



Food and Agriculture
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YEAR IN REVIEW 2021

CENTRAL AFRICA

Highlights of FAO's emergency and resilience programming

There are approximately 33 million acutely food-insecure people in four countries of Central Africa alone. This includes the Democratic Republic of the Congo – the world's largest food crisis in 2021, with some 27 million people facing high levels of acute food insecurity. The complex humanitarian crises are fueled by the intersecting and compounding effects of conflict – which remains the primary driver of food insecurity – climate extremes, disease outbreaks and economic crises, including those caused by COVID-19.

Supporting livelihoods and improving resilience to shocks

In **Cameroon**, FAO's mushroom cultivation support in 2021 helped reduce vulnerability to shocks and strengthened livelihoods. Mushrooms are fast yielding, constitute a nutritious source of food and their cultivation does not require access to land. This makes it a suitable and sustainable livelihood source for internally displaced people, returnees, and rural and peri-urban farmers to engage in. Some 50 mushroom units can produce approximately 6 000 kg of mushrooms per year, and generate around USD 60 000. Furthermore,

mushroom cultivation provides a considerable return – by investing about USD 340 per household, families can generate an average net income of approximately USD 630 per year.

Increasing climate resilience

Across the subregion, climate change has exacerbated desertification in many countries, resulting in reduced availability of water, fodder and pasture for the growing populations of farmers and herders. This has increased tensions and conflicts between farmers and herders. To help tackle this problem, FAO organized



a subregional workshop in September 2021 on the prevention and resolution of conflicts related to the use of agro-pastoral resources and transboundary transhumance in Cameroon, the Central African Republic and Chad.

Putting the humanitarian-development-peace nexus into practice

In **Chad**, various intersecting factors, including conflict, weather extremes and economic shocks have significantly impacted food security and nutrition. While there is a need for humanitarian assistance to mitigate the immediate impacts, there is also a need for an integrated approach, focusing on stability and development efforts to address the root causes of the crises.

In 2021, FAO continued to safeguard agriculture-based livelihoods, by supporting the most vulnerable populations with agricultural and livestock inputs (including cash+); improved access to water, as well as to technical and financial services. FAO's interventions also aimed to reduce inter- or intra-community conflicts over access to natural resources.

Investing in resilience and food security to ensure peace and reconciliation

In the **Central African Republic**, FAO implemented activities including cash for work, seed fairs, direct distributions of agricultural inputs and sharing of sustainable agricultural techniques. These activities enabled vulnerable households in high-priority areas to increase their food production and generate income, thereby improving their food security.

In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, FAO improved the production and financial capacity of vulnerable farmers, especially female-headed households, to strengthen the resilience of livelihoods, and improve food security and nutrition. FAO also implemented activities to strengthen community organizations, contributing to social cohesion, gender equality, and promoting peace and reconciliation.

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