



Record reporting as 34 African countries track resilience to food insecurity shocks

Having households that can cope with the aftermath of climate-change shocks or socioeconomic shockwaves that affect their food security situation is central to a country's efforts to protect livelihoods and provide good food for all for today and tomorrow.

For the African Union Commission (AUC), the continent's body of 55 member states, resilience to weather variability, food-price volatility and social shocks was underlined at the highest levels in the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods. Signed by all Heads of State and/or Government under the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), countries committed to seven targets to eliminate hunger and reduce poverty by boosting economic growth through agriculture-led development by 2025.

One of those seven key targets is Commitment 6 – enhancing resilience of livelihoods and production systems to climate variability and other shocks. Specifically, by 2025, at least 30 percent of farm/pastoral households should be resilient to shocks.

How is resilience measured?

Three indicators come into play. The first marker (6.1.i) is the percentage of farm, pastoral and fisher households that have improved their resilience to climate change and other shocks. This indicator is assessed using the Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (e-RIMA) tool developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

The second and third indicators are the share of agricultural land under sustainable land-management practices, and the percentage of public spending on responses to needs on resilience-building initiatives such as Early-Warning Systems and social-safety nets. As the lead of technical working group 6 of the Malabo agenda, FAO supports the monitoring and assessment of these indicators.

KEY MESSAGES

- ▶ The African Union Commission (AUC) measures and tracks resilience to food insecurity, climate variability and other shocks in Africa through its Biennial Reviews of the Malabo Declaration.
- ▶ Resilience reporting surged from 8 countries in 2019 to 34 in 2023, thanks to FAO's e-RIMA tool and capacity building.
- ▶ On average, over half (56 percent) of farmers, pastoralists and fishers in the reporting countries have enhanced their resilience capacity to shocks between 2020 and 2023.

Rocky road to resilience reporting

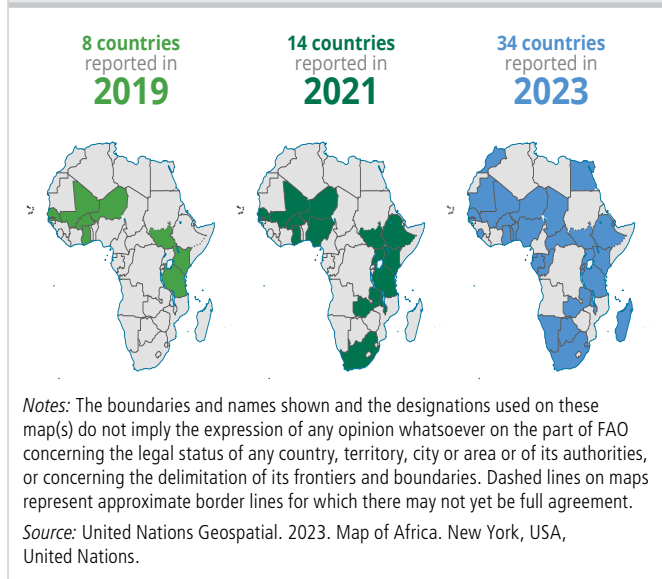
For a long time, measuring and tracking how resilient households are to food insecurity and to bounce back from shocks proved to be too complex, resulting in no countries reporting their resilience scores for the first Biennial Report on the implementation of the Malabo Declaration in 2017.

Since then, and to boost resilience reporting across the continent, FAO has supported the AUC by providing technical expertise at the regional and sub-regional levels and in mapping nationally representative household data from on-the-ground surveys to feed into future resilience reporting.

A milestone in 2023

This extra support led to gradually better results. In the Second Biennial Report in 2019, 8 countries reported their resilience, a figure that rose to 14 by the third edition in 2021. But the most impressive jump came in 2023 for the Fourth Biennial Report, when a record 34 countries across Africa were able to record their vulnerability to food insecurity (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1. Maps showing countries reporting resilience over a four-year period



What's driving the uptick in coverage?

In earlier reporting, countries manually collected and computed vast amounts of data, making the process data heavy, cumbersome and time consuming.

As a result of these setbacks in the number of countries reporting resilience in the first three biennial reports, FAO and AUC agreed in 2022 to ramp up efforts to assist countries in measuring resilience.

At the same time, to facilitate and digitalize the process, FAO launched the Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (e-RIMA) tool,¹ which uses a robust methodology² to measure and track changes in household resilience to food insecurity based on four determining data "pillars": access to basic services (such as health centres, schools, and markets) household assets (for example, livestock), social-safety nets (public policies and mechanisms), and adaptive capacity (such as access to extension services, education, income-source diversification). Then, when the model is run, it produces a percentage score on resilience, which is then relayed to the AUC by country focal points.

For the 2023 reporting, countries could submit their resilience scores in three ways. They could either collect the household survey data and compute the data themselves with FAO providing remote assistance, or provide the data to FAO experts to carry out the analysis, or

¹ See <https://www.fao.org/agrifood-economics/areas-of-work/rima/shiny>

² FAO. 2016. *Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis II – RIMA-II*. Rome. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/i5665e>

through on-the-spot learning in capacity-building workshops on how to treat, clean and compute the data, and interpret the indicators. A workshop on the RIMA methodology and e-RIMA tool was also held in 2023 in Dakar, Senegal, where 24 CAADP focal points and statisticians attended from 12 countries.

The 34 countries now reporting their resilience

Thanks to strong support from FAO and enhanced engagement between FAO and the AUC, 34 countries reported their resilience capacity to food insecurity in the face of climate change and other risks. These countries are Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, the Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Namibia, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Togo, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, and Zambia.

How do they fare on resilience?

The average score of the 34 countries is around 56 percent, meaning that more than half of farmers, pastoralists and fisher households have gained resilience to food insecurity in the face of multifaceted shocks between 2020 and 2023. When broken down by resilience pillars, access to household assets comes out as the strongest contributor to resilience, closely followed by access to basic services, then adaptive capacity, and then by social-safety nets.

North Africa leads in resilience with a score of 74 percent, driven by strong access to basic services and household assets, but needs improvement in adaptive capacity and social-safety nets. West Africa scores 64 percent, with access to services and assets being key, alongside moderate contributions from adaptive capacity and social-safety nets. East Africa, at 55 percent, shows balanced contribution, with household assets and adaptive capacity being the drivers behind resilience there. Southern Africa has the lowest score, with 36 percent, with strengths in basic services but major weaknesses in adaptive capacity and social-safety nets.

Recommendations for the 5th Biennial Report

The Malabo Declaration and CAADP framework have laid a strong foundation for agricultural resilience in Africa, with progress measured through the Biennial Reviews. Building on the success so far, FAO, the AUC and countries should further continue to engage in technical support and capacity building on e-RIMA, so that more countries report resilience in 2025, thereby empowering countries to track their efforts to face up to shocks on food security.

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