



Food and Agriculture Organization  
of the United Nations

## CANADA AND FAO

### PARTNERING TO BUILD RESILIENCE AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT FOR FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

Since the foundation of FAO in 1945, Canada and FAO have worked together towards finding solutions to many of the most pressing problems of our time, and tested new ways of delivering support to those most in need. With Canada's contributions, FAO has reached emergency areas where resilience building and crisis response are crucial, and contributed to rural transformation through investments in agricultural productivity and livelihood opportunities, fundamental to create a sustainable context for long-lasting peace.

#### Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

Canada is a valuable contributor to FAO's efforts to empower rural women through decent work in all areas of agriculture, fisheries and forestry. The country recognizes that increasing rural women's employment opportunities is key to improving their productivity and earning power, which in turn ensures better food security and nutrition for rural communities.

In line with Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy, the country has provided US\$ 5 million to support women's cooperatives/associations in Lebanon's agro-food sector. The three-year project will create an improved and enabling social and cultural environment for rural women's economic empowerment, and increase their participation in local economies to establish and/or expand agro-food income-generating enterprises. Through cash transfers and employment vouchers, women's cooperatives/associations will be supported to develop and implement business plans in the agro-food sector. The project's data collection phase will allow for the identification of actual, contextual and relevant factors hindering the integration of women in certain economic activities. The project will also introduce the Gender Action Learning System modality — a community-led methodology aimed at introducing behavioural change at household, cooperative and community levels.

#### Cooperation policy

Canada and FAO work together to target long-term development as well as peace, security and humanitarian assistance. The country also supports FAO around a wide range of areas, including food security and nutrition, gender sensitive crisis response, equal access to health care and education. FAO works closely with several Canadian agencies and departments, including Global Affairs Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, as well as the Government of Québec.

#### Feminist International Assistance Policy

In June 2017, Canada started implementing a "feminist" international assistance policy, applying a human rights-based approach to six core pillars of work:

- ➔ Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls
- ➔ Human dignity (health education, humanitarian assistance, nutrition, sexual and reproductive health and rights, food security)
- ➔ Inclusive economic growth
- ➔ Environment and climate action
- ➔ Inclusive governance
- ➔ Peace and security

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## Supporting innovative partnerships to build resilience

With a US\$ 38 million contribution — US\$ 17 million directly to FAO — Canada is partnering with the United Nations Rome-based agencies (RBAs) — FAO, International Fund for Agricultural Development and World Food Programme — to field-test a conceptual framework to collaboratively strengthen resilience, food security and nutrition. The innovative programme in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Niger and Somalia marks the first time that the RBAs have received joint multi-year funding for resilience work.

The joint programme aims to meet immediate food needs, while sustainably increasing food security and strengthening resilience in regions affected by protracted and recurrent crises. It represents an unprecedented effort to support and invest in the same vulnerable communities over a five-year period through integrated, context-specific, gender- and nutrition-sensitive assistance packages, identified by communities themselves through participatory planning and aligned to national priorities. The interventions aim at protecting people's food and livelihood sources by restoring, rehabilitating and supporting their productive assets, improving market linkages and strengthening technical and marketing capacities.

## Promoting fair trade and inclusive value chains

Canada has greatly supported FAO in its efforts to help smallholder farmers tap into global value chains, which are more stable and that allow small producers to earn enough money to ensure a decent life for them and their families.

Canada is an enormous contributor to FAO's work in strengthening agri-businesses in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, where producers face limited market opportunities and poor land and water management. With US\$ 16 million from Canada, an ongoing project is increasing water availability and productivity for farming households through the restoration of damaged water pipe sections, helping them to overcome issues of water scarcity and replacing the use of wastewater for irrigation. Around 130 farmers (20 percent women) have also received high-quality seedlings to diversify and improve the profitability of their crop production businesses. Trainings and exchange visits have strengthened the agricultural cooperatives' capacity to further improve production. A potential export market (the United Arab Emirates) has also been identified, and cooperatives will receive further support to access the new market by meeting its quality standards. The project has allowed smallholder farmers to tap into stronger value chains and improved the way cooperatives market and promote themselves.

## Bridging humanitarian and development objectives

By supporting FAO's diverse efforts to build resilient rural communities, including through monitoring and protecting valuable natural resources and supporting climate change adaptation, Canada is helping to break the negative cycle of vulnerability that is a key obstacle to achieving Zero Hunger and sustainable development worldwide. Canada has been a champion of FAO's work in emergencies and its timely financial support has prevented thousands of crisis-struck farmers from having to revert to negative coping strategies.

In Ukraine, for example — amidst ongoing conflict resulting in loss of income, rising prices and significantly disrupted value chains — Canadian support brought emergency assistance to affected areas to both address immediate needs and preserve and strengthen rural livelihoods. FAO provided vulnerable small-scale farmers with drought- and disease-resistant seeds to plant crops that do well in the small areas of land that the farmers own. They also received fodder to keep their livestock healthy and productive, and donations of small livestock — poultry or rabbits — which ensure better nutrition and income. In addition, the project trained and supported farmers in establishing groups/cooperatives that let them benefit from greater economies of scale in their production.

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