

Programme Implementation Report 2018-19

Web Annex 7:

Regional Dimensions Results

1. FAO's work at regional level is structured around Regional Initiatives (RIs), which provide an integrated approach to addressing priority issues and guide the implementation of country programmes. The RIs serve as a multidisciplinary mechanism to enhance delivery and ensure impact on the key priorities of each region, while contributing to the Strategic Objectives.
2. This *Web Annex* provides a summary of achievements for each of the RIs and additional information is included in the respective [Regional Conferences](#) documents *Results and Priorities for FAO Activities in the Region*.¹

Africa

Regional Initiative on Africa's Commitment to End Hunger by 2025

3. FAO assisted countries, the African Union Commission (AUC) and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in strengthening their systems and capacities to deliver programmes that contribute to eradicating hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition, as well as towards mutual accountabilities for delivery of results. The Organization also contributed to enhancing governance and coordination capacities, including for the progressive realization of the Right to Adequate Food.
4. FAO contributed to the improvement of food security and nutrition analysis and enhanced compliance with the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)/Malabo Declaration and SDGs accountability and reporting mechanisms. With FAO support, AUC updated the Ending Hunger Indicators and aligned them to SDGs while the African Development Bank (AfDB) developed a nutrition scorecard, which included the Prevalence of Undernourished (PoU) and Household Dietary Diversity Score. FAO strengthened capacities to apply the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) and enhanced country ownership of FSN indicators and their inclusion in National Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks and National Surveys.
5. At the country level, FAO contributed to improving food security and nutrition policies and strategies through: (a) development, review and implementation of sectoral and cross-sectoral policies better integrating FSN, nutrition-sensitive agriculture, land tenure and gender considerations in 14 African countries; (b) support to the formulation of second-generation National Agriculture Investment Plans (NAIP), aligned with the CAADP/Malabo Declaration and integrating social protection dimensions, food security and nutrition, gender and resilience in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal and Togo; and (c) review of public agricultural expenditure on food security and nutrition and budget planning of agricultural and rural sector programmes in Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Senegal.
6. FAO contributed to the development and validation of nutrition and healthy foods documents, such as the East Africa Nutrition Sensitive School Meals Guidelines in partnership with AUC and the Food-based Dietary Guidelines (FBDG) in Rwanda and countries in Southern Africa. FAO also strengthened capacities of urban street food vendors on nutrition and healthy foods in Ghana and the United Republic Tanzania. FAO provided support to the AUC around school feeding and on Home Grown School Feeding in 2019.
7. There has been critical work in Ethiopia, Mali, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, and the United Republic of Tanzania, among many others, all directly supporting the reduction of hunger.

Regional Initiative on Sustainable Production Intensification and Value Chain Development in Africa

8. This Regional Initiative focuses on sustainable intensification of production and the associated measures needed to address post-production issues, including better handling, processing and distribution, improved food quality and safety and facilitating access to markets.

¹ RAF/20/8; APRC/20/6; ERC/20/5; LARC/20/5; NERC/20/2;

9. FAO supported strategies promoting investment, piloting and scaling-up of a broad range of agricultural practices that are more productive. It also worked to strengthen production systems, diversify income sources and improve living conditions of households.
10. FAO provided guidelines for the design and implementation of effective public and private sector partnerships (PPPs) in the agriculture sector, in addition to convening public-private sector dialogues in Ghana, Uganda and Zambia to improve the enabling environment for agri-PPPs. In assisting AUC and RECs to strengthen investment frameworks for agriculture, FAO launched the AgrInvest initiative across the region to attract and de-risk private-sector investment in agrifood systems and value chains.
11. In collaboration with the AUC, FAO prepared and launched the Framework for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in Africa, aimed to boost productivity, reduce harvest and post-harvest losses and link agriculture to manufacturing.
12. FAO assisted AUC, NEPAD, RECs and countries to implement natural resource preservation initiatives, including the African Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100), Great Green Wall, Pan-African Sustainable Forest Management Strategy, Agreement on Port State Measures, the African Union Strategy on Illegal Exploitation of Wildlife Resources and the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries in Central and West Africa.
13. The capacities of RECs and countries were strengthened to enable participation in the activities of the international food standards setting bodies (Codex, OIE, IPPC),² especially on microbiological risk management and Codex's microbiological criteria for foods in order to improve compliance with Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and trade facilitation requirements.
14. Initiatives to improve gender equality and women leadership were implemented in agricultural value chain development and cross-border trade in the Cabo Verde, Guinea, Rwanda and Zambia.

Regional Initiative on Building Resilience in Africa's Drylands

15. This Regional Initiative strengthens institutional capacity for resilience; supports early warning and information management systems; builds community-level resilience; and responds to emergencies and crises.
16. FAO supported the formulation and development of resilience strategies, including the East Africa Regional Livestock Strategy and Regional animal feed action plan; Capacities on the feed balance methodological approach were reinforced in Chad and the Niger. Finally, support was provided to set up the roadmap for interinstitutional cooperation on the peace-food security-pastoralism nexus in the Sahel and West Africa, in collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP) and the European Union.
17. In collaboration with partners such as AfDB, FAO raised awareness and shared relevant information on regional platforms and member countries to enhance capacity for control and management of pests and transboundary animal diseases.
18. FAO supported disaster risk reduction initiatives, such as the National Strategy for Early Warning, Emergency Response and Resilience for Agriculture in Burundi, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Madagascar and Mali. A second initiative was the East Africa Fall Armyworm Strategy and Implementation Plan. Support for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction was provided to Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia. Similarly, FAO enhanced country capacities on the use of FAO Emergency Response Preparedness Plan (FERPP) and the Disaster Risk Prioritization (DRP) tools in East and Southern Africa.

² World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE); International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)

19. FAO supported countries in integrated and multisectoral strategies for sustainable ecosystem management, restoration of land and climate change adaptation, including access to climate finance through the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Nationally Determined Contributions implementation.

20. Activities that strengthened the resilience of vulnerable population groups, especially women, included: (a) establishment of Dimitra Clubs, a group of women and men who gather on a voluntary basis to find solutions to community issues and to implement them using local resources, in the Central African Republic and the Congo; (b) strengthened households' savings and credit capacity with Caisses de résilience in Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau and Mali; and (c) enhanced capacities of governments to establish feed inventories and feed balance in arid and semi-arid areas in Ethiopia and Kenya.

Partnerships

21. FAO facilitated several partnerships and knowledge management activities including: (a) facilitation of partnership with AfricaRice, the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and the Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD), in the framework of South-South Cooperation, for transfer of technologies in rice value chain; (b) collaboration with parliamentarians and universities, including respectively the Pan-African Parliamentarian Alliance and EAC Parliamentarians and the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) to develop evidenced-based policy processes and legislation towards the achievement of the Africa Agenda 2063, Malabo commitments and SDGs; and (c) convening of the Round Table of Contributors to replenish the ASTF, an African driven innovative financing mechanism to fund regional projects.

Asia and Pacific

Regional Initiative on Zero Hunger

22. At the regional level, FAO, jointly with the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) Secretariat, organized a Regional Consultation on Voluntary Guidelines for Food Systems and Nutrition in Thailand. The consultation deliberated on a draft document focused on transforming food systems to end all forms of malnutrition, which will lead to the finalization of the Voluntary Guidelines and their presentation for adoption during the CFS plenary session in 2020.³

23. In partnership with the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) system, academia and development partners, the Regional Initiative on Zero Hunger supported the mainstreaming of agriculture diversification and support to disadvantaged areas in Asia and the Pacific region through the Future Smart Food Initiative (FSF Initiative).

Regional Initiative on Climate Change

24. The Regional Initiative on Climate Change is aligned to the outcomes of the FAO Strategy on Climate Change. It supports countries to plan, implement and report on climate change actions, and access climate finance to build resilient and low-emission agriculture systems.

25. FAO expanded forest landscape restoration in Asia and supported ASEAN in launching the Guidelines for Agroforestry Development.

26. With FAO's support, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) made a submission to the Koroniva Work Planning in agriculture.

27. FAO has been developing a pipeline of Green Climate Fund (GCF) projects in the Asia and the Pacific region in partnership with countries. This includes full projects approved in 2019 (Nepal and Pakistan) and a number of Readiness and Preparatory Support projects. FAO also facilitated access of

³ FAO. 2019. [CFS Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition, Zero Draft](#). Rome

countries to global climate finance to implement national priorities identified in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and national climate change and DRR policies and strategies.

28. In 2019, FAO launched the Sustainable Rice Landscapes Initiative in partnership with the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, UN Environment, German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation, the International Rice Research Institute and the Sustainable Rice Platform.

Regional Initiative on Blue Growth

29. The Regional Initiative on Blue Growth supported countries to address the full spectrum of aquaculture, capture fisheries and protection and sustainable use of aquatic ecosystems and biodiversity. FAO supported ten regional and national institutions to develop capacity in applying aquaculture planning management tools and a further 20 regional and national institutions to address antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and associated risks in aquaculture.

30. FAO organized a regional consultation on climate-resilient fisheries and aquaculture in Asia and the Pacific region and produced a publication on climate-resilient fisheries and aquaculture.

31. FAO supported countries on sustainable fisheries and other actions to prevent illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing through advocacy and technical assistance with global, regional and country GEF and Technical Cooperation Programme projects.

Regional Initiative on One Health

32. In 2019, FAO facilitated South-South Cooperation with technical experts from countries such as Thailand to assist other countries with their response to Fall Armyworm (FAW). Desert Locust emergency response action with support from FAO at country level helped contain the recent locust invasion in India, Iran and Pakistan.

33. FAO supported Members on critical issues related to zoonoses, emerging infectious diseases and other health threats, including AMR under the One Health approach. FAO strengthened tripartite collaboration between OIE, WHO and FAO, and reinforced capacities of countries to implement arrangements consistent with Codex Alimentarius and International Plant Protection Convention standards. FAO, OIE and WHO are strategically addressing the threat of AMR in the region.

34. FAO's Transboundary Animal Diseases (TAD) programme implemented the Regional Animal Health Laboratory and Veterinary Epidemiology Frameworks for TADs and zoonoses in close cooperation with ASEAN and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries.

Interregional Initiative (IRI) on SIDS – Pacific Component

35. The Pacific component of the IRI on SIDS focused on implementing the Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in SIDS (GAP). Under the initiative, the GAP was operationalized through the development of a Joint Action Framework for Food Security and Nutrition in the Pacific Islands (Pacific Food and Nutrition Framework).

36. In line with the global Small-scale Fisheries Guidelines and regional New Song for Coastal Fisheries, a number of national governments received technical assistance to strengthen their services to communities that are managing their own resources, such as through drafting and improving manuals for community-based fisheries management, and through training extension officers.

Achievements in cross-cutting themes

37. In 2019, FAO published "E-Agriculture in Action: Blockchain for Agriculture", which provides some thoughts on the opportunities and challenges in implementing blockchain-based systems, and documents case studies on the use of blockchain for agriculture.

38. FAO contributed to the development of the Pacific Strategic Plan for Agricultural and Fisheries Statistics with the Pacific Community (SPC) and is providing technical support to advance its implementation.

39. Country-gender assessments of agriculture and other rural sectors were conducted in 13 countries. In addition, FAO contributed to the UN joint report “Pathways to Influence: Promoting the Role of Women’s Transformative Leadership to Achieve the SDGs in Asia and the Pacific”. FAO partnered with United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), UN Women, the World Food Programme to organize high-level preparatory meetings for the Commission on the Status of Women.

Partnerships

40. FAO stepped up its partnerships in the region, working in collaboration with subregional, regional and international entities. In 2018, FAO signed a new Memorandum of Understanding with ASEAN to strengthen cooperation in agriculture and forestry and to combat IUU fishing. FAO collaborated with specialized national research institutions such as the CGIAR Centres, providing policy advice and capacity development.

41. FAO also expanded its regional collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and WFP. Collaboration in the area of nutrition and food systems with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WFP and WHO has continued to be strengthened. The Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition was released as a joint report for the first time in 2018 and then in 2019.

42. FAO strengthened its partnerships with the Asian Institute of Technology, ILO, SAARC, SPC, UNESCAP, UNFPA, UNOHCHR, UNSIAP and UN Women to build statistical capacity and support the implementation of agriculture censuses and surveys and the compilation of SDG indicators. Enhanced collaboration with the Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia was formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding to promote improved coherent actions for achieving the SDGs in the Asia and the Pacific region.

Europe and Central Asia

Regional Initiative on empowering smallholders and family farms for improved rural livelihood and poverty reduction

43. The key objective of this Regional Initiative is to: (a) enhance access of smallholders and family farmers to services (SO3.1)⁴ so that they can acquire good agricultural practices in areas such as forestry, fisheries and livestock production resulting in increased adaptation and resilience to climate change; and (b) ensure inclusive growth through improved rural livelihoods.

44. Highlights of achievements include: (a) innovative practices were promoted; (b) governance frameworks were strengthened; (c) policies and programmes were promoted to improve access to natural resources and digital technologies; (d) cross-sectoral policy advice was provided for the development of gender-equitable and sustainable rural development.

45. The Regional Initiative has enhanced its partnership with its key partners such as the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG) in Southeast Europe, collaboration with the European Commission in programme implementation in Georgia, Tajikistan or North Macedonia (NM). Other key resource partners include Austria, Azerbaijan, Sweden, Finland, Turkey and the Russian Federation. Gender partnership with UN Women and the Rome-based agencies (RBAs) is pursued in Kyrgyzstan under the UN Joint Programme on Rural Women's Economic Empowerment as

⁴ The figures in brackets refer to the respective Outcome of the [FAO Strategic Framework](#) (SO 3.1 – means the outcome 3.1 of the Strategic Framework – Rural poor and rural poor organizations empowered to access productive resources, services and markets).

well as in other countries. At regional level, collaboration was strengthened through the UN Issue-Based Coalition on Gender.

Regional Initiative on improving agrifood trade and market integration

46. The objective of this Regional Initiative has further evolved in supporting countries in enhancing the agri-food trade policy environment. The three components focused on (a) strengthening capacity on WTO trade agreements and effective use of WTO procedures; (b) strengthening capacity to implement global food safety and quality standards including addressing sanitary, animal health and phytosanitary issues; and (c) supporting domestic food markets and food exports diversification and promotion in view of developing more inclusive and efficient agri-food systems.

47. Highlights of achievements, including: (a) multi-stakeholder dialogues were promoted on trade-related agreements; (b) public- and private-sector institutions were supported in plant and animal health, food safety and quality domains; (c) a regional conference on antimicrobial resistance (AMR), risk assessment and food safety was organized in 2019; (d) under the umbrella of the Global SAVE FOOD Initiative on Food Loss and Waste (FLW) Reduction, technical assistance was provided to several countries in collaboration with the public and private sector, in the development of national strategies on FLW reduction; and (e) the crosscutting issue of food security and nutrition was embedded in the Regional Initiative by carrying out a regional analysis to assess the impact of trade agreements on food security and nutrition outcomes in the region, and key findings are reflected in the Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition in Europe and Central Asia.⁵

48. Enhanced collaboration included the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), WHO, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), Slow Food, and Central European Free Trade Agreement (CEFTA), IAMO. Collaboration was also enhanced with academia e.g. the National Institute for Economic Research of the Republic of Moldova and the Rural and Agricultural Policy and Development Institute (RAPDI) in Georgia and IAMO, and the private sector e.g. the Ukrainian Fruits Association.

49. The Regional Initiative addressed crosscutting issues, in particular gender, governance, food security and nutrition. It ensured gender mainstreaming across its activities including trainings and workshops.

Regional Initiative on Sustainable natural resource management under a changing climate

50. The main objective of this Regional Initiative is to strengthen countries' capacities to achieve Sustainable Natural Resource Management (SNRM) including adaptation and mitigation to Climate Change (CC) and Disaster Risks Reduction (DRR) in agriculture, forestry and fisheries. It uses the components: (a) improving policy alignment, coordination and cooperation for sustainable use of natural resources, CC and DRR and related capacities including access to climate financing; (b) effective provision/collection of data, tools and services for effective decision making on addressing natural resource management, CC and DRR; and (c) supporting capacity development for SNRM, CC adaption and mitigation and DRR to respond to the demand in the region and the countries.

51. Highlights of results, including: (a) policy alignment, coordination and cooperation for sustainable use of natural resources, CC and DRR and related capacities including accessing climate financing were improved; (b) providing and collecting data, tools and services for effective decision making on addressing natural resource management, CC and DRR; (c) innovative practices and integrated multi-sectoral approaches on climate change adaptation and mitigation, e.g. climate-smart agriculture (CSA); (d) awareness raising activities were conducted to promote Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) to strengthen climate resilience and safeguard

⁵ [Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition in Europe and Central Asia](#) (FAO 2019), Part 3 on Structural Transformations of Agriculture, Food Systems and Food Policy.

agro-biodiversity in the region; and (e) FAO supported country preparedness for and management of effective responses to disasters and crises.

52. Key partners in supporting climate-smart agriculture included the global research partnership CGIAR, the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), and members of the Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture (GACSA).

Achievements in addressing food insecurity and malnutrition

53. Efforts under this priority area (not a Regional Initiative) focused mainly on SDG 2,⁶ which calls for ending all forms of malnutrition. In this context, FAO also supported following up the implementation of the Rome Declaration on Nutrition adopted at the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), as well as the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition. Highlights of results, include: (a) Support on developing FSN policies, processes and programmes; (b) Evidence based decisions were supported through the preparation of FAO's flagship publication on the Regional Food Security Panorama 2019;⁷ With regards to FSN related policy and programme implementation; a new inter-governmental platform (Regional Nutrition Capacity Development and Partnership Platform for Central Asia and Caucasus/RNPP) was developed⁸ in collaboration with regional offices of UNICEF, WHO and WFP.

54. Key lessons learned⁹ from the implementation of the work programme in the 2018-19 biennium are: (a) the RIs are a good basis to facilitate cross-sectoral dialogue as well as linking up with external processes. However, the Theory of Change for RIs would need to be further sharpened; (b) Regional Initiatives should serve as a programmatic umbrella facilitating cross SO and holistic approaches and responding to regional priorities and achieving greater impact at the country level; and (c) larger impact was achieved when small projects linked with major interventions (e.g. by creating the required knowledge and awareness to formulate larger programmes) or established networks.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Regional Initiative on Hunger-free Latin America and the Caribbean

55. Through this RI, FAO addressed the prevalence of overweight and obesity in Latin America and the Caribbean and sought to recover progress towards the goal of Zero Hunger, with special attention to rural areas.

56. As a result of FAO's support to the Parliamentary Fronts against Hunger, 13 national parliaments are strengthening regulations supporting the Right to Food, including at constitutional level; 11 are discussing related budgetary allocations; and seven approved laws in related areas, ranging from food labelling, malnutrition and food loss and waste to agro-ecological practices and family farming. FAO also facilitated an agreement among parliamentarians to prioritize legislation with impact on vulnerable territories.

57. FAO supported 13 countries in strengthening their school feeding programmes through improved legal frameworks and institutionalizing public purchasing from family farmers. Over 285 000 children receive daily healthy meals thanks to this work. There is renewed interest in food and nutritional education, with over 7 400 public officials from nine countries participating in the newly created Diploma and knowledge exchange on school feeding programmes. In addition, joint FAO-UNESCO-WFP analyses of school feeding programmes increased harmonization and coordination among the agencies.

⁶ End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

⁷ [2019 Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition in Europe and Central Asia](#)

⁸ [Press release on the launch of RNPP](#)

⁹ ERC/20/6: Synthesis of FAO Evaluations 2014-2019 in Europe and Central Asia Region

58. In partnership with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), and with the participation of more than 25 experts from the region, FAO organized the Forum for the Transformation of Food Systems and the Reduction of Overweight and Obesity in Latin America and the Caribbean to analyse the defects of the current food systems that hinder access to healthy food by the most vulnerable population groups. In addition, the development of a common regional position on the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition was facilitated.

59. Work on food loss and waste included capacity building for public institutions and small-scale agricultural workers to implement FLW prevention and reduction policies, assistance to drafting of laws and legal frameworks on FLW, training, and the production of national FLW baselines. At regional level, the #SinDesperdicio platform led to the Regional Summit on FLW and consolidated a solid alliance between FAO, Inter-American Development Bank and the private sector through which innovative approaches for addressing FLW were developed.

Regional Initiative on Family Farming and Inclusive Food Systems for Sustainable Rural Development

60. Through this RI, FAO addressed rural poverty reduction and the revitalization of lagging rural territories, with a focus on rural youth, women, indigenous peoples and afro-descendants.

61. FAO proposed strategies for addressing rural poverty, including the issue of rural migration, in the first Overview of Rural Poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Atlas of Migration in Northern Central American Countries, co-published with ECLAC. The Organization also improved methodologies for measuring rural poverty and its links to environmental management, in collaboration with the Alliance for the Elimination Rural Poverty and the Institute of Peruvian Studies. The “100 territories free from hunger and poverty” strategy, launched in six countries, provides a toolkit in support of lagging rural territories. This will be one of the partnership mechanisms of the Hand-in-Hand initiative in 2020-21.

62. Through FAO’s assistance, family farming committees were strengthened in 13 countries; registries and market mechanisms were established in eight countries, technological innovations were piloted with indigenous communities, rural women and rural youth in five countries leading to a sustainable model of diversified production with cotton as the main crop benefitting 18 thousand families. Broad dialogue facilitated by FAO resulted in a regional agenda for family farming, the first regional policy on peasant, indigenous and afro-descendant family farmers, and a roadmap for formulating an action plan.

63. The Organization led efforts in the region to strengthen synergies between policies for social protection and productive inclusion. Examples include supporting SICA’s Intersectoral Regional Agenda for Social Protection and Productive Inclusion with Equity; promoting social assistance programmes, sectoral social registries, national poverty reduction plans; and policy recommendations included in the report on Social Protection in Small-Scale Fisheries and Aquaculture in Latin America and the Caribbean.

64. FAO actively promoted decent rural work and employment opportunities. The Commission on Inland Fisheries and Aquaculture for Latin America and the Caribbean endorsed a toolkit to improve working conditions of fisherfolk and fish farmers, and rural youth across six Caribbean countries accessed seed capital and technical assistance for business plans, employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. Technical assistance was provided for mainstreaming gender-sensitive approaches across policies on market access, decent work, access to productive resources, social protection and climate change. Sixty indigenous women leaders from 17 countries strengthened their leadership skills and knowledge on human rights, food security and food sovereignty, and nutrition at the leadership schools established by FAO and the International Forum for Indigenous Women. Furthermore, FAO launched its 2019-23 Regional Gender Strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Regional Initiative on Sustainable use of natural resources, adaptation to climate change and disaster risk management

65. Through this RI, FAO focused on reducing the environmental impact of agrifood systems, managing disaster risks to agriculture, building resilient livelihoods and strengthening natural resource management. The RI also provided a framework for supporting countries in securing financing to address environmental and climate change challenges.
66. A regional strategy on biodiversity approved by the FAO Council emerged from two processes facilitated by FAO: the high-level dialogue on mainstreaming biodiversity in agriculture, forestry and fisheries and aquaculture (DRANIBA) and the multi-stakeholder process for measuring progress in integrating food production practices that promote biodiversity. In addition, the eight Amazonian governments agreed on criteria, institutional arrangements and financial sustainability for managing Protected Areas in the biomass, safeguarding livelihoods and biodiversity, and contributing to the Aichi Biodiversity targets. Furthermore, five countries submitted proposals for Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) sites.
67. The Organization provided digital modelling systems and training in the application of its new agroecological efficiency assessment tool. The resulting Soil Organic Carbon maps are used for implementing Voluntary Guidelines on Sustainable Soil Management and monitoring SDG indicator 15.3.1. In Central America, an oceanographic research campaign allows assessment of potential fishery resources and a satellite-based Agricultural Drought Surveillance System detects drought probability based on FAO's Agricultural Stress Index System (ASIS). ASIS was also calibrated at national level as stand-alone systems in five countries.
68. Nine countries committed to the Climate Action Platform on Agriculture for Latin America and the Caribbean (PLACA) fostered by FAO to support collaboration and strengthened climate action. The Organization also promoted the adoption of Climate-Smart Livestock strategies, policies and technologies and fostered an agreement among South American to customize the Global Livestock Environmental Assessment Model (GLEAM) tailoring it to their needs. Key livestock stakeholders have increasingly adopted adaptation and mitigation in their practices, strategies and investments, attracting private credit and investments. In the context of the Blue Growth Initiative, FAO supported local Caribbean governments in adapting fisheries to climate change. Actions include sensitization of fisherfolk, incorporation of early warning systems via mobile technology, and access to insurance following storms or hurricanes. Eight countries implemented their REDD+ Strategies and reported on progress towards the mitigation targets of the forestry sector.
69. FAO supported legal frameworks and operational procedures to strengthen the fight against illegal logging and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing including the implementation of the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) and regulations for timber utilization and developing national traceability systems. Two countries ratified the PSMA and the WECAFC¹⁰ endorsed a regional plan of action on IUU fishing.
70. FAO facilitated the identification of priority Disaster Risk Management (DRM) initiatives and the establishment of a regional governance mechanism for the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture and CELAC's 2018-30 Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Management in the Agriculture and FSN sectors. Eighteen countries improved their agriculture and disaster data management systems and five conducted cost-benefit analyses demonstrating the benefits of farm-level investment in Disaster Risk Reduction.
71. With FAO's support, 19 countries accessed financing from Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environmental Fund (GEF) for large-scale, innovative interventions that apply landscape approaches and address the interlinkages between poverty reduction, climate change adaptation and mitigation and community resilience.

¹⁰ Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission

Achievements in cross-cutting themes

72. FAO assisted 14 countries in implementing censuses and surveys and 13 in calculating the food insecurity experience scale (FIES, SDG 2.1.2) and prevalence of undernourishment (SDG 2.1.1). Furthermore, FAO and national institutions piloted an approach for measuring FIES that is respectful of indigenous peoples' cultural specificities, ensuring their free and informed consent.
73. The 10th and 11th issues of the annual Panoramas of Food and Nutritional Security in Latin America and the Caribbean were the first to result from a FAO collaboration with WHO, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), UNICEF and WFP informing on regional progress in achieving SDGs 2 and 3 targets related to food and nutrition, and provide an integrated view of the problems and possible solutions.
74. FAO assisted eight countries in strengthening their AMR action plans and developed innovative methodologies for assessing the risks of AMR in relation to national food production systems and supporting policy formulation.
75. FAO worked intensively for an open, fair and transparent international agricultural trading system by leveraging the potential of regional trade agreements and cross-border zone. Work included *inter alia*: mapping of trade barriers and opportunities; supporting the empowerment of value chain actors; developing strategies for establishing trade zones; negotiating trade agreements with small-scale producers; and promoting a reduction of legal barriers to inclusive trade.
76. Thirteen countries received support for improving supply policies, thus bringing producers closer to consumers, diversifying diets, and providing vulnerable populations with access to food through fixed and mobile stores. Six countries strengthened the resilience of their supply system through interinstitutional agendas, spaces for dialogue, and information management. The Organization also proposed actions for facilitating consumer access to fresh food based on an analysis of 40 wholesale markets in 14 countries, and provided training in thirteen countries on improvement of distribution chains and monitoring food prices through IT systems such as the livestock and agricultural market information and monitoring system (SIMMAGRO).

Support to the 2030 Agenda

77. FAO promoted regional and national dialogues on the importance and relevance of food systems and agriculture to the 2030 Agenda. At the Week of Food and Agriculture: Future Challenges for Latin America and the Caribbean, FAO and 34 collaborating partners convened 850 delegates from 34 countries representing multiple constituencies. FAO also produced and disseminated evidence to support decision-making processes, through flagship publications and the [Series 2030](#), a set of 33 technical documents aimed at accelerating progress towards achieving the SDGs.
78. In addition, the Organization delivered SDG analyses, information tools, and training, and strengthened governance and coordination for data collection and monitoring. National institutions received support for monitoring SDG indicators 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 5.a.2, 12.3.1 and 15.3.1 as well as on Sendai Framework indicators measuring the balance of damages and losses in the agricultural sector.

Near East and North Africa

Regional Initiative on Water Scarcity

79. The Regional Initiative on Water Scarcity has scaled up its support to strategic planning and policies, capacity building on water accounting, water productivity monitoring, and drought management and groundwater governance. The development of a regional partnership and a regional strategic platform on water scarcity, in collaboration with all relevant regional institution is part of the key results. The Land and Water Days event organized in March 2019 gathered 480 participants from 45 countries and resulted in the first ever regional conference of ministers for agriculture and for water under the aegis of the League of Arab States (LAS).

80. Most of the efforts of the Regional Initiative have been focused on enhancing water productivity for agriculture. The initiative has developed guidance material on unlocking the potential of protected agriculture in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, showing how protected agriculture technologies can help generate employment, including employment for youth and women.

81. The Regional Initiative has also conducted a rapid water accounting assessment in Jordan and is on track to do so in Lebanon, Tunisia and Palestine. It has also implemented farmer field schools on water management practices in five countries, training around 500 farmers. Finally, it has trained specialists in seven countries on the use of remote sensing for water management.

Regional Initiative on Small-Scale Family Farming

82. Under the Regional Initiative on Small-Scale Family Farming, the main areas of FAO's work over the 2018–19 biennium focused on three pillars: enhancing the agricultural productivity of smallholder farmers, creating an environment for decent rural employment and social protection, and promoting inclusive and sustainable agri-food value chains and market access.

83. The initiative identified climate-impacted focus areas and developed a regional strategy and national roadmaps for climate adaptation of small-scale farming in the Near East and North Africa (NENA) region.

84. In June 2019, FAO published a regional overview on rural migration trends and contributed to the 2019 Situation Report on International Migration in the Arab States published in December 2019 by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), LAS and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA). The Organization has also worked on identifying best practices in territorial development, in particular cluster approaches, as a tool to address rural migration and generate employment opportunities in the region. In this regard, FAO is collaborating with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) to conduct a study on cluster-based rural development in Egypt and Tunisia.

85. An important pillar of the Regional Initiative is the development of value chains in support of small-scale family farming. FAO has trained 35 staff from the ministries of agriculture of 11 countries in the region on value chain development. FAO has also implemented projects in Egypt, Lebanon, Oman, the Sudan, Tunisia and Palestine that support the establishment of producers' organizations, including agricultural cooperatives, and increase the participation of women's associations in agrifood income generating enterprises.

Regional Initiative on Building Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition

86. Through the Regional Initiative on Building Resilience for Food Security and Nutrition, FAO supports countries in developing risk reduction strategies and investments. Country capacities have been strengthened to monitor plant and animal diseases and pests, such as the desert locust (through the Commission for Controlling the Desert Locust), and for preparedness for possible highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreaks in the region.

87. Regional partnerships have been strengthened through the establishment and capacity building of the Parliamentary Network for Food Security and Nutrition in Africa and the Arab World, highlighting food security and conflict through the Regional Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Forum; and through building the capacity of the Near East Network on Forest and Wildland Fires (NENFIRE).

88. Through its Country Support Process, the Regional Initiative implemented 56 activities to support resilience building in countries in the region affected by crises, including: support to national food security policy development, food security information systems and resilience measurements, disaster risk reduction transboundary animal and plant pests and diseases, humanitarian programming and capacity building to strengthen resilience programming in countries.

Transboundary pests and diseases

89. FAO supported seven countries (Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia and Palestine) to address the *Xylella fastidiosa*, including through the introduction of innovative surveillance systems based on mobile phone applications. FAO developed a regional strategy to combat the RPW and a USD 20 million Regional Programme for RPW Management. In addition, FAO cooperates with AOAD on the development of a framework for the date palm value chain which addresses RPW as one of its priorities. A regional project focusing on the prevention and control of transboundary animal diseases (TAD) was initiated in 2019 in partnership with AOAD.

Food safety

90. Within the framework of the Arab Food Safety Initiative for Trade Facilitation (in collaboration with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization [UNIDO] and in partnership with LAS), FAO is implementing a regional food safety project aimed at strengthening the capacity of national institutions on food safety and Codex, including training workshops. Seventy-five government staff from the Sudan and Tunisia were trained on the design and operation of a national food control system.

Antimicrobial resistance

91. As part of its work on antimicrobial resistance (AMR), FAO supported Egypt, Jordan and the Sudan in developing and implementing National AMR Action Plans.

Climate change

92. FAO is supporting the formulation of eight GCF projects in Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Mauritania and the Sudan, focusing on the rehabilitation and sustainable management of landscapes (pastoral, forests, agriculture), oases, strengthening climate resilience of agriculture livelihoods, promoting efficient water management, enhancing adaptive capacity of local communities and enhancing biodiversity conservation.

Gender

93. Trainings on gender mainstreaming in programmes and projects were held in Jordan and Lebanon in 2018. FAO, together with LAS and ILO, organized a side event on social protection for women's empowerment at the 63rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in the context of progress toward SDG 5. In addition, FAO implemented training for practitioners from eight NENA countries (Algeria, Egypt, Iran [Islamic Republic of], Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Palestine) on gender analysis and sex-disaggregated data in water governance in June 2018.

Food security and nutrition

94. Following the Regional Symposium on Sustainable Food Systems for Healthy Diets and Improved Nutrition held in Oman in December 2017, FAO has undertaken studies on the mortality and burden of disease related to food and nutrition security risks in the Arab world. It also organized a regional multistakeholder policy workshop entitled "Leveraging Food Systems to Combat Obesity in the Near East and North Africa region." In Palestine, 40 government and development agency staff were trained in better integrating nutrition and food security into agricultural programming.