

# Working together

FAO | IFAD | WFP

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## From emergencies to sustainable development

The rising tide of civil conflict, war and natural disasters in the world's poorest nations has led to a near explosion in emergencies. The impact of emergencies on human lives, economic development and the environment can be extreme. Hence, when disaster strikes, FAO, IFAD and WFP respond in a complementary and timely manner. FAO and WFP jointly carry out emergency needs assessments and monitor food security in affected countries. And when the crisis is over, the two organizations are joined by IFAD to ensure a smooth transition from emergency relief to sustainable development. For example, FAO, IFAD and WFP are working closely in Angola (see box, page 3).

### In this issue...

The articles in this issue of *Working together* highlight some of the many ways FAO, IFAD and WFP are working together to fight poverty and hunger. Collaboration among the three Rome-based agencies is now part of the strategic planning of each agency. Moreover, the implementation of these strategies is guided by the complementary roles that FAO, IFAD and WFP play in supporting the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

During the past year and half, FAO, IFAD and WFP have joined efforts at international, regional and national levels. In 2002, the global fight against poverty was distinguished by the convening of three major international conferences in which the three agencies pursued a joint approach (see article, page 5). At the regional level, for example, the three agencies united in common action to assist the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). And at the national level, they collaborated in activities initiated in Bangladesh, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Honduras, Mali, Mauritania and Nicaragua. The national activities clearly illustrate the complementarity of the organizations' specific mandates – technical expertise, financial assistance and food aid.



In Laos, during the appraisal of the IFAD-supported Oudomxai Community Initiatives Support Project, IFAD collaborated with WFP's VAM unit to assess and understand the causes of poverty and household food insecurity. The results of the analysis are being used to assist the Government in formulating its poverty-reduction strategy, prioritizing internal and external resources, and developing appropriate tools and interventions to address the critical poverty and vulnerability issues of the poor. In the context of the Oudomxai project, the VAM allowed IFAD to develop criteria, strategies and tools to focus on poor ethnic groups and women living in the midland and upland areas, who practise shifting cultivation and opium production. IFAD provided USD 70 000 to WFP's Country Office as its share of the costs of VAM activities.

## Assessing food security

WFP and FAO work closely in many emergencies. The two United Nations agencies carry out joint emergency needs assessments and food security monitoring in food-insecure countries or countries affected by food crises.

In 2002, FAO/WFP's joint crop and food supply assessment missions (CFSAMs) visited more than 20 countries affected by drought and other natural and man-made disasters to analyse the extent of food shortfalls and the need for food aid. The joint assessments are crucial in alerting the international community to emerging humanitarian crises.

Generally, FAO assessments of the national food situation are complemented by WFP's analyses of household coping capacities and access to food. WFP's Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) Unit conducts household assessments before and after the CFSAMs. These assessments help target food assistance effectively and also determine the appropriate size and composition of food baskets.

Joint food security monitoring and analysis at the country level has been undertaken in Afghanistan, Malawi, North Korea, Rwanda and Yugoslavia. FAO/WFP collaboration ranges from jointly managed food security units to cooperation in food insecurity analysis and mapping activities.

## Food and seeds: addressing present and future needs in Southern Africa

Erratic weather patterns resulting in prolonged drought, combined with the devastating impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, have reduced food security in Southern Africa to the lowest level since the 1992 drought.

In response to this crisis, which is affecting more than 14 million people, WFP and FAO are linking emergency relief programming with longer-term efforts to increase food production.

In Lesotho, for example, WFP is providing immediate relief to the suffering of millions of people through food aid, while FAO is providing seeds, hand tools and fertilizers to farmers. The agencies are ensuring that the food, seeds and tools are provided to beneficiaries at the same time. After all, a plentiful harvest from the next cropping season would greatly ease the immediate food crisis and prevent a continuing cycle of hunger.

In Zambia, WFP is providing food rations to enable farmers to make the transition to "conservation farming", an agricultural system whose goal is to maintain and improve crop yields and resilience against drought and other hazards, while minimizing environmental degradation. At the same time, FAO provides seeds and implements to make the transition. In this way, while farmers introduce a farming system that will increase their future food security, their immediate food needs are met.

# emergencies

## A gender perspective in emergency programmes

FAO and WFP have jointly prepared guidelines to help operations staff and humanitarian coordinators maintain a gender perspective by using a participatory approach in all phases of an emergency project – from needs assessment, project formulation and targeting to monitoring and evaluation. The guidelines, entitled “Passport to Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Emergency Programmes”, are designed to ensure that the most vulnerable groups and those with a crucial role to play in the rebuilding of their societies will not be further marginalized and can be reached with agricultural interventions.

The Passport, which is currently being tested, consists of key analytical questions to be asked during the data collection process in an emergency situation. The questions have been formulated to sensitize designers of humanitarian interventions about gender differences at the local, regional and national levels. Responses will facilitate a gender analysis that helps clarify the specific and often different needs, vulnerabilities and coping strategies of women and men. In this way, the needs of women and men can be more adequately addressed in responses to emergency situations. The Passport is available in English and will soon be available in Arabic, Chinese, French, Portuguese and Spanish.



WFP / J. Holmes

## Increasing income and food security in Angola

In Angola, FAO, IFAD and WFP collaborated from 1998 to 2002 in implementing the Uige Food Security Project financed by the Italian Government. The project assisted about 1 500 rural poor families in the province of Bengo in increasing their income and food security. Under the project, FAO put into practice some of the strategic principles of its Special Programme for Food Security, while WFP expanded its food-for-work programmes into the rehabilitation of social infrastructure. With an Italian NGO as its implementing partner, IFAD provided support to increase crop and animal production and strengthen the capacity of the public extension service and farmers' organizations. Despite operating in a difficult environment, the project can count a number of achievements, including:

- provision of agricultural tool kits and improved seeds and planting material for food crops to all target families and implementation of a goat multiplication scheme through the introduction of over 300 breeders;
- establishment and equipment of 25 water-use associations for irrigated vegetable production in an area of 125 ha;
- organization of fishermen's groups in four communities and provision of inland fishing equipment to 30 groups;
- legal recognition of land use rights by local communities over an area of 9 000 ha;
- improvement of access roads in the municipality of Dande and construction/rehabilitation of four primary schools, four health centres and three wells for drinking water; and
- rehabilitation and re-equipment of the provincial extension service and training of extension staff.

## Helping Afghanistan gain food security

Crop and food supply assessments are critical in a country such as Afghanistan, where recent droughts have compounded the impact of more than two decades of conflict and exposed millions of people to extreme hardship. Moreover, the military and political upheavals that followed the events of 11 September 2001, combined with a devastating earthquake in the north of the country in March 2002 and floods and Moroccan locust infestation during the 2002 cropping season, have raised serious humanitarian concerns.

FAO and WFP worked together in Afghanistan to assess the 2002 cereal harvest and the cereal import requirements, and to estimate food shortages at the provincial level for the coming year. The mission benefited from the United States Agency for International Development's and the United States Geological Survey's expertise in food security and agro-meteorology respectively, and was complemented by field inspections, spot-check crop-cuts and household surveys. In addition, WFP, through its joint Food Surveillance Security Unit with FAO, continues to monitor closely the effects of food aid distribution on local food production and local markets. Through these collaborative initiatives, it is hoped that timely and appropriate assistance will be provided to address immediate food shortages and chronic hunger.

IFAD, in consultation with FAO and WFP and other multilateral and bilateral donors, is planning to develop a partnership for its interventions in Afghanistan. Such a partnership will identify priority needs for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of community infrastructure and initiate micro-credit and income-generating activities to benefit the rural poor, displaced people, returnees and women.



WFP / C. Shirley



# Joint Efforts at International Conferences in 2002

## United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development

The United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD), held in Monterrey, Mexico, from 18 to 22 March 2002, addressed the challenges of financing for development by bringing different components of the international economic, financial and trading systems together in the Monterrey Consensus.

The three Rome-based United Nations agencies – FAO, IFAD and WFP – pursued a joint approach towards FfD at the intergovernmental level, bearing in mind the complementarity of mandates and similarity of objectives and thematic focus. Their collaboration extended from the third and fourth sessions of the FfD Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) to the Monterrey Conference itself.

- Third session of the PrepCom, 15-19 October 2001: The President of IFAD delivered a joint statement on behalf of IFAD, FAO and WFP, highlighting the need for mobilizing resources and providing financial, technical and food assistance in the fight against hunger and rural poverty. In addition, IFAD, FAO and WFP jointly prepared and widely circulated their comments on the first draft of the outcome document, later called the Monterrey Consensus.

- Fourth session of the PrepCom, 14-25 January 2002: The Deputy Executive Director of WFP addressed the session on behalf of the three agencies, sharing with delegations the jointly prepared comments on the second draft of the outcome document.

During the Conference, FAO, IFAD and WFP continued to participate jointly in various activities in areas where a coherence of message of the three Rome-based agencies had proven to be an effective strategy in the preparatory process.

- The three agency heads held a joint press conference during the Conference's opening day.

- FAO, IFAD and WFP jointly organized, and co-sponsored with the World Bank, a side event on the topic of "Reducing Poverty and Hunger: The critical role of financing for rural development, food and agriculture". As a background note, the three agencies prepared an analytical report on this topic.



IFAD / F. Zanettini



WFP / J. Holmes

## Building Partnerships for Food Security: The United Nations System Network on Rural Development and Food Security

A network has been set up specifically to promote coordination among United Nations agencies: the United Nations System Network on Rural Development and Food Security. FAO manages its secretariat in close collaboration with IFAD, WFP and the International Land Coalition (formerly called the Popular Coalition to Eradicate Hunger and Poverty). The Network aims at strengthening interagency partnerships in the fight against poverty and hunger in the world. Established in 1997 by the United Nations Administrative Committee on Coordination (today the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination), it brings together key actors for the achievement of the shared goals of 'food for all' and rural poverty reduction.

At the international level, the Network consists of 20 United Nations organizations and many associated non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil-society organizations (CSOs). It is an interagency mechanism for follow-up to the World Food Summit (1996) and the World Food Summit: five years later (2002), and it supports the International Land Coalition. Its website in Arabic, English, French and Spanish (<http://www.rdfs.net>) is updated every two months and provides information on recent or coming events, documents and initiatives jointly prepared by various United Nations organizations, NGOs and CSOs.

At the country level, the Network has more than 80 national thematic groups working on rural development and food security issues in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Near East. The Network's dynamic core, these national thematic groups are typically composed of representatives of United Nations agencies and organizations in the country, government agencies, donors, NGOs and CSOs. They provide a coherent framework for initiating collective action and mobilizing funds for rural development and food security activities. These range from the development of national food security strategies, country nutrition profiles, participatory needs assessments and information systems, to the design and implementation of rural development programmes.

The national thematic groups are also likely to play a significant role in the implementation of the International Alliance Against Hunger, which was formally approved in the final Food Summit declaration.

All these initiatives are supporting the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

### World Food Summit: five years later

At the World Food Summit: five years later, held on 10-13 June 2002, world leaders meeting in Rome committed to reducing the number of hungry people in the world to about 400 million by the year 2015.

FAO, IFAD and WFP collaborated to produce "System-Wide Guidance on Household Food Security and Nutrition", a document that underlines fundamental points of common understanding on household food security.

In preparing for the Summit, IFAD and WFP provided general comments on the two main papers drafted for this event by FAO and discussed at the Committee on World Food Security in May 2001 – "Mobilizing Resources to Fight Hunger" and "Fostering the Political Will to Fight Hunger".

IFAD chaired the two-day high-level panel on resource mobilization for agriculture and rural development, convened by FAO in June 2001 and attended by representatives of regional development banks, multilateral institutions and international financial institutions.

With the assistance of the United Nations System Network on Rural Development and Food Security (see box), FAO, IFAD and WFP took a common stand during the International NGO/CSO Forum for Food Sovereignty, held in Rome during the Summit. Experts from the three agencies also gave presentations on specific topics to forum participants.

## World Summit on Sustainable Development

At its fifty-fifth session, the United Nations General Assembly agreed to organize the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), a ten-year review of progress on the implementation of United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the “Earth Summit” held in Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992). WSSD was hosted by South Africa in Johannesburg from 26 August to 4 September 2002.

As with the Monterrey Conference and the World Food Summit: five years later, the engagement of FAO, IFAD and WFP in the WSSD was pursued jointly. In this respect, and prior to each WSSD PrepCom session, the three agencies participated in coordination meetings to exchange views on planned activities leading to WSSD. These meetings were followed by discussions to review the outcomes of WSSD PrepCom sessions.

### A common platform on access to land

Secure access to natural resources, especially land, is an essential element in the work of the three Rome-based United Nations food agencies. The relevance of land issues is clearly reflected in FAO’s land tenure and land management services; in the prominent role IFAD gives to improving the assets of the rural poor in its strategic goals and lending programmes; and in the importance WFP attaches to access to land and natural resources as a strategy for emergency prevention and conflict resolution. Secure access to natural resources is also a key feature in the World Food Summit’s plan of action.

As partners in the International Land Coalition, the three agencies joined with other coalition partners from the United Nations, the Bretton Woods organizations and CSOs to achieve a broader consensus on the importance of land issues and the ways and means to achieve practical country-level results. The resulting “Common Platform on Access to Land” received widespread support at the WSSD, and now forms a platform for joint action at the country level and for strengthening the enabling government policies required to support the resource needs of the rural poor.



# The new partnership for Africa's development

## Developing a coordinated approach

FAO, IFAD and WFP have pursued a coordinated approach for assisting NEPAD's Agricultural Secretariat in elaborating its vision for the agricultural sector and action plan for agricultural development and rural poverty reduction. A number of activities already initiated provide a firm foundation for deepening and extending the NEPAD process. FAO has provided assistance in formulating the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme, which has been endorsed by African ministers of agriculture. IFAD has supported the organization of a series of subregional consultations in Dakar and Dar-es-Salaam to ensure greater input from farmers' organizations, civil society and intergovernmental organizations in the NEPAD process; and WFP has actively participated in a series of meetings dealing with NEPAD implementation processes, and has been working very closely with the Algeria NEPAD team in charge of coordinating NEPAD's human development thrust.

These broad-based subregional consultations can serve as valuable input to the formulation of a shared African vision on the way forward for the agricultural and rural sector on the continent. They represent efforts to bring grass-roots input more systematically into the NEPAD process, and have the potential to serve as building blocks for bringing the continental vision of the NEPAD document to the regional, subregional and national levels.

It is envisaged that further support from the Rome-based agencies will include:

- provision of technical assistance to the NEPAD Agriculture Secretariat in South Africa to help elaborate further the NEPAD vision and action plans for the sector;
- continued support to widening the access of stakeholders at subregional and national levels (including NGOs and CBOs, farmers' associations and intergovernmental organizations) to the consultation and dialogue process;
- assistance in the development of regional and subregional action plans;
- eventual programme/project investment in selected activities identified in the action plans.



FAO / 17580 / G. Diana



IFAD / R. Grossman



## Mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS on food security and rural poverty



IFAD / R. Chatasani

To contribute to the prevention of HIV/AIDS and to mitigate its impact on agricultural productivity, food security and rural poverty, FAO, IFAD and WFP, in coordination with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), organized a three-day meeting at FAO in December 2001 and a round-table discussion in November 2002.

The meeting represented a first attempt by FAO, IFAD and WFP to undertake joint strategy development work around HIV/AIDS and food security with partners from developing countries (government and non-government sectors) and bilateral donors. The meeting's specific objectives were to develop a common understanding of the impact of HIV/AIDS on rural livelihoods and to identify innovative, gender-sensitive and participatory approaches, based on current best practices, to reduce the impact of HIV/AIDS on agriculture. The meeting set the stage for further collaboration. One of the concrete outcomes was FAO's Policy Advisory Notes detailing the impacts of HIV/AIDS on food security, the implications and the possible agricultural responses.

The round-table discussion provided the arena for FAO, IFAD and WFP to identify areas where they can work jointly to amplify programming efforts on HIV/AIDS and food security. The three agencies agreed that a possible next step will be to develop a joint strategic framework for action on HIV/AIDS and food security.



FAO / 22322 / A. Preto

# Gender

## Sharing tools to mainstream gender in central and eastern Europe

Material produced by FAO's Socio-Economic and Gender Analysis (SEAGA) Programme was used for reference in a two-day workshop organized by IFAD in Rome at the end of 2002 to identify the main gender issues that should be addressed by rural development projects in Central and Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States (CEN) and to discuss how best to promote gender-mainstreaming activities in IFAD-supported projects in CEN countries. The material included sector guides (project cycle, irrigation, microfinance) and field and intermediate handbooks. The sector guides combine the particular sector issues and practices with socio-economic and gender analysis concerns, using real examples and case studies. The handbooks provide practical information on how to conduct socio-economic and gender analyses at different levels. Each handbook presents case studies and tools and helps development practitioners analyse and use information. It also suggests methods for integrating findings into policy, programme and project identification and formulation.

The SEAGA handbooks and sector guides have been translated into Russian and are therefore particularly useful for CEN countries, given the near total absence of similar material in Russian. Other FAO material on gender was also made available to the workshop participants, who expressed their interest in contacting directly gender resource persons and organizations trained by FAO to explore potential collaboration.



FAO / 20965 / R. Falduiti



FAO / 22866 / J. Spaul

## Labour-saving technologies and practices in Sub-Saharan Africa

In Southern and Eastern Africa, FAO and IFAD are undertaking a joint study on "Improving Women's Access to Labour-Saving Technologies and Practices in Sub-Saharan Africa". This research follows from a 1997 joint IFAD/FAO study focusing on agricultural implements used by women farmers in sub-Saharan Africa. The objectives of the current study are to identify: labour/power shortages in rural communities and households (particularly due to the effects of HIV/AIDS) and existing coping strategies; how labour-saving technologies and practices can assist in overcoming the need for these strategies; and the key factors that need to be in place to improve the adoption and sustained use of labour-saving technologies and practices by rural poor women.

The study is benefiting from the synergy between two specialized sections within FAO and IFAD – the Agricultural and Food Engineering Technologies Service (AGST), and the Gender Strengthening Programme in Eastern and Southern Africa respectively. AGST draws on technical expertise in the areas of agricultural implements, appropriate mechanization and innovative agricultural practices; the IFAD programme incorporates a gender and poverty-focused approach. The principal source of funding for the study has been provided by the Japanese Government.

The study has three components: a distance survey of 23 IFAD-supported and FAO projects and programmes from 13 countries in sub-Saharan Africa; a field study of four farming communities in western Kenya that are under labour stress primarily because of HIV/AIDS<sup>1</sup>; and an ongoing field study focusing on conservation agricultural practices in the northern part of the United Republic of Tanzania.

The distance survey and the Kenyan study have revealed that one common response by households to minimize their farm power requirements is to adopt minimum or zero tillage systems, and use cover crops and mulches to suppress weeds. However, there is some debate as to whether conservation agriculture is suitable for use by vulnerable households. Thus, the third component of this study seeks to determine: the extent to which conservation agriculture is labour-saving; the circumstances under which it is suitable for adoption by vulnerable groups without exposing them to too many risks to their own food security and livelihood stability; and potential barriers to adopting labour-saving practices and means to overcome them.



## Sustainable livelihoods for fishermen and women

The Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Programme (SFLP), funded by the Department for International Development (United Kingdom), is implemented by FAO in 25 countries of West and Central Africa. Since 2001, the programme has built a strategic partnership with IFAD to improve fisheries livelihoods in Benin, where the programme's regional support unit (RSU) is based. This collaboration was extended in 2002 to Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria.

Within the framework of its poverty-reduction strategy in rural areas, the Benin Government approached IFAD in 2000 for assistance in the identification of the Participatory Artisanal Fisheries Development Support Programme (PADPPA). The programme aims to reduce poverty and curb further degradation of the living conditions and income of the country's poorest and most vulnerable communities. It focuses on the rehabilitation of water bodies and the development of non-fisheries income-generating activities.

SFLP provided support to the identification mission and was also contacted by IFAD and the Investment Centre of FAO to assist in the joint IFAD/African Development Bank pre-evaluation mission. During this pre-evaluation mission, SFLP made the services of its RSU officers available to help integrate the sustainable livelihoods approach (SLA) into PADPPA. Shortly afterwards, SFLP assisted the country in preparing a participatory poverty profile of some major inland water bodies. It also helped finance a number of small, capacity-building projects and will help PADPPA build its national team's capacities in project monitoring and participatory methods.

In Nigeria, an RSU officer participated in the appraisal mission, conducted in 2002, of the Community-Based Natural Resource Management Programme – Niger Delta. This participation facilitated the incorporation of the SLA into the programme's design and implementation arrangements. Possible areas of collaboration identified during the mission include training in SLA for local IFAD consultants and SFLP participation in programme activities, especially those related to capacity-building for fisheries communities in participatory monitoring, rural livelihoods analysis, community organizational planning and project formulation.

In Côte d'Ivoire, IFAD approved in 2002 the financing of a study on the policies, strategies and development programmes for artisanal fisheries. In this context, SFLP sponsored an exchange visit to Benin for a four-person delegation to obtain information on the IFAD project formulation process from officials in Benin.



IFAD / R. Maass

# Improving the lives of farmers and fishermen and women in Bangladesh

IFAD and WFP have teamed up in three ongoing projects in Bangladesh. These projects cover 15 of the country's districts and are targeted at a combined total of about 250 000 direct beneficiaries (the vast majority of whom are women).

Two of these projects – the Agricultural Diversification and Intensification Project and the Smallholder Agricultural Improvement Project were established to enable landless and marginal families to increase their incomes and improve their nutrition through poultry and fish enterprises, agro-processing and other income-generating activities, and homestead gardening. They also help to enable small farmers to intensify and diversify crop production, and to pursue other rural enterprises.

IFAD and WFP adopted complementary approaches. IFAD has focused on: creating a favourable agricultural development environment for technology transfer and market and land development; supporting group formation and community development through NGOs; and channelling credit essential for enterprises both through NGOs and nationalized commercial banks. WFP has focused on rehabilitation/construction of road and flood protection infrastructure for improved access, increased agricultural production and marketing through food-for-work projects.

A third project – the Aquaculture Development Project – aims to improve living standards and the conditions of village life for communities with a strong presence of fishermen and women and fish farmers. The project is seeking to increase fish production and consumption to enhance the livelihoods of the target population. IFAD has focused on: establishing and empowering beneficiary groups (both men and women) so they can access training, aquaculture technologies and productive water-bodies; improving selected water bodies for aquaculture; and providing savings and credit services through NGOs. Through a food-for-work programme, WFP has emphasized the excavation of ponds for subsequent leasing to landless women for aquaculture purposes.

Results reported in 2002 from these projects include:

- Women are beginning to acquire cows, ponds, land and other assets in their own names. Some women have jointly leased land for vegetable and crop production, sharing profits equally.
- Women claim control over their income, and focus spending on needs such as food, schooling for children, health and other family needs and, most notably, on themselves for saris, jewellery, and land in their own names.
- Access to markets has been improved through the construction of rural roads and markets. Many women group members are becoming involved in small trades such as the buying and selling of staple crops and vegetables.
- Many poor women have gained access to re-excavated ponds on ten-year leases.



## Debt for development swap in Peru

FAO, IFAD, WFP and the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification have formed a partnership with the Italian Government to assist countries that are not included under the Debt Initiative for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries in switching funds from debt payments to fighting poverty and promoting sustainable development. This is being done through programmes and projects aimed at poverty reduction under the Millennium Debt Relief Initiative. Italy is the first creditor country that has pursued options for integrating activities related to land degradation into poverty-reduction strategies through debt relief.

Peru has been selected as a country matching the eligibility criteria of the initiative, paving the way to an agreement signed in 2001 by the Italian and Peruvian Governments, which officially approved a framework of eligible activities to be implemented through the Italy-Peru Trust Fund. The goal of this fund is to promote poverty-reduction projects fostering sustainable socio-economic development. Priority areas of intervention include community development, protection of the environment and development of productive systems in the rural areas. Under these priorities, the Global Mechanism has facilitated the development of a project channelling debt to the high-priority areas designated by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

## Increasing agricultural production in Mali

IFAD and WFP have been in Mali since 1999 implementing microprojects in the region of Timbuktu. In the last two years, their collaboration has mainly focused on supporting asset creation in the rural areas of Niafunké district through WFP food-for-work and food-for-training programmes.

In 2002, more than 1 700 people benefited directly from the joint projects, 40% of whom were women. In addition, more than 85 of the participants in training projects were women.

IFAD and WFP expect that this cooperation will contribute to increased agricultural production and to improved self-reliance and food security among participants and their communities. They also hope that investments will be sustainable because of complementary activities relating to environmental protection such as reforestation, technical training in functional literacy and asset management, and erosion protection through irrigation schemes, construction of dikes and fishery lakes.



WFP / C. Shurpf

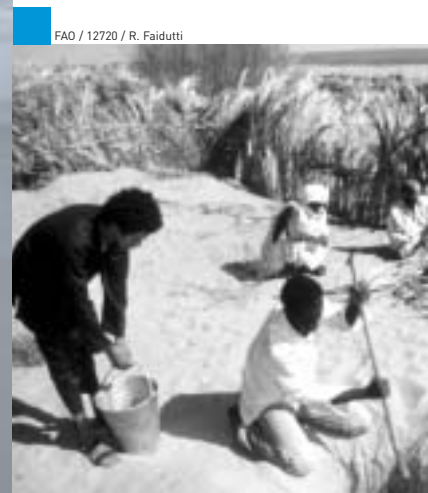
## Curbing the desert in Mauritania

With help from FAO and WFP, Mauritanian farmers are working at curbing the desert's advance, estimated to be moving 6 km per year. The areas particularly under threat are the Moughataas districts of Mederdra and Toujounine, on the outskirts of the capital city, Nouakchott.

The "Green Belt for Nouakchott" project focuses on the establishment and maintenance of tree nurseries and tree plantations and the installation of dune fixation devices in the Wilayas regions of Nouakchott and Traza. For each day of work, participating workers receive a daily WFP food-for-work family ration consisting of 2.5 kg of whole wheat (used to make couscous), 200 g of pulses, and 100 g of vegetable oil. FAO provides back-up technical assistance and non-food items.

Recent project achievements include:

- 90 ha of dune surface have been stabilized and planted with trees, and a total of 1 400 ha of land surface have been protected or restored.
- A total of 1 800 families have been protected, and more than 750 buildings and homes have been saved.
- More than 1 200 people have benefited from temporary employment. In the case of the tree nursery work, 80% were women. In addition, about 150 beneficiaries have been trained in reforestry techniques and dune fixation.





WFP / L. Dematteis

## Reviving fields in Nicaragua

IFAD and WFP, with the support of the European Union, are helping improve food production among rural families in the northern municipalities of Nicaragua, the areas most prone to extreme weather conditions.

People living in these regions have faced recurrent droughts since 1997. As a result, harvests have been poor and the residents are highly vulnerable to food insecurity. Through food-for-work programmes, the two organizations are helping plant trees to stop water run-off and set up micro-irrigation systems. During 2001, nearly 7 000 rural families in 15 municipalities in Estelí, Madriz and Nueva participated in these programmes.

## Helping China's rural poor fight poverty

Hu Quanhua, 32, and her eight-member extended family (parents, two brothers, husband and two children) produced 100 kg of wheat, 1 000 kg of sweet potatoes and 150 kg of corn on her 0.4 ha farm. This was made possible through her and her husband's participation since 1999 in food-for-work and food-for-training activities in land improvement, functional literacy training and technical training. She received a loan of 3 300 yuan renminbi (the equivalent of USD 400) to start a grain-processing unit and poultry production. Because of the training she has received, she now can read and follow the instructions on fertilizer bags. With the new income generated by her family's small farm, she has been able to buy 100 kg of rice to feed her family, pay for her son's education and build a new house.

Hu Quanhua is just one of the six million people who have benefited from IFAD/WFP joint projects in China since 1995. Eight joint IFAD/WFP development projects have been developed, approved and implemented with joint targeting, design, supervision, monitoring and evaluation.

The total cost of the projects is estimated at USD 460 million, to which WFP contributed USD 70 million (410 000 tonnes of food) and IFAD USD 141 million.



IFAD / L. Dematteis



The complementarity of WFP and IFAD mandates – food aid and international financial assistance – goes a long way towards helping the rural poor. A comparative study carried out in 2000 of two villages in the Chinese province of Qinghai shows that WFP food-for-training and food-for-work activities have closed the food gap of the hungry poor, built their productive capacity and increased their creditworthiness. It also shows that microfinance institutions such as the Rural Credit Cooperative and Project Management Office are becoming more willing to accept clients from the poorer segment of the local population. Thanks to their improved access to microfinance services and their newly created assets, the rural poor now have the means to fight poverty.

In October 2002, IFAD and WFP published a booklet entitled "Fighting Rural Hunger and Poverty: WFP/IFAD Partnership in China". It describes the collaboration between the two agencies in China, focusing in particular on the eight projects developed, approved and implemented jointly.

## Promoting school feeding projects in Honduras

FAO, IFAD and WFP are working together in Honduras to support an agricultural fair that has become a key forum for promoting local farming products. The event, organized by WFP each November in the capital Tegucigalpa, also represents an opportunity to promote the programmes carried out in the country with the support of FAO, IFAD and WFP either jointly or individually.

At least 15 000 people, among them ministers, ambassadors, government employees, entrepreneurs, investors and students, visit the exhibitions and attend nightly concerts. The fair serves as a platform for fund-raising, and the money generated by renting exhibition stands is used to purchase food locally to extend the coverage of school feeding projects in the country.

The fair also provides an opportunity for local producers to sell their yearly production to supermarkets or arrange to export products through the Secretary of Agriculture and IFAD projects.



## Vegetable gardening in Ethiopia's schools

FAO and WFP are implementing a joint vegetable-gardening project in 19 schools in the Amara and Oromia regions of Ethiopia. The project was launched in January 2001 as an integral component of WFP's school-feeding programme. FAO provided consultancy and financial support for 2001, and WFP took over financing the project in January 2002. The project is expected to run until February 2003.

The project's main objective is to support the creation of irrigated gardens that will enable schools to produce vegetables to supplement WFP's school-feeding programme. The increased availability of vegetables helps reduce the emergence of diseases as a result of vitamin deficiency.

Before the project, vegetables were rarely seen in local markets. The average intake of vegetable products per person per year was approximately 2.1 kg. Since the implementation of the school-gardens, vegetable consumption per student has risen to 7.6 kg. More than 21 000 students currently enrolled in the 19 schools are benefiting from the project, of whom almost 9 000 are girls. In addition, about 30% of the schools' harvests are sold in markets. The income generated is used to pay for water and to finance school facilities and teaching.

Some participating schools are supplying the seeds grown in school gardens to students' families for their home gardens. The seeds will generate additional food and income and improve overall household food security. Up to 2 200 women are expected to benefit from this initiative.



WFP / T. Haskell

## In brief

■ In 2001, 24 WFP country offices implemented projects jointly with FAO, or had plans in the pipeline to do so. WFP's estimated total contribution to these joint initiatives was USD 10.6 million, with some 3.1 million people directly benefiting. FAO's investment totalled USD 8.4 million.

■ In 2001, 14 WFP country offices implemented projects jointly with IFAD, or had plans in the pipeline to do so. WFP's estimated total contribution to these joint initiatives was USD 18.7 million, with more than 1.9 million people directly benefiting. IFAD's investment totalled about USD 64.9 million.



IFAD / R. Maass



FAO / 25361 / A. Photo

■ FAO and IFAD have continued working together in the context of the Regional Unit for Technical Assistance (RUTA) in Latin America and the Caribbean. The general objective of RUTA is to strengthen national and regional capacities to make the agricultural sector more competitive and reduce rural poverty in the region. The programme operates in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Panama. On 9-10 July 2002, RUTA held its annual meeting in Rome with the participation of delegates from its member institutions. The meeting reviewed programme implementation and identified future activities.

■ FAO and IFAD have joined efforts to develop the Rural Knowledge Network Pilot Project for East Africa. The project covers Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. IFAD has provided a grant to FAO of USD 1.5 million towards financing of the project. The project's overall goal is to initiate a people-centred knowledge management process that is built on an understanding of farmers' needs, shapes the existing technical information to respond to their requirements and delivers knowledge in a form they can understand. The project will use the local communications network already in place under FAO's farmer field schools and the electronic network of FAO's EcoPort Programme, which has been pilot-tested in FAO programmes in South Africa and Zambia.

■ FAO, IFAD and WFP are jointly implementing the IFAD-supported West Nubaria Rural Development Project in Egypt. The project's objective is to enhance the livelihoods of nearly 17 000 households in 19 villages of Nubaria reclamation zones whose statutory tenancies were disposed of and compensated for with 1 ha of land. The project aims to strengthen community cohesion and organization; support the adoption of better on-farm water management practices; encourage the development of small and medium enterprise agricultural production and marketing; provide marketing extension and information; and develop a viable financial system. FAO is financing a technical cooperation programme of USD 400 000 for preparatory work on irrigation and drainage during the project's initiation phase, and WFP will support the development and operations of a food rations distribution system.

■ Twenty five Italian NGOs and associations, FAO, IFAD, WFP, the International Land Coalition and the Global Mechanism participated in a workshop to foster cooperation and knowledge-sharing on rural poverty reduction issues, held in Rome in January 2003. The workshop, organized by IFAD, the International Land Coalition and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, opened a new area in which the three Rome-based organizations could join efforts to work with Italian civil-society actors in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.





## Different mandates ... a common vision

**FAO** was founded in 1945 with a mandate to raise nutritional levels and living standards, improve agricultural productivity and better the conditions of rural people. **FAO** is the lead agency for technical expertise in food security, agriculture, forestry, fisheries and rural development, and in the sustainable management of natural resources essential over the long term.

**IFAD** was established in 1977 to help developing countries combat rural poverty by mobilizing and providing financial resources on concessional terms for agricultural and rural development projects. Its mission is to enable the rural poor to overcome their poverty by strengthening their capacity and that of their organizations; improving equitable access to productive natural resources and technology; and increasing access to financial services and markets.

**WFP**, the food agency of the United Nations system, was created in 1963. It provides food aid to save lives in emergency situations, improve the nutrition and quality of life of the most vulnerable people at critical times in their lives, help build infrastructural assets and promote the self-reliance of poor people and communities.



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