policy support and investment, what is the use? FAO supports governments in all those areas, as will be explained lower in this article, to keep the momentum going.

“FAO manages over 2000 field projects and programmes with an available budget close to US\$1.5 billion.”

The origins of FAO's field programme can be traced to the early 1950s when its goal was to deliver practical assistance to fight hunger. Since then, the Organization has accumulated a wealth of technical capacity and expertise on rural and agricultural development. Currently, FAO manages over 2000 field projects and programmes with an available budget close to US\$1.5 billion.

About half of FAO's total resources are spent on its field programme, the highest proportion ever. Just six percent of the field programme's funds come from FAO's regular budget; the rest comes from voluntary contributions and various trust funds. Field activities cover a wide range of initiatives, from controlling animal or plant diseases across countries or regions, to renovating village grain storage, to providing policy advice.

The growth in emergencies over the past two decades brings new opportunities and a new urgency to FAO's actions in the field. Many of the new disasters are climate induced, for example, the 2010 floods in Pakistan and drought in the Horn of Africa. In addition, political crises have not only increased in number over the past decade but also in complexity, impact and duration.

The small-scale farmers, fishers and foresters who comprise 75 percent of the world's one billion hungry depend entirely on agriculture and related enterprises for their food security and livelihoods. When disaster hits, they are bound to lose some or all of their assets. FAO's approach now is to help vulnerable families become more resilient to disasters, or even better, to equip them to anticipate crises and deal with them as they occur.



Over time, FAO has concentrated on identifying the best mix of interventions for a given crisis situation. The result is an approach that integrates development in an emergency context. In the aftermath of the 2010 Pakistan floods, for example, it was critical to provide immediate food aid. But it was also necessary to save livestock and make sure that farmers could plant and irrigate their crops over the medium term.

In 2007, an era of volatile food prices dawned, hurting poor farmers and poor consumers alike. In December 2007, FAO launched the Initiative on Soaring Food Prices – known as the ISFP – to help small farmers grow more food and earn more money. Since then, the Organization has carried out interagency assessment missions in nearly 60 countries and has implemented projects in an additional 25 countries. FAO has provided policy advice to governments and scaled up monitoring of food prices through the Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture.



Another trend in FAO's field programme brings the Organization together with development banks, national and municipal governments, NGOs and grassroots organizations to design agricultural and rural development programmes that are owned, managed and partly financed by the governments themselves. For example, FAO recently helped Bangladesh to develop a country investment plan for agriculture, food security and nutrition. This led to a US\$50 million grant from the World Bank, a small portion of which is being used by FAO to strengthen the capacity of Bangladesh to implement the plan.


In addition, middle-income countries like China are increasingly becoming development cooperation partners and providing financial or in-kind support through FAO to assist low-income food-deficit countries achieve their national priorities. Brazil funds an extensive FAO field programme in its own country.

Over time, the Organization has greatly decentralized its operations, an action that has not only reduced costs, but has also placed many more technical officers in the field. Their proximity ensures that FAO's country assistance policy is based on a deep and thorough understanding of the convergence between government priorities and FAO's comparative advantages. As with all of FAO's work, it has the overall objective of ensuring that people have access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives. ■

10 “... the Organization has greatly decentralized its operations [and] placed many more technical officers in the field.”





A man with short grey hair, wearing a white lab coat, is looking through a microscope. The microscope is a compound light microscope with a black body and a white eyepiece. The man's face is in focus, showing concentration. The background is slightly blurred, showing a white wall and a window with light coming through. The overall tone is professional and scientific.

FAO AT WORK

12

Highlights



FAO launches wheat rust tracking site

FAO has launched a new website called Rust Spore <http://www.fao.org/agriculture/crops/rust/stem/en/>, which aims to deliver up-to-date information on the devastating strain of wheat stem rust disease known as Ug99. The website also monitors new strains of the disease and provides access to reliable data on a global scale. Ug99 presents a severe threat to the world's wheat crops and causes millions of dollars in crop losses. The monitoring is crucial as 90 percent of global wheat varieties are vulnerable to the seven recognized variants of the Ug99 strain. Rust Spore was created in cooperation with the Borlaug Global Rust Initiative.

JUNE 2010

FAO steps up response to Niger food crisis

Nine new FAO projects are underway in Niger in response to the severe food crisis in 2009 that left 7.1 million people, half the entire population, facing hunger in 2010. The projects have reached 2.8 million people – farmers and pastoralists – and are valued at US\$17.7 million. FAO's emergency teams distributed 14000 tonnes of animal feed, 3000 tonnes of cereal seeds and 1 500 tonnes of fertilizer. In parallel, the European Union's Food Facility provided long-term support by investing €3 million in the construction and rehabilitation of agriculture inputs shops and warehouse facilities that provide farmers with access to quality inputs and information on production techniques.

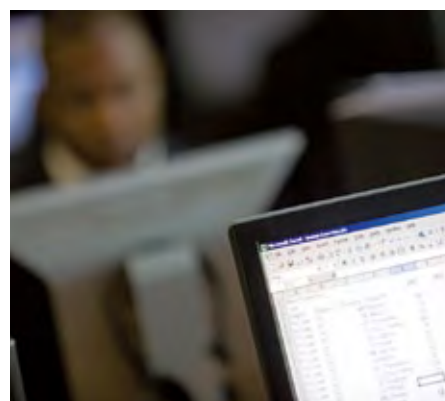
JUNE 2010



Food experts set melamine levels

The Codex Alimentarius Commission has set new maximum levels for melamine in food and feed: 1 mg/kg in powdered infant formula and 2.5 mg/kg in other foods and animal feed. In the last few years, high levels of melamine have been discovered in food products as diverse as infant formula and pet food, resulting in illness and death. These levels were caused by deliberate addition of melamine to boost the apparent protein content of food products. The Commission also set measures to protect fresh salads from picking up pathogens like salmonella, e.coli and hepatitis A virus as well as to control the bacterial species *Vibrio* in seafood. Limits and measures for prevention were also set for aflatoxins, the carcinogenic fungal toxins that can contaminate corn, peanuts and other food crops such as tree nuts.

JULY 2010

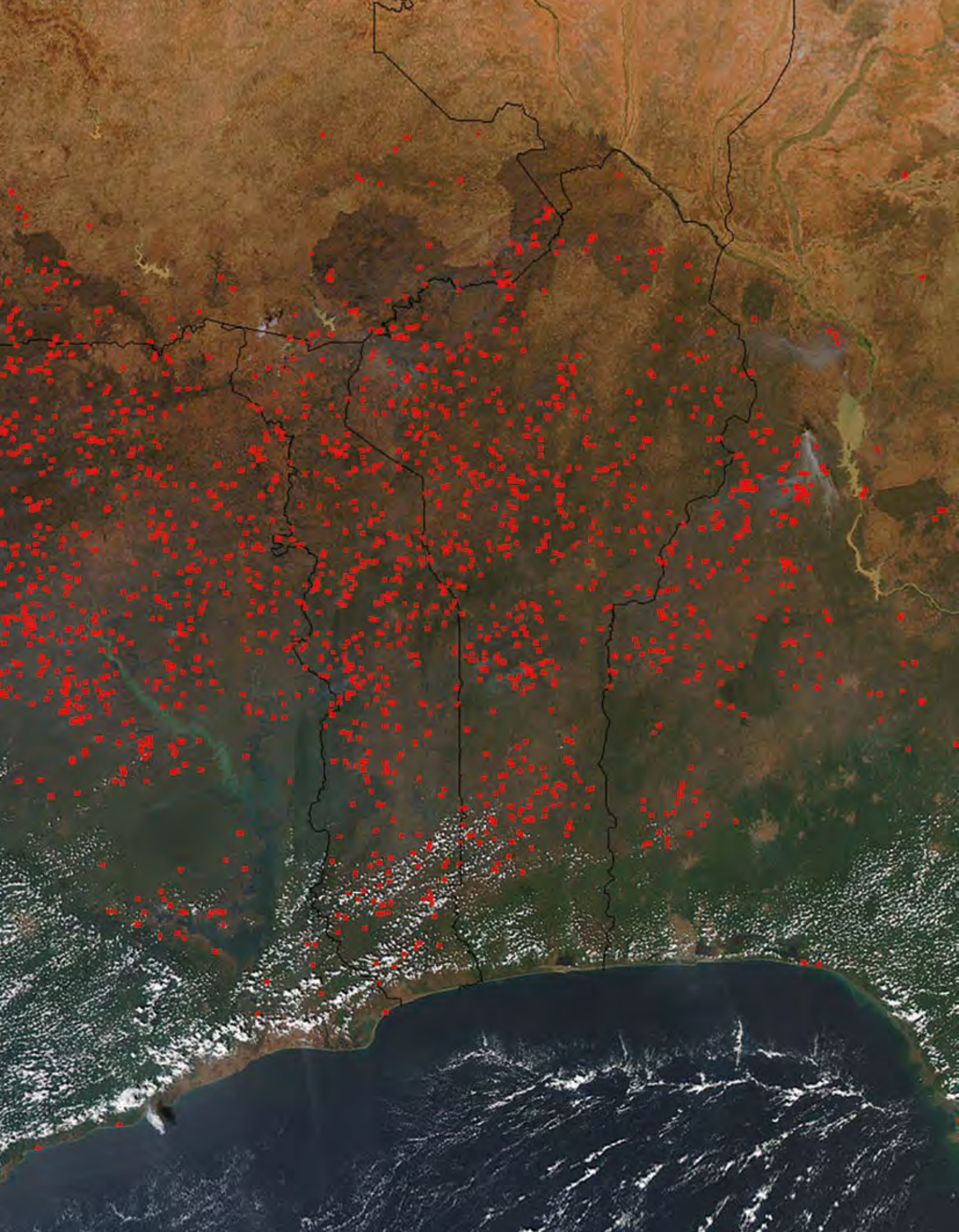


FAO opens statistics treasure trove

FAO is now offering free online access to FAOSTAT, the world's largest database of food, hunger and agricultural information that make up over one million data points from 210 countries and territories. Geared towards policy makers, economists and planners, the database helps in understanding where – and why – hunger occurs and underscores the power of numbers in the fight to alleviate poverty and hunger. FAOSTAT is already in use by other UN agencies, national development authorities, donors, international aid organizations, NGOs, academics, investors and farmers. Data dates back to 1961.

JULY 2010





UNITAR/FAO offer online courses

FAO and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research are offering a series of online knowledge management and web 2.0 technology courses for developing countries. The interactive tutor-facilitated online courses are certified using internationally recognized quality standards. FAO and partners have developed the self-paced e-learning materials that aim to help development professionals reinforce the effectiveness of their work. The partnership underscores the UN call for enhanced inter-agency collaboration in capacity development.

JULY 2010

FAO launches NASA-developed fire monitoring system

FAO's new Global Fire Information Management System (GFIMS) detects fire hotspots in near real-time from satellites operated by NASA, the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration, developed in collaboration with the University of Maryland. Thanks to GFIMS, information on fires is accessible while fires are still burning, with a 2.5-hour lapse between satellite over pass and the data being available. Globally, vegetation fires affect an estimated 350 million hectares of land each year, of which about one half or more are in Africa. In the Mediterranean, between 700 000 and one million hectares are damaged by vegetation fires annually. GFIMS will also help in fire trend analysis and response.

AUGUST 2010



Committee on World Food Security appoints experts

The Committee on World Food Security (CFS) has appointed a steering committee of 15 world renowned multidisciplinary experts for the High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE). The HLPE will mobilize knowledge sources and disciplines to assess and analyze the current state of food security and nutrition and to provide independent, solution-oriented knowledge to inform policy debates at CFS. The HLPE is an essential step towards policy coherence and progress in fighting hunger and malnutrition and promoting agricultural and rural development worldwide. The HLPE is currently working on food price volatility, land tenure and international investment in agriculture, climate change and food security, and social safety nets.

SEPTEMBER 2010



New celebrities become Goodwill Ambassadors

Canadian Grammy-awarded singer Céline Dion, Oscar winning American actress Susan Sarandon, Italian internationally known actor Raul Bova and Philippine singer and actress Lea Salonga have joined FAO in the fight against hunger by becoming Goodwill Ambassadors. The performers have agreed to commit themselves personally and professionally to FAO's mission of building a food secure world for present and future generations. Lea will also act as advocate for the Youth and United Nations Global Alliance initiative led by FAO.

OCTOBER 2010



World leaders rally around World Food Day

Pope Benedict XVI and President Paul Kagame of Rwanda joined FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf by calling for global unity in finding resolute and concrete actions against hunger through producing more food in the countries where the hungry live. Diouf underscored the 2010 World Food Day theme, United Against Hunger, means that food security on a global scale is everyone's responsibility. The call to action comes as 925 million people in the world go to sleep hungry and with a child dying from hunger-related causes every six seconds.

OCTOBER 2010





FAO distributes huge quantities of wheat seeds to Pakistan

Pakistan is now reaping the benefit of FAO's distribution of 26 000 tonnes of wheat seed, which helped save 2010's Rabi planting season after dramatic floods washed away or ruined hundreds of thousands of tonnes of seed for planting. Wheat is the main staple of the Pakistani diet and the 2010 floods put the food security of tens of millions at stake. The 2011 harvest is expected to be large enough to feed over four million people for the next six months. Thanks to rapid donor response, FAO's distribution began in October. FAO received US\$91.98 million in donor support within the framework of the floods relief and early recovery response plan; approximately US\$54 million was spent in buying and distributing quality wheat seed.

OCTOBER 2010



Africa crop tool launched

FAO has launched an interactive 43-nation guide on what to plant as well as when and where to plant it. The quick reference calendar covers 43 major African countries and advises on planting according to the agriculture area. The web-based tool, developed by FAO experts, covers more than 130 crops from beans to beetroot and wheat to watermelon. The FAO crop calendar covers 283 agro-ecological zones in Africa, representing the richness and variety of the African ecology as well as the challenges of land degradation, sand encroachment and floods.

NOVEMBER 2010

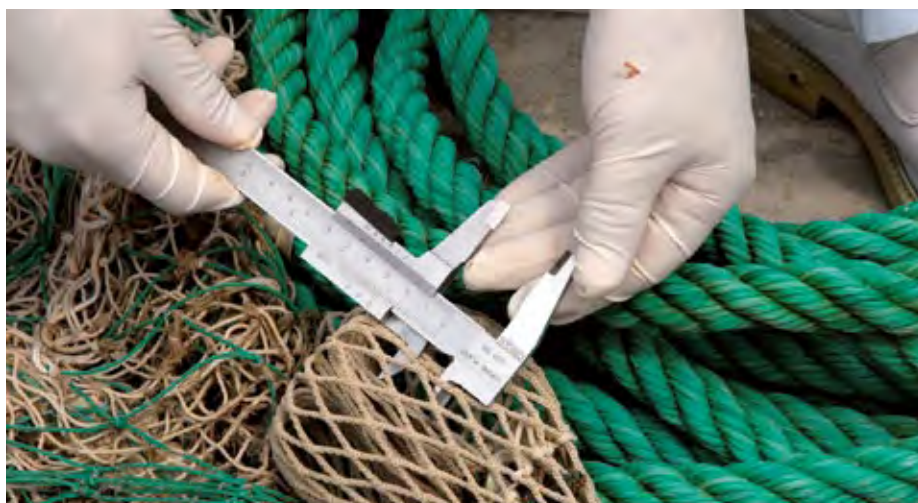
Over three million people sign I billionhungry petition

Over three million people have signed a petition for the The I billionhungry Project, which calls for an end to world hunger. The petition was presented to world governments at FAO's Rome headquarters and asks world leaders to make the elimination of hunger their top priority. The 2009 global economic downturn and rising food prices pushed the figure of hungry people worldwide, at 925 million, past the 1 billion mark for the first time in history. Awareness for the project is being raised by FAO's Goodwill Ambassadors and through social media sites. The next phase aims to keep the spotlight shining on anti-hunger initiatives that are already working.

NOVEMBER 2010







Ann Tutwiler appointed FAO Deputy Director-General

American citizen Ann Tutwiler has become one of FAO's two Deputy Directors-General, the first woman to hold the position. Tutwiler's specific job is Deputy Director-General for Knowledge. Previously she worked for the United States Department of Agriculture as Coordinator of Global Food Security. Tutwiler was Senior Advisor for the Africa Bureau of the US Agency for International Development. She holds degrees in agribusiness from Purdue University and Harvard Business School, a Masters from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and a Bachelor of Arts from Davidson College.

DECEMBER 2010



Fisheries Committee adopts three new guidelines

The FAO Committee on Fisheries adopted three new guidelines, on aquaculture certification, the ecolabelling of fish and fishery products from inland capture fisheries, and on bycatch management and reduction of discards. It also gave its support to the development of a global record of fishing vessels and guidelines on small-scale fisheries. Countries are making progress in implementing the 15-year-old Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries but the Committee recognized further action, including Port State Measures and Flag State Performance, is needed to curtail illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which continues to be a major global threat to the long term sustainability of fisheries, particularly in developing countries. It also encouraged a broader application of the ecosystem approach to fisheries and aquaculture. Aquaculture was acknowledged as a key contributor to future food and nutrition security as well as social and economic well-being. The Committee also told FAO to raise awareness of the role of fisheries and aquaculture in the context of climate change.

FEBRUARY 2011

International Year of Forests kicks off

It is the International Year of Forests! FAO's *State of the World's Forests* report underlines benefits gained when local people manage forests in sustainable and innovative ways. The international year also aims to reinforce the connection between people and forests because, the report stresses, the forest industry is vital to the green economy. Since wood and wood products are made from renewable resources they are recyclable. The report reveals that most solid wood products are produced with relatively little energy and have a low carbon footprint. Many governments are increasing their support to the forestry sector and believe the industry has great potential in promoting a greener economy, in particular through bio-energy.

FEBRUARY 2011



Global community supports Japan

In the wake of the March 11 earthquake that struck northern Japan, and the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant, FAO, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the World Health Organization have offered their full support to the country's ongoing efforts to address food and agriculture issues, including food safety resulting from radioactive contamination.

MARCH 2011

Sixtieth anniversary of FAO in Italy

FAO is celebrating its sixtieth anniversary in Italy in 2011. The Organization, founded in 1945, moved from its Washington, DC headquarters to the centre of Rome, Italy in 1951. Some activities have been scheduled, including the preparation of a souvenir book, a special plaque at FAO headquarters to mark the occasion, a video on the transfer based on the film archives of FAO and *Istituto Luce*, a poster competition to involve school children, and an Open Day in October 2011, in the context of the World Food Day observance.

2011



Inter-agency report to the G20 on food price volatility

The G20 Ministers for Agriculture in June 2011 set a series of recommendations and proposed various concrete measures to reduce food insecurity and the volatility of food prices for consideration at the G20 Cannes Summit in November 2011. The recommendations were based on a comprehensive report on policy options for coping with food price volatility. The report was coordinated by FAO and OECD, in partnership with IFAD, IMF, UNCTAD, WFP, the World Bank and the WTO.

JUNE 2011

José Graziano da Silva elected FAO Director-General

The FAO Conference at its biennial meeting elected José Graziano da Silva, 61, of Brazil as the next Director-General. As Brazil's Extraordinary Minister of Food Security and Fight Against Hunger, Graziano da Silva was responsible for implementing the country's highly successful *Fome Zero* (Zero Hunger) programme, in whose design he also played a leading role. Since 2006, he has served as FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean. His term of office starts on 1 January 2012 and runs through 31 July 2015.

JUNE 2011

Rinderpest declared eradicated

The FAO Conference on 28 June formally declared the global eradication of the cattle disease rinderpest, achieved under an FAO-coordinated programme. Rinderpest becomes only the second disease in history to be eradicated, after smallpox. For over a thousand years, rinderpest epidemics killed millions of animals, leading to destitution and starvation among cattle-keeping communities.

JUNE 2011

European Commission signs strategic partnership with Rome-based UN agencies

The European Commission, FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Food Programme have signed a new Strategic Framework of Cooperation. The agreement aims to increase the capacity of the international community to deliver effective, coordinated, timely and sustainable support to food security and nutrition. By joining forces, the four partners are seeking to achieve higher collective impact on the world's food security.

JUNE 2011





Members

An intergovernmental organization, FAO has 191 Member Nations, two associate members and one member organization, the European Union.

Governance

Representatives of members meet at the biennial FAO Conference to review global governance policy issues and international frameworks, as well as to evaluate work carried out and to approve the budget for the next biennium. The Conference elects Council Members, to serve three-year rotating terms to carry out executive oversight of programme and budgetary activities. The Conference also elects a Director-General to a four year term of office, renewable once. The current Director-General, Dr Jacques Diouf of Senegal ends his third term on 31 December 2011. The newly elected

Director-General, José Graziano da Silva will assume his functions on 1 January 2012 for a term which expires on 31 July 2015.

Departments

FAO is composed of seven departments: Agriculture and Consumer Protection; Economic and Social Development; Fisheries and Aquaculture; Forestry; Corporate Services, Human Resources and Finance; Natural Resources Management and Environment; and Technical Cooperation.

Offices

Besides its headquarters in Rome, FAO is present in over 130 countries. The decentralized network includes five regional offices, 11 subregional offices, two multidisciplinary teams, 74 fully fledged country offices (excluding those hosted in regional and

subregional offices), eight offices with technical officers/FAO Representatives, and 36 countries covered through multiple accreditation. In addition, the Organization maintains five liaison offices and four information offices in developed countries.

Staff

As of 1 April 2011, FAO employed 1 835 professional staff (including Associate Professional Officers and National Professional Officers) and 1 856 support staff. Figures only refer to staff holding fixed term and continuing appointments. Approximately 53 percent are based at headquarters in Rome, while the remainder work in offices worldwide. During the last 15 years, the proportion of women in the professional staff category has more than doubled, from 16 percent to 34 percent.

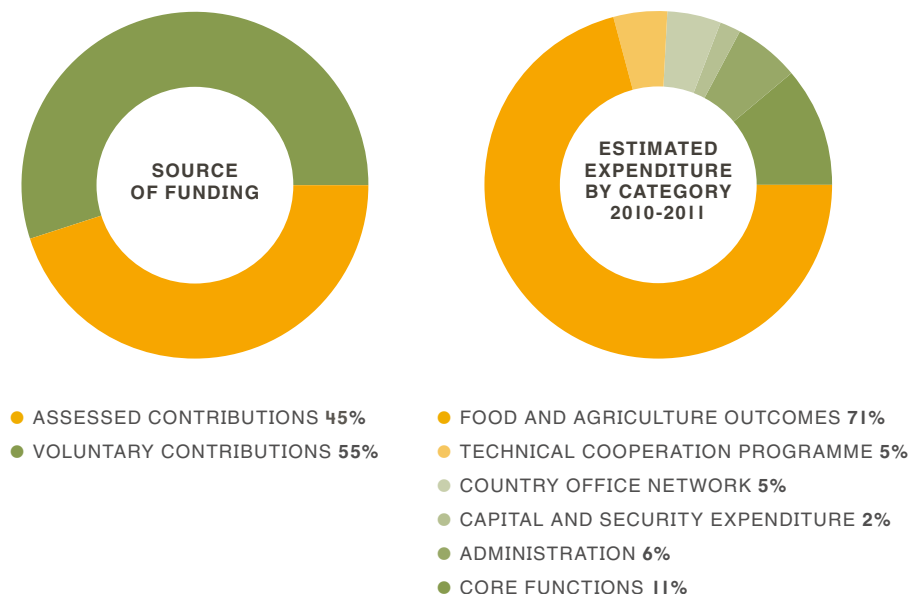
Programmes and projects

In 2010, FAO implemented programmes and projects with a total value of US\$903 million. About four percent are funded by assessed contributions through the FAO Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) and the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS). The remaining 96 percent are funded from voluntary contributions, through the Government Cooperative Programme (44 percent), Unilateral Trust Fund (UTF) (six percent), other forms of Trust Funds (46 percent), that include UN Joint Programmes.

Funding and expenditure

FAO's overall programme of work is funded by assessed and voluntary contributions. The assessed contributions are member countries' contributions, set at the biennial FAO Conference. The FAO regular budget for the 2010-2011 biennium is US\$1 billion. The voluntary contributions provided by members and other partners support technical and emergency (including rehabilitation) assistance to governments, as well as direct support to FAO's core work. The voluntary contributions are expected to exceed US\$1.2 billion in 2010-11.

FAO in figures







**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
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