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Progress Made on the Global Action Programme (GAP) for Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) in Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) of Africa Region

Executive Summary

The Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition (GAP) in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) was officially launched during the 40th Session of the FAO Conference, held in July 2017. FAO delivers its contribution to the implementation of the GAP through the Interregional Initiative (IRI) on SIDS.

Matters to be brought to the attention of the Regional Conference

1. Special attention should be given to the Atlantic and Indian Ocean SIDS Component of the GAP.
2. The Atlantic and Indian Ocean SIDS should ensure appropriate resources are allocated to address the priorities of the Programme.
3. Mechanisms are needed to facilitate involvement of the private sector to invest for food security and nutrition in SIDS.
4. The Hand-in-Hand Initiative is an opportunity for the SIDS to address their food security and nutrition challenges.
5. Ensure interaction with regional economic bodies such as the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

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1. The GAP and the IRI, as FAO's main delivery mechanism, have been designed with the recognition that SIDS face many shared constraints to their sustainable development, including a narrow resource base, reliance on ocean resources, fragile natural environments, volatile market dependencies, high food imports, and high costs for energy, transportation and communication.
2. These constraints imply increased vulnerability to shocks and limited development of commercially oriented agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors.
3. The priorities identified in the GAP have been integrated in each Member's Country Programming Framework (CPF), and each programme and/or project contributes to the GAP.

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4. During the 30th Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa, held in 2018 in the Sudan, the African SIDS Regional Programme was officially launched. An inventory of interventions contributing to the IRI has been carried out:
 - some actions were related to FAO Strategic Programme 4 (SP4, on food systems) and others were part of Strategic Programme 3 (SP3 on rural poverty reduction);
 - a programming framework for food security and nutrition in the Atlantic and Indian Ocean SIDS was designed (Cabo Verde, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles and Zanzibar in the United Republic of Tanzania);
 - the Strategy for FAO's work on Climate Change in sub-Saharan Africa benefited two countries (Cabo Verde and Seychelles);
 - projects on controlling Fall Armyworm (FAW) invasion were implemented (Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Mauritius);
 - support was provided for the promotion of production systems aimed at improving food and nutrition security through South-South cooperation (SSC).
5. At regional level, in the Indian Ocean region:
 - a Regional Programme for Food Security and Nutrition (PRESAN) of the IOC, was formulated as a joint FAO Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) grant;
 - the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission was established under Article XIV of FAO's Constitution.
6. In the Atlantic Ocean region:
 - the Strategy for FAO's work on Climate Change in sub-Saharan Africa benefited Cabo Verde and Guinea-Bissau, and regional and international organizations such as ECOWAS, West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF/WECARD), World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) and the Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS).

The Indian Ocean Regional Programme for Food Security and Nutrition (PRESAN)

7. The PRESAN seeks more cooperation and inter-island trade. This approach, which aims to unleash the full potential of regional food production, needs to be accompanied by the active participation of the private sector. The programme is about making an inclusive, equitable and connected system where all the actors of production, processing, transportation and food trade interact with those who provide the goods and services they need to carry out their activities within a secured business climate.
8. The PRESAN is the expression of a common will to build a region of shared growth in which the availability and access to healthy food in sufficient quantity is a daily reality. The PRESAN approach is based on intraregional exchanges of information, experiences, know-how, technologies and foodstuffs.
9. Since the formulation of PRESAN, technically and financially supported by FAO, in February 2016, there have been a number of achievements:
 - a Strategic Cooperation Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between FAO and the IOC in November 2018;
 - the Regional Coordination Unit of PRESAN has been established within the FAO Office in Antananarivo;

- designation of PRESAN Focal Points from agricultural institutions in each IOC member country to coordinate the programme initiatives at country level;
- four Steering Committee Sessions of PRESAN have been held in Madagascar (June and December 2018), Réunion (May 2019) and Seychelles (December 2019);
- national technical and monitoring committees have been set up to ensure a multisectoral implementation of PRESAN activities. These committees count representatives from public sector, such as ministries, parliamentarians and governmental institutions, private sector including agri- and agro-business enterprises, and agricultural producer organizations and Civil Society organizations, as well as financial and technical partners working in agricultural development sectors;
- public awareness on the PRESAN approaches and objectives was led through videos, and communications materials;
- formal identification of the value chains of regional priorities was made through data analysis on markets;
- studies for the development of regional priority value chains have been carried out;
- the standards and regulations for the trade of agricultural and food products have been analysed to better facilitate inter-island trade in these products;
- a study for the establishment of the information platform on intraregional business opportunities, as part of the project to support the development of intra-regional trade in agricultural products, contributing to the implementation of the PRESAN is being finalized;
- a programme document, based on value chain studies, will be available shortly to facilitate resource mobilization and partner positioning.

Lessons learned from the formulation and ongoing implementation of the Africa, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea (AIMS) SIDS Component of the Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition (GAP)

1. Agriculture and Climate Change

The AIMS and Madagascar¹ are very vulnerable to climate change. The risks associated with natural disasters are emphasized by the exacerbation of the cyclones, drought and frequent storms, etc.

The sectors most vulnerable to climate change are the following:

- water resources: scarcity of drinking and irrigation water, and the impacts on agricultural activities;
- infrastructures are often damaged by torrential rains that have become more frequent. Lack of energy sources, and impacts on industrial development;
- agriculture including fisheries and livestock: Insufficient rainfall and increased temperature, while 90 percent of agricultural activities depend on rainfall. A decrease in favourable areas for agriculture and the loss of arable land, leading to a further decrease in agricultural foodstuffs and a displacement of vulnerable populations. Internal migration is becoming an issue in a big island such as Madagascar, and creates new challenges in the hosting regions;
- transport: vulnerability of road infrastructures to the effects of climate change, obsolescence of means of navigation, risks and related costs;
- health: the impacts of climate change are also visible on the health of the population in terms of the proliferation of malaria, dengue and other vector-borne diseases.

¹ Even though not considered as a SIDS, Madagascar faces the same challenges as the neighbouring SIDS.

2. *Malnutrition and Food Insecurity*

With a fragile and unsustainable food system, malnutrition in all its forms is prevalent in these SIDS.

- Changes in dietary patterns and lifestyle, often due to changes in the national economic focus and enhanced socio-economic development, are linked to poor health;
- poverty still prevails in the Atlantic and Indian Ocean SIDS and is associated with hunger and malnutrition (undernutrition);
- cumulative impacts of climate change and associated issues weigh heavily on Atlantic and Indian Ocean SIDS;
- most AIMS SIDS are food-deficient and import between 70-80 percent of the food they consume;
- Atlantic and Indian Ocean SIDS rely importantly on the ocean for national development.

3. *Building and Strengthening Resilience Capacities in the SIDS*

Beyond the usually agreed lack of enabling and appropriate conditions or environment, SIDS have weak capacities for disaster risk reduction in agriculture and related sectors, as well as weak human and institutional capacities to implement appropriate technologies. In addition, there is low availability of proactive investment to mitigate risks.

To cope with all these constraints, and with the aim of strengthening the resilience capacities of the SIDS, the FAO IRI, formulated in the framework of the GAP, has identified appropriate actions to be undertaken:

- strengthen the enabling environment and conditions for food security and nutrition.
- establish a sustainable and resilient food system for a healthy diet and better nutrition.
- provide communities with the means to access food security and better nutrition, by promoting social and economic empowerment, and implementing social protection programmes.
- strengthen early warning systems with emphasis on the importance of mitigation and prevention.
- improve the information system at the national and regional levels to monitor emerging threats to food and nutrition security.
- establish facilities for public/private partnerships and investments in the rural development sectors.
- strengthen/reform existing coordination platforms (the nature of the platform and decision-making process has to be defined; awareness raised among decision-makers within governments; and institutional strengthening and capacity building).
- promote data collection/evidence-based policy-making. (Improved data and evidence-based policy-making is important and can be achieved by convincing the decision-makers. Furthermore, it is important because financing partners need to track the optimal use of resources).