

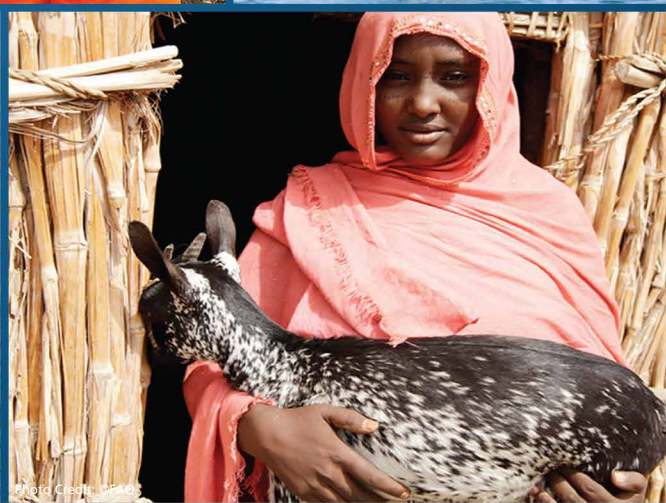


Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR AFRICA newsletter

July-December 2017



For a hunger-free Africa

Inside Stories

Page 3

Africa Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition report: Message from Bukar Tijani

Page 4

Africa Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition report: Key Messages

Page 5

FAO and Africa Union join efforts towards sustainable management of Fall Armyworm in Africa

Page 6

Africa's Great Green Wall Initiative

Page 7

FAO responds to food insecurity in the Eastern Africa subregion

Page 8

FAO insights on Food Security and Blue Economy at the centre of the 4th World Forum on Local Economic Development

Page 9

Fish and cassava stop migration in Guinea-Bissau

Page 10

Bringing relief to distressed families

Page 11

UN appeals for more funds as the sting of drought bites in Kenya

Page 12

FAO and the Sustainable Development Goals

Page 13

FAO leads efforts to eradicate hunger and malnutrition in The Gambia

Page 14

FAO strengthens livestock in Somalia as it works to change the future of migration

Page 15

FAO-RUFORUM partnership: strengthening the capacities of African universities to shape the future of food security and agriculture

Page 16

FAO and UNECA to stage a high-level continental forum on "Zero Hunger"

Page 17

FAO launches new Umbrella Programme on Supporting Responsible Investments: What you need to know

Page 18

FAO partners with the Pan-African Parliament on capacity reinforcement on Food Security and Nutrition for legislators

Page 19

Food crisis in the Lake Chad Region: FAO supports farmers and pastoralists for sustainable development

Page 21

Photo Gallery: World Food Day celebrations at FAO Regional Office for Africa



Rwanda
A woman taking care of her vegetable farm. Photo Credit: ©FAO

Africa

REGIONAL OVERVIEW OF FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

2017

MESSAGE FROM BUKAR TIJANI

Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa

The International Community is committed to the Sustainable Development Goal of ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition and FAO is mandated to monitor progress towards achieving this goal and reports on this progress.

Progress in fighting hunger has been steady over the past decades.

The number of undernourished declined globally from 900 million to 777 million between 2000 and 2015. Also, sub-Saharan Africa made sound progress in the fight against hunger. But progress has slowed and between 2015 and 2016 the number of undernourished in the world rose from 777 million to 815 million.

In sub-Saharan Africa the rate of undernourishment remained flat after 2010, but has risen to nearly 23 percent in 2016 and the number of undernourished has reached 224 million in 2016, up from 200 million in 2015.

The worsening situation in many countries can be attributed to adverse climatic conditions, often linked to the El Niño phenomenon. Conflict, in combination with drought or floods, also contributed to severe food insecurity in several countries.

Lower commodity prices and a difficult global economic environment further contributed to the worsening food security situation. The worrying trend in undernourishment for sub-Saharan Africa is not yet reflected in nutritional outcomes in the region, but progress in reducing multiple forms of malnutrition has been poor.

The situation and trend in food security and nutrition underscore the challenging nature of the quest for a world without hunger by 2030. Effective government policies and actions are key dimensions to strengthen agricultural policies. Improvements achieved by many countries



Photo Credit: ©FAO/Samuel Creppy

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

manifests that cumulatively, CAADP has contributed significantly to raising agricultural public investment and growth. The momentum needs to be sustained through effective implementation and delivery on the goals of the Malabo Declaration on agriculture, integrating it with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the Decade of Action on Nutrition.

This year's Regional Overview highlights conflict as an important factor in the worsening food security situation.

In sub-Saharan Africa, a majority of the population undernourished in 2016 live in countries affected by conflict. Impact of conflict on rural livelihoods is particularly severe in countries with large rural and agricultural sectors. Conflict not only leads to food insecurity but food insecurity and malnutrition can also contribute to fragility and conflict.

Conflicts are usually complex and multifaceted and addressing these complexities, and not only

post-conflict, is essential to sustaining peace.

Other shocks occur with conflict, and building household resilience is necessary for lasting peace. A sustainable impact of food security and nutrition-related interventions on peace is more likely when implemented as part of a broader, multisectoral set of interventions before, during and after conflict.

The worrisome trends in food security and nutrition in the region must be a call to act more urgently to fight hunger and malnutrition.

FAO is convinced that we have the knowledge and tools to accelerate the elimination of hunger and poverty in our region.

We stand ready to assist all countries to effectively implement and deliver policies and investment plans.

KEY MESSAGES

→ In sub-Saharan Africa, the prevalence of undernourishment appears to have risen from 20.8 to 22.7 percent between 2015 and 2016, and the number of people undernourished rose from 200 to 224 million, accounting for 25 percent of the 815 million people undernourished in the world in 2016. At the same time, the proportion of the population that has experienced severe food insecurity because of their inability to access food has risen in the region.

→ Adverse climatic conditions and conflict, often occurring concurrently, are key factors driving the recent increase in food insecurity in the region. A difficult global economic environment, reflected in falling prices of extractive and non-extractive commodities and weak growth, also contributed to increased food insecurity in many countries.

→ Despite a rising prevalence of undernourishment, rates of stunting continue to decline while levels of overweight and obesity continue to grow, notably in Southern Africa in terms of the latter. Progress towards the World Health Assembly global nutrition targets has been poor and a majority of countries need to step up their efforts, especially with regard to reducing anaemia in women of reproductive age as well as stunting and wasting in children.

→ The improvements achieved by many countries manifests that cumulatively, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme has contributed significantly to raising agricultural public investment and growth, reducing poverty and advancing mutual accountability in sub-Saharan Africa. This momentum

needs to be sustained through effective implementation and delivery on the goals of the Malabo Declaration on agriculture, integrating it with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the Decade of Action on Nutrition.

→ Effective implementation and delivery of policies and investment plans aligned with the Malabo Declaration requires adequate funding, setting the right priorities and strengthening institutional capacities.

→ In sub-Saharan Africa, a majority of the population undernourished in 2016 live in countries affected by conflict. The prevalence of undernourishment is about twice as high in conflict-affected countries with a protracted crisis than in countries not affected by conflict, and nutrition outcomes are also generally worse in these countries.

→ For all countries in sub-Saharan Africa attaining food and nutrition security while addressing climate change and the degradation of the environment is a primary challenge. A further dimension is added to this challenge in countries that are in fragile situations and have weak institutions. In these countries food insecurity may itself be a trigger for conflict, and or prolong conflicts.

→ Conflict-sensitive and timely interventions aimed at improving food security and nutrition can contribute to building resilience and sustaining peace. A sustainable impact on peace is more likely when implemented as part of a broader set of multisectoral humanitarian, developmental and peace related interventions at country, subregional and regional level.

FAO and African Union join efforts towards sustainable management of Fall Armyworm in Africa



Photo Credit: ©FAO

Fall Armyworm poses a serious threat to the achievement of goals that African countries have committed to under the Malabo Declaration/CAADP and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs).

On the margins of the 2nd AU Specialised Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment (STC) Conference, FAO and African Union Commission signed on 6 October 2017 in Addis Ababa a Technical Cooperation Agreement (TCP) on a coordinated management of the Fall Armyworm (FAW) in Africa.

FAO and African Union Commission (AUC), through the signing, laid the foundation for the implementation of a programme aiming at responding to priority areas of combating the Fall Armyworm. These include sensitization and awareness-raising, securing buy-in from policy-makers and mobilization of partnerships and resources in support of effective response.

The proposed two-year project under the title "Support to AU-DREA (Department of Rural Development and Agriculture of the African Union) in reinforcement of plant health governance in Africa through coordinated management of Fall Armyworm" will help increase

productivity of crops and incomes of farmers through improving the capacity of stakeholders, ensuring rapid pest identification, timely evidence-based decision on appropriate management approaches, and minimal use of pesticides.

Fall Armyworm poses a serious threat to the achievement of goals that African countries have committed to under the Malabo Declaration/CAADP and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs), and, therefore, warrants a coordinated response for effective action and delivery.

At the signing ceremony, Bukar Tijani, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa stated: "FAO stands with the African Union Commission in providing support in implementing the identified priority actions to battle the Fall Armyworm, a threat to food security to Africa."

FAO and AUC have identified the urgent need to develop a well-coordinated early warning and rapid response system at

national and regional levels to address technical capacity gaps. Sacko Josefa Leonel Correa, AUC Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, highlighted the need for coordinated actions with FAO and key partners to combat the impacts of the Fall Armyworm.

FAO and AUC collaboration on FAW
FAO and AUC have taken bold steps towards responding to the negative effects of the Fall Armyworm through raising awareness among the political leadership on the state of the pest infestation in Africa.

A side event with relevant partners was organised on the margins of the Conference of AU STC, to raise awareness and enhance advocacy on the impact of FAW, review management strategies, and to mobilize partners around the issue. At this event, FAO urged African Ministers to step up efforts in agriculture to end hunger in Africa and presented the "Framework for Sustainable Management of Fall Armyworm in Africa" for evaluation.

The recommendations of the Committee would be presented to the Executive Council of the Union during the January 2018 Summit for consideration and presentation to the African Union Assembly. On the technical part, FAO, through its Africa regional and subregional offices, has partnered with AUC to develop a region-wide coping strategy.

Additionally, in August 2017, a joint media briefing was held by FAO and AUC to sensitize Member States and the media on the impacts of the Fall Armyworm on smallholders. FAO, in collaboration with partners, will continue to assist AUC and the member countries in Africa, farmers' organizations and individual farmers to sustainably manage the Fall Armyworm, before the worm becomes a perpetual threat to African farmers.

Africa's Great Green Wall Initiative



Photo Credit: ©FAO

Climate Change Division underlined the key role the Great Green Wall Initiative can play in mitigating the impact of climate change on lives and livelihoods in the drylands of Africa.

The multisectoral workshop on the Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI) held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, from 25 to 27 October 2017, has opened up a new path by fostering a common understanding of the GGW programmatic approach.

The participants, coming from more than 20 countries, met with technical and financial partners to agree on a road map to further mobilize climate funding and make the most of upcoming opportunities.

The three-day workshop, hosted by the African Development Bank (AfDB) and co-organized with the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall Initiative, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the African Union Commission, was a unique opportunity for the actors involved to share their views on the achievements reached so far and the next steps ahead. Discussions among participants have highlighted the extraordinary potential of the Great Green Wall Initiative to change migration patterns, by providing sustainable livelihoods in an enabling

environment to the 232 million people living within the GGWI core area across North Africa, the Sahel and the Horn of Africa.

The results obtained to date in several countries show that the GGWI can fulfil its promises to combat the effects of climate change and desertification, and to address food insecurity and poverty. In the coming years, scaling up these initiatives will be key to change the future of Africa's youth, especially in rural areas.

René Castro, FAO Assistant Director-General and Head of the Climate Change Division, underlined the key role the Great Green Wall Initiative can play in mitigating the impact of climate change on lives and livelihoods in the drylands of Africa.

"Timing is key in the fight against climate change, and this is why expanding the Great Green Wall Initiative cannot be delayed. We need support from all partners to reach this goal", he said.

Participants also discussed the need to strengthen several aspects pertaining to the Great Green Wall Initiative, including capacity development at several levels.

Renewed efforts will be essential to sustain cross-fertilization across sectors and support emerging synergies, especially because of the water, energy and food security nexus. Indigenous knowledge and local practices should be leveraged as well to further release the potential of the GGW Initiative.

The need for stronger communications and awareness-raising activities, focusing on the benefits of the Great Green Wall Initiative, was agreed on. Exploring new communications opportunities, going from restoration needs to socio-economic development of communities, will be central to attract additional resources to ensure the GGWI expansion. This will also be key to further develop synergies and solidarity between the GGWI countries.



Photo Credit: ©FAO



Photo Credit: ©FAO



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FAO responds to food insecurity in the Eastern Africa Subregion

FAO representatives in the Eastern Africa subregion drew a roadmap to address the increasingly alarming food insecurity and hunger situation in the subregion, comprising Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda. While Eastern Africa has made progress in terms of hunger eradication, it still remains in a precarious food security situation with close to 124 million people undernourished. As part of its efforts to address the problem of hunger and food insecurity, the FAO Subregional Office for Eastern Africa is currently developing its food security support strategy.

Experts drawn from IGAD and countries in the Eastern Africa subregion, namely, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, Somalia, and Uganda, participated and discussed the draft support strategy that aimed at identifying priorities and providing a strategic direction on how FAO will work with countries in the subregion and key regional bodies to address hunger and food insecurity. The two-day workshop was organized and held in Addis Ababa on 25 to 26 September 2017. The workshop reviewed the draft strategy,

examined countries' experience in addressing food security problems with focus on coordination mechanisms, policies and strategy development and implementation as well as countries experiences related to food security analysis and reporting approaches and current experiences.

Speaking at the event, the FAO Subregional Coordinator for Eastern Africa and Representative to the AU and the UNECA, Patrick Kormawa, recalled African countries' commitment under the Malabo Declaration to end hunger by 2025 and stated that Africa must put in place concrete steps towards ending hunger. He added that moving forward, African countries must promote intraregional trade, introduce new technologies, and invest in capacity development and knowledge-sharing to support the stride towards a hunger free subregion.

"This workshop is a key platform to discuss on the way forward where we look at how we can build strong institutions and early warning and monitoring systems to support our interventions and how we can strengthen our coordination

“

Moving forward, African countries must promote intraregional trade, introduce new technologies, and invest in capacity development and knowledge-sharing to support the stride towards a hunger free subregion”

mechanisms to better respond to the situation”, Kormawa said.

Participants of the workshop have rigorously discussed the draft strategy and important recommendations and feedbacks were provided throughout all sessions of the workshop. As a way forward, it was agreed that the draft strategy should incorporate comments and feedbacks of the workshop in the final draft and shared with all participants.



FAO insights on Food Security and Blue Economy at the centre of the 4th World Forum on Local Economic Development

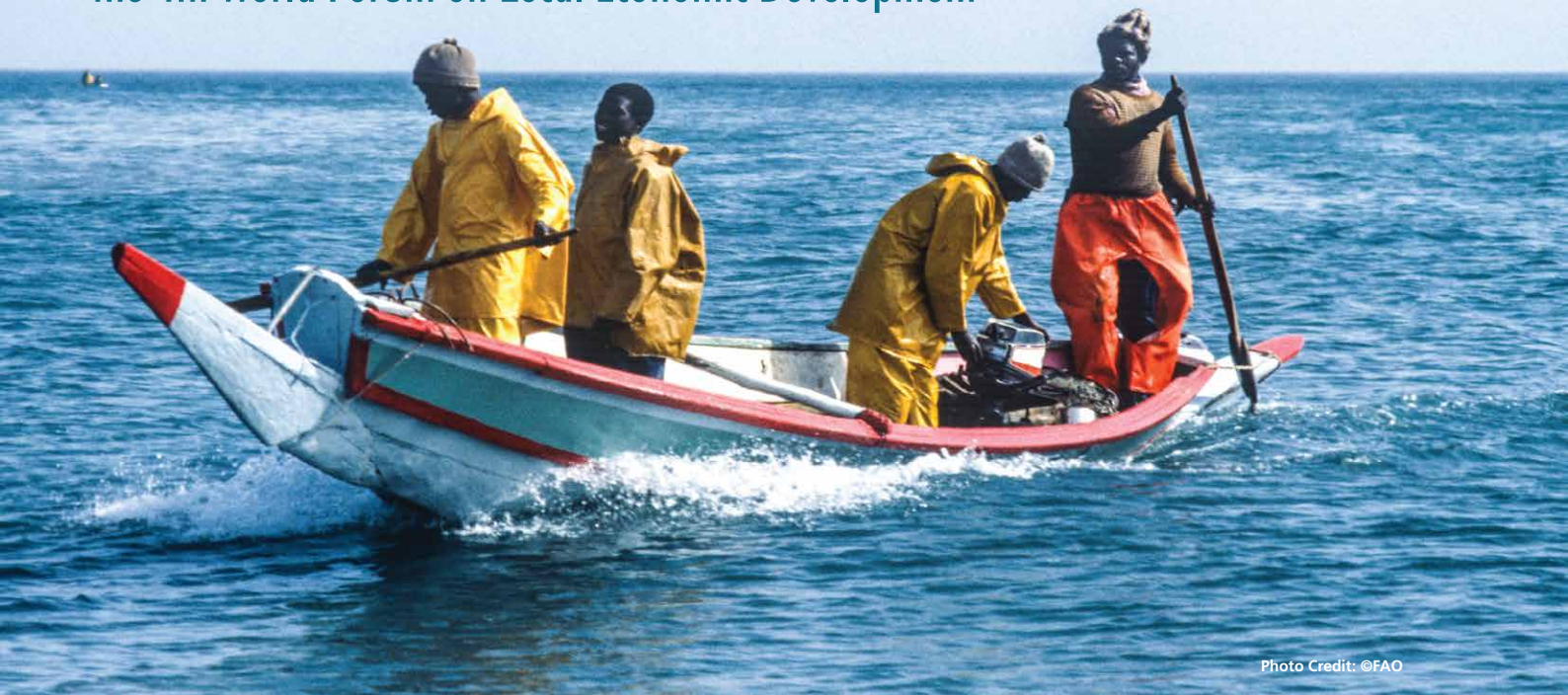


Photo Credit: ©FAO

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) participated actively at the 4th World Forum on Local Economic Development (WFLED) celebrated in Praia, Cabo Verde, from 17 to 20 October 2017. The two partners co-organized an interactive panel on City-to-City Cooperation to the benefit of Local Economic Development and Food Security, and a learning agenda session on Blue Economy, Sharing Perspectives and Experiences from Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Before 2 600 participants from all continents, the President of the Republic of Cabo Verde, Jorge Carlos Fonseca, highlighted the potential of the blue economy within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the need of investments “as a requisite for the success of the action plan for the development of the blue economy of the United Nations programs for SIDS”.

There is a need to mainstream the oceans economy into the 2030 Agenda to achieve local and sustainable economic development, giving special consideration to the use of marine ecosystems and resources within ecological limits. “It is critical to involve local communities into the blue growth process, empowering them as key actors for the local

economic transformation”, underlined Nélide Pires, official at the National Directorate of Maritime Economy of Cabo Verde. These conclusions came out of the session on the Blue Economy where participants discussed about challenges and opportunities of this sector for the SIDS and coastal States, within the context of the FAO Blue Growth Initiative.

Food security as a basis for local economic development

FAO involvement in the WFLED was part of a long-standing process aimed at enhancing the policy dialogue and the key role of the local and regional governments to build sustainable food systems that ensure food security for all, in the framework of the New Urban Agenda and the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (MUFPP).

“Decentralized cooperation offers a lot in terms of the approach and the methodology on how to stimulate local economic development and enhance food security. For instance, promoting integrated, multisectoral, and multigenerational initiatives, such as school feeding programmes or urban agriculture is fundamental to ensure food security for all”, highlighted Maria Bottiglieri,

member of the Mayor’s Cabinet, in charge of International Cooperation at the Municipality of Torino (Italy), during the interactive panel promoted by FAO.

Key role of Global South cooperation

This session, moderated by the FAO Representative in Cabo Verde, Rémi Nono Womdim, showcased models of cooperation among cities to spark innovation and speed up the transition towards sustainable food systems. It was also highlighted as a good practice the South-South Cooperation project on micro-gardening facilitated by FAO, involving Dakar, Douala and Praia municipalities.

The Praia Declaration emphasizes the role of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development to “provide a comprehensive reference for a people-centered, transformative vision and action on achieving sustainable development through the establishment of inclusive, cohesive, peaceful, and resilient societies”. In this context, local cooperation is of utmost relevance to improve food security and nutrition, and foster sustainable economic development and inequality reduction.



Fish and cassava stop migration in Guinea-Bissau



The Africa Solidarity Trust Fund (ASTF) requested FAO to implement a US\$4 million project in six West African nations to generate employment for youth in aquaculture and cassava value chains. Planting cassava is quite straightforward. Interestingly, the six countries had clear ideas about aquaculture interventions: one country focused on fish ponds, another on fiberglass tanks and a few also on floating cages. All these fishholding possibilities concentrated on tilapia and catfish.

In Guinea-Bissau, floating fish cages were used to attract youth into fish rearing operations. A special formula was developed with so-called "core" farmers, land owners, who then collaborated with young "satellite" farmers. The fish cages were deployed in a river (freshwater environment) and in an estuary (brackish water environment) and filled with two different species of tilapia fingerlings from Senegal, with respect to their natural habitats.

The selected youth had been trained by the project's international consultant from Senegal in building cages, mooring them, protecting them against predators and of course

filling them with fingerlings. The project provided the fish and the feed and supported the youth in fish feeding and cage maintenance. They were taught how to sample the fish and record the growth performance. In parallel, the cassava group continued to weed their satellite farms.

The first big harvest came. The cassava fields yielded between one and four tons, which was a great success for the cassava farmers, who also produced their own samplings for the next production cycle. During a support mission from the FAO Regional Office for Africa (RAF), the cages were seen full of harvestable fish. Of course, when the fish reach the size for harvesting, special attention has to be given to surveillance in case an outsider decides to harvest the fish prematurely. An animated Question and Answer session offered an opportunity for sharing information on the feeding frequency, timing, mortality rate, bird predation, and other technical details. Villagers also listened to the "fish talk"; an elderly lady said that FAO, through the cassava and fish project, "had stopped migration from the village".

Appreciation was expressed on FAO's role in the project to rear fish and grow cassava and its impact in the day-to-day life of the village. The success story from the village of Pitche in Guinea-Bissau would hopefully encourage the ASTF to continue financing such initiatives. The Fund may count on FAO's commitment to make other future initiatives a success.



• Bringing relief to distressed families

FAO provides “Wonder Stoves” to households affected by mudslide and floods in Freetown



The FAO “Wonder Stoves” are being distributed to 1 761 households that were affected by the 14 August mudslides and floods that occurred in Freetown.

Sheka Samura, 44, was determined to lead a self-sufficient household. A household that will not always be dependent on neighbours or relatives for survival, and not lack of the basic needs, including domestic ones. Therefore, he had worked tirelessly over the years to ensure that his dependents are catered for. Shockingly, his gains were reversed in the early hours of 14 August 2017 when a torrential rain washed away all his possessions and left him and his family homeless.

Samura has six dependents, including a one year old tot. They are now undergoing difficult living conditions that, most of the times, he does not want to talk about, especially when he thinks on the inconvenience that they are going through. “I used to be a property owner, but I am now a property borrower. We use to eat at our convenient time, but we now depend on others’ approval in order to eat”, he lamented.

Recounting on the 14 August incident, he explained that his wife first woke up at around 3:00 a.m. and saw the drainage filled with water and immediately informed him about it. “I told her that the water will

reduce, assuming that the high tide was caused by a blockage in the drainage”, he said.

Samura narrated that it was around 6:00 a.m. that he had a neighbour hitting and shouting at his door that the water was taking over the community. “When I jumped out of the bed, my first footstep landed in water. So, I urgently woke my wife up, we grabbed our children and we ran out of the house”, he recounted. He explained that the doorway was flooded in a way that they pushed their children through the window with the help of the neighbours. “There was no time to gather our properties because the water was speedily flowing into the house. In fact, as soon as I stepped my feet outside the house, it collapsed”, he added.

Since then, he has lived with his dependents in a cubic room that was offered to him by his brother-in-law. According to him, from the day they were forcefully evacuated from their house, they started experiencing a miserable life every day.

Monday, 30 October 2017 was a happy day for Samura and wife when they received a cooking stove from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Samura stated that

the cooking stove will be very essential to his family because he had not been able to afford one since the old one that they had was washed away by the flood.

“You might be seeing it as a minor support, but it is very remarkable for us because the absence of a cooking stove in our household has caused a lot of discomfort for us,” Kumba Samura, the wife, said. She explained that her cooking schedule was determined by the relatives that lend her cooking stoves because she always had to wait for them to finish cooking before she could have access to their stoves. “One day, my eyes nearly ran tears when a relative came to collect her stove while I was in the middle of cooking. I could not imagine myself begging to use a cooking stove when I used to own one”, she lamented.

The Samura family and many other families that were affected by the mudslide and floods in Sierra Leone are living on handouts from relatives, government and charitable organizations.

The FAO “Wonder Stoves” are being distributed to 1 761 households that were affected by the 14 August mudslides and floods that occurred in Freetown. Every household receives a cooking stove and a brochure with environment protection messages. Since the 14 August tragedy occurred, FAO has been actively working with the United Nations Country Team and Government of Sierra Leone in the response efforts.

The Organization recently conducted a rapid assessment to ascertain the severity of the impact caused by the tragedy across the country and the needs of the affected households. FAO hopes to strengthen the resilience of communities through supporting the existing systems and instruments, including the provision of farming inputs to rural households, disaster management and prevention training, and proper land management so that the likelihood of such tragedies is minimized.

UN appeals for more funds as the sting of drought bites in Kenya

Ngopina Lekitei, a mother of five children from Njakuai village in the Eastern part of Samburu, one of the most drought-affected counties, has lost twelve of her fifteen goats in a period of eight weeks.

The Kenya Red Cross Society with support from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) have been distributing meat in her village during that period – keeping her and her family from succumbing to hunger.

“We have been receiving at least four kilograms of meat every week for the past eight weeks, and each portion could sustain me and my small children for three to four days as we wait for another ration towards the end of the week,” she said.

The last nine months have left households in Kenya’s arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs) areas hard hit with massive losses of livestock and shortage of food. The Kenya Red Cross and FAO intervened through the local administration by identifying vulnerable households as beneficiaries of meat distribution and animal feeds.

A similar exercise has been ongoing in the counties of Marsabit, Mandera, Garissa, Tana River and Turkana.

Drought-affected persons on the rise

Parts of Kenya have not experienced any or significant rainfall in the past three seasons – a situation which has contributed to an increase in the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance. According to the latest figures released by OCHA, there are currently 5.6 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in Kenya, including 3.4 million people who are food insecure. This includes



Photo Credit: ©FAO

Parts of Kenya have not experienced any or significant rainfall in the past three seasons – a situation which has contributed to an increase in the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance.

2.6 million people facing severe food insecurity.

FAO’s intervention is funded through the UN’s Central Emergency Response Funds (CERF) through a holistic approach which combines livestock feed distribution, animal health intervention through vaccination and mass treatment for livestock. Departments of livestock will also oversee distribution of fodder seeds which will eventually increase availability of pastures and fodder for livestock.

As livestock prices continue to fall, the three-month joint drought emergency intervention aimed to increase the community’s buying power by directly injecting income to animal owners who sell their animals. The meat from these animals was then distributed to selected vulnerable community members.

At the same time animal feeds – up to 30 bales of hay and 7 bags of range cubes – have been distributed to targeted households to enable them to feed a limited number of core breeding or milking animals, over a two-month period. Some of

the beneficiary families have been able to resuscitate their wasted breeding animals with some being able to resume milk production during the drought.

“This is an innovative approach. We decided to include vulnerable livestock animals in our emergency aid programme so that they can continue to provide a livelihood for hard-hit communities in the six drought-stricken counties of Northern Kenya,” said Joseph Mathooko, FAO’s Livestock Field Coordinator on the project.

The FAO have also been providing routine animal health services to a total of 1 210 vulnerable households in all the six counties. To date, over 10 800 animals have been treated.

The situation could deteriorate further before it gets better

The short rains are forecast to improve foliage and pasture conditions in both agricultural and pastoral areas; however, the early cessation projected in some

agricultural areas may interfere with crop development before maturing. While the rainfall is likely to alleviate the dire pasture conditions in the northeastern, northwestern and southeastern counties in Kenya, it will depend on its geographical spread and timing.

Additionally, heavy rain after a drought is likely to further kill tens of thousands of livestock and weaken the pastoral asset base – an impact that will take many years to recover from.

“Pending the onset of the short rains across the whole country, there is a

need for US\$4.4 million (440 million Kenya Shillings [Ksh]) for purchase and distribution of hay and concentrates to rescue vulnerable animals owned by the poorest, and also for fodder production,” said Piers Simpkin, Head of animal health and production team at FAO.

He added: “There is a further need for US\$4 million (Ksh400 million) for livestock offtake and distribution of meat as food rations to the vulnerable population.”

Humanitarian partners in Kenya appealed for US\$106 million in early

September to scale up their response to the most urgent and lifesaving needs particularly in Northern Kenya. Only 43 per cent of the previous Flash Appeal for Kenya launched in March 2017 have been funded.

The gravity of the situation for the affected means intervention will be necessary until the situation normalizes, and the affected are able to get back on their feet.



We can be the
#ZeroHunger
generation

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FAO leads efforts to eradicate hunger and malnutrition in The Gambia

One in four children under the age of five in The Gambia are stunted, according to the Standardized Monitoring and Assessment of Relief and Transitions (SMART) Survey 2015. Inadequate dietary intake, household food insecurity, high levels of poverty and malnutrition, poor eating habits, poor sanitation and hygiene and increased disease burden are among key factors contributing to the unacceptably high rate of stunting and wasting among children under the age of five in the country.

In a bid to ensure that the immediate and underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition are effectively addressed, FAO is leading the implementation of an European Union (EU) funded €11.5 million project entitled "Post-Crisis Response to Food Insecurity in The Gambia". Launched on 8 June, the 30-month project is being jointly implemented by three UN agencies, namely FAO, WFP and UNICEF, in close partnership with the Department of Agriculture (and its specialized units), the National Nutrition Agency, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare and other civil society organizations committed to ending hunger, malnutrition and poverty reduction.



Photo Credit: ©FAO/Samuel Creppy

The project has also assisted some 400 smallholder farmers to rehabilitate the drainage system of their rice fields as well as rehabilitate access roads to their fields while earning some income to pay for the households' needs in the process.

The intervention seeks to contribute to the reduction of stunting among children 0-24 months of age in at least 11 000 food insecure households in the four regions.

Increased production and productivity

In June 2017, FAO distributed farm inputs worth over US\$623 000 to over

6 500 food insecure farmers in the North Bank Region (NBR), Lower River Region (LRR), Central River Region (CRR) and Upper River Region (URR). These regions have stunting rates above the national average. The intervention aims to reverse the trend through increased crops (rice, maize and groundnut) production and productivity.

Despite the erratic rainfall and the fall armyworm infestation experienced across the country, the farmers who benefitted from the inputs provided by the project are impressed by the performance of their crops. Those who cultivated cowpea have reported a good harvest and increased consumption of the highly nutritious seed.

The project has also assisted some 400 smallholder farmers to rehabilitate the drainage system of their rice fields as well as rehabilitate access roads to their fields while earning some income to pay for the households' needs in the process. The cash for work programme is very popular among the target beneficiaries.



Photo Credit: ©FAO/Samuel Creppy

In a bid to ensure that the immediate and underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition are effectively addressed, FAO is leading the implementation of an European Union (EU) funded €11.5 million project entitled "Post-Crisis Response to Food Insecurity in The Gambia".

Increased knowledge and skills to support vulnerable households

Between 3 September and 19 October 2017, FAO trained 78 people from the four regions on best agricultural practices with emphasis on climate-smart agriculture and horticulture production. The trainees, comprised of agriculture extension workers, NGO field staff and farmer groups' representatives, will operate Farmer Field Schools (FFS) for groups of 30 people each, thus supporting the extension services in their normative role to train more farmers. Through this initiative, at least 10 000 farmers will be trained on good agricultural practices (GAPs) with emphasis on climate change adaptation and sustainability. This intervention will consequently provide a robust extension service in support of the Department of

Agriculture (DoA). The main highlight of the graduation ceremony of the FFS training was a tour of the demonstration plots during which the trainees shared the knowledge acquired with the dignitaries and other invitees, tree planting and presentation of certificates to graduates.

Speaking at the graduation ceremony, the European Union Ambassador to The Gambia, Atila Lajos, praised the efforts of the Ministry of Agriculture to strengthen Farmer Field Schools in The Gambia. He said: "Their constructive approach to the project and much appreciated support to FAO have resulted in the timely organization of the trainings and in today's successful graduation". He also acknowledge the participation of local authorities and trainees. Lajos used the opportunity

to call on communities to work towards making their community horticulture gardens a success and thus contributing towards improving nutrition, food security and resilience building within the country. Perpetua Katepa-Kalala, FAO Country Representative, reaffirmed FAO's unwavering resolve to empower farmers achieve Zero Hunger through the FFS approach, in partnership with the EU and The Gambian government.

Adama Ngum-Njie, Permanent Secretary 2, in the Ministry of Agriculture and Fanta Bojang Samateh-Manneh, Governor, Lower River Region, both acknowledged the relevance of the intervention for the Gambian farmers.

FAO strengthens livestock in Somalia as it works to change the future of migration

Mahal Abdillahi Mohamed used to be one of the wealthiest people in Dasaan village in Somalia's semi-autonomous region of Puntland. The 47-year-old owned 700 goats and sheep and 80 camels.

He was married with five healthy children who enjoyed milk and meat every day. The family also sold goats' milk.

But then drought struck, and after four consecutive seasons of poor rainfall, his livestock started dying. Desperate to save what he could, Mahal decided to herd the remaining goats and sheep – less than 200 head – to Bandar Beyla on the coast.

But the situation was just as bad there and by then, he had no money and was already in debt. He could not even sell the surviving animals because they were too weak. "If the remaining animals die, I will have nothing," he said. "I am here alone."

Mahal is just one of more than 916 000 people who have been forced from their homes since November last year because of conflict and drought, bringing the

total number of displaced people in Somalia to more than two million. "I am worried about my family because I have not spoken to them," Mahal said in Bandar Beyla. "I do not know how they are eating. I don't know if the camels survived."

When rains fail in Somalia, no one is spared but among the hardest hit are pastoralists like Mahal. Drought means little grass or fodder, dying animals and families plunged into poverty or saddled with debt in a country where conflict has hamstrung development for decades.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is striving to break this vicious cycle by strengthening the herds pastoralists rely on so they can avoid joining millions of Somalis already on the move.

With support from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), FAO launched its largest emergency livestock campaign earlier this year, and Mahal was among those who benefitted.



Photo Credit: ©FAO



FAO's Livestock Coordinator treated his surviving animals, gave him a week's supply of medicine and taught him how to administer the drugs. "Now my animals are being treated and I am relieved. I will continue to take care of them," Mahal said.

Most Somalis depend on farming, pastoralism or a mixture of the two. That is why FAO is battling to save precious animals and build herds' back better. If livestock can be preserved, families will have food now, hope for the future and the ability to sustain themselves.

Underlying FAO's approach is the knowledge that treating livestock now is more cost-effective than scrambling to deliver aid once pastoralist families have tipped over the edge into destitution. Replacing a herd of 40 animals could cost around US\$1 600, but it only costs US\$16 to provide that herd with basic veterinary care.

In the first half of 2017, FAO treated more than 20 million animals, protecting the livelihoods of more than 3 million people. Now, the UN agency has expanded its operations to vaccinate around 14.5 million sheep and goats across Somalia. It is

also providing follow-up treatment to 2.5 million animals, including cattle and camel.

With fodder and grazing scarce and expensive, FAO is distributing rangeland cubes fortified with proteins, vitamins and minerals. It will also work with cooperatives and communities to boost fodder production by delivering seeds, training and equipment to around 2 000 households.

To ensure a lasting legacy, FAO will provide marketing support to link fodder producers with traders and buyers, and it may buy back some of that fodder for distribution to those in need in the future. For pastoralists who have already lost the animals they depend on, FAO will distribute ten healthy goats to each family to help them get back on their feet.

Somalia is on the frontline of our changing climate and frequent droughts have increased pressure on water sources and scarce grazing, fuelling tensions between displaced people and host communities who are often also living on the edge.

During this most recent drought, thousands of pastoralists like Mahal have lost up to 60 percent of their

livestock. Because most have no safety nets, the loss of an animal is more than just a tragedy: it represents an economic catastrophe.

In February, Somalia's president described the drought as a national disaster and warned of the risk of famine. Timely intervention by authorities and international aid groups has averted this worst-case scenario so far this year. However, around 6.2 million people still need humanitarian assistance, with 3.1 million requiring immediate life-saving help.

FAO's emergency livestock campaign is of particular value to rural families who are most at risk of hunger. It is part of a wider rural development drive to build more resilient livelihoods, reduce conflict over scarce natural resources and provide more secure sources of food for both host communities and migrants.

Sustainable livelihoods mark a vital step on the road to a stable future for rural communities and will also support the reintegration of internally displaced people, like Mahal. "Once the animals are strong, I can go back to my home and be close to my family," he said.

FAO-RUFORUM partnership: strengthening the capacities of African universities to shape the future of food security and agriculture

Eradication of hunger and malnutrition and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will require different governmental and non-governmental actors to work together to pool resources, generate innovative solutions, build capacities and raise awareness on sustainable development themes. In order to achieve food security and support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, FAO works in partnership with universities and research institutions, civil society and private sector. Through partnerships with academia, FAO can exchange technical knowledge and expertise with students and researchers, raise awareness of academic community of good agricultural practices, tools and

guidelines relevant for eradication of hunger, malnutrition and sustainable agriculture, involve academia in development-related projects with local communities.

To strengthen collaboration with universities in Africa, on 26 October 2017 FAO signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) committing to work together to strengthen the capacity of RUFORUM member universities to better contribute to food security and nutrition, increase sustainability of agricultural and food systems, reduce rural poverty and support the implementation of the SDGs.

RUFORUM, a network of 66 universities in Africa, is a natural partner for FAO in the region, as its mission is to enhance the quality and relevance of post-graduate education and research in Africa with a focus on sustainable smallholder agriculture and to train agricultural professionals responsive for agricultural development needs. The partnership between FAO and RUFORUM will allow both organizations to join hands in developing initiatives for strengthening institutional capacities and technical competencies, increasing access of African universities to agriculture science and research journals and supporting youth through community-based field projects. Both partners will also aim to strengthen outreach and multistakeholder regional dialogues to advocate for best policies and practices to achieve food security, increase the sustainability of agriculture and reduce rural poverty.





knowledge exchanges between academia and farmers on new approaches and best practices how to increase the sustainability and resilience of small-scale agriculture, improve livelihoods and reduce rural poverty. Through these field attachments students will also gain practical skills on how to apply research findings in field projects, generate innovative solutions to address sustainable development challenges and engage with local communities.

FAO and RUFORUM: the way forward

Future collaborations with FAO will allow RUFORUM member universities to further strengthen their institutional capacities through access to FAO's tools on capacity development, build their technical competencies and boost the quality of higher agricultural education and research through better access to advanced learning resources on food and agriculture and trainings. By partnering with RUFORUM, FAO will benefit from the local expertise of RUFORUM member universities to extend and augment its own knowledge, expertise and capacity to deliver and implement its Regional Initiatives and Country Programming Frameworks in Africa. Both partners are also looking forward to exploring the opportunities to work together in support of the implementation of SDGs in the region.

Launching an E-learning Hub

In 2017 FAO and RUFORUM launched an E-Learning Hub to facilitate for students and researchers from RUFORUM universities to access FAO's knowledge resources in the areas of food and nutrition security, social and economic development and sustainable management of natural resources. This joint initiative provides academia from RUFORUM universities with FAO's most up-to-date knowledge, experience and information on current and emerging issues in food and agriculture, which can enhance the traditional face-to-face university courses. The E-learning Hub will also increase the uptake of FAO e-learning

resources and raise the awareness among African youth on key themes relevant for achieving the SDGs.

Building practical skills of students through community-based field placements

RUFORUM and FAO have recently launched an initiative on community-based field attachments to provide opportunities for postgraduate and doctoral students in agriculture sciences to increase experience of working with local communities in Africa. This programme will support the placements of students in rural communities and encourage

FAO and UNECA to stage a high-level continental forum on "Zero Hunger"

With a view to draw attention and resources towards the alarming food insecurity situation in Africa, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) agreed to call a high-level forum to find means of fighting hunger and malnutrition in Africa.

The agreement was reached last August in a meeting in Addis Ababa between the FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, Bukar Tijani, and the UNECA Executive Secretary, Vera Songwe.

On the margin of the African Union's Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment Conference (STC), Bukar Tijani discussed with Vera Songwe

on a number of issues pertaining to the existing food security and malnutrition issues in Africa.

While reviewing the commitments the two organizations have entered earlier this year towards meeting the zero hunger challenge, the two officials also agreed to accelerate the implementation of joint programmes: enhancing rural entrepreneurship and employment for youth and women; addressing natural resource degradation and scarcity, conflicts and migration; ending hunger, nutrition and poverty in Africa; and effective response to climate change.

They also discussed UNECA's contribution of data and information on food security and nutrition analysis in Africa. FAO partnership with UNECA can contribute to the successful

implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aim to end hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition.

For Vera Songwe, it was high time the two institutions fast-tracked implementations to address the multifaceted challenges the continent faces in the food and agriculture sector. She stressed that the two organizations must work together to respond to Africa's challenge of feeding a growing population amidst climate change and drought.

The FAO delegation to UNECA included Patrick Kormawa, FAO Representative to the AU and UNECA and Subregional Coordinator to Eastern Africa, and Abebe Haile-Gabriel, Regional Programme Leader for Africa and Representative to Ghana.





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FAO launches new Umbrella Programme on Supporting Responsible Investments: **What you need to know**

A need for more and better investments

Not only do we need more investments in agriculture and food systems, but the world also needs better investments that are responsible.

To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), investment in agriculture and food systems needs to increase. Specifically, to eradicate poverty (SDG 1) and achieve zero hunger (SDG 2) in sub-Saharan Africa, an increase of US\$118 billion in investment annually is needed until 2030, according to FAO estimates.

Unfortunately, worrying accounts keep coming in about infringements of community rights, threats to livelihoods and damage to the environment caused by investments, showing that not all investments contribute to sustainable development.

The Umbrella Programme

This is where FAO's new Umbrella Programme, *Supporting responsible investments in agriculture and food systems*, comes in. It responds to the global need of enhancing more and better investments in agriculture and food systems with a set of key advocacy and capacity development activities that could be funded on the global, regional and country level.

The Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development Division (DPS), which led the development of the programme, has used an innovative approach for its development. DPS has organized eight capacity assessment events, which involved governments, private sector and civil society organizations.

The outcomes of these events formed the basis of the programme, enhancing the buy-in of all actors and alignment of the activities with the actual needs of stakeholders.

Central to the programme is supporting the application of key international guidance instruments on enhancing responsible investment.

Of essential importance in this regard are the 2014 Principles for Responsible Investments in Agriculture and Food Systems (CFS-RAI), which provide broad-based guidance to all stakeholders.

They have been developed through an inclusive multistakeholder process by the Committee on World Food Security. The programme will also be strategically interlinked with guidance instruments such as the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure and the OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains.



Call on all staff working on issues related to responsible investment

DPS would like to work together with all staff members whose work touches upon responsible investments in agriculture and food systems. In that regard, DPS is planning a series of webinars and videoconferences in the coming months, to hear from you and raise internal awareness about the programme and responsible investments among FAO staff in regional offices.

To overcome the challenge for more and better investments, we will need everybody's help. For more information about the programme or if you wish to share information about the programme with your partners, you can find a specifically designed brochure for this purpose here. It is currently available in English, French and Spanish. DPS is open to all queries and is keen to hear about any expressions of interests from countries or your partners about the programme.



Photo Credit: ©FAO

FAO partners with the Pan-African Parliament on capacity reinforcement on Food Security and Nutrition for legislators

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) have recently signed a Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) project for a two-year engagement aimed at enhancing the technical capacities of the PAP and the Pan-African Parliamentary Alliance on Food Security and Nutrition (PAPA-FSN).

The agreement builds on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed last year between the two parties.

The project will focus on four pilot countries (Cameroun, Madagascar, Sierra Leone and Uganda) to advance strategies, policies and laws on the right to adequate food, investments in food and nutrition security at national and regional levels, in collaboration with the Department for Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union Commission (AUC-DREA).

Another TCP from FAO Regional Office for Near East and North Africa (RNE) is expected to follow next year to cater for one more focus country in that region.

"The initiative will contribute to the realization of the right to food and

also reinforce consensus on the importance of addressing the structural challenges to achieving food security and nutrition through a human rights approach", said Bernadette Lahai, Vice President of the Pan-African Parliament.

The President of the Pan-African Parliament, Roger Nkodo Dang, praised the initiative and FAO's support in improving the capacity of legislators in advocating for as well as developing and implementing food and nutrition security policies, adding: "We now need to transform this commitment into concrete actions that will have a meaningful impact on the food and nutrition security of our people".

Through this initiative, parliamentarians will be trained and provided with tools, skills and technical capacity reinforcement to support advocacy and multisectoral coordination mechanisms required to integrate food and nutrition security into regional and national legislation while ensuring increasing budgetary allocations for food Security and nutrition to meet the commitments of the Malabo Declaration and ICN-2 as well as the SDGs in the next ten years of the

UN Decade of Action on Nutrition.

At country level, the project will undertake a gap analysis on legal instruments for advancing food and nutrition security, including the enshrining of the right to adequate food into national legal frameworks. The initiative will also assist with the establishment of national and subregional parliamentary alliances on food Security and nutrition.

Following the formal signing of the TCP project, parliamentarians met to discuss the details of the project, including its three key outputs. Nearly 40 parliamentarians from 20 countries attended this meeting at PAP's headquarters in October in Midrand, South Africa.

NOTE

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Since the beginning of the crisis in the Lake Chad region, FAO has been supporting refugees, returnees and displaced persons and host populations to put in place mechanisms for easy access to food and for improving their living conditions.

Food crisis in the Lake Chad Region: FAO supports farmers and pastoralists for sustainable development

Destocking of animals versus animal feed, provision of dried meat to women to help malnourished children, support for market gardening for women's groups and vaccination of livestock – these are part of FAO's support toward building the resilience of the populations affected by crisis in the Lake Chad region.

Since the beginning of the crisis in the Lake Chad region, FAO has been supporting refugees, returnees and displaced persons and host populations to put in place mechanisms for easy access to food and for improving their living conditions. In the field of agriculture, FAO's projects focus on vegetable production, processing and conservation of agricultural products.

According to Jolie Bonheur, Head of FAO Office in Bol, "seeds and tools are being made available to women's groups to enable them produce food for their consumption, and part of that production is sold to increase income for these populations in order to improve

their standard of living." Women refugees, returnees and indigenous women have formed groups, and are working hard to produce vegetables and other crops that are essential for their diets.

Adje Gombo, Chairlady of the Mar-Irbou women's group, explains: "Vegetable production has changed our life and our family's diet. We have discovered that the earth is a treasure and we are working to make the most of it for our livelihood."

For Kadji Mdou of the women's group of Kolom Grenoum, the seeds, boreholes and motor pumps that FAO provided for them for production is a great support for her community. "Thanks to FAO's support, we are able to vary the family's diet, we can keep our children healthy with the benefits of our sales and we can also send them to school".

Even though they are happy with what they were able to produce, these women do not intend to stop

there. With technical support from FAO, they have also learned to process their products in order to preserve them for a long time. Processing and preservation for sustainable and profitable agriculture

The women of Mar-Irbou and those of Koloum Grenoum whom we met happily told us of the need for them to process and preserve their products. "The weekly markets are located far from our village and it is often difficult to sell our crops in a timely manner," says Adje Gombo.

"FAO has equipped us with processing and conservation techniques to improve the economy of our families and to achieve some of our projects," she added. Solar mills and dryers have been made available to the women for the processing and preservation of their products and technical support from FAO through training and practical sessions on the use of these processing tools.



Photo Credit: ©FAO

According to the technical director of SODELAC, FAO's implementation partner in the region, FAO is a preferred partner in providing quality seed and technical support to the agricultural sector in the Lake. He called on FAO to give greater support to the Lake's populations by putting in place market gardening, especially as the movement of the populations affected by the crisis has led to overcrowding of localities around the Lake's region. "We need to focus our actions on sustainable development, despite the crisis," he said.

With regards to the livestock component, a destocking and vaccination project has improved milk production and animal health through feed supplements and vaccination.

According to the livestock officer in the region, FAO has provided a great support to pastoralists. He stressed the added value of destocking for the beneficiaries and especially pointed out the usefulness of the dried meat provided by FAO for the nutrition of pregnant women and malnourished children.

The herders met at the Somi village made up of displaced people and indigenous people shared the same feelings. "The destocking of animals versus animal feed project has been very beneficial for our livestock. We have noticed that feed supplements have increased milk production and the physical appearance of cattle. Which of course makes it possible to have animal with better appearance on the market, which has thus increased our profits", said Mahamat Hissein, head of this village.

They thought it would be beneficial to do the same with small ruminants to improve all their breeding.

Dried meat against malnutrition

The destocking project, which consisted in providing animal feed in exchange of livestock, has indeed enabled FAO to support the fight against malnutrition in the project implementation zone.

A part of this support consisted in making dried meat from destocked animals, in collaboration with the regional livestock delegation and

the NGO International Medical Corps (IMC) with the view to support the fight against malnutrition among pregnant women and children in the health centres of the city of Bol and those of the surroundings.

This technique has a positive result for both pastoralists and women who benefited from dried meat for their feeding and/or that of their children.

The women in Bol expressed great satisfaction in seeing their children cured of malnutrition by giving them dried meat supplement.

Zenaba Abakar, a 30-year-old mother of six, benefited from the dried meat project for the treatment of acute malnutrition in her last two children. "Three months after I gave birth, I realized that I was pregnant again. I was always sick and could not take good care of my baby. After delivery, the baby and the infant are often sick, and at the hospital, the doctor told me that my children are malnourished," Zenaba explained.

She was directed to the health centre where IMC was distributing dried meat made available by FAO, and she was provided with meat in needed quantity to improve the nutrition of her children. "When I started to give them the meat that FAO gave me, the health of my children quickly improved and I realized that this food was effective," she testified.

Zenaba believes that this food supplement is very good for the health and well-being of his family. She encourages FAO to continue this project for the benefit of the people of the Lake and those of other regions. An opinion shared by the staff of the health delegation in the lake region as well as health workers met at the Bol Health Centre.



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Bukar Tijani, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, delivering the keynote address on the theme: 'Change the future of migration. Invest in food security and rural development' during the World Food Day celebration, 2017



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Ms. Christine Evans-Klock, United Nations Resident Coordinator for Ghana, addressing the audience as the Guest Speaker during the World Food Day celebrations



Photo Credit: ©FAO/Samuel Creppy

Selected migrants and other stakeholders having panel discussion on the theme: 'Change the future of migration. Invest in food security and rural development' during the World Food Day Celebrations



Photo Credit: @FAO/Samuel Creppy

Representatives of youth leaders and CSOs sharing their views on the theme: 'Change the future of migration. Invest in food security and rural development' during the World Food Day Celebrations



Photo Credit: @FAO/Liliane Kambirigi

Representatives from youth networks contributing to discussions on the World Food Day celebration



Photo Credit: @FAO/Samuel Creppy

Cross-section of participants of the World Food Day celebration held in Accra



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Regional Office for Africa, #2 Gamel Abdul Nasser Road
P.O. Box GP 1628 Accra, Ghana, Tel: (+233) 302 610930 Fax: (+233) 302 668427 Email: FAO-RAF@fao.org
www.fao.org/Africa