

**Impact of Climate Change on Food and Nutrition Security  
in ACP Countries**

**ACP Committee of Ambassadors**

**Statement by the FAO Director-General**

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**Brussels, Belgium**

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Ladies and gentlemen,

1. It is a pleasure to be here again. I would like to thank Secretary-General Patrick Gomes for inviting me to meet the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States.
2. In 2011, the APC were an important partner in my election as Director-General.
3. Your support stemmed from the belief that we could achieve food security and adequate nutrition for all by working together.
4. Since I took up office in 2012, we have been working to transform FAO with one goal in mind: give a more significant contribution to your development efforts.

5. We sharpened our focus around five strategic objectives: ending hunger, promoting sustainability, reducing rural poverty, improving markets, and building resilience.
6. We are continuously increasing our efficiency to deliver better value for your money.
7. We are strengthening our presence in the field to increase our direct assistance to you.
8. You are recognizing our efforts.
9. The fact that I am the only candidate for a second term as FAO Director-General is only one example of your support.
10. There are others. Just a few weeks ago, FAO's executive Council reached consensus on the budget level for our next program of work.
11. This is historic. It is the first time we have an agreement on our budget before the Conference.

12. FAO will keep its focus on the five strategic objectives in the years to come.
13. We are also giving greater prominence to certain areas, including nutrition and climate change. Both issues are of great significance to the ACP Group of States.
14. Even though, hunger has fallen in the past decades, the world still has over 800 million undernourished people.
15. Until we bring that number to zero, our main challenge continues to be ending hunger.
16. But hunger is only one face of malnutrition. At the other extreme we have obesity, which has been rising at alarming rates and affects developed and developing countries alike.
17. And in the Caribbean and the Pacific, obesity is becoming a concern as big or even bigger than undernourishment.
18. FAO recognizes this and work to ensure food security and adequate nutrition for all.

19. The second area we are increasing our work in is climate change. Agriculture has a dual relationship with climate change.
20. It is a source of greenhouse gas emissions and has the potential to mitigate them. But it cannot be used as a scapegoat to clean all carbon fuel emissions.
21. At the same time, climate change affects agricultural productivity and can change the food production geography.
22. Climate change is not tomorrow's problem. It affects food systems and the livelihoods of the most vulnerable today.
23. It is important to note that the impacts of climate change are not evenly distributed. Tropical regions, home to many ACP members, are among the most affected regions.
24. Also remember that over 70 percent of the world's food insecure lives in rural areas of developing countries.

25. So, climate change has a direct impact in the food security and livelihoods of poor family farmers, pastoralists and agro-pastoralists.
26. They usually have less access to adequate rural infrastructure.
27. They have access to degraded natural resources. They suffer with water scarcity. They are subject to repeated droughts and floods.
28. And when agriculture does not have the chance to bloom and when food is always scarce, the consequences can be traumatic.
29. Hunger can turn into despair and feed social unrest and conflict. Hunger can force people to leave families and homes in search for better opportunities that do not always exist.
30. Climate change worsens all these conditions. And poor rural families do not have the means to cope alone.

31. In these countries, with these families, I have no doubt that our first goal must be preserving food security.
32. For that to happen, agriculture must adapt to climate change. This requires a paradigm shift in global food systems and business models. Our window of opportunity is now.
33. By building resilience to climate change in agricultural systems we can achieve food and nutrition security for all and meet our sustainable development targets.
34. FAO is part of this effort. We have launched regional resilience initiatives in the Near East, northern Africa, the Sahel and the Horn of Africa.
35. In the Caribbean, we are supporting the development and implementation of resilience building and disaster risk reduction plans.
36. In the Pacific region, we are part of food security and sustainable livelihoods program.

37. There are many ways to build resilience and adapt food systems to cope with changing climate patterns.
38. Sustainable land and water management, and approaches such as climate-smart agriculture and agro-ecology are tools that can help achieve this transformation.
39. They are part of a set of possible approaches that can be used, combined and adapted to local conditions.
40. There are also many innovative solutions being used by local farmers that can become part of our global toolbox.
41. This shows the importance of South-South Cooperation and how it is a two-way street: everyone has knowledge to share.
42. There are no one-size fits all solutions, but there is a lot we can learn from each other.

Ladies and gentlemen,

43. Cyclone Pam that hit Vanuatu in March is a reminder of the vulnerability of Small Island Developing States to natural disasters and to climate change.

44. But we must also not forget the silent and slow onslaught of recurrent droughts. Year after year they affect regions such as the Sahel and Horn of Africa. Their damage is spread over time but is as deadly as a cyclone.

45. Finding lasting solutions is a joint responsibility. And it requires action at the national and international levels.

46. We look forward to a new, global, legally binding climate agreement at the COP21 in Paris.

47. An agreement that limits temperature rise to less than 2 degrees Celsius. That assigns clear responsibilities. And that ensures a fair division of mitigation and adaptation costs.

48. The agriculture sector cannot be asked to pay the price for all GHG emissions.

49. And within it, we cannot put too heavy a burden on poor family farmers, pastoralists and agro-pastoralists.

50. They are not the main source of emissions, but are among the most affected. We cannot punish them. We need to help them adapt to climate change and reach their potential.

Ladies and gentlemen,

51. In 2011, you supported my election as Director-General. We have made important strides since then. We are on the right track.

52. FAO looks forward to facing and overcoming our development challenges working in partnership with the ACP countries.

53. Thank you for your attention.