



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Benin and FAO

A partnership for the sustainable development of agriculture and food security

Since joining FAO in 1961, Benin has established strong cooperation links with the Organization. These links have assisted in its fight against poverty and hunger, by providing broad technical support and by supporting the development and the implementation of policies, programs and capacity building projects. Cooperation also includes projects for emergency assistance, agricultural rehabilitation and resilience building.



CELEBRATING 40 YEARS IN

BENIN

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

Women's empowerment in rural areas

Hydro-climatic disturbances cause food crises in several areas of Benin where women are more severely affected by agricultural shortages.

Faced with these challenges, in 2015 FAO launched the Rural Women's Empowerment Support Project, which aims to contribute to improving the living conditions of rural women and their social leadership. The project targeted three communes in southwestern Benin (Dogbo, Djakotomey and Aplahoué), where women benefited in particular from capacity building in market gardening production, donations of sheep to assist in developing family based animal farming, as well as training sessions on resilience to hydro-climatic shocks.

Project: Support for rural women's empowerment through improved food and nutrition security. Funded by FAO.

Matching FAO's expertise to Benin's development priorities

FAO's assistance in Benin is shaped by the 2017-2021 FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF), which is centered on two priority areas:

- **Strengthening food security** through diversification and increased production in the agricultural, livestock and fisheries sectors
- **Sustainable management of natural resources** including improvements in legal and administrative frameworks, harmonization of soil management and responsible land governance

Jointly developed with the Government and other development partners, the CPF is constructed on the principles of Results-Based Management (RBM). It is the fruit of a long process of consultation between the various stakeholders in the agricultural sector and the representatives of sustainable development in Benin including Government Ministries (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, and Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development), producers, the private sector and civil society.

Working together

Scaling up preparedness and prevention capacity

In Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Niger, several poultry farms and bird markets have been affected by the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) virus H5N1.

In 2015, FAO, with the assistance of the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), coordinated rapid assessment missions to Benin, Togo and Cameroon, with the aim of reducing the risk of potential spread between countries in the region. FAO has also launched an emergency project to scale up the preparedness and response capacity of countries in the region.

Project: Emergency aid for the prevention and control of HPAI H5N1 in West and Central Africa. Financed by the United States.

CONTACTS

FAO Representation
Représentation de la FAO Avenue Jean Paul II, Lot 549,
parcelle H, quartier Zongho Ehuzu
Cotonou, Benin
Tel: +229 21314429
E-mail: FAO-BJ@fao.org

Reconstruction after floods

Benin is subject to climate shocks and frequent floods that severely affect the agricultural sector, resulting in crop and livestock losses and the destruction of fish ponds in rural communities.

In November 2013, after the Niger River breached its banks, FAO helped rebuild Benin through two emergency projects. About 15 000 households received direct

assistance, particularly women, in the cities of Malanville and Karimama – the most affected areas – in the north of the country. Quality rice seeds and off-season vegetables were provided and corn growing along

the shoreline was sustained. Agricultural equipment and tools were also distributed and storage facilities were put in place to reduce production losses. Many farmers benefited from training in post-harvest activities, modern technologies and best practices. In addition, 1 300 young people – who had undertaken agricultural activities as part of a Government programme aimed at reducing youth unemployment – received support focused on assisting existing commercial activities. Community members and local authorities also benefited from awareness and training activities, including resilience workshops focusing on good agricultural practices, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and natural resource management.

Supporting the production of quality seeds

Benin's agriculture sector makes a decisive contribution to food security, income generation and job creation. Maize plays an important role in the local diet and is central to the country's food security strategy. It is also among the priority sectors in Benin's Strategic Plan for Recovery. Ensuring a supply of quality seeds and planting material has been essential in the process of modernizing and improving the competitiveness of agriculture. With a view to boosting the seed sector through increased diversification and productivity, FAO has been facilitating farmers' access to quality maize seeds and developing seed quality control systems. It has also implemented a project to strengthen the operational capacity of the Agricultural Quality Control Authority through the purchase of modern equipment and the publication of a manual on the production, monitoring and certification of seeds.

Project: Supporting the Development of the Corn Seed Sector. Implemented under FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme.

Strengthening pesticide management

Persistent organic pollutants and obsolete pesticide stocks not only have harmful effects on human health but also threaten the environment. As part of Benin's efforts to revive its agriculture sector, a four-year project has been launched to reduce the harmful effects on human health and the environment of the excessive and poorly controlled use of pesticides. Results achieved to date include the removal of 450 tonnes of an expired and extremely harmful pesticide, Endosulfan; the identification and decontamination of a number of sites; and institutional capacity building for the management of obsolete pesticide stocks.

Project: Contribution to the Protection and Disposal of Obsolete Pesticides in Benin. Funded by Japan.

Increase the production of market garden crops in urban areas

Securing sufficient quality produce to meet the demand of urban households is a challenge for Benin, due to its urban population growth. To deal with this problem, the Government of Benin has requested FAO's support for the financing and execution of an innovative project dedicated to the "Promotion of Urban and Semi-Urban Agriculture". Totalling US\$373 000, this project contributed to the updating of technical production itineraries for nine of the most common market garden crops in the country. Product production and processing fliers and manuals have been developed for each of these different crops and made available to the various participants in the value chain. The project has also led to the formulation of a strategic plan for the development of market garden crops in urban areas, as well as the rehabilitation of seed farms.

