



Food and Agriculture Organization
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STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY AND ENGAGEMENT OF YOUNG SOMALI PROFESSIONALS IN AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY FOR NATIONAL RESILIENCE-BUILDING

August 2023

SDGs:



Country:

Somalia

Project Code:

TCP/SOM/3802

FAO Contribution:

USD 320 000

Duration:

1 October 2020-30 September 2022

Contact Info:

FAO Representation in Somalia
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Implementing Partner

Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation.

Beneficiaries

Young Somali technical professionals.

Country Programming Framework (CPF) Outputs

CPF (2022-25): Institutional strengthening and capacity building support provided to expand the coverage of government early warning centres and increase the access of vulnerable communities to enhanced early warning products and services.

CPF (2017-19) Output 1.3: Capacity developed and institutions strengthened to deliver services, promote good practices and add value along agriculture, livestock and fisheries value chains.



BACKGROUND

Somalia is emerging from decades of conflict and a breakdown of state institutions, including those responsible for leading, coordinating and advancing progress in the agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors. However, the process of revitalizing institutions is challenged by a lack of qualified and experienced staff in local job markets, as well as recent university graduates who have yet to gain the relevant technical and organizational experience and training required to work in line ministries, or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and United Nations (UN) agencies.

Although Somalia's work force has considerable potential, including individuals from the diaspora, many require proper training and exposure to the agriculture and food security sectors. Such preparation would render them better suited for employment within these sectors, enabling them to make meaningful contributions toward attaining national and rural development objectives.

As such, this project aimed to enable and empower young agricultural leaders to help shape and contribute to agricultural development in Somalia. It aimed to recruit 20 university-trained national professionals to participate in a ten-month internship programme for junior technical professionals, in collaboration with relevant authorities.

IMPACT

By improving the capacities and technical skills of Somali junior technical professionals in the field of agriculture and food security, the project contributed towards the attainment of its expected outcome to enable and empower young agricultural leaders shaping agricultural development in the country.

ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS

The internship programme was hosted by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU) between October 2022 and June 2022, and linked to the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, which provided support for technical and programme needs. The 20 junior technical professionals had no previous exposure to or experience in food security and the project enabled them to acquire skills and experience in food security assessment, monitoring, analysis and reporting. Interns received training in several topics, including basic Geographical Information Systems (GIS), Integrated Food Security Phase Acute Food Insecurity (IPC AFI) classification, IPC Acute Malnutrition (IPC AMN) and a course on food security and livelihoods. The interns also had the opportunity to participate in seasonal food security and nutrition assessments and subsequent IPC analysis workshops, which enabled them to acquire additional and marketable practical skills and experience. At the activity level, the mentoring programme provided support and guidance for young professionals in their agricultural career development. It provided them with insights into new and emerging opportunities and helped boost their confidence levels and soft skills development. It also focused on two-way skills development, whereby young professionals offered senior professionals support in areas where they are strong (e.g. social media, etc.), thus creating awareness among senior professionals about the value of young professionals and providing new ideas and insights enriching the work of the senior professionals.



IMPLEMENTATION OF WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

While the training of junior technical professionals was successfully achieved, their engagement with partners in the agriculture and food security sector could not be implemented due to COVID-19 restrictions. As a result and in response to a request from the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation, funds were reprogrammed from activities that could not be carried out and used to extend the duration of the internship from 10-months to 1.5 years. Although the COVID-19 pandemic was not originally foreseen as a risk during project formulation, throughout implementation, COVID-19 risk mitigation measures were developed and applied, including the provision of training virtually and the use of face masks and hand sanitizer during in-person events.

FOLLOW-UP FOR GOVERNMENT ATTENTION

The project aimed to build the capacity of young Somali professionals in various institutional and technical fields in support of the implementation of programmes in Somalia, such as for agriculture, forestry, livestock and fisheries subsectors. This was addressed from a number of levels (policy, institutional, and individual), reflecting FAO's capacity development approach. The continued uptake of these capacities by line ministries is strategic to ensuring sustainable resource use in the country. Considering the fact capacity development for young Somali professionals is an ongoing and long-term initiative, the mobilization of funds will be essential in ensuring the continuation of a mentoring programme, as well as the benefits reaped from the project.

SUSTAINABILITY

1. Capacity development

The project was embedded within the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation, and existing policies and legal frameworks are in place to further support capacity development. Through their participation in multi-partner seasonal food security assessments and subsequent analyses, the junior technical professionals had several opportunities to interact and work with technical staff from other line ministries, NGOs and UN organizations. However, the Ministry lacks the resources to absorb the trained interns and sustain the internship programme for other (new) interns.



2. Gender equality

The internship programme benefitted women, where 2 out of 20 participants were female (10 percent). While this is relatively a low figure, it somewhat mirrors the overall lower participation of women in the work force of the Ministry.

3. Environmental sustainability

As the project consisted primarily of the training and mentorship of interns, it had limited impact on the environment.

4. Human Rights-based Approach (HRBA) – in particular Right to Food and Decent Work

The project design did not have explicit consideration of the human-rights. However, the training and experience obtained by the junior technical professionals enabled them to acquire marketable technical skills.

5. Technological sustainability

The internship involved the use of basic information technology equipment (laptops, printers internet), and the training and experience gained by the participants enabled them to broaden their knowledge and acquire additional technical skills.



ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS - LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Expected Impact	Enabled and empowered young agricultural leaders shaping agricultural development in Federal Republic of Somalia		
Outcome	Improved capacities and technical skills of Somali Junior Technical professionals in the field of agriculture and food security		
	Indicator	Number of Somali Junior Technical professionals who successfully complete one-year of internship and mentoring programme	
	Baseline	0	
	End Target	20	
Comments and follow-up action to be taken	A total of 20 junior technical professionals completed approximately 1.5 years of internship at the FSNAU between October 2020 and June 2022. The interns received training in several topics including Microsoft Basic, GIS, IPC AFI, IPC AMN and a course on food security and livelihoods. The interns also had the opportunity to participate in seasonal food security and nutrition assessments and subsequent IPC analyses workshops, which enabled them to acquire additional practical skills and experience.		
Output 1			
Technically specialized Somali junior professional officers identified and trained to influence policies and programmes related to agriculture development in Somalia.			
Indicators		Target	Achieved
Number of Somali junior technical professionals identified and selected for a one-year internship and mentoring programme through a competitive process.		20	Yes
Baseline	0		
Comments	The internship originally planned for ten internships per year (i.e. a total of 20 internships in two years) but at the request of the Minister of Agriculture and Irrigation, this was changed to a one-year internship for the 20 candidates identified.		
Activity 1.1			
Technically specialized junior professionals identified and work plans endorsed			
Achieved	Partially		
Comments	The Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation assigned a national project coordinator, and 20 interns were identified and nominated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation based on the profiles (Terms of Reference) developed by FAO. Periodic individual performance appraisals of the interns were completed in accordance with FAO human resources procedures.		
Activity 1.2			
Junior technical professionals empowered through mentoring programming.			
Achieved	Yes		
Comments	A training and capacity building package was prepared by FAO/FSNAU for the 20 interns. The interns participated in an 18-month (October 2020 and June 2022) mentoring programme (trainings, workshops) under the direct supervision of the Head of FSNAU/FAO. All interns were attached to the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation to support technical and programme needs. The interns received training in several topics, including Microsoft Basic, GIS, IPC AFI, IPC AMN and a course on food security and livelihoods. The interns also had the opportunity to participate in seasonal food security and nutrition assessments and subsequent IPC analysis workshops through which they acquired additional practical skills and experience. With regard to securing future funding, priority has been given to conducting capacity assessment and identification of priority gaps of key government institutions with the objective of developing a programme document and budget to address the identified gaps.		
Output 2			
Somali junior technical professionals engage with partners in the agriculture and food security field			
Indicators		Target	Achieved
Number of events organized for engagement of trained junior technical professionals with partners.		3	No
Baseline	0		
Comments	This was not achieved due to COVID-19 related restrictions affecting meetings and travel. Funds were reprogrammed to extend the duration of the internship from 1 to 1.5 years.		
Activity 2.1			
Trainees engage with partners to demonstrate newly acquired skill sets and experience			
Achieved	No		
Comments	This was not achieved due to COVID-19 related restrictions on meetings and travel. Funds were reprogrammed to extend the duration of the internship from 1 to 1.5 years. Despite these not being completed and funds being reprogrammed, through their participation in IPC analyses workshops, the interns had the opportunity to demonstrate their newly acquired skills.		

Partnerships and Outreach

For more information, please contact: Reporting@fao.org

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