



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF COUNTRY REPRESENTATIONS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC



FOREWORD

Forty years after the first country Representation offices opened in Asia-Pacific, FAO's commitment and determination to work in partnership to help its Member Nations achieve zero hunger and food security, in an environmentally tenable and sustainable way, while improving rural livelihoods, is as strong as ever.

Today, Asia and the Pacific is a much different place than it was in the late 1970's. Today it is a dynamic, growing, interconnected region. Many Member Nations that were once dependent on food aid are now economically powerful in their own right, and the emergence of South-South cooperation has become well established. The FAO Representations have played an important part in that development.

The story of that development began in 1977, when Edouard Saouma, FAO's Director-General at the time, proposed to Governments the idea that Representations in-country, working side by side with the Organization's constituents, would better help them fight hunger and poverty and would do so concretely and demonstrably. The plan was expanded under successive Directors-General and, today, under the guidance of José Graziano da Silva, FAO's current Director-General, there are FAO Representation offices in 85 countries worldwide.

In 1977, and in quick succession, five countries in the Asia-Pacific region agreed to establish Representations. Bangladesh and Nepal were agreed in February, India in March, followed by Myanmar (then known as Burma) in October, and the Philippines in November. By the end of the decade, a further five country offices were created in Viet Nam, Pakistan, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Indonesia in 1978, in that order, and they were joined by Sri Lanka in 1979.

Much has been achieved, but there is more work ahead. Our region is still home to in excess of 60 percent of the world's undernourished, while poverty remains endemic in some areas. Ending poverty and achieving zero hunger are today's fight and will be tomorrow's fight too. Working together and continuing this special relationship through the FAO Representations in the years to come will help us achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.



Kundhavi Kadiresan
Assistant Director-General and
FAO Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF COUNTRY REPRESENTATIONS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

1977



Bangladesh



India



Myanmar



Nepal



The Philippines

1978



Indonesia



Lao PDR



Pakistan



Viet Nam

1979



Sri Lanka



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS IN

BANGLADESH

Established in 1977, the FAO Representation in Bangladesh is pleased to be celebrating its 40th anniversary



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Initially, the FAO Representation, in partnership with the Government of Bangladesh, focused on building production of the staple crop of the country, rice, and together this partnership proved instrumental in helping Bangladesh transition from a food aid dependent country at Independence in 1971, to a cereal self-sufficient country in the second decade of the 21st Century.

Over the last 40 years, rice yields have tripled, and wheat and maize have increased from 10 million metric tonnes in 1971 to more than 38 million tonnes today. In particular the increased maize production has provided feed stock for the expansion of egg and poultry production to meet the growing nutritional needs for foods of animal origin.

Bangladesh is one of five high-risk endemic countries for H5N1 highly pathogenic avian influenza, and the growth of the poultry industry has been significantly affected by the disease. Since March 2007, more than 500 outbreaks have been reported in the country's poultry sector. In response, FAO has been providing substantial technical assistance through its ECTAD country team.

Today, through these many years of joint efforts, rural men and women – many in remote areas – are now more positive about their futures and their ability to resist future shocks to their agriculture-based livelihoods.



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS IN

INDIA

Established in 1977, the FAO Representation in India is pleased to be celebrating its 40th anniversary

India's record of progress in agriculture through the decades has been impressive. With more than a five-fold increase in food grains from 50 million tonnes in the early 1950s to more than 270 million tonnes by 2017, India has become a net food exporter.

Operation Flood (1970-1996), or the White Revolution, were major events of 20th century dairying in India. In the early days, food aid built an institutional infrastructure for national dairy development. But with Operation Flood, milk production had nearly tripled. Today, the dairy sector is one of the largest employers of rural people, especially women.

FAO has worked closely with the government to improve fisheries. With a fisheries industry employing more than 15 million people, India is now a major fish exporter.

Today, India is also an important knowledge partner of FAO, providing technical expertise to other countries through South-South cooperation, and sharing important evidence-based developmental lessons. FAO facilitates South-South cooperation around DeenDayal Antyodaya Yojna (DAY) – National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) experiences and recently supported Ethiopia and Ghana on developing an integrated approach to rural poverty through a learning exchange and the establishment of a good practice learning centre.



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CELEBRATING 40 YEARS IN

INDONESIA

Established in 1978, the FAO Representation in Indonesia is pleased to be celebrating its 40th anniversary



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During the last 40 years, hundreds of FAO development and emergency programmes have successfully supported Indonesia's food and agriculture sectors, including fisheries and forestry. The emphasis of FAO's support to the Government's development plans has focused on work contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Particular attention is paid to the primary beneficiaries of this work, including smallholders, rural women, fishing communities and rural youth – all groups with a pivotal role in ensuring sustainable food and nutrition security for future generations.

FAO also gives priority to Government efforts at sustainable intensification of crop production and rural poverty reduction, while working on improving policy development and implementation in food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors.

Today, Indonesia is working with FAO to increase resilience of livelihoods to climate change and environmental shocks and to contain avian influenza through promotion of the One Health approach.

The development of Conservation Agriculture (CA) demonstration plots has helped strengthen community resilience to climate and weather related issues. Implementing CA has, in a very short timeframe, more than doubled maize yields.

During the last ten years, the FAO Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD), has also worked closely with the Indonesian Government to develop the HPAI control and prevention capacities in more than 30 provinces.



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS IN

LAO PDR

Established in 1978, the FAO Representation in Lao People's Democratic Republic is pleased to be celebrating its 40th anniversary

Through the years, FAO and Lao PDR have worked together to deliver more than 250 projects, ranging from policy advice to technical development assistance. FAO's support and partnership continues to be instrumental as the country faces key opportunities and challenges in the agriculture sector.

Through Farmer Field Schools, FAO has provided training in Integrated Pest Management and the hazards of pesticides to over 30 000 Lao PDR rice, vegetable and fruit farmers. As Lao PDR is very vulnerable to natural disasters and environmental shocks, FAO has assisted the Government in its development of a Plan of Action for Disaster Risk Reduction Management in Agriculture. The Representation has also been supporting work on Avian Influenza prevention and control for more than 15 years.

FAO has four priority areas for assistance in Lao PDR: Fostering agricultural production and rural development in particular sustainable intensification of agricultural production among smallholders; improving food security and nutrition for the most vulnerable; protecting and enhancing forests and other ecosystems to integrate more sustainable natural resource production systems; and, improving capacity to respond to food and agricultural threats and emergencies, including the impact of climate change.

Today, FAO is supporting the agriculture sector's contribution to improving nutrition in relation to Lao PDR's commitment to graduate from the category of Least Developed Country by 2020.



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CELEBRATING 40 YEARS IN

MYANMAR

Established in 1977, the FAO Representation in Myanmar is pleased to be celebrating its 40th anniversary



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With its technical expertise, FAO has worked with the Government of Myanmar to deliver a wide range of assistance through projects and programmes. These have been appropriately divided between field-level interventions, providing immediate and long-term support to rural livelihoods, and Government capacity building to strengthen policy, planning and implementation across the country's agriculture and natural resource sectors.

As part of its focus on improved livestock production, FAO has successfully implemented a project to enhance technical, managerial and policy capacity of Government officials, private-sector parties, cooperatives and farmer groups, NGOs and smallholder farmers in the development of animal feeding strategies.

As Myanmar is endowed with the second largest forest cover in Southeast Asia, including some of the most ecologically intact forest, FAO works with partners to improve the productivity of natural resources to conserve ecosystems, including forests, land and water resources.

Today, as part of FAO's contribution to the overall Government vision of people-centered, inclusive and sustainable development, FAO's work aims to ensure that vulnerable people benefit from poverty alleviation, better nutrition, food security and food safety.



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS IN

NEPAL

Established in 1977, the FAO Representation in Nepal is pleased to be celebrating its 40th anniversary

FAO was among the first United Nations agencies to commence field work in Nepal, focusing initially on agriculture and rural development. Cooperation in the area of watershed management dates back to the mid-1960s. FAO provided training and technical expertise to determine the feasibility of inland warm-water aquaculture and, as a result of FAO's initial support, Nepal now meets most of its vegetable requirements through domestic production by a thriving private sector.

Since the establishment of an FAO Representation, FAO's contribution has been significant in the introduction and institutionalization of Integrated Pest Management and Farmer Field School programmes in Nepal. FAO has also contributed in promoting livestock product commercialization through agri-business promotion and improving livelihood of small holder farmers.

Through the years, the Organization has supported the implementation of more than 300 projects in the field of agriculture, livestock, fisheries and forestry. This work emphasizes sustainable development in food and nutrition security and rural income generation, early warning and market information, current agricultural statistics, water management and control of HPAI H5N1 and zoonotic influenzas as part of the One Health approach.

Today, FAO's work in Nepal concentrates on building technical capacity by providing technical assistance to the Government for policy development and implementation and it works to enhance agricultural production systems to make them more resilient to climate change.



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CELEBRATING 40 YEARS IN

PAKISTAN

Established in 1978, the FAO Representation in Pakistan is pleased to be celebrating its 40th anniversary



Pakistan joined FAO on 7 September 1947, three weeks after independence, and has been an active member ever since. During the first years of its operations in Pakistan, FAO assisted the Government in building and strengthening the national agriculture infrastructure with an emphasis on irrigation – the lifeline of country's agriculture system.

The introduction of a better seed potato variety, created farm-market linkages and adequate storage facilities improved the lives of the farmers in Gilgit Baltistan.

In the 1980s, FAO work focused on horticulture, modern agri practices, livestock and building capacity of government institutions. Research-based interventions transformed traditional cropping patterns and have helped farmers adopt innovative techniques.

Today, FAO works with Government on poverty reduction, food security, resilience, sustainable livelihoods and food systems and rural development. The FAO Representation is providing analysis, advice on policy making and planning. It has also partnered with the Government of Pakistan and other institutions on new research and development, training and innovative approaches to extension services.

FAO's work is centred on the following priority areas: Zero Hunger: Healthy, safe and nutritious food for all; climate-smart resilient agriculture and sustainable ecosystems, including forests, fisheries, livestock and water management; and inclusive and efficient agriculture and food systems. FAO will support Pakistan further strengthen its contribution to sustainable development, global food security and resilience, while boosting its efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda.



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS IN

THE PHILIPPINES

Established in 1977, the FAO Representation in the Philippines is pleased to be celebrating its 40th anniversary

During the last 40 years, FAO has implemented more than 400 national projects in the Philippines, reaching more than half-a-million farming and fishing families – some 2.5 million people.

In the 1970s, FAO began its assistance with support to the Government's agrarian reform programme – one of the largest efforts of that era – to reduce poverty and inequality in rural areas by improving the lives of impoverished landless farmers.

To support the Government's nutrition programme, particularly in providing an affordable source of protein for the population, FAO implemented a brackish water development and training project in 1977. It resulted in the availability of affordable tilapia and milkfish in almost all public markets in the country.

Today, FAO continues to focus on strengthening the country's food and nutrition security, increasing the sustainability and competitiveness of agricultural production, fisheries and forestry. According to the National Economic and Development Authority, GDP growth in the first quarter of 2017 indicated the Philippines was one of the strongest performers among major emerging economies in Asia.

As progress continues and opportunities evolve, support from FAO will help ensure that the Philippines successfully makes the transition to becoming a food-secure, strong partner in trade, peace building, and sustainable development, while strengthening the country's resilience to the impacts of climate change, natural and human-induced disasters.





CELEBRATING 40 YEARS IN

SRI LANKA

Established in 1979, the FAO Representation in Sri Lanka is pleased to be celebrating its 40th anniversary



The overarching goal of FAO's programme in Sri Lanka has been the reduction of food insecurity, malnutrition and other sources of vulnerability, and the sustainable management and use of natural resources.

During times of natural disasters, such as the cyclone in 1985 and the tsunami of 2004, and during the 26 years of conflict in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, FAO and its Representation office provided much needed emergency assistance in the form of agricultural inputs and support to the affected population.

The Mahaweli Development Programme is the largest multi-purpose development project conceived in Sri Lanka. In 1961 the Government of Ceylon requested assistance from the special fund of the United Nations to survey the Mahaweli Ganga Basin and the Dry Zone areas in the North and Central Provinces. In 1968, FAO formulated a master plan to provide irrigation from the Mahaweli Ganga (Sri Lanka's largest river) to develop 360 000 hectares of new and existing agricultural land and provide additional hydroelectric power facilities. The opening of the Moragakanda – Kaluganga Scheme in January 2018 completed the 40-year long Mahaweli Development Programme.

Today, the FAO Representation continues to assist the Sri Lankan Government and people by strengthening food systems to enhance nutrition security and increase income generation through the sustainable management of natural resources and promotion of climate resilient agriculture.



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS IN

VIET NAM

Established in 1978, the FAO Representation in Viet Nam is pleased to be celebrating its 40th anniversary

Forty years ago, the initial goal of the new FAO Representation in Viet Nam was to provide technical assistance in the agricultural sector. In the first decade of operations, the post-war priority was to restore food security and to support the Government in rebuilding institutions and capacity in the agriculture sector. By the 1980s, FAO's programme in Viet Nam was its third largest in the world after India and China. In the years following, FAO support gradually expanded to cover policy advice.

The FAO Emergency Center for Transboundary Animal Diseases (ECTAD) programme in Viet Nam was established in 2006, initially to support the Government's efforts in combatting the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). It later expanded to address broader animal health, animal production, food safety, and antimicrobial resistance issues.

As one of the countries most affected by climate change, droughts, tropical storms, typhoons and floods, FAO works with the Government of Viet Nam, and other development partners, to restore food security, agriculture and livelihoods of people in the affected areas when these events happen – and to help them build their resilience and adaptability.

Today, the FAO Representation in Viet Nam continues to support this work as well as agriculture and rural development for the alleviation of hunger, malnutrition and improved food safety, while helping the Government in areas of policy and sustainable development.





Key Messages:

- ◆ For 40 years, fighting hunger, poverty and malnutrition has been at the heart of FAO's work worldwide
- ◆ FAO's cooperation with members countries and support in the field are crucial for achieving Agenda 2030, in particular food security and nutrition
- ◆ FAO's holistic approach includes strengthening rural communities' livelihoods and the sustainable use and management of natural resources
- ◆ In facing climate change, FAO is working with countries to ensure more resilient, inclusive and productive food systems
- ◆ Close collaboration between headquarters and decentralized offices brings FAO closer to its member countries
- ◆ FAO's decentralization strategy aims at strengthening the Organization's impact at the country, subregional and regional level, thereby increasing its support to countries' achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals
- ◆ Through tailored Country Programming Frameworks, FAO's technical and policy expertise is aligned with government priorities and supports the most vulnerable populations
- ◆ Concerted action, based on strong partnerships with government, UN , civil society and other key partners at the country level, is key for achieving a Zero Hunger Generation