



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Canada 

Rome-based Agencies Resilience Initiative

Strengthening the resilience of livelihoods in protracted crises
in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Niger and Somalia

Foreword

Humanity is at a critical juncture with an unprecedented level of humanitarian needs driven largely by protracted crises. Stronger and more frequent shocks are disproportionately impacting the world's most vulnerable and food insecure populations, particularly women and children. Humanitarian responses to crises have saved lives and helped to restore livelihoods, but have not always succeeded in addressing underlying vulnerabilities. Meanwhile, development gains can still be quickly wiped out by a natural disaster, conflict, or a surge in food prices. Addressing underlying vulnerabilities through our humanitarian work could facilitate and form the base of our development efforts.

Advancing new and differentiated approaches to protracted crises, including promoting resilience of vulnerable communities and livelihoods, is worth further exploring to break the cycle of vulnerability and achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 2 “Zero hunger”. But this requires a ‘New Way of Working’, in line with the commitments made at World Humanitarian Summit of 2016 and in the Grand Bargain that calls for an integrated, context-specific, multi-year, multi-partner actions led by national governments and local communities and supported by multi-year financing.

Canada is partnering with the United Nations Rome-based agencies – the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) – to further test in the field their joint Conceptual framework for strengthening resilience for food security and nutrition. To do that, we are making a unique commitment to addressing humanitarian needs in protracted crises by contributing 50 million Canadian dollars (USD 38 million) for the implementation of an innovative, five-year programme in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Niger and Somalia.

As we look into how to do things differently and be innovative, the impact of this Resilience Initiative will help inform Canada's approach to humanitarian food assistance in the future. We thank the RBAs for their leadership and determination in helping the most vulnerable and ending hunger. We hope that others will join us in the resilience agenda that provides a sound programming framework for bridging humanitarian and development approaches, helping to mitigate the damaging effects of recurrent crises and to address the root causes of persistent vulnerabilities and food insecurity.



Ms Marie-Claude Bibeau
Minister of International Development and La Francophonie
Canada



Canada's unique commitment to addressing humanitarian needs in protracted crises

The Government of Canada is contributing CAD 50 million (USD 38 million) to the three United Nations Rome-based agencies (RBA) for the implementation of an innovative, five-year programme in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Niger and Somalia. While the RBAs collaborate closely in many countries, this is the first time that they have received joint multi-year funding for resilience work. The impact of this Initiative will help inform Canada's approach to humanitarian food assistance in the future.

A complementary approach that bridges humanitarian and development objectives

This joint programme aims to meet immediate food needs while sustainably increasing food security and strengthening the resilience of food-insecure households in regions affected by protracted and recurrent crises, with a specific focus on vulnerable women and children. The programme represents an unprecedented effort to support and invest in the same vulnerable communities over a five-year period through integrated, context-specific, gender- and nutrition-sensitive assistance packages. These are identified by communities through participatory planning and aligned to national priorities. They aim at protecting and promoting people's food and livelihood sources by restoring, rehabilitating, and supporting their productive assets (such as land, natural resources, inputs, tools, access to water, livestock, etc.), improving market linkages and strengthening technical and marketing capacities. This will contribute to addressing the root causes of food insecurity and vulnerability, and ultimately reduce dependency on humanitarian assistance.

The majority of people affected by conflict and protracted crises rely on crops, livestock, fisheries and forestry for their livelihoods. Conflict and violence interrupt food production and agriculture, deplete food stocks and seed reserves, disrupt markets, deepen hunger and exacerbate malnutrition. RBAs work towards enhancing sustainable and resilient rural livelihoods which are a cornerstone of peaceful societies. RBA interventions build resilience by supporting people and systems to cope with and recover from conflict, while contributing to economic development more broadly.



RBA collaboration: an integrated approach for greater results

The programme capitalises on existing RBA cooperation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Niger and Somalia and leverages the strengths, experience and tools of each agency to maximize results.

Key elements of the RBA collaboration

Joint planning and programming

The planning and design of the activities to be implemented in the joint areas of intervention is based on WFP's Three-pronged approach (3PA) to resilience building. The 3PA is a consultative process that places people and partners at the centre of planning. It lays the foundation for jointly identifying, designing, coordinating and implementing complementary projects by linking information on the trends of food security, shocks, livelihoods, and seasonality at national, sub-national and community levels. The 3PA allows women to contribute to their own empowerment and tailor programmes to the needs of girls and women.

Gender-sensitive resilience programming

Vulnerable rural women are disproportionately affected by shocks and stressors, particularly in contexts of protracted and recurrent crises. A gender responsive strategy will be adopted throughout the intervention. Gender-related issues will be identified and analysed at every stage of the programme, taking into account the different roles and challenges of men and women, and addressing their specific needs.

Complementarities and alignment of activities

The RBA will align interventions to complement each other's efforts. WFP will target the most food-insecure people through its Food Assistance for Assets programmes, providing food and/or cash-based transfers to cover households' immediate food shortfalls so they can dedicate time to building assets that stabilize landscapes and reduce the risk of future climatic shocks and seasonal hardships (particularly those faced by women), together with FAO's technical support. With the natural resource base restored, FAO-supported Farmer and Pastoral Field Schools and training in climate resilient agricultural practices will boost production and increase income and diversification of livelihoods. This will complement IFAD's investments in connecting farmers to markets, and enable WFP to further support smallholder farmers through local purchases. IFAD's role will also be instrumental in strengthening local producers' organizations; promoting greater access to rural financial services; and improving the community-based governance of scarce natural resources. This will enable smallholder farmers to adapt to crises through rural employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, especially for rural youth.

Generating evidence through impact evaluation

FAO's Resilience Index Measurement and Analysis (RIMA) model will be used to measure the impact of the interventions on household resilience. It will analyse the main determinants of resilience (e.g. access to basic services, assets, social safety nets, etc.) and how they evolve over time during programme implementation. Lessons learned will allow to improve the quality and impact of joint RBA resilience programming in the three contexts as well as in many other countries, through documenting and sharing experiences.





The Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Territory of Rutshuru, where the project will be implemented, has been heavily affected by recurrent violent conflicts in the last few years.

The communities will benefit from an innovative combination of:

- Food Assistance for Assets
- smallholder value chain development
- financial inclusion

The project will initially provide cash-based or in-kind transfers to improve food access for the most food insecure households, whilst simultaneously building natural resource-based assets and rehabilitating productive infrastructure. The project will then provide technical assistance and quality inputs, and implement the Purchase for Progress (P4P) approach. It will strengthen the capacities of smallholder farmers (with a focus on those with less than one hectare of land) and their organizations in sustainable and nutrition-sensitive agriculture production; quality and post-harvest management; and storage and marketing.

The project will also improve their access to markets with a focus on the key value chains identified by the design of the North Kivu Agriculture Sector Support Project (PASA-NK): maize, Arabica coffee, potato and rice. Market infrastructure will also be constructed and rehabilitated.

The project will also support the financial inclusion of smallholder farmers, both women and men, by setting up Savings and Loan groups and connecting them gradually with formal financial institutions.

This will facilitate access to credit and financial assets. Finally, women's groups, including girls, pregnant women and breast-feeding mothers, will benefit from nutrition education, training in nutritional good practices, functional literacy programmes and culinary demonstrations.





The Niger

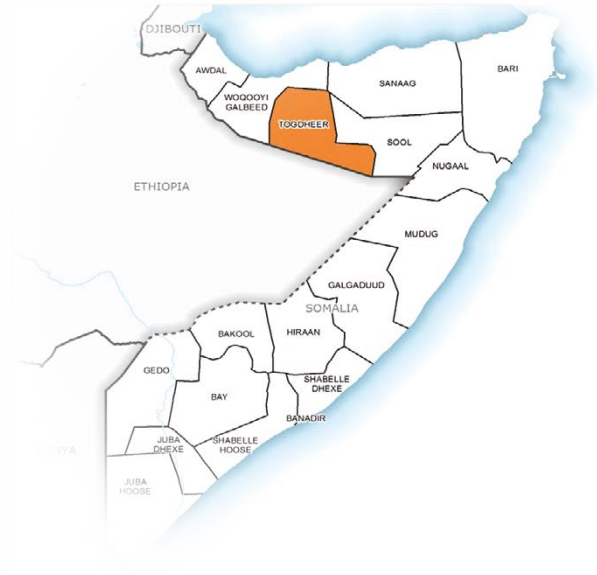
The Niger is affected by recurrent food and nutritional crises, triggered by widespread vulnerabilities and increased frequency of climate shocks.

In the two “*communes de convergence*” of the Maradi and Zinder regions where the project will be implemented, gender-sensitive participatory community planning exercises will be organized to identify specific community needs, discuss assets and land tenure issues and sensitize communities to the project. This will align closely with the national Nigeriens Nourish Nigeriens (3N) initiative and with the ongoing Family Farming Development Programme (ProDAF).

Targeted households will be supported with cash or in-kind transfers through Food Assistance for Assets programmes. Technical assistance, through Farmer and Agro-pastoralist Field Schools, and the provision of diverse, quality inputs for both crop and animal production, will further strengthen and diversify the economic potential of smallholder farmers. In addition, support will be provided to improve their access to markets through local purchases and training in water management, land use planning, climate resilient and nutrition-sensitive production, post-harvest management and marketing.

A financial component will contribute to sustaining the impact of the project by providing beneficiaries with the means to continue implementing innovative production techniques over time. Dimitra listening clubs – each with 25 to 30 individuals – will be set up to mobilize the community, improve social cohesion and gender equality, and increase women’s leadership in the selected villages. Nutritional supplements will be provided to children aged 6-23 months in targeted households throughout the lean season, and to malnourished children throughout the year. Capacity building on community management, and screening of moderately acute malnutrition (MAM) in children and malnourished pregnant women, will be undertaken. School meals will be also provided and school gardens will be created.





Somalia

The lives and livelihoods of the communities of the two districts of the Togdheer region in Somalia, where the project will take place, have been extremely affected by the 2017 drought which triggered famine conditions.

The communities will receive support throughout the next five years to rebuild their food stocks and livelihoods, recover their nutritional status and strengthen their productive assets. This will help mitigate the impact of future shocks. The most food insecure households will receive food or cash transfers to cover seasonal food shortfalls, and quality inputs to increase crop and fodder production. Through Food Assistance for Assets, they will receive support to rehabilitate degraded range and agricultural lands, improve productive infrastructure (irrigation and water reservoirs), and implement soil and water conservation measures.

To improve the diversification of their livelihoods, both within and outside agriculture, technical assistance in sustainable crop and livestock production techniques, vocational skills training for income generation, and training in post-harvest management and marketing will be undertaken.

The use of fuel-efficient cooking stoves will be promoted to improve Safe Access to Cooking Fuel and Energy (SAFE). Communities will receive support in developing action plans for sustainable natural resource management, with government buy in and ownership. Nutritious food will be provided to pregnant and nursing women attending Mother-Child Health Centres. Those identified as moderately acute malnourished will be targeted with supplementary feeding programmes. Food assistance will also be provided to tuberculosis patients and people receiving anti-retrovirus treatment, and to their families. A school meals programme will support good diets for school children.

Definitions

Dimitra listeners' clubs are groups of people that meet regularly to identify common challenges, seek solutions and take collective action to improve their living conditions. With a specific focus on those most marginalized (women and youth), this participatory approach contributes to behavioural change, improves access to information for rural populations and strengthens organizational capacities.

Farmer or agropastoralist field school (FFS) is a group-based learning process that brings together concepts and methods from agroecology, experiential education and community development.

Food Assistance for Assets (FFA) is a programme that provides a food or cash-based transfer to fill a consumption gap of the most vulnerable (i.e. short-term access to food), whilst simultaneously supporting people to build household and community assets that reduce the risk of disaster, strengthen livelihoods and build resilience over time (outcome and impact levels).

Purchase for Progress (P4P) programmes connect smallholder farmers to markets, giving them an opportunity to grow their businesses and improve their lives and those of their communities. Under P4P, stable demand from WFP and partners provides smallholder farmers with an incentive to invest, whilst bringing together a wide range of partners to provide support across the entire value chain – from production to post-harvest, business skills and access to finance.

Safe Access to Fuel and Energy (SAFE) is a multidisciplinary approach that focuses on (i) ensuring a sustainable supply of energy through mapping and assessing potential sources of fuel; (ii) addressing energy demand through fuel needs assessments, the promotion of fuel-saving cooking practices and fuel-efficient technologies for cooking and productive uses; and (iii) promoting sustainable livelihoods and diversifying livelihood activities to build resilience.

Savings and loan schemes allow for village members to pool their savings by buying shares in the group, and when they've all put in an agreed amount members can qualify for a small loan to start a small business or meet a sudden need (e.g. school fees). The interest paid when the loan is returned is shared among all members.

Key information

Contribution

CAD 50 million

Resource partner

Canada

Duration

2017–2021

Selected countries

The Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Niger and Somalia

Total planned beneficiaries

27 000 families (168 000 people)



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