



Djibouti and FAO

Building capacities for sustainable agricultural development and food security

Cooperation between the Republic of Djibouti and FAO has continuously increased since the representation was opened in 2008. FAO assistance has covered numerous areas such as access to water, food production and systems in the agricultural, livestock and fisheries sectors. FAO continues to strengthen its collaboration with the Government, emphasizing climate change resilience and sustainable development initiatives, including projects targeting agro-pastoralists.

Fishery products – essential resources for food and nutrition security

The fishing potential is still largely underutilized in Djibouti, although it is destined to become a key resource for food and nutrition security and job creation for youth and women. FAO assisted the Government in improving fisheries' governance by revising the policy and by putting in place a strategy for developing marine aquaculture. Since 2016, FAO has conducted an assessment of the fishery resources and set up a monitoring system for the exploitation of territorial waters. In addition, diversification of fishery products is underway, including the promotion of shellfish aquaculture, such as clams and oysters, with the establishment of pilot farms to create jobs locally – particularly again with a focus on youth and women.

Matching FAO's expertise to Djibouti's development priorities

FAO assistance in Djibouti is shaped by the 2013-2017 FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF), which is centred on three priority areas:

- **Food security, nutrition and resilience**, including disaster risk reduction and management to ensure Djibouti's population has the means cope with shocks such as drought and events connected to climate change
- **Improving production and productivity in the agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors**, focusing on specific value chains, with a view to achieving more efficient, competitive and diversified production systems and generating employment and income opportunities in rural areas
- **Sustainable and responsible management of productive natural resources**, including an emphasis on integrated water management for agriculture and livestock activities as well as sustainable forest and fisheries management

Jointly developed with the Government of Djibouti, the CPF responds to national priorities and represents FAO's contribution to the **UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2013-2017** for Djibouti. It supports FAO's Strategic Objectives as well as its regional and subregional priorities, including the **Plan of Action for a Hunger-Free Horn of Africa**.

The new **CPF 2018-2022** is being formulated in the wake of the new UNDAF covering the same period.



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Improving access to water – an overriding priority

Consecutive years of drought have depleted food and water resources in Djibouti, severely affecting the ability of rural communities to sustain a livelihood. Malnutrition rates are consistently above emergency thresholds, while the country is also host to a large number of refugees – almost half of whom are food-insecure. Livestock rearing, a mainstay of rural livelihoods, has also been undermined by limited access to water resources.

In this context, FAO Djibouti has consistently directed its efforts towards enhancing food production and, above all, increasing access to water, especially for vulnerable agro-pastoral communities. Key ongoing water-focused activities include the building and strengthening of wells and underground cisterns for rainwater harvesting as well as the establishment of water reservoirs in rural areas throughout the country, including along migration axes (as about 60 000 migrants pass through Djibouti each year).

A major achievement has been the construction of an 11 km water adduction system (built in 2015), which pumps water uphill to the village of Asagueila, previously disadvantaged by extremely difficult water access constraints. In addition to supplying Asagueila's population with water for household use and livestock rearing, the system has opened up new agricultural opportunities through the development of irrigation facilities.

FAO's activities in support of water management have also focused on strengthening local capacities through training events and the establishment of water management committees in all regions of the country. A number of FAO projects have introduced and promoted technologies such as micro-irrigation, and – in collaboration with agricultural cooperatives – drip-irrigation kits have been widely distributed through agro-pastoralist field schools and in refugee camps.

FAO water management projects in Djibouti have been implemented with the Ministry of Agriculture and supported by donors including – but not limited to – OCHA, Belgium, Japan and the European Union.

Managing prosopis – for profit

FAO provided technical assistance to support the Ministry of Agriculture's innovative management of prosopis, aiming to turn this highly invasive tree species into a valuable resource. The Government is committed to helping local groups manage and fully exploit the tree's potential, including its cloves, wood and flower. These provide a source of livestock feed, wood for furniture, and products such as charcoal and honey.

Implemented under FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme, the project introduced income-generating activities for women and unemployed youth, providing payment for prosopis clove picking for example. Participating communities benefited from information campaigns, training courses and practical demonstrations.

"There is no food security without water security."

FAO Director-General

Strategic planning and policy support

Since 2008, FAO has supported the Government in the formulation of major programmatic frameworks. In January 2016, together with the European Union (EU), FAO established the Food and Nutrition Security Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation (FIRST) programme, a policy assistance mechanism. The Programme has significantly strengthened programmatic and coordination activities in the country. Thanks to this new mechanism, Djibouti's National Investment Plan for the Agriculture Sector and Food and Nutrition Security (PNIASAN 2016-2020) includes a significant nutrition component. This has already enabled the country to secure significant funding (US\$211.5 million), 65 percent of which is to be allocated to food and nutrition security. The Plan focuses on interventions to strengthen the agriculture sector, particularly for vulnerable rural communities. Additionally, a group of Parliamentarians, representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture and FAO technical experts are currently drafting a law on food and nutrition security.

