



Botswana and FAO

Partnering for sustainable market-oriented agriculture and food and nutrition security

FAO and Botswana have cooperated for the last 30 years, with FAO being one of the main partners to have continuously supported the country's development efforts despite its middle-income classification. In addition to supporting the formulation of key national policies, FAO had delivered more than 112 technical projects, ranging from animal disease control to business management capacity building for farmers and extension services. A constant focus has been placed on promoting sustainable livelihoods for smallholders.

Matching FAO's expertise to Botswana's development priorities

FAO assistance in Botswana is shaped by the 2014-2016 FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF). Jointly developed with the Government and other partners, the CPF is aligned with the Botswana UN Development Assistance Framework as well as relevant national policies, including Vision 2016 and the National Development Plan 10 (2009-2016).

Activities are further aligned with specific sectoral programmes, including the Integrated Support Programme for Arable Agriculture Development, the Livestock Improvement and Infrastructure Development, and Programmes for Disease Control and Intensification of Rural Infrastructure Development.

The CPF focuses FAO-Botswana cooperation on three priority areas:

- **Support for producers and natural resource managers** in the adoption of **environment-friendly and climate-smart agricultural practices and approaches**, aimed at a sustained increase in agricultural production. Technical assistance to the Government in this area includes the design and roll out of control strategies for the Asian fruit fly in Chobe district, with capacity building at community and household level; improving the legal framework and institutional capacities for life-cycle management and disposal of obsolete pesticides;

and developing capacities for climate change adaptation and mitigation as well as building resilience through innovative technologies and approaches. In particular, FAO will support the Botswana National Conservation Agricultural National Task Force, facilitating the integration of climate-smart agricultural approaches in their work.

- **Support for the development and implementation of inclusive policies and strategies**, aimed at a sustainable increase of agricultural production and food security. Assistance in this area includes a specific focus on the development and adoption of a plant protection and irrigation policy. Other activities include the elaboration of a legislative framework and capacity building for the protection of Botswana's animal and plant genetic resources; and addressing the issue of illegal hunting and bush-meat trade, including the development of policy and control measures and sensitization campaigns, and the identification of alternative livelihoods for local communities. This last area of activity will directly benefit rural communities in northern Botswana, which risk losing natural resources that are vital for long-term food security and wildlife-based livelihoods. FAO is also to support monitoring and analysis of the country's nutrition status and a review of the national Nutrition Surveillance System.
- **Support for the promotion of more inclusive, efficient and trade-oriented livestock, crop and food systems.** In line with the Government's objective of promoting inclusive, efficient and trade-oriented food and agricultural systems, FAO is helping to build institutional and technical capacities for meeting relevant Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards and providing effective public services. Activities cover animal disease monitoring and response; the formulation of a crop pest and disease inventory; and the improvement of regulatory capacities and compliance of meat inspection services and value chain stakeholders.

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Animal disease control and emergency response

One of FAO's flagship programmes of assistance in Botswana is that of animal disease control. This has included the foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) surveillance project, delivered through FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP), which helped to upgrade serological facilities at the national veterinary diagnostic laboratory. This enabled large-scale testing to be carried out and essential information on the country's FMD status to be made available, thereby permitting the development of contingency plans. Botswana also benefited from another TCP project to support prevention and control of contagious bovine pleura-pneumonia (CBPP), a disease which spreads rapidly between herds and across international borders, causing significant cattle mortality and production losses. The high impact of this intervention is demonstrated by the fact that Botswana is now considered a model country, in which CBPP has been successfully eradicated.

Regional base for emergencies

From 2008 to 2013, FAO placed the subregional unit of its Emergency Centre for Transboundary Animal Disease Emergencies (ECTAD) in Gaborone to support member countries tackling area-specific problems and to coordinate activities with the South African Development Community (SADC), headquartered in Gaborone. This ECTAD unit played a major coordination role for influenza preparedness in southern African states. A number of innovative activities were implemented, including: laboratory training coupled with annual international laboratory proficiency testing; table-top and simulation exercises for the implementation of contingency plans, and the development of regional laboratory Standard Operating Procedures. In addition to conducting laboratory training and surveillance, the ECTAD unit supported the SADC Livestock Technical Committee (LTC) and its subcommittees on laboratories, epidemiology and informatics, and veterinary public health. Innovations included faster reporting through digital pen technology and total laboratory management using the laboratory information management system (SILAB) for African countries.

It was the ECTAD unit in Gaborone that facilitated designation of NVL Botswana as the second Regional Support Laboratory.

Capacity building – a key component of cooperation

FAO provides capacity building as an integral part of its policy support and field assistance. Specific capacity building interventions (provided through the Technical Cooperation Programme) have included: promotion of business concepts for farmers and extension workers; support to Botswana's Agro-food Value Chain Project; support to the Assessment of Livestock Identification and Traceability System; development of a Strategic Plan for the Department of Agribusiness Promotions; and food safety strengthening.

Interventions specifically tailored for the Agriculture Ministry include strengthening of the monitoring and evaluation system for resource control; and the design of a new data system for the processing and analysis of the annual agricultural and farm management survey data.

"Improving agricultural and food systems is essential for a world with healthier people and healthier ecosystems"

**José Graziano da Silva,
FAO Director-General**



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