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Продовольственная и
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Organización de las
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منظمة
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FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA

Thirty-second Session
Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, 11-14 April 2022
Results for FAO in the Africa Region – 2020-21

Executive Summary

This document presents major developments and main results achieved by FAO in the Africa Region during the 2020-21 biennium. It also highlights FAO's contribution to supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for *better production*, *better nutrition*, a *better environment*, and a *better life*, leaving no one behind.

During the 2020-21 biennium, FAO introduced new ways of working, modalities and corporate initiatives, such as the Hand-in-Hand Initiative and the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme. In addition, the Organization introduced a modular and flexible structure allowing for optimal cross-sectoral collaboration and aims for a stronger and coordinated focus on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The reforms also aimed at modernizing FAO and improving its methods of work and transparency. In 2020-21, FAO fully aligned its country-level planning with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) process and FAO's country level process contributed to shaping the formulation of UNSDCFs.

FAO continued to focus its work in the Africa Region through the following Regional Initiatives:

- Regional Initiative 1: Africa's Commitment to End Hunger by 2025

- Regional Initiative 2: Sustainable Production Intensification and Value Chain Development in Africa

- Regional Initiative 3: Building Resilience in Africa's Drylands

These Regional Initiatives served as a mechanism for delivery at country level, facilitating greater impact of FAO's work on key priorities under the results framework for the biennium.

This document describes the achievements and lessons from the implementation of corporate and regional priorities in the context of FAO's work. It describes FAO's new ways of working, modalities and programmes as well as achievements on the Regional Initiatives. It also highlights relevant cross-cutting themes and thematic areas important for ensuring the quality and integrity of FAO's work as well as notable partnerships, innovations, gaps and lessons learnt.

Documents can be consulted at www.fao.org

Matters to be brought to the attention of the Regional Conference

The Regional Conference is invited to:

- Recognize FAO's new ways of working, modalities and corporate initiatives as well as the modular and flexible structure that allows for optimal cross-sectoral collaboration and aims for a stronger and coordinated focus on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and reforms aimed at modernizing FAO and improving its methods of work and transparency;

- Recognize the full alignment of FAO's country-level planning with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) process;

- Note the achievements on implementation of FAO corporate strategies and initiatives in the Africa Region, including the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme, Hand-in-Hand Initiative, Green Cities Initiative, 1000 Digital Villages Initiative, One Country One Priority Product initiative and the Regional Technical Platform on Common Agricultural Policies and Practices. In doing so, note the focus on evidence-based, country-led and country-owned actions in the region to accelerate agrifood systems transformation and sustainable rural development for the eradication of poverty (SDG 1), hunger and all forms of malnutrition (SDG2) as well as for the attainment of all the other SDGs in the region;

- Note the achievements on the implementation of the Regional Initiatives in the Africa region, including the demonstrated importance of adopting innovative approaches and using science and technologies including digital solutions to address new situations and challenges; and

- Note the importance of strengthened partnerships, with smallholder producers and their organizations as well as with the private sector, including small and medium enterprises (SMEs), agrifood companies and consumers.

Queries on the content of this document may be addressed to:
ARC Secretariat

ARC-Secretariat@fao.org

I. Introduction

1.   This document presents major developments and principal results achieved by FAO in the Africa Region during the 2020-21 biennium. It also highlights FAO's new ways of working, modalities and initiatives introduced in 2020-21 to contribute to supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the transformation to MORE efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agrifood systems for *better production, better nutrition,* a *better environment*, and a *better life*, leaving no one behind.

2.   Since the arrival of Director-General QU Dongyu in August 2019, FAO has undergone deep transformative change to ensure that FAO is fit-for-purpose to face the challenges that lie ahead. FAO has introduced a modular and flexible structure that allows for optimal cross-sectoral collaboration and aims for a stronger and coordinated focus on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Among the changes introduced: the new Office of Innovation to consolidate and strengthen FAO's innovative spirit; the new Office of SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs[1] to ensure that the special needs of these vulnerable populations and countries are met; the new Office of SDGs which coordinates the corporate engagement in the 2030 Agenda follow-up and review; and FAO's new position of Chief Scientist which ensures robustness, breadth and independence of scientific approaches in FAO's work.

3.   The reforms introduced also aimed at modernizing FAO and improving its methods of work and transparency, including through the establishment of the Core Leadership team, comprised of the three Deputy Directors-General, the Chief Economist, Chief Scientist and the Director of Cabinet.

4.   In 2020-21, FAO rapidly transitioned to a fully digital Organization, further accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, with the expanded use of cloud solutions and the introduction of new technologies facilitating the work of the Organization from any location and paving the way for the "new normal". Virtual meetings of the Governing Bodies, including the Regional Conferences in 2020, allowed governance processes to proceed smoothly, with interpretation provided in all FAO languages.

5.   Furthermore, during the biennium, a few key corporate initiatives were introduced, such as the Hand-in-Hand Initiative (HiH), which is FAO's evidence-based, country-led and country-owned initiative to accelerate agricultural transformation and sustainable rural development in support of the SDGs, and the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme which appeals for immediate-, medium- and longer-term actions to prevent the health crisis from becoming a food crisis.

6.   In 2020-21, FAO fully aligned its country-level planning with the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) process, thus building on the UNDS efforts to collectively support country ownership and address national SDG priorities and gaps. At the same time, FAO's country level process also contributed to shaping the formulation of the UNSDCF, thus ensuring that agrifood systems transformation concerns and related SDGs are well integrated and prioritized in the UN common planning documents.

7.   Following the 31st Session of the Regional Conference for Africa held in 2020, FAO focused its work in the Region through the following Regional Initiatives:

- Regional Initiative 1: Africa's Commitment to End Hunger by 2025

- Regional Initiative 2: Sustainable Production Intensification and Value Chain Development in Africa

- Regional Initiative 3: Building Resilience in Africa's Drylands

8.   These Regional Initiatives served as a mechanism for delivery at country level, facilitating greater impact of FAO's work on the key priorities in each region under the results framework for the biennium as presented in the Updated Results Framework 2020-21.

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[1] Small Island Developing States (SIDS); Least developed countries (LDCs); Land-locked developing countries (LLDCs)

9.   The next section describes achievements of the region in 2020-21, focusing on corporate and regional priorities in the context of FAO's work. The section also highlights relevant cross-cutting themes and thematic areas important for ensuring the quality and integrity of FAO's work.

II. Achievements in the Africa region

FAO's new ways of working, modalities and programmes

FAO COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme

10.   The COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme appeals for immediate-, medium- and longer-term actions to prevent the health crisis from becoming a food crisis. The Programme aims to mitigate the immediate impacts while strengthening the longer-term resilience of livelihoods, moving towards a green recovery, and building to transform agrifood systems. FAO's response to the pandemic leverages the Organization's convening power, real-time data, early warning systems and technical expertise to direct support where and when it is most needed.

11. FAO developed a flexible and modular plan of action, through the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme. In the Africa region, COVID-19 Regional Actions Plans were developed to address the following seven priority areas:

- Global Humanitarian Response Plan - addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and safeguarding livelihoods in food-crisis contexts.
- Data for decision-making - assessing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on food insecurity at regional, national and sub-regional levels.
- Economic Inclusion and Social Protection to Reducing Poverty: Enhancing COVID-19 response and post COVID-19 recovery and resilience for vulnerable populations.
- Trade and Food Safety Standards: Facilitating and boosting regional trade and mainstreaming food safety in the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).
- Boosting Smallholder Resilience for Recovery: Protecting and boosting resilience of vulnerable pastoral and agro-pastoral households.
- Preventing the next Zoonotic Pandemic: Building back better to prevent future pandemics by expanding and renovating One Health.
- Food Systems Transformation: Assisting governments to transform agrifood systems to produce safer food and be more resilient and sustainable.

12.   The FAO COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme for Africa provides a comprehensive and coordinated approach for dealing with the challenge, initially focusing on information and impact assessment, to inform policy, advocacy and country programming. The COVID-19 Regional Action Plans were discussed with key partners and stakeholders in the Africa region, including the African Union Commission (AUC), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), development partners and development finance Institutions (DFIs) and were used to design country and regional initiatives for COVID-19 response and recovery. Within the framework of the programme, a corporate-wide coordination mechanism was set to allow for immediate response at the decentralized level, with support from Regional Offices.

13.   In collaboration with partners, including the African Development Bank (AfDB), the European Union, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Bank, FAO supported the AU to establish its COVID-19 Taskforce, which increased policy support, investments, advocacy and programming for COVID-19 response and recovery. Efforts have been directed at developing action-oriented solutions, including sharing knowledge products and good practices and enhancing national and regional capacities, in collaboration with United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) and other development partners.

Hand-in-Hand Initiative

14.   The FAO Hand-in-Hand Initiative (HiH) strives to facilitate agrifood systems transformation and sustainable rural development, accelerated through targeting the poorest and the hungry, differentiating territories and strategies and bringing together all relevant dimensions through analysis and partnerships. Launched in July 2020, the Hand-in-Hand Geospatial Platform is a digital public good to facilitate partnerships, and provide advanced geo-spatial modelling and analytics, to identify real-time gaps and opportunities to raise incomes and reduce inequities and vulnerabilities of rural populations.

15.   The Africa region made significant progress in rolling out the HiH during the biennium 2020-21. Currently, 25 countries, out of 45 globally which have expressed their desire to participate in the initiative, are in the Africa region.[2] Country engagements included technical studies, such as stochastic frontier analysis, identification of programme entry points, including priority value chains, territories and markets as well as specification of required investments and partner consultations.[3] FAO in Africa invested close to USD 5 million through Technical Cooperation Programmes (TCPs) to support 15 Members to undertake analytic studies and catalyse key investments.[4]

Green Cities initiative

16.   The FAO Green Cities Initiative was launched in the Africa region to trigger transformative actions for increasing people's well-being through better availability of and access to products and services provided by urban and peri-urban forestry, agriculture and food systems. The first phase of the Green Cities Regional Action Programme for Africa (GC-RAPA) was rolled out in 2021. This phase targeted 15 cities in Africa with innovative "quick win" actions to develop the capacity of local stakeholders to integrate food systems, urban and peri-urban agriculture and urban forests and trees into local planning and actions. Priority entry points are identified for the development of a regional programme formulation and further funding mobilization to support cities to embody sustainable Green Cities principles. Several existing projects were incorporated into the Green Cities Initiative implementation, including the City Region Food System programme in Antananarivo, Madagascar and Kigali, Rwanda and support for food governance in Kisumu and Nairobi cities in Kenya.

1 000 Digital Villages Initiative

17.   The FAO 1 000 Digital Villages Initiative aims to convert 1 000 villages across the world into digital hubs that support the transformation of agrifood systems. It also assists existing and potential digital villages in their quest to advance and improve livelihoods, agriculture, nutrition, health and well-being of their citizens. The initiative incorporates three main elements: i) "e-Agriculture" to improve agricultural productivity through information and communication technologies (ICT) and digital solutions, such as climate smart, precision and intelligent facility agriculture; ii) "Digital Farmer Services" to enhance farmers' access to services, including financial services, social protection and employment; and iii) digital services for "Rural transformation".

18.   Building on FAO 1 000 Digital Villages Initiative, a Pilot Digital Villages Initiative (DVI) was designed and implemented in seven countries in Africa (Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Somalia). Scoping assessments to understand the agrifood and digital environments as well as the conditions for successful implementation of the DVI were conducted in the seven countries between July and November 2021. The results from these scoping studies were used to identify potential villages

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[2] Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Chad, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Somalia, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe

[3] Angola (Nat. Agric. Survey & FFS), Burkina Faso (rice, peanuts, sesame, beef sector, non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and aquaculture), Ethiopia (Agro-Commodity Procurement Zones (ACPZs) - Coffee & Avocado in Yuirgalem = SNNP/Sidama regions and Wheat & Dairy in Bulbula = Oromia Region), Mali (Agropoles - Koulikoro and Kayes by strengthening agro-enterpreneurship and increasing the competitiveness of women and youth), Nigeria (a twin-track approach - (i) resilience building for emergency; and (ii) Dairy, horticulture and fisheries VCD), Rwanda and Zimbabwe (Agrinvest, FLW, Horticulture, etc.).

[4] Angola, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda and Zimbabwe

for the project's interventions. Three countries, Kenya, Somalia and Senegal, started preparatory activities by fine-tuning digital platforms for full project launch or testing new digital agriculture services. A knowledge sharing and learning event, involving FAO, its partners and key stakeholders, provided a platform to share insights from the DVI Pilot studies, obtain stakeholder and expert feedback and mobilise interest and partnerships for the scaling up the findings to accelerate digitalization for rural transformation within and beyond the pilot countries.

One Country One Priority Product (OCOP)

19.   In September 2021, FAO launched its Global Action on Green Development of Special Agricultural Products: One Country One Priority Product (OCOP), with the objective to develop sustainable value chains for Special Agricultural Products. This initiative aims to support small and family farmers reap the full benefits of a global market, and ultimately help the transformation of current agrifood systems and the achievement of the SDGs.

20.   The OCOP was launched in the Africa region during 2021. FAO subregional offices worked with Country Offices in Africa to identify potential commodities for the OCOP initiative. Best practices and knowledge products from the region were used to strengthen the regional perspectives to the Framework of Global Action on Green Development and guidelines for country project applications.

Regional Technical Platform (RTP) on Common Agricultural Policies and Practices

21.   The RTP on Common Agricultural Policies and Practices (CAP) in Africa was developed to share knowledge, experiences, best practices and resources on innovations and policy actions to enhance efficient and responsible production and improve resilience in agrifood systems. During the year, the RTP developed content materials and compiled knowledge products on the implementation of National Agricultural Investment Plans as a common policy and investment framework within the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). Work also started on engagement with parliamentarians to enhance their capacity for political commitment and advocacy as well as to design policy and programme initiatives for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Regional Initiatives and key achievements in 2020-21

Africa's Commitment to End Hunger

22.   FAO provided policy papers, analytical frameworks and other knowledge products to the AUC and member countries, such as Gabon and Namibia, to strengthen the policy formulation processes including CAADP country processes for the formulation of second generation National Agriculture Investment Plans.

23.   FAO contributed and supported the organization of several policy dialogues at regional level that focused on: (i) the food security nutrition and poverty nexus; (ii) promoting indigenous foods and scale-up best practices to transform food systems for healthy diets; (iii) nutrition sensitive food systems in response to the COVID-19 pandemic to promote short value chains and urban rural food linkages to address urban and child malnutrition; and (vi) preserving African Heritage using food systems during the commemoration of Africa Day of Food and Nutrition Security on the theme. FAO also contributed and supported the organization of the following: (i) two CAADP Partnership Platform dialogues centered on "Translating Lessons Learnt into Accelerated Action towards 2025 in the context of Malabo Commitments" and "Ending hunger in Africa by 2025 through resilient food systems"; and (ii) two Malabo Policy Learning Events (MAPLE) that brought together technical networks, country-level policy practitioners and leaders to discuss important agricultural policy topics, share learning and generate actions that can drive the CAADP Malabo Agenda.

24.   To support the implementation of the Malabo Declaration commitment on Mutual Accountability to Actions and Results, FAO strengthened national and regional institutional capacities for knowledge and data generation, and management that support evidence-based planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Specifically, FAO:

        a.   Strengthened national capacities for food- and nutrition-based data collection, analyses and communication for informed decision making, including support for assessment of

the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on food security and nutrition in Benin, Burundi, Eritrea, Namibia, Sierra Leone and Togo;

b. Organized successfully the 27th Session of the African Commission on Agricultural Statistics (AFCAS)" aimed at assisting Members in improving data collection, processing, analysis, dissemination, comparability and development of SDG indicators. Forty AFCAS member countries attended;

c. Developed the operational guidelines for the World Programme for the Census of Agriculture 2020, supported the implementation of the Global Strategy to improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics, and supported 12 countries (Angola, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Niger and Sao Tome and Principe) in the implementation of agricultural censuses. FAO supported also the assessment of the Agricultural Statistics Strategic Plan in Tanzania, strengthened capacity for Country Gender Assessments in Somalia and supported South Sudan to finalize the Gender Stocktaking and develop a gender action plan;

d. Supported the AUC, African Union Development Agency - New Partnership for Africa's Development (AUDA-NEPAD), and 12 countries to prepare the third continental Biennial Review report in collaboration with other partners. FAO supported 8 countries (Angola, Cabo Verde, Chad, Madagascar, Namibia, Niger, Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe) to document progress on poverty reduction (SDG 1) and ending hunger (SDG 2) to complete their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) reports on SDG implementation;

e. Produced and disseminated two flagship reports, the "Overview of Food Security and Nutrition in Africa" in collaboration with the AUC and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) to inform on the progress towards the Zero Hunger target (SDG 2), and the standing challenges;

25. Continued to promote nutrition tools at country level on Food Based Dietary Guidelines and knowledge products, using these tools to raise consumer awareness on healthy diets option as part of the COVID-19 response, and mainstreaming nutrition in key corporate and strategic documents. FAO provided technical support and strengthened institutional capacities to conduct prospective assessments of policy and economic environments to reduce poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition through agricultural commodity value chains such as cashew, cocoa, maize, rice, poultry, fish and tomatoes, which covered 8 countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Eswatini, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, , and Togo). In addition, staff in member countries were supported with technical assessment and capacity strengthening to undertake value chain assessments on the rice value chain for the West Africa Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and on the shea butter value chain in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) countries. The results of these assessments were used to inform dialogues with different stakeholders on investment priorities and key areas for policy reform and enhanced value chain actor engagement.

26.   FAO supported drafting of a model law on food security and nutrition and its dissemination to governments and national stakeholders in Central, West and North Africa to support advocacy and political engagement to track progress towards ending hunger and malnutrition as well as for integration in AU structures for improved food security and nutrition.

27. The capacities of government and national stakeholders were developed including through the provision of data, knowledge products and policy papers to support the development of Common Country Analysis and the formulation of United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF) in 13 African countries that are currently implementing the new generation UNSDCFs and 33 that are about to embark on this strategic exercise within the next 2-3 years.

28. Policy papers and knowledge products on healthy and locally available nutritious food options were provided to AUC/ AUDA-NEPAD officials to strengthen agrifood systems transformation for better nutrition and livelihoods through advocacy and educational activities, including in Small Island Developing States (SIDS). At the country level, FAO continued to promote nutrition tools by delivering

Food-Based Dietary Guidelines and consumer awareness products on healthy diets to governments and national stakeholders as part of COVID-19 response and efforts to mainstream nutrition in key corporate documents. A report on Home Grown School Feeding programmes and a compendium of successful case studies were published and disseminated to governments and other stakeholders in African countries to support them in the design and implementation of school feeding initiatives to improve food security and nutrition.

29.   African countries, including Burundi, Chad, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Senegal and Rwanda, were supported in establishing or strengthening systems for collecting, processing and disseminating agricultural, food security and environmental data and information as well as strengthening the production of food security and nutrition indicators, particularly for monitoring SDG 2.1.

30.   Under the FAO-United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Opportunities for Youth in Africa (OYA) Programme, FAO collaborated with UNIDO and AUC to develop and disseminate baseline reports and action plans for implementation of youth entrepreneurship and agribusiness projects in Cabo Verde, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Tunisia and Zambia. FAO, in partnership with the AUC, developed the 'Guidelines for Investment in Youth in Agriculture and Agribusiness in Africa', which were used to strengthen the capacity of AU members to design and implement youth-centred investments for decent employment.

31.   In partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-hosted International Policy Center for Inclusive Growth (IPC_IG), an e-learning micro-course on Rural Poverty and Social Protection was developed and launched to improve livelihoods and improve food security and nutrition in Africa. An action plan was developed to strengthen social protection systems and extend their coverage to rural areas in Eastern and Southern African countries.

Sustainable Production Intensification and Value Chain Development in Africa

32.   Governments and private sector stakeholders across the Africa region were supported to formulate national agricultural mechanization strategies for the operationalization of the Framework for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization in Africa (F-SAMA). Working with the AUC and the African Conservation Tillage Network (ACT) as well as with key stakeholders from both the public and the private sector, FAO provided knowledge products, guidelines, best practices and innovations to support the operationalization of F-SAMA for improved productivity and competitiveness along agrifood systems in Africa.

33.   FAO strengthened the capacities of national stakeholders in Africa on Global Soil Organic Carbon Sequestration (GSOCseq), ensuring that countries are equipped with the skills and information to implement bilateral environmental agreements at global and continental levels for more improved sustainable natural resource management.

34.   Integrated Pest Management packages to deal with Fall Armyworm infestation were developed and rolled out in the West, Central, Eastern and Southern Africa sub-regions to support implementation of the Global Action for Fall Armyworm control.

35.   Publications for governments and national stakeholders were provided to support AU Semi-Arid Food Grain Research and Development (SAFGRAD) carry out a survey of Status, Opportunities and Challenges of Irrigation and Agricultural Water Management Practices in Africa for Advancing the Domestication of the AU's Irrigation Development and Agricultural Water Management (IDAWM) Framework for food security.

36. FAO led, in coordination with co-implementing agencies (IUCN, WWF and WB), the development and implementation of the GEF-7 Sustainable Forest Management Impact Program on Dryland Sustainable Landscapes (DSL-IP), which was endorsed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in June 2021 with a total grant funding of USD 104 million and USD 810 million of co-financing. The programme is supporting African countries, including Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe in the implementation of their interventions by providing demand-driven technical support which includes the development/refinement of selected community of

practices for sustainable dryland management and the documentation and sharing of evidence-based good practices to enhance the programme's overall coherence, scale and impact.

37. FAO also supported Members in the formulation and implementation of large-scale climate change related projects, with the financial support of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), benefiting countries including: :
   a) The Republic of Congo PREFOREST CONGO - a project to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from forests in five departments in the Republic of Congo, worth USD 29.9 million;
   b) Côte d'Ivoire -PROMIRE on promoting zero-deforestation cocoa production for reducing emissions in Côte d'Ivoire , worth USD 10 million;
   c) Zambia with UNDP (USD 2 million); and
   d) Mozambique with WFP (USD 600,000).

38. Working jointly with the AUC and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the capacities of African public and private organizations were strengthened in Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and atomic mass unit (AMU) Surveillance to improve disease prevention, control, response and management to promote trade.

39. The Digital Agriculture Profiles (DAPs), a pre-investment policy tool aiming at measuring the readiness for digital transformation of the agricultural sector, was promoted to guide policy and decision makers in the elaboration of a suitable policy framework for digital transformation in agrifood systems in Côte d'Ivoire and Kenya. Digital solutions DAPs, including mobile, data, blockchain, and weather station technologies, provided the most promising high-impact solutions for addressing the challenges facing Kenyan agricultural stakeholders.

40. Good practices in agriculture, aquaculture and livestock were developed and provided to families, private and public organizations to improve food security and nutrition in several African countries, including to promote the Green Family Initiative in Gabon and short value chains and urban-rural food linkages in Senegal, support scaling up of the production of bio-fortified crop varieties (OFSP, cassava, maize and cowpea) in the Gambia, operations in different stages of hybrid rice production, hybrid rice seed and agricultural mechanization to improve agricultural productivity in Madagascar and aquaculture development in Ghana and Nigeria.

41. Knowledge products, including guidelines for the development and harmonization of food control measures, food control systems and trade facilitation programmes were provided to national stakeholders, private and public organisations in African countries and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to support their effective participation in the activities of International Standard-Setting Bodies (ISSBs) and their contribution to continental free trade agreements (AfCFTA).

42. Working in collaboration with the AUC, the AUC-FAO Framework for Boosting Intra-African Trade in Agricultural Commodities and Services was developed and disseminated to national stakeholders, private and public organizations in ECOWAS and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) region to support intra-regional agricultural trade under the AfCFTA. FAO also supported the formulation of the AU SPS Policy Framework and the AUDA-NEPAD regional harmonized guidelines for food safety standards for improved trade in the Africa region.

43. Food loss assessments, situation analysis and intervention options for selected value chains, especially in the context of COVID-19 pandemic, were provided to agribusiness small and medium enterprises (SMEs), including women and youth-led SMEs, private and public organizations in West Africa to reduce Post Harvest Losses (PHL) for food security and nutrition. The Codex Alimentarius structures of AU, RECs and Memberss were reinforced to promote the roll out of agricultural incubation initiatives and implementation of the PHL and Food Safety frameworks for improved trade.

44.   FAO, in collaboration with the World Bank, provided a food price monitoring system in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic to support development partners, governments and private and public organizations in Africa track emerging food insecurity trends and food price movements during the COVID-19 pandemic and to support COVID-19 response and recovery initiatives to improve food security   and   nutrition.

Building Resilience in Africa's Drylands

45.   In collaboration with the AUC and other development partners, a policy paper identified 15 African countries as at "high-risk" of severe deterioration of food security and nutrition to help governments and development partners design and implement targeted COVID-19 response and recovery interventions for food security and nutrition.

46.   Knowledge products on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on agriculture and food security in Africa, including a synthesis report of the disruptions in agrifood systems, a policy paper on impacts on agriculture, trade, SMEs and other key sectors, impacts on youth and women and country case studies on specific agricultural sectors were developed and disseminated to the AUC, governments, development partners, and private and public organizations to formulate and implement policy, investment and advocacy interventions for COVID-19 response and recovery for food security and nutrition.

47.   Knowledge products and best practices were developed and disseminated to the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the Permanent Interstate Committee for drought control in the Sahel (Comité permanent inter-Etats de lutte contre la sécheresse dans le Sahel) (CILSS), and FAO networks at the IGAD/CILSS such as "The Horn of Africa and Sahel Virtual Knowledge Share Fair: Promoting innovation to build resilience against climate shocks" for adapting to climate change effects.

48.   The capacities of staff from the AUC and RECs as well as national stakeholders were strengthened to facilitate resilience measurement for the biennial review process and the design of country level action plans to integrate migration issues into humanitarian and rural development policies and programmes.

49.   The capacities of governments and national stakeholders in 20 African countries were strengthened to build and manage resilient health systems, with a focus on pandemic preparedness and response to prevent the next zoonotic pandemic under the Emerging Pandemic Threats (EPT-2) and Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA).

50.   FAO, in collaboration with partners, has supported Members regarding emergencies, including:

   a)   The fully funded FAO appeal for USD 230 million that allowed ground and aerial operations to treat 2.3 million ha of Desert Locust in the Horn of Africa and Yemen since January 2020. FAO's Desert Locust Information Service (DLIS) which provided timely and accurate early warning and forecasts throughout the upsurge. Under the auspices of the L3 Locust Emergency, DLIS collaborated with numerous academic, research and private sector partners, resulting in 16 new innovations that have been integrated into DLIS and national locust programmes to further improve monitoring and early warning. In addition, the drones for the locust survey were introduced in several countries with the support of the Desert Locust Regional Commissions in the Central and Western Region (CRC and CLCPRO).

   b)   Emergency response to control outbreaks of African Migratory Locust (AML) in Southern Africa, covering Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe for a total budget of USD 4.9 million. This effort resulted in the effective and timely suppression of the AML in the five affected countries through setting up of Locust control units, procurement of equipment for Locust surveillance, monitoring and control as well as operational and logistical support to field activities for locust control. With this, the food and nutrition security and livelihoods of up to 2.8 million vulnerable people in the five affected countries were protected from the threat of the AML.

c) Scaling-up Early Warning Early Action (EWEA) for agriculture and food security, for the locust activation in the grand sud – where an estimated 4.25 million people were exposed. Countries included are Malawi, Madagascar and Zimbabwe.

d) Emergency response to a complex crisis in southern Africa, covering Madagascar and Mozambique of USD 700 000 , to support effective preparedness and response to emergencies.

e) Regional pests and pesticides management and capacity building of the CILSS member countries s (Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Chad, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal) – with USD 7.4 million.

f) Strengthening the resilience of cross-border pastoral and agro-pastoral populations in the Sahel, through the Global Network Against Food Crises Partnership Programme in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, with Euro 9.1 million budget.

51. Early warning and early action plan for governments, national stakeholders, private and public organizations in the Africa region were developed for rabies elimination and desert locust in Ethiopia, Fall Armyworm in Botswana and Burundi to reduce threats to the food chain.

52. In partnership with CILSS, WFP and US Agency for International Development (USAID), FAO conducted assessments of food security parameters for governments through the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) and the Cadre Harmonisé analytical tools for countries' improved reporting and actions on food insecurity and nutrition.

53. The capacity of governments, including Burkina Faso, Comoros, Ethiopia and Kenya, was strengthened to mainstream nutrition indicators in their policies and Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) frameworks with a special focus on mainstreaming Trade and Nutrition and promoting local, nutrition sensitive value chains for food security and nutrition.

54. The capacities of public and private organizations were strengthened in AUC member countries, including Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Eritrea, Mozambique, Namibia and Rwanda, on better and harmonized technical options, practices and strategies on Conservation Agriculture and climate smart agriculture to facilitate adaptation and mitigation climate change measures for improved productivity.
55. FAO supported governments in Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania and Zimbabwe in promoting the Progressive Control Pathway (PCP) for African Animal Trypanosomosis (AAT) to develop national AAT atlases of tsetse and streamlining it into national policies or strategies for food security and nutrition.

Notable partnerships, innovation and cross-cutting themes

56. Notable partnerships and stakeholder engagement, including with the private sector during the biennium, included:

a) Collaboration, consultations and inclusive policy dialogue with stakeholders including the AUC and UNECA to support governments, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the African Union Commission (AUC) as well as the United Nations development system (UNDS) entities at national, sub-regional and regional level respectively towards the UN Food Systems Summit. At the country and regional levels, these consultations brought together the diverse voices of smallholder producers/family farmers, youth and women, and Indigenous People to provide African perspectives on the key themes of the UN Food Systems Summit.

b) FAO developed several partnerships with private firms. A partnership with Mandulis Energy Limited, a pioneer private firm in Uganda, helped to generate and supply on-grid and off-grid renewable (biogas) energy, connect farmer groups, refugees, and the host communities to market by supplying agriculture residue and produce at fair market prices and improve their access to alternative energy sources at affordable prices. In another private sector partnership, FAO and JR Farms Limited, a youth-led agribusiness company, collaborated to promote youth agripreneurship through capacity development including training and to improve their access to equity funds in Rwanda.

c) Other notable partnerships included the following:

- Initiatives forged and strengthened in gender equality for normative and programmatic work. These included collaboration with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) Gender Platform to generate evidence on the gender impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and gender-responsiveness of policy response in seven countries in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) with the International Trade Centre to develop a joint programme, which aims to ensure that African women agriculture producers, traders and processors increase their benefits from trade and improve their livelihoods through the AfCFTA. In the area of climate action and governance, FAO worked with the African Risk Capacity and the World Food Programme (WFP) to raise awareness on the importance of women's leadership in climate action and disaster risk reduction (DRR) through the organization of webinars and the production of joint policy briefs;

- FAO and AUC collaborated in the development of the 'Investment Guidelines for Youth in Agri-Food Systems in Africa' and with, UNIDO and AUC in a tripartite partnership under the Opportunities for Youth in Africa (OYA) Programme;

- The Network of Farmers' and Producers' Organizations in West Africa *(Réseau des Organisations Paysannes et de Producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Ouest)* (ROPPA) to develop the capacity of producers and the regional action plan for the UN Decade of Family Farming (UNDFF) in West Africa;

- The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), a consortium of 129 African Universities in 38 countries for knowledge sharing and capacity development of youth;

- Regional research organisations, such as the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), and CGIAR institutions such as CIAT-Bioversity, The Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) - World Agroforestry (ICRAF) have worked with FAO to advance on Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) in Africa. The joint work included taking stock of experiences and lessons learned and developing policy and technical guidance for scaling-up CSA programmes in Africa building on respective research work and field projects of all the organizations involved as well as their data and knowledge compilation and analysis.

57. Statistics is at the core of FAO support to several countries and regional partners. FAO's approach to incorporating statistics in the Africa Region's programme of work include:

- Technical, statistical support in conducting agricultural censuses, TCP and donor-funded projects, as well as through the implementation of the "Global Strategy to improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics";

- The FAO database with compiled data on food security and nutrition indicators (SDG 2) as well as other SDG indicators for which FAO is custodian has been made available and accessible to the African Union, AUDA-NEPAD and countries for the preparation of the third continental Biennial Review report and the Voluntary National Reviews respectively. This data is also used for tracking several indicators and complying with the accountability mechanisms for the CAADP/Malabo declaration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and

- Statistical data used for mainstreaming nutrition in the ongoing formulation of National Agriculture Investment Plans (NAIPs).

58. The approach for addressing cross-cutting themes, such as youth and gender, in the programme areas of work include the following:

- Advancing youth employment and entrepreneurship is at the core of the new regional 'Decent employment in agrifood systems' priority programme, which will strengthen efforts to implement the Rural Youth Action Plan (RYAP 2021-2025) in sub-Saharan Africa and promote increased investments towards youth in agrifood systems; and

- Gender issues were incorporated across all of FAO's work to identify and implement priority areas of work at the country and regional levels. Additional collaborations with external partners, including the AUC, CGIAR and ITC, ensured gender issues are well mainstreamed within the Africa Region's programme of work.

59.   During the biennium 2020-21, FAO Africa explored several innovative approaches in the region's programme of work. A notable business process innovation is the development of an integrated framework for programme work planning and results, which ensured strong alignment between corporate strategies, regional programmes and country priorities. This framework facilitated planning, dialogue and results measurement across all levels at FAO. At the programme level, FAO collaborated with IGAD to improve prevention and control of Rift Valley Fever, (RVF), through the RVF Decision Tool (RVF-DST), a web-based platform that integrates risk modelling/forecasting, remote sensing and expert knowledge on RVF. FAO also built the capacity of Women Dagaa Processors (Marine waters) around the Indian Ocean in the United Republic of Tanzania towards Reducing Post Harvest Losses by using Hot Air Blow Machines.

Gaps and lessons learned

60.   The implementation of FAO's programme of work during the biennium 2020-21 identified key gaps and lessons learned, including the following:

- FAO Country Offices are at the front line of good project design, which highlights the importance of FAO's technical expertise and leadership at the country level. These are essential for FAO to positively influence the policy agenda and advocacy on normative issues. FAO country offices' technical expertise and leadership are also essential for FAO's contributions to and leadership on food and agriculture in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

- Multi- and cross-sectoral coordination and action is extremely important when addressing gender inequality and triggering the transformation of discriminatory social norms. The promotion of systematic exchange of experiences and lessons among countries and stakeholders in the Africa region and beyond has proven to be an effective way to support initiatives towards gender-responsive and inclusive agrifood system transformation, and should be encouraged.

- Applying lessons from previous crises to anticipate actions, using existing data and information to extrapolate initial crisis assessments, linking "data for action" to "data that demonstrates resilience outcomes", investing in a systematic (digitised) data sharing mechanism and multi-stakeholder collaboration for joint planning and joint outcomes are critical for timely assessment and response to major, unknown crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Knowledge generated by FAO projects is important for FAO's advocacy, resource mobilization and internal learning. It is also a public good that should be systematised and made widely accessible.

- Strategic and inclusive partnerships are essential for achieving results. While FAO maintains strong partnerships with counterpart ministries, FAO's partnerships need to be more inclusive of other stakeholders, particularly other ministries, civil society and the private sector. Inclusive partnerships are not built through *ad hoc* activities. They require an approach based on deep understanding of potential partners in government, the private sector, civil society and other development partners, with a clear articulation of the mutual benefits of the partnership for FAO and the potential partners.