



Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations

# BUILDING THE RESILIENCE OF COMMUNITIES AGAINST DROUGHT IN NAMIBIA

In 2016, recurrent dry conditions affecting Namibia were exacerbated by one of the worst El Niño episodes on record. This resulted in widespread crop failure during the 2015-2016 agricultural season, with the staple crops, maize and mahangu, attaining below average national yields of 62 percent and 39 percent, respectively. The impact upon the agriculture sector was compounded by water scarcity, increased incidence of disease, high food prices and declining livestock prices. With the loss of livelihoods for 1.5 million subsistence farmers and pastoralists and more than 720 000 people (36 percent of the country's population) reported to be food insecure, a state of emergency was declared by the country's President. In response, FAO mobilized resources to continue and expand its technical assistance to the Government of Namibia through resilience-building interventions targeting selected drought-affected communities.



## WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

The project aimed to protect assets and ensure food security, while building resilience against natural disasters. The assistance focused on the following components: (i) emergency distribution of animal feed and (ii) emergency distribution of crop seeds. While the project succeeded in reaching 1 600 vulnerable small-scale pastoral households affected by drought in the three target regions, difficulties in the identification of potential suppliers for cowpea seed meant that seed could not be procured as planned. As a result, funds were reallocated for the procurement of animal feed, thereby increasing the number of beneficiaries under the livestock component.

## IMPACT

This intervention contributed significantly to protecting livestock assets, in particular the core breeding herds, thereby ensuring food security and livelihood protection, with special focus on the poor and most vulnerable agropastoralists. Policy-makers feel that there might be a need for the Government to review the existing National Drought Policy. The need for the timely implementation of interventions is an important lesson learned for future drought-related activities in the region. Extension staff from the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry and beneficiaries in the target areas are expected to ensure the sustainability of project benefits through continued evidence-based advocacy, drawing from gains made by the project, not least in terms of increased survival rates, improved productivity and milk production.

## KEY FACTS

### Contribution

USD 500 000

### Duration

November 2016 – August 2017

### Resource Partner

FAO

### Partners

Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, Regional Councils

### Beneficiaries

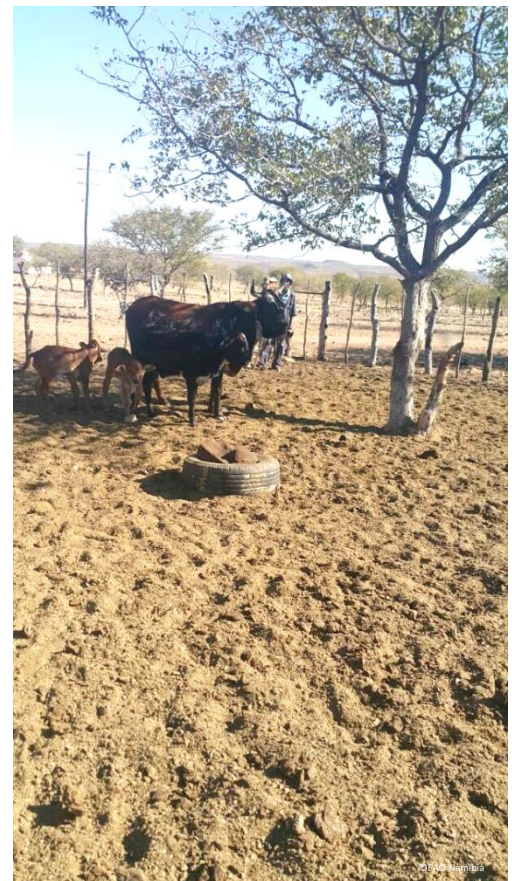
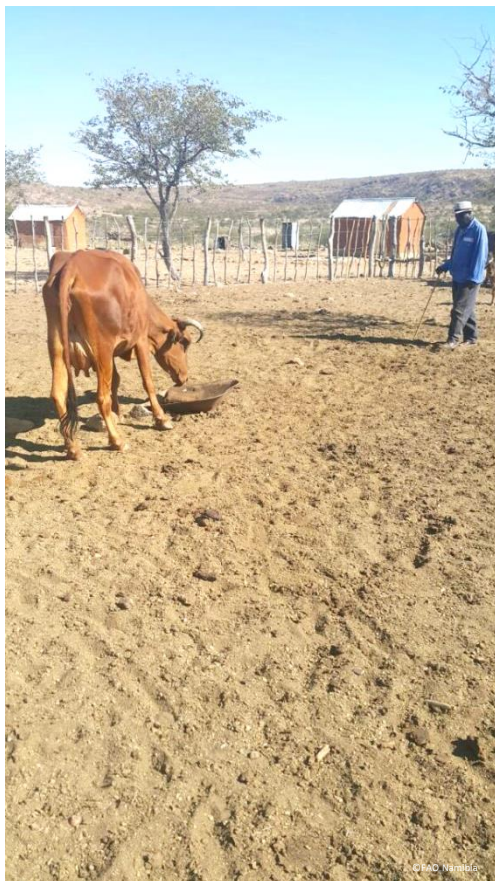
Households in three target regions (through access to livestock feed and mineral supplements), extension staff, farmers and regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management coordinators

## ACTIVITIES

- 496 metric tonnes of livestock feed (256 metric tonnes of grass hay and 240 metric tonnes of multinutrient block supplements) procured to feed around 9 600 large stock equivalent (large or small ruminants) belonging to the 1 600 small-scale pastoral households, for a period of two months.
- Following the reallocation of funds, additional animal feeds were procured, namely 100 metric tonnes of grass hay and 38 metric tonnes of multinutrient blocks.
- Livestock assets protected and food security ensured for the 2 390 beneficiaries reached.
- Rapid post-implementation evaluation carried out, with randomly selected beneficiaries visited expressing their appreciation for project intervention.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



**Project Code**  
TCP/NAM/3605

**Project Title**  
Emergency support to mitigate the impacts of El Niño-induced drought on pastoral and agropastoral communities in Erongo, Kunene and Omusati regions

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