



EMERGENCY SUPPORT TO HOUSEHOLDS AFFECTED BY EL NIÑO-INDUCED DROUGHT IN THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI

The agriculture sector is crucial to the livelihoods of over 70 percent of the rural population in the Kingdom of Eswatini, most of whom are subsistence farmers. The country faces a number of challenges to agricultural production, including drought induced by El Niño. In February 2016, the El Niño-induced drought was declared a national disaster, causing serious implications for approximately 35 000 households who were not be able to afford inputs for planting, as well as many other farmers who experienced a drastic decline in harvest. The aim of the project was to support 2 500 of the most vulnerable households affected by the drought through the provision of emergency assistance in the form of training and technical support on the use of Climate-smart Agriculture (CSA) technologies and seed and hand tool distribution.



WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

The project was designed to respond to drought impacts on 2 500 small-scale vulnerable households. Throughout target areas, 60 trainings were held and 325 lead farmers enhanced their capacities in Conservation Agriculture (CA). Agricultural production and climate resilience capacities for 2 063 households were also improved. A livelihood emergency package was distributed to farmers, including maize, sorghum, groundnut, bean and vegetable seeds, as well as fertilizer and irrigation kits, and, as a result, beneficiaries that received maize, beans and vegetable packages increased household food availability. Government staff also received training on Geographical Information Systems (GIS), CSA and disaster risk reduction and decision-making, improving the effectiveness of extension services across the country. An e-voucher system introduced by the project showed great potential to further assist farmer organizations in the future.

IMPACT

The project contributed to overall food security and improved livelihoods for households affected by El Niño-induced drought. Farmers that received maize, beans and vegetable packages, 60 percent of whom were women, improved their household food availability. Rains continued and properly timed planting improved over two seasons and farmers harvested more than anticipated. The use of e-vouchers also improved timely access to seed. To further enhance future climate resilience, the project trained and emphasized CA, a climate-smart and environmentally friendly practice, which will continue to improve beneficiary households' food security and income.

KEY FACTS

Contribution
USD 500 000

Duration
December 2016 – December 2017

Resource Partner
FAO

Partners
African Cooperative Action Trust;
Baphalali Red Cross Society; Ministry
of Agriculture (MoA)

Beneficiaries
Small-scale vulnerable households;
Extension service providers; MoA staff



ACTIVITIES

- Agricultural packages and irrigation and fertilizer kits distributed to vulnerable households.
- Resilience capacities of MoA staff and beneficiaries strengthened, including increased awareness and sensitization of MoA extension staff on CSA and training in GIS data interpretation and use.
- Lead farmers selected and trained on CSA.
- Assessment carried out on agricultural production and the project's contribution to improving beneficiary households' food security and income.



Project Code
TCP/SWA/3601

Project Title
Emergency assistance to vulnerable smallholder households affected by El Niño-induced drought

Contacts
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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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