



Food and Agriculture
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FAO in Africa

FAO Regional Office for Africa



One Country
One Priority Product

Edition 2

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Welcome



Welcome to the second edition of the **FAO in Africa** newsletter, from the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Regional Office for Africa. Our newsletter is tailored to mobile phones, so share with your contacts.

In this edition, you will see we are ramping up action towards transforming agrifood systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life, leaving no one behind.

We launched the One Country One Priority Product (OCOP) initiative in Africa.

You will also find out about preparations for the 32nd Session of the FAO Regional Conference for Africa (11-14 April).

This quarter, we welcomed news of the African Union declaring 2022 the Year of Nutrition and look forward to more good collaboration in this area.

We are also highlighting the International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa – read on to find out what you can do. Happy reading!

Abebe Haile-Gabriel
FAO Assistant Director-General
and Regional Representative for Africa

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News FEATURE

African countries to define regional agrifood systems priorities



FAO will hold the 32nd Session of the Regional Conference for Africa in Malabo, 11-14 April, hosted by the Government of Equatorial Guinea. The regional conference is FAO's highest governing body in Africa.

ARC32 will see agriculture ministers and other government officials from across Africa come together with civil society groups, development partners, the private sector and observer member countries to discuss priorities in agricultural development and agrifood systems transformation.

According to Abebe Haile-Gabriel, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, "The four-day hybrid conference

will focus on the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031, which aims to help countries achieve the Four Betters: better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life, leaving no one behind."

The agenda also includes a special event for member countries to exchange best practices under the Four Betters, a launch with the African Union of a guide to investing in youth in agriculture, and the launch of a Regional Technical Platform for knowledge-sharing on common agricultural policies and practices. Find out more at the [ARC32 conference website](#).

News **BETTER PRODUCTION**

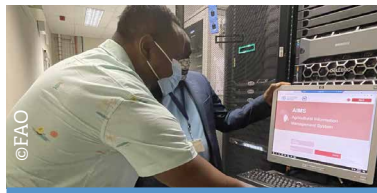
One Country One Priority Product launch



One Country
One Priority Product

In March, FAO in Africa held the regional launch of the One Country One Priority Product (OCOP) initiative. Around 500 people took part in the launch including Ministers and Deputy Ministers of Agriculture, development partners, and representatives from the private sector, civil society organizations and research institutions. The aim is to support countries to develop agricultural products that have special qualities associated with geographical locations, farming practices and cultural heritages. “These products are often underutilized resources which have not received the same attention as commonly known agricultural products, but which can significantly contribute to ensuring food security and healthy diets, supporting a sustainable bioeconomy and improving farmers’ livelihoods and economic growth, while protecting the environment and biodiversity,” said FAO Deputy Regional Representative Yurdi Yasmi.

Taking aim under the STOSAR project



Through FAO support, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has been equipped with the region’s first-ever Agricultural Information Management System (AIMS) under the European Union-funded **STOSAR** project. The AIMS is an integrated multi-lingual system, generating real-time agricultural data from across 16 SADC member countries for strategic evidence-based planning and decision-making.

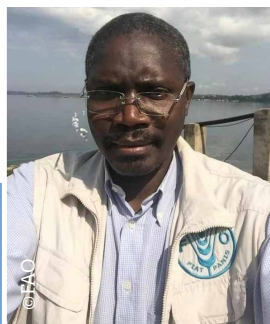
“The newly installed high-end server is now fully functional and will ensure harmonized and standardized agricultural data across the region, promoting access to export markets and trade opportunities for plants and animal products and commodities,” STOSAR Project Coordinator, Dr Elma Zanamwe said.

Opinion

Better Nutrition: Africa's small-scale fisheries - small in scale, big in value

This year is the **International Year of Artisanal Fisheries and Aquaculture (IYAFA)**. These fisheries may be small in scale but they are big in value, particularly in terms of livelihoods and nutrition.

In Africa, small-scale fisheries provide a high-quality, cheap source of protein to about 200 million people, directly employ 10-19 million people,



and another 90 million work along the fisheries value chain - 50 percent of whom are women.

There remains great potential for growth in Africa, particularly in overcoming the 30-50% loss in harvested fish due to spoilage along the value chain.

The year celebrates fishers, fish farmers and fish processors, both women and men, as the resource stewards of our oceans and lakes who ensure responsible management and sustainable use of living aquatic resources and their supporting ecosystems.

They must be engaged in building and strengthening enabling policy environments so that small-scale fisheries and aquaculture can fulfil their potential for national economies, fighting hunger, and climate resiliency.

So what can you do this year? Buy seafood from small-scale artisanal fisheries and aquaculture producers; support policies that support them; and help to advocate on their behalf. Happy #IYAFA!

By FAO in Africa
Senior Fishery
Officer Ndiaga
Gueye

News

BETTER ENVIRONMENT

A forest law for sustainable resource management



H.E. President Filipe Nyusi launching consultations on the forest law.

The President of Mozambique, H.E. Filipe Nyusi, has launched the national public consultation process on the country's new Forest Law that was drafted with the technical assistance of FAO. President Nyusi said the proposed new law will help the country to adequately respond to present and future challenges managing forest resources sustainably.

News

BETTER LIFE

Germany responds to drought in the Horn of Africa



A mission to drought-affected parts of Kenya by FAO's Deputy Director-General Beth Bechdol and Director of Emergencies Rein Paulsen has helped raise awareness of the plight of rural families enduring a severe drought. The Government of Germany responded to the urgent call for support by **contributing €20 million** to help avert a hunger crisis. The funding aims to support the lives and livelihoods of the most severely drought-affected farmers and herders. "We would like to thank the Government of Germany for the generous contribution, which will help provide efficient and effective assistance to highly-vulnerable, agriculture-reliant communities in the most impacted areas," said FAO Director-General QU Dongyu.

News

BETTER LIFE

“Doing good is good business”



Thabo Mabe, Executive Director of Dangote Flour Mills, was optimistic about the opportunities for agribusiness in Africa in his keynote address at FAO's 2nd African Agribusiness Leadership Dialogue. “This is a very exciting time to be investing in agribusiness for Africa,” he said. He also called for agile action to prevent post-harvest losses along agrifood supply chains. “Doing good is good business,” he said.

“Firms need to embrace technology, innovate and diversity. A change of mindset is crucial for all of us,” said H.E. Beata Habyarimana, Rwanda’s Minister of Trade and Industry in her opening remarks.

The online event brought together over 80 private sector entities from over 20 countries across Africa.

More countries join Hand-in-Hand Initiative



Djibouti and South Sudan are the latest African countries to join FAO's **Hand-in-Hand Initiative**, bringing the number of African participants to 27, which accounts for more than half of the global total.

Hand-in-Hand in Africa adopts a market oriented agrifood systems approach to increase the quantity, quality, diversity and accessibility of nutritious foods available in local, regional and national food markets.

FAO has so far invested close to USD 5 million through Technical Cooperation Programmes to support countries to undertake analytical studies, using the stochastic profit frontier analysis method of economic modeling to catalyse key investments.

News

BETTER LIFE



A roadmap for empowering women and youth

A roadmap to meet the challenges of empowering youth and women to support agrifood systems transformation in Central Africa was identified as a main priority for the sub-region at FAO's 14th **Multidisciplinary Team Meeting** (MDT, 28 Feb – 2 March). Organised by FAO's Sub-regional Office for Central Africa, the meeting brought together stakeholders including more than 10 ministers of state and government representatives of the eight central African countries.

The Sub-regional Office for West Africa's 13th **Multidisciplinary Team Meeting** (15-17 March) saw 15 ministers and government representatives meet with other partners to discuss priorities for agrifood systems transformation in the sub-region, with a focus on the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-

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INNOVATION

2031 and the Four Betters. Member countries and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) highlighted trade and investment, nutrition, fisheries and aquaculture, and women and youth inclusion as major issues for resilient agrifood systems in West Africa and the Sahel.

Lesotho's first digital Farmer Registry



Lesotho has developed a new digital National Farmer Registry under a project technically and financially supported by FAO and implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security.

The system creates a database of farmers in the country, identifying demographic data, main farming practices, and livestock ownership.

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INNOVATION

It will help the government to channel support to intended farmers and inform future policies.

“Without data you cannot make any informed decisions. The new electronic registry will help us to identify who does what and where,” said Maoala Khesa, National Project Coordinator from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security.

The initiative is part of a larger FAO collaboration to establish the Lesotho Integrated Agriculture Management Information System (LIAMIS).

New Digital Innovation Strategy

FAO in Africa has launched the new [Digital Innovation Strategy for Agrifood Systems in Africa](#). The Strategy has been prepared to respond to critical challenges facing inclusive and sustainable agrifood systems transformation in sub-Saharan Africa, and the Strategy is built on three pillars:

- **INSIGHT:** Improve use of quality data for country planning
- **INTERACT:** Develop internal digital agriculture capacity to effectively support food systems transformation
- **IMPACT:** Support inclusive national and regional digital agriculture ecosystems

FAO in Africa has also published a new booklet on the [1,000 Digital Villages Initiative in Africa](#). FAO is aiming to connect at least 1,000 villages globally to digital agricultural and other services. In Africa, the exciting initiative is being piloted in seven African countries so far.

UN Food Systems Summit follow-up actions

As part of the drive to transform agrifood systems, FAO is launching the results of a set of agrifood systems assessments in Africa, undertaken with governments, the European Union and CIRAD,

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PARTNERSHIPS

the French agricultural research centre, as part of delivering on the commitments made at the UN Food Systems Summit.

The assessments took place in 27 African countries and provide a refreshed picture of the state of agrifood systems in each country, highlighting the challenges and opportunities to make them more sustainable and inclusive. The results from Burkina-Faso, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Madagascar, Senegal and more are available on the [FAO website](#).

Working together with Africa's farmers



FAO in Africa has signed a new 5-year partnership agreement with the [Pan-African Farmers'](#)

[Organization \(PAFO\)](#) that will help farmers' have a greater voice in policy processes.

PAFO represents over 70 small-scale farmers and producers' organizations from 49 countries in Africa, and it is the first time the two organizations have put in place a formal partnership.

“FAO has been enjoying a good working relationship with the Pan-African Farmers' Organization since its establishment and we are pleased to forge this partnership in a more formal way to support Africa's farmers, including women and young people,” said FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa Abebe Haile-Gabriel.

What's New

Publication: Digital Innovation Strategy

The Strategy sets out FAO's vision for digital innovation in agrifood systems in Africa.



Publication: Status of Digital Agriculture in 47 sub-Saharan African Countries

This publication presents a snapshot of the status of digital agriculture in each country, as well as suggested steps for future action.



Publication: Fostering Rural Transformation through the Digital Villages Initiative

Find out about progress in Africa in implementing the 1000 Digital Villages initiative.



Publication: FAO in Africa Impacts in 2021

Review the impacts FAO made in Africa in 2021 towards agrifood systems transformation.



Contact us: If you have feedback or a story suggestion, contact the [FAO Africa Communications Team](#).