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SUCCESS STORY

Protecting Livelihoods and Building Resilience in Drought-Prone Communities

USAID-supported trainings preserve agricultural livelihoods in Angola and Namibia



[Photo Credit: FAO/Matteo Tonini]

"The animals had become gaunt...when we got help from the veterinary services and FAO, the antibiotics helped them recover quickly." - António Muetukoya



[Photo Credit: FAO/Javier Sanz Alvarez]

Beneficiaries' yields improved following FAO trainings in southern Namibia.

Through \$4.1 million in FY 2014–16 funding from USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA), the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is protecting livelihoods and building resilience in drought-prone communities of southern Angola and northern Namibia.

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An increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events has accompanied climate change in Southern Africa, making it difficult for vulnerable populations to cope with environmental shocks. In areas along the border of Angola and Namibia, successive years of dry conditions have depleted household resources and disrupted agriculture- and- livestock-based livelihoods, constraining access to food and income for many drought-affected families.

Since 2013, USAID/OFDA has supported efforts by FAO to build resilience in drought-prone communities of southern Angola and northern Namibia, including through the promotion of climate-adaptive practices and diversified cropping, strengthening of veterinary services, and trainings in water conservation techniques. Although the onset of a region-wide El Niño-induced drought in late 2015 has strained agricultural systems throughout Southern Africa, FAO's resilience-building activities have empowered communities to maintain agricultural production and livestock-based livelihoods amid the dry conditions.

Ms. Uazamuani Tjambiru, who received agricultural training from FAO, stated that "...with [FAO] support we've learned that diversification helps us to ensure sustainable food production...we remain hopeful for a better tomorrow."

USAID/OFDA assistance has also enabled FAO to meet immediate needs and restore livelihoods during acute emergencies. In late 2015, FAO supported the vaccination campaign that helped contain an outbreak of foot and mouth disease in southern Angola's Cunene Province. Following the end of the outbreak, FAO trained 40 community animal health workers to improve animal disease monitoring and treatment services in the province. In June 2016, the Government of the Republic of Angola lifted a ban on livestock sales in the area due, in part, to the strengthened disease-monitoring framework, restoring a significant source of income for communities affected by the ongoing drought.