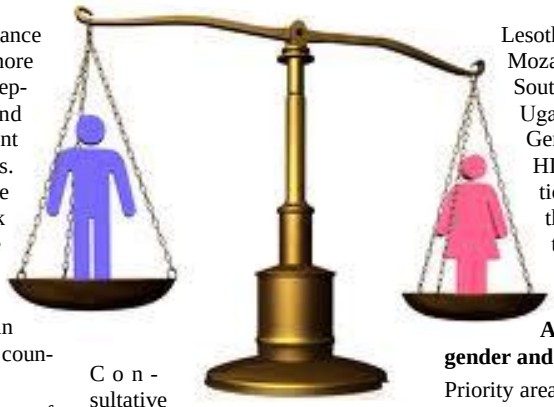
FAO Sub-Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Office for Southern Africa (FAO REOSA) Volume 2, Issue 3 From March to October 2013

Food Security and Agriculture Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in Practice

Newsletter for DRR, Agriculture and Food Security Partners

Balancing the Gender Scales



Promote gender balance and strive to get more women involved in representing, negotiating and participating in the important issues that affect all of us. That is the message from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

After the Conference of Parties (COP) 18 in Doha in November-December 2012, countries signed up to:

1.Improve the participation of women in the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol and strive for a gender balance in these bodies.

2. Strive for gender balance in country delegations; and

3. Conduct a workshop on gender balance and gender-sensitive climate policy and capacity building at the next COP 19 in Warsaw, Poland, at the end 2013.

The UNFCCC called for early submissions and views on ways to advance gender balance in organizations.

The deadline for the submissions was 2 September 2013. Before this the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) organized a three-day Regional Consultative Meeting on Gender and Climate Change (CC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 17 to 19 July 2012. The aim was to facilitate the development of a unified continental position. The objectives were to:

1.Review the position of Africa on gender and CC and identify priority issues to address these;

2. Identify options to advance gender balance from Africa's perspective;

3. Facilitate the joint drafting of the submission in response to the UNFCCC by 2 September 2013.

Representatives came from international and regional bodies and participants from African member states: Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. FAO REOSA's Gertrude Kara, Regional HIV, Gender and Nutrition Officer, took part in the meeting, providing technical support. The meeting produced:

A unified common African position on gender and CC.

Priority areas in addressing gender in CC include education, training and awareness creation; capacity development; knowledge management and information dissemination; and equitable access, ownership and control of productive resources. Action points include:

- Hold consultations on gender and CC with the African Group of Negotiators;
- Identify and promote a gender and CC champion;
- Undertake a baseline study on gender and CC;
- Support community initiatives on gender and CC resilience and documenting best practices;
- Coordinate networking and coalition building efforts on gender and CC;
- Develop relevant tools and methodologies to facilitate the development of gender and CC policies;
- Develop a framework for education, training and awareness; and
- Develop a framework for capacity development.

A draft submission to the UNFCCC Secretariat with suggestions on how to advance gender balance. Options include:

- Establish a fund to support women's participation in national delegations at UNFCCC meetings, specifically from the Africa.
- Develop the capacity of women delegates who are already participating in the UNFCCC to enhance their knowledge and skills in various technical areas.
- Set a gender "representation target" of not less than 40% of female and not more than 60% of male representatives in UNFCCC boards and bodies and national delegations.
- Set timelines, e.g. five years, to monitor the challenges and effectiveness of consistent gender balance or imbalance among delegates, informing effective CC policies that address the needs of women and men equally.

Meet the new Senior Regional DRR/M Coordinator at FAO REOSA

There's a new man at the helm of FAO REOSA. Mario Samaja is no stranger to either the Food and Agriculture Organization or the United Nations.

From 1986 to 2000 he worked for Italian NGOs, the Italian Government Development Cooperation and private firms in food security, management of relief programmes, rural water supply and groundwater contamination and remediation.

In 2000 he joined the FAO Emergency Division and remained there until 2005, working in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Sudan. Samaja moved to the UN Humanitarian Coordinator's Office in South Sudan, the UN-DPKO peace-keeping mission in Sudan and UNDP in Somalia. He rejoined FAO in 2010 as Senior Emergency and Rehabilitation Coordinator in the FAO Uganda Office — also FAO Representative a.i. for seven months in 2011.

His work focus in Uganda included managing the transition from an emergency context to recovery, DRR/M, Climate Change and IPC, among others. He chaired the Environment and Natural Resources Development Partners Group, including bilateral and multilateral donors and UN agencies.

His long-term country experience includes Mozambique, Angola, Zimbabwe, Sudan and South Sudan, Uganda and Somalia. He also worked briefly in Swaziland, Lesotho, South Africa, Malawi, Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Myanmar.

Samaja is married to Monica Inroga, a surgeon based in Maputo, Mozambique. They have twin girls, Ermelinda Carla and Ercilia Judite, and two boys, Yuran de Jesus and Marco Aurelio.

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A Committed Partnership

DIPECHO III is Up and Running

From 11 to 15 February, 2013, the regional partners for the third Disaster Preparedness ECHO (DIPECHO) for South East Africa and the South West Indian Ocean — COOPI, FAO Regional DRR Office for Southern Africa (FAO REOSA) and UN-Habitat — attended a partner inception workshop in Antananarivo, Madagascar.

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The workshop brought together regional project management teams from each organization, as well as their colleagues based in the DIPECHO III target countries: Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique. The workshop was organized to confirm regional partners' commitment to coordinated DRR technical support; a coherent Information and Knowledge Management System (IKMS); the development of multisectoral technical resources; the conduct of DRR research in the region; and the packaging of common DRR advocacy in southern Africa.

To solidify this commitment, the regional partners developed a common work plan, established coordination mechanisms among themselves, established information and data needs among the regional actions to contribute to an IKMS. The workshop was organized by FAO REOSA as part of its regional action's coordination activities with support from the FAO Madagascar representation.

This is the third cycle of Disaster Preparedness ECHO (DIPECHO) funding for the South East Africa and South West Indian Ocean region.

The first round of grants was issued in 2008, targeting the Comoros, Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique. The second round of funding (July 2010 to November 2011) was a continuation of the first and focused on consolidating the gains and scaling up the activities of the first round, with actions implemented in the same countries, except Comoros.

The second phase saw the integration of FS-DRR into the purview of DIPECHO activities. This gap had been identified by DIPECHO's implementing partners.

For the third phase FAO was requested to implement and coordinate FS-DRR activities in the region. The aim is to entrench sound technical practices, to consolidate information and to ensure its capitalization, and to develop a more coherent, multisectoral advocacy message to donors, governments and stakeholders concerning DRR in southern Africa and the South West Indian Ocean.

Building on Expertise and Experience

Within the DIPECHO III regional partnership, each partner is responsible for a sector in which it will provide technical expertise.

COOPI: Information and Knowledge Management Systems (IKMS), geographic information and mapping support, as well as specific aspects of health in disaster risk reduction (DRR).

FAO: Food security disaster risk reduction (FS-DRR) and climate-smart-adapted agriculture. FAO also has specific coordination responsibilities among the regional partners.

UN-Habitat: Infrastructure, housing and shelter, as well as urban risk assessment and methodologies.

COOPI

FAO FIAT PANIS

UN-HABITAT

Some of the Achievements so Far

In the first result of its regional intervention, Fao committed to consolidate the good practices with demonstration sites in Chikwawa, Malawi, and Grande Comoros, Comoros, and to provide technical support to implementing partners. Achievements in the first set of activities included:

► FAO Malawi and the Evangelical Association of Malawi implement activities to increase the food security resilience of 1,200 households in Chikwawa, Malawi

FAO and the Evangelical Association of Malawi (EAM) entered into an agreement to support 1,200 small-scale farmers in Chikwawa (southern Malawi) with irrigated agriculture in the 2013 season.

These farmers benefited from trainings on good agricultural practices and sustainable farming technologies that aim to increase their resilience. They also received inputs (maize, beans, tomatoes, cabbage) for production in the irrigated season, from July to October.

The trainings helped the beneficiaries to reduce their reliance on production undertaken in the main agricultural season (November to April), which also coincides with the peak hazard season.

► FAO establishes presence in Comoros and enhances collaboration on DRR/M resilience issues

Following the torrential rains that fell from 20 to 25 April 2012, the Union of Comoros launched a USD 20-million Early Recovery Plan to support the 64,987 people directly affected by the massive flooding, mudslides and rockslides.

The flooding destroyed agricultural lands, farm animals were lost, roads and other infrastructure were extensively damaged, as was housing and community assets.

Latrines and water tanks overflowed, exposing thousands to the risks of water-borne diseases and epidemic outbreaks.

It became evident that more sustained investments in DRR and resilience capacities are needed, particularly in primary sectors like agriculture and food security.

Through the DIPECHO III programme, FAO established a physical presence in the Union of Comoros and actively engaged the DGSC (*Direction Générale de la Sécurité Civile*), the agency responsible for national DRR coordination in Comoros, to increase resilience to natural hazards. FAO and the DGSC identified priority activities to address the longer-term resilience and DR needs, including:

The establishment of food security working groups for the collection and analysis of data and information in relation to climatic hazards and other aspects of food security allows actors in that sector to understand the risks that natural and other hazards pose to the population.

Specific agricultural activities have begun, including irrigated agriculture and diversified production to increase the food security

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Some of the Achievements so Far

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resilience of 700 households on Grande Comoros. The objectives of the collaboration between FAO, the Government and an implementing partner in Comoros are to map the vulnerabilities, increase assessment capacities and undertake agricultural activities to address structural and hazard risks to food security.

For technical support, FAO is working through national focal points (see contacts below). This support is part of FAO's commitment to provide demand-driven technical support to food security-disaster risk reduction partners in Comoros, Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique. These needs have been identified so far:

► CARE Madagascar to receive technical support from an FAO entomologist for sweet potato and Taro protection challenges

Following consultation with partners in Madagascar, CARE Madagascar noted that it needed FAO technical support on potato weevil (*Cylas formicarius*), sweet potato scab (*Elsinoe batatas*) and leaf blight (*Phytophthora colocasiae*) on Taro.

An entomologist from a division of FAO, specialised on plant production and protection (http://www.fao.org/agriculture/crops/en/), undertook a field mission in early August to advise on appropriate options for managing these pest and diseases, which threaten food security in the Tamatave area.

The mission included diagnostic activities as well as training for CARE and Government staff on these plant protection issues.

► Training on food security risk assessment and early warning systems in Madagascar from 19 to 20 August

FAO Madagascar, working with FAO DRM Office for Southern Africa, supported the southeast food security cluster with training on food security risk assessment and early warning systems. The training, targeting cluster members, was held in Farafangana. The aim was to support the cluster members with skills to assess and forecast the impact of hazards in the southeast region of Madagascar, introduce assessment tools and how to follow assessments with appropriate action.

In the second result, FAO committed to consolidate knowledge in the areas of food security and DRR/M and resilience. To accomplish this FAO and partners achieved the following activities already:

► FAO and UN Habitat collaborated on peri-urban food security risk issues

In the regional component of the multisectoral DRR Support in Southern Africa, FAO REOSA and UN-Habitat formed a partnership to analyze food security risks and vulnerabilities in hazard-prone urban and peri-urban areas. The aim was to improve the understanding of risks to food security in urban areas through the development of alternative tools for participatory planning, land use and building norms to address food security-related issues in Malawi and Mozambique. As the risks to food security in urban and peri-urban areas differ from those in rural areas, FAO and UN-Habitat aimed to map the relevant risks in two urban/peri-urban areas, one in Malawi and one in Mozambique.

► FAO participates in UN-Habitat Urban Risk Assessment Workshop

In the framework of DIPECHO III, FAO REOSA participated in "Developing an Urban Risk Reduction & Resilience Tools for Southern Africa" workshop hosted by UN-Habitat in Maputo from 4 to 8 June 2013.

This complemented the agreement that had been signed between the two agencies. FAO did a presentation on agriculture and food security in urban and peri-urban areas, taking into account relevant aspects on food production, the value chain, food safety and protection of assets, including agricultural inputs such as seeds or fertilizers, as well as food storage systems. FAO's objectives were to reinforce the links between the two agencies' work, mainly concerning the integration of the food security and agricultural components in the ongoing work done by UN-Habitat in urban and peri-urban areas.

FAO and EAM are supporting farmers in Chikwawa, Malawi, with improved agricultural technologies to increase their resilience. Photo: FAO © Javier Sanz Alveraz

► DIPECHO III regional partners and Malawi-based partners produce multisectoral resilience video

Through its regional project, FAO organized the production of a multisectoral resilience video focusing on activities undertaken in Malawi through DIPECHO and similar funding opportunities. The video demonstrates the challenges faced in the southern regions of Malawi, as well as the efforts made by communities and DIPECHO partners in Nsanje, Chikwawa and Salima to increase their resilience to the floods and droughts that they have to face.

The video, *Building Resilience in Southern Africa*, was launched in September. You can see it on **http://www.fao.org/emergencies/resources/videos/video-detail/en/c/201003/** or on YouTube **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFJHbDM9vtg**

For more information on FS-DRR activities in the region or in each of the specific countries, please contact these FAO FS-DRR Focal Points:

Regional: Mr Javier Sanz Alvarez (javier.sanzalvarez@fao.org)

Comoros: Mr Gerard Madodo (Gerard.Madodo@fao.org)

Madagascar: Ms Hanitra Randrianarivelo (Hanitra.Randrianarivelo@fao.org)

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Mozambique: Ms Claudia Pereira (Cláudia.Pereira@fao.org)

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A field trip to sites in the Chikwawa District, south-west of Blantyre. Photos: FAO REOSA 2013

The Need to Integrate CA and DRR/M

Integrating Conservation Agriculture into Disaster Risk Reduction and Management and Food Security Strategies in Southern Africa Workshop in Blantyre from 19 to 22 February 2013

Smallholder farmers, who depend on rain-fed agriculture, make up to more than 70% of the population of southern Africa. They are particularly at risk to climatic variability, climate extremes and climate change (CC).

The most common disasters with the highest impact are droughts, floods and cyclones. It is imperative that smallholder farmers are supported to implement farming practices and technologies that can help improve resilience to climate variability and CC impacts and improve agricultural productivity.

Conservation Agriculture (CA) is one option that has been proved to conserve and restore the productive capacity of the land and provides a way of strengthening the resilience of smallholder farmers, contributing to improved food security and nutritional security through higher and less-variable yields. CA has been promoted by various stakeholders in the region as a way to strengthen the resilience of smallholder farmers in the face of the vagaries of climate change. Using CA, farmers are better able to cope with disasters by both reducing the impact on agriculture and providing a strategy for post-disaster recovery.

Despite the proven benefits of CA that have been demonstrated in the region, it has not been integrated into disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies and systems by national disaster management departments and practitioners.

To contribute to the process of integrating CA into DRR strategies for smallholder farming and FS systems, a workshop was organized by FAO in Blantyre, Malawi, in February.

Senior government and non-governmental personnel involved in the design and management of CA and DRR programmes – in particular DIPECHO III, in Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique – participated in the workshop.

Workshop Objectives

The broad objective was to increase the contribution of CA in the prevention and reduction of the impact of agriculture disasters. Specific objectives included:

- To develop a common understanding among participants of the relationship between CA and DRM;
- To explore risk reduction practical needs and how CA contributes to risk reduction; and
- To identify entry points for CA in DRM.

Workshop Highlights

- The workshop used a combination of presentations, group discussions, plenary sessions and field trip. Participants visited three sites in Chikwawa District, south-west of Blantyre, where communities were implementing CA and DRR/M projects.

The technologies across the sites included: contour ridging; agro-forestry, intercropping maize with pigeon pea; rainwater harvesting (in swales or tanks); afforestation (for river bank protection); CA; crop diversification and use of early-maturing crop varieties.

Status of CA integration in Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique

► **Madagascar** is regularly exposed to climate-related disasters, including cyclones, irregular rainfall, drought, desertification, food insecurity, locusts and hailstorms. The southern and south-eastern areas are at particularly high risk. CA has a relatively strong institutional and technical basis after more than a decade of development. Currently, DRR/M and CA are not integrated at either institutional or technical level nationally. However, in the southern region an effort has been made – with the help of FAO – to link DRR/M and CA through a cluster approach.

Mulching helps retain residual moisture in the soil. Photo: FAO 2013

► **Malawi** The Agriculture Sector Wide Approach (ASWAp) focuses on food security and risk management, commercial agriculture, agro-processing and market development and it supports the increased adoption of environmentally sustainable agricultural land and water management..

► **Mozambique:** At institutional level, linkages between DRR/M and CA exist through the National Management Institute (INGC). Mozambique has started to integrate CA and DRR/M in pilot and demo sites in Gaza and Inhambane.

- After the field trip it was clear that most of the challenges would be better addressed using the catchment approach. But there was no evidence that communities in the upper and lower catchments of the Lower Shire River were working together to address the challenges. The communities visited indicated that they were implementing some of these technologies to address: accelerated soil erosion and runoff leading to flooding; deforestation, declining soil fertility, food insecurity and prolonged dry spells.
- Experts believe that CA can be used in the DRR/M framework. While the production potential of CA has been well documented, there is a need to provide more evidence of other aspects, including economic, ecological and longer-term social benefits.
- DRR/M experts believe that CA is too complex for rapid implementation, does not address some of the key hazards (e.g. floods) and places more emphasis on land and not human resilience. There is a need to improve the marketing of CA technologies and approaches to DRR/M planners and get support for implementation.
- Although there is substantial evidence of the benefits of CA, the information needs to be re-analyzed and re-framed in the DRR/M context and the linkages need to be clearly identified, quantified and verified.

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'A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall'

In 2013 to 2014 there is the chance that there may be more hazards across the region, which would hit a large percentage of households that earn a low income (the poor and near-poor), are net food purchasers and, in rural areas, rely on their agriculture for income (crops, livestock, labour). These are the very vulnerable, those who are especially hit by rising market prices and climatic shocks.

This was one of the observations that delegates heard during the SADC Regional Vulnerability Assessment Committee (RVAC) Dissemination Forum held on 8 to 10 July at Ezulwini in Swaziland. The workshop was an important opportunity for networking and coordinating the Food and Nutrition Security Working Group's (FNSWG's) interaction with Regional Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis (RVAA) programmes and some National VAC (Vulnerability Assessment Committee) teams. The workshop heard that natural disasters are expected to become more frequent in the region, with the western-central areas affected by dry spells and the eastern areas by floods and cyclones.

Recurrent climate shocks affect the same communities year after year.

DRR/M interventions are insufficient in scale and scope to reverse the negative vulnerability trends and enhance their food and nutrition security resilience, with drastic consequences on the new generations.

Such heavy burdens will hinder economic growth and the progress of Millennium Development Goal Number One — Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger.

In fact, members of the workshop made a number of observations about the need for integrating nutrition into Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis (VAA).

Hazard warning: Women in Mozambique cross a flooding river. Photo: FAO

Some of these were:

- There is increasing global evidence that malnutrition is negatively affecting economic development and thus on food and nutrition security;
- There is a lack of up-to-date data about specific nutrition information to inform policy and programme interventions. Target groups are not always recognized and areas are not defined;
- There is an information gap in HIV and AIDS and food utilization and nutrition in vulnerability analysis and reports. National Vulnerability Assessment Committees (NVACS) usually collect information on food availability and access, leaving out issues of utilization that are linked to underlying causes of malnutrition.

Delegates at the workshop made several recommendations, including:

- There is a need for more nutrition and HIV and AIDS information in general and, specifically, for the integration into the VAA methodology;
- A harmonized and comparable integration of nutrition and HIV and AIDS in the VAA methodology and tools require further technical discussion;
- A good and sustainable information management system is required for trend analysis; and
- There is a need to strengthen the capacity of existing national structures to support the integration of gender, HIV and nutrition in VAA by providing technical and financial support.

What's Going on in Your Part of the Region? Tell Us!

We all believe that it is vitally important to help people to build resilience against both natural and other disasters and shocks. So, please, tell us your story.

The contributions may come in story form and/or pictures. We will credit you and your organization, unless you ask us not to.

If you send photographs. please give the names of people in the picture (if you know them), where it was taken and who took it. You are welcome to give us more details if you have any.

If you have any queries, please email: *FAO-REOSA@fao.org*

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CA in Lesotho gets a Big Boost

Lesotho Conservation Agriculture National Strategy Validation and Launch

Conservation Agriculture (CA) received a huge boost in Lesotho when the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, Minister Lits'oane Lits'oane, told farming groups that the government would turn 400ha of state farm land in Peka, Leribe, into a CA block, starting in the 2013-2014 summer season.

He said: "We would like to demonstrate as government that this [CA] is possible and it can be done. Preliminary work on ripping and liming has already been done and there will be minimum tillage implements used."

The validation workshop was held on 30 January 2013 and officially launched on 5 April 2013.

The strategy – called the CA National Strategy – was developed by the Lesotho National CA Task Force (LNCATF). Participants of the workshop and the launch included government officials, FAO representatives from Lesotho and South Africa, members of the LNCATF, members of the Conservation Agriculture Regional Working Group (CARWG), members from LENAFU, an umbrella body for Lesotho farmers, and representatives of donors. The Strategic Plan is for the period 2012 to 2017.

The Vision Statement:

By 2030 CA is a dominant farming system practised by the majority of farmers in Lesotho, leading to increased and sustainable agricultural production, farm profitability and sustainable land management.

The Mission Statement:

To promote adoption and upscaling of CA technologies in the agriculture sector across all ecological zones of Lesotho through:

- The formation and implementation of appropriate land management policy;
- Research and extension strategy; and
- Improved coordination, institutionalization, cooperation and creation of smart partnerships between government ministries, academic and research institutions, the private sector and NGOs and development partners.

The Strategic Goal:

To ensure increased, efficient and sustainable agriculture production and land management in the farming systems of Lesotho.

The Strategic Objectives are to:

- Leverage the inclusion of CA in the national food security policy and strategy;
- Promote sustainable agriculture production through the practice of CA principles and appropriate technologies for smallholders (manual and oxen) and semi-commercial to commercial (tractor mechanized) farmers;
- Promote adoption of CA in 50% of the arable land within 20 years.

The government believes that education and raising awareness at school level is a strategic area for the sustainable adoption of CA. Photos: Elisabeth Tsehlo FAO Lesotho

In the Short to Medium Term:

- Increase the yield from the 0.5 tons per hectare in conventional farming to 5.0 tons per hectare using CA;
- Increase carbon sequestration through the improvement in soil organic matter levels by 6% in CA fields;
- Reduced land degradation, soil and fertility erosion; and
- Improve soil water conservation in arable catchments.

Strategic Policy Areas:

Sustainable upscaling of CA in Lesotho must take a step-by-step approach, building on the current capacities and resource constraints of the communities. This strategy is conceived:

- First, as a process (analysis, priority setting and decision-making);
- Second, as an actionable plan (for proactive resource mobilization and allocation); and
- Third, as a framework for implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Agriculture and Food Security Minister Lits'oane Lits'oane

Strategic Areas for Sustainable Adoption of CA in Lesotho:

- Policy: establishing conditions for success;
- Appropriate CA technology frameworks;
- Capacity building for extension and research collaboration;
- Research and development;
- Education and awareness raising;
- Mobilizing finance in support of CA initiatives; and
- Development of a monitoring and evaluation framework.

During the launch in Maseru on 4 September 2013, Minister Lits'oane Lits'oane said CA would be included in the curricula for higher-learning institutions, for example, the National University of Lesotho, the Lesotho Agricultural College and the Lesotho College of Education. The ministry also encouraged CA training in institutions that cater for young farmers, such as the Farmer Training Centres.

He said the government had signed the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Programme (CAADP). "The Lesotho Compact marks an important milestone. The ministry would ensure the [CAADP] investment plan talks would include upscaling CA as a means of improving productivity and thereby achieving food security in Lesotho."

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Case study from the field in Lesotho by Elisabeth Tsehlo

Copying his Neighbours Changed Farmer's Life

When Paul Motseki saw how well the farmers in a neighbouring area were doing – they had strong, quality plants and good yields – he decided to copy their method of farming, using Conservation Agriculture (CA).

He had not heard of it before but the success of his neighbours encouraged him to try it out.

Motseki was selected to become a participant of the 2012 emergency programme of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), funded by the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO), Belgium and UN Central Emergency Trust Fund (CERF).

He lives in Mahobong, about 100km from Maseru, in the Leribe District of Lesotho. He owns a horse, a donkey, poultry and 10 cows, four of which are used for farming and the other six for milking. He grows maize, sorghum and beans.

Since he started farming, Motseki has always used conventional methods. But last year he decided to dedicate 0.2ha of his land to CA. He was so happy with the results that he is continuing to use the CA method. "In conventional farming, I can harvest 960kgs of maize on 1.6ha of land. With only 0.2ha of land in conservation agriculture, I get the same yield!" he said, enthusiastically. "I also noticed that the quality of the crops is better in Conservation Agriculture than in conventional agriculture."

Practicing CA implies respecting three principles: minimum soil disturbance, crop rotations and soil cover. Motseki said that he does two of them. "I dig basins for minimal soil disturbance and I leave the maize stem on the land after harvesting, as mulch. I use the top of the crops for feeding my livestock." He wants to do crop rotations in the next season.

Motseki is the Lead Farmer of a group of 17, five men and 12 women. When asked why he was chosen, he said: "They chose me because I am a hard working farmer!"

Paul Motseki stands proudly in front of his healthy crops. Photos: FAO REOSA 2013

The group works closely together. They help one another to prepare their fields before the planting season. "We all dig the basins for the seeds and fertilizer for about three people's fields every day until all the fields are ready."

Motseki heads a family of 10. Fortunately six of his children are married and do not depend on him anymore. He takes care of two children and his mother who stays at his home. His wife died the last year. At the age of 66, Motseki produces enough to cover the needs of his family and he sells the excess to the neighbouring villages. He also has a home garden where he grows tomatoes and other veggies. He sells most of them during the peak season.

"Most of my cereal production is under conventional agriculture," said Motseki, "but I want to change that. The biggest challenge with CA is digging the basins to prepare the land. It is a lot of work! As I am getting older, I count on team work and motivation to develop conservation agriculture on my land."

Contact: Elizabeth.Tsehlo@fao.org

U-turn Leads to Healthy Yields for a Hard-Working Woman

Impressed by the success of Paul Motseki, the Lead Farmer of her group, Matseko Raseboko did a "U-turn" on her agricultural practices and adopted Conservation Agriculture (CA).

Raseboko has been a farmer for years. She is 77 years old. This is the first time she is using CA methods and she is very happy about the coming season. "My field looks very good. The maize plants look healthy and well developed," she said with a large smile .on her face.

She planted 100% of her field – 0.4ha – using CA. She immediately dropped conventional practices when she saw the benefits of CA on Motseki's land.

Matseko Raseboko

Raseboko is a widow, she had two children, one of whom died and the other is married and has her own family.

Raseboko owns one cow and she grows veggies in the back yard. In the past her relatives helped her to take care of her field. Now that she is a programme beneficiary of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and a member of the team led by Motseki, she gets help from the other members of the group.

In the previous years, she produced enough to sell her surplus to neighbouring villages. She says: "Now that I am doing CA, I am going to produce even more and I will be able to sell more!"

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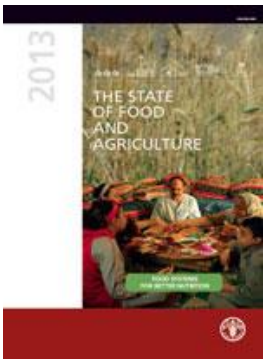
FAO works to eradicate malnutrition



The FAO launched its flagship publication in June 2013: *The State of Food and Agriculture (SOFA) 2013, Food systems for better nutrition.*

In it FAO voices its concern about the global burden of malnutrition. It finds that 12.5% of the world's population (868 million people) are undernourished in terms of energy intake; 26% of the world's children are stunted; two billion people suffer from one or more micronutrient deficiency; and 1.4 million people are overweight and/or obese.

FAO says malnutrition in all its forms — undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, overweight and obesity — imposes unacceptably high economic and social costs on countries at all income levels.

Improving nutrition and reducing these costs requires a multisectoral approach that begins with food and agriculture and includes complementary interventions in public health and education. It says the traditional role of agriculture in producing food and generating income is fundamental, but the entire food system — from inputs and production, through processing, storage, transport and retailing, to consumption — can contribute more to eradicate malnutrition.

It says agricultural policies and research should continue to support productivity and growth of staple foods. But they should pay greater attention to nutrient-dense foods and more sustainable production systems. Traditional and modern supply chains can enhance the availability of a variety of nutritious foods and reduce nutrient waste and losses. Government, international organizations, the private sector and civil society can help consumers choose healthier diets, reduce waste and contribute to more sustainable use of resources by providing clear, accurate data and ensuring access to diverse and nutritious foods.

For More Information

If you would like to know more about FAO DRR/M and our partners' activities, please contact Sina Luchen: *Sina.Luchen@fao.org*

About this Newsletter

This quarterly newsletter aims to share information on activities, best practices, lessons learned and information of interest to Food Security DRR/M stakeholders. For more information go to: *www.fao-reosa.org*

FS/DRR Southern Africa Partners Website

This newsletter — and more information on the projects — can be accessed on: *www.disasterriskreduction.net_southern africa*

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Recent Meetings / Events

►Training on food security risk assessment and early warning systems in Madagascar from 19 to 20 August 2013

FAO Madagascar, in collaboration with FAO REOSA, provided training to the Madagascar Southeast Food Security Cluster on food security risk assessment and early warning systems. The training was held in Farafangana. The training will support the cluster members with skills to assess and forecast the impact of hazards in the southeast region of Madagascar, to introduce assessment tools and how to follow assessments with appropriate action. This technical support is part of FAO's commitment in the European Commission-funded DIPECHO III. (See Pages 2 & 3)

►IPC Training and Analysis, 19 to 26 August 2013

This was a consolidation of training and analysis for Malawi VAC (IPC TWG) following last year's pilot. More information can be found on www.ipcinfo.org.

►Conservation Agriculture Regional Working Group (CARWG) Annual Meeting

CARWG held its Annual General Meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa, on 3 to 4 September 2013.

►IPC Training and Analysis in Swaziland, 30 August to 6 September 2013

This was to introduce IPC into Swaziland. There were four days of training and four days of analysis. It followed an awareness-raising meeting on 29 August 2013.

► Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Nutrition Capacity Development Workshop from 9 to 13 September 2013 in Gaborone, Botswana

Organized by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Union Commission (AUC), the workshop brought together country teams of professionals from agriculture, health, finance, the private sector, notably including farmer organizations, the civil society, CAADP country teams and representatives of 14 southern African countries to develop a roadmap for maximizing the nutritional impact of agriculture investment plans.

►Special IPC Partner and Donor Meeting in Rome, 3 to 4 October 2013

The IPC Steering Committee Global Meeting provided an excellent opportunity to hear first-hand from SADC on the progress made , achievements and future challenges in IPC implementation in the region.

Partners: