



# Welcome



Welcome to the first edition of the new quarterly **FAO in Africa** from the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Regional Office for Africa. It is tailored to mobile phones, so if you like what you see, it is easy to share with your WhatsApp contacts.

FAO's Regional Office for Africa is committed to working hand-in-hand with our partners through supporting transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agri-food systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life for all, leaving no one behind.

Each quarter, we aim to bring you stories from across the Africa region that show our work towards these ambitions. Happy reading!

Abebe Haile-Gabriel  
FAO Assistant Director-General and  
Regional Representative for Africa

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## News

### Better Environment: Greening Africa's cities



In Rwanda, FAO and the City of Kigali have started planting more than 10,000 fruit trees as part of FAO's global **Green Cities Initiative** and Kigali's Masterplan 2050. The Initiative's Africa programme targets small, medium and large African cities to introduce innovative solutions to integrate food systems, urban and peri-urban agriculture, and urban forestry into local planning and communities.

*“With urbanization on the rise here in Rwanda's capital, a push towards greening the city aims to improve the lives and livelihoods of the people who live here - the new avocado, mango, orange and other trees provide food, shade and other ecological benefits contributing to the Four Betters, including a Better Environment,”* said FAO Representative in Rwanda Gualbert Gbehounou.

### ARC32 and the Four Betters



The countdown is on to the 32<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Regional Conference for Africa (ARC32), hosted by Equatorial Guinea in April 2022. As part of the preparations, Zimbabwe's Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Water and Rural Resettlement and Chair of the 31<sup>st</sup> Session, Anxious Jongwe Masuka (pictured, right), visited FAO's Regional Office for Africa in Accra, Ghana and met with the FAO team including FAO Regional Representative Abebe Haile-Gabriel (pictured, left). He also paid courtesy visits to Government of Ghana officials including the Minister of Food and Agriculture Dr. Owusu Afriyie Akoto, the Minister of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation Dr. Kwaku Afriyie, and the Minister for Fisheries and Aquaculture Development Mrs. Mavis Hawa Koomson, and to the Secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade

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Area (AfCFTA). ARC32 will bring together member states and other stakeholders in Africa's agricultural development, and will focus on FAO's **Four Betters** – the organizing principles under which FAO aims to support countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

### Science and innovation in the spotlight



FAO's first Science and Innovation Strategy was in the spotlight at a regional consultation with FAO's Chief Scientist Ismahane Elouafi (pictured) ahead of next year's 32<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Regional Conference for Africa. The strategy aims to translate science and innovation into relevant, accessible tools for agricultural development. "The new strategy covers the full range of scientific disciplines: biological, social, behavioural, economic,

and all types of innovations: technological, social, policy, financial and institutional," Dr Elouafi said.

### Hand-in-Hand Initiative ramps up in Africa

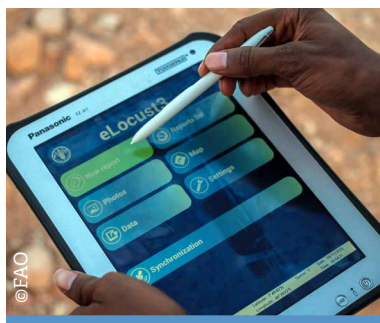


FAO's Hand-in-Hand Initiative continues to expand in Africa, with African countries now accounting for more than half of the 46 countries participating globally. The most-recent country to join the Initiative is Uganda. Cameroon, Ethiopia, Mali and Zimbabwe were early adopters, and recently shared their experiences at the first in a series of quarterly dialogues organised by the FAO Regional Office for Africa and bringing in country, sub-regional and headquarters experts. Ethiopia, for example, is focusing on value chains for avocado, coffee, dairy and wheat and is developing investment prospectuses for animal feed, dairy and specialty coffee. FAO Value Chain Analyst Marlo Rankin told the meeting there

## News

is high potential for agricultural production and inclusion and therefore transformation. Find out more about the [Hand-in-Hand Initiative](#).

### **Better Production:** New hub for Somalia's desert locust control operations



FAO and the Government of Somalia have opened the National Desert Locust Monitoring and Control Centre, in Bari Region. It serves as the country's early warning and control base and will contribute significantly to Somalia's national capacity to independently manage desert locust upsurges. The centre is supported through FAO projects funded by the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

*"This centre means that we are not just responding in the present, but have the capacity to manage these crises in the future as well," said His Excellency Abdullai Deni, President of Puntland State.*

FAO has supported countries across East Africa to take the lead on desert locust monitoring and control operations, and to stay ahead of a potential food security crisis.

### **Closing the gap on agricultural data**

Experts on agricultural statistics have welcomed FAO's roadmap to support African countries in their reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals. The roadmap was highlighted at the 27<sup>th</sup> Session of the African Commission on Agricultural Statistics (AFCAS, 15-18 November), hosted by FAO and Senegal. "Quality agricultural statistics that are comparable across countries help to measure progress towards the SDGs, and innovative digital tools are increasingly part of the solution," said FAO Statistician and AFCAS Secretariat's Paul N'Goma Kimbatsa. [Find out more.](#)

## News

### Making charcoal production, consumption sustainable



Africa has a complex relationship with charcoal: Two-thirds of people in sub-Saharan Africa rely on charcoal or firewood for cooking, causing forest degradation and

destruction, greenhouse emissions and health problems. Yet many households don't have access to alternative, affordable sources of energy and in fact rely on these woodfuels for their livelihoods and food security. Balancing these concerns was at the heart of a conference co-organised by FAO and partners on making woodfuel value chains sustainable. "Coming together at this conference has shown us that the recipe for success in confronting the complex issues around woodfuel in Africa is the involvement and unity of all stakeholders for the benefit of people, planet and pockets," FAO Africa Senior Forestry Officer Nora Berrahmouni said. [Find out more.](#)

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**News** **FEATURE**

# Land tenure goes digital



The Government of Kenya has made a breakthrough in the recording of land tenure, after an FAO project supported its digitising of records into an online public registry. Across Africa, insecure tenure rights can leave people marginalized and vulnerable to eviction from their homes and farms, with women particularly at risk of being unable to prove they own their land.

The registry - known as **Ardhisasa** - allows a land transaction to be carried out in 48 hours instead of what used to be more than 6 months, with a tenure search now taking just 3 to 5 minutes. With all of Kenya mapped and titles secured, it is a significant achievement considering over 80 percent of Kenyans live on about 20 percent of the land.

FAO Kenya has been working with the National Land Commission since 2018 as part of a project funded by the European Union and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, which recognises secure land tenure as an important element of agricultural development.

*“Lack of clear tenure makes it hard for small farmers to raise finance,” said Carla Mucavi, FAO Representative in Kenya. “It can also cause family and community conflict, prevent an important natural resource from being used to its full economic potential and reduce the impact of poverty reduction measures. FAO has been very happy to work with the Government of Kenya to establish fairness and clarity.”*

**News** **FEATURE**

# Better Nutrition from Cameroon's growing aquaculture sector



While Cameroon has a fishing industry along its coast, aquaculture has been less important, with crops and animal husbandry being more common sources of livelihoods. That is now changing after FAO's collaboration with the country's Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries to give farmers and pastoralists in the country's north training in this promising sector.

By combining fish farming and market gardening, the participants were trained to use nutrient-rich waste water from their fish tanks

to irrigate their crops and minimize the use of chemical fertilizers. More than 500 vegetable gardens and 20 fish farms were established in the region with FAO's assistance and funding from the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and Irish Aid.

***“Not only does aquaculture provide jobs and secure livelihoods, it also provides vital food and micronutrients in a region where fish consumption is much below the world average,”** said Audun Lem, FAO Deputy Director of Fisheries and Aquaculture.*

***“I now know how to manage a fish farm, while ensuring the health of my fish,”** said Florence, a project participant. **“I can now breed fish myself and sell my products to create a better life.”***

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## Opinion

# Better Life: The first year of Africa's free trade area

### What it meant for Africa's women.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement is about to mark its first year, after being launched with much hope and ambition on 1 January. But what has it meant for Africa's women? They are at risk of being left out of the equation.

The single market will change existing trading practices, introduce stricter enforcement of standards, and formalize markets which could preclude women's



access and further relegate them to informal and less lucrative value chains. So, the AfCFTA could exacerbate existing gender disparities and discrimination and worsen the condition of women engaged in trade and agriculture.

Africa's women must not be left behind. Instead, women's inclusion must be prioritized and barriers removed. Let's see in the next 12 months of the AfCFTA greater recognition of the important role rural women play in Africa's development.

#### DID YOU KNOW?:

**85 percent of economic activity** in Africa is conducted in the informal sector. Women account for nearly **90 percent of the informal labour force**, and women are estimated to account for approximately **70 percent of informal cross-border traders**.

#### Find out more:

*Seizing the opportunities of the African Continental Free Trade Area for the economic empowerment of women in agriculture.*

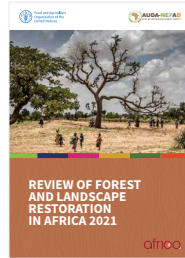
by Clara Park, FAO  
Regional Office  
for Africa Senior  
Gender Officer

# What's New

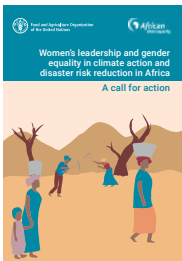
**Report:**  
Transforming  
Agriculture in Africa's  
Small Island  
Developing States



**Report:**  
Review of Forest and  
Landscape Restoration  
in Africa 2021



**Brief:**  
Women's leadership and  
gender equality in climate  
action and disaster risk  
reduction in Africa:  
A Call for Action



**Video:**  
Fighting  
Antimicrobial  
Resistance  
in Africa

