

FAO'S RURAL INSTITUTIONS, SERVICES AND EMPOWERMENT (RISE) TEAM NEWSLETTER

# ON THE RISE

STRENGTHENING RURAL INSTITUTIONS AND EMPOWERING PEOPLE TO REDUCE POVERTY

## What's new?

The RISE Team kicked off the last semester of 2018 by projecting its vision, mission and achievements during the ESP Divisional Workshop on September 25th. The event was an opportunity for reflection on the division's work in 2018 and the team's aspirations and ideas for 2019.

**FAO-Dimitra highlighted at the Food Security week 2018 organized by the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in Papua New Guinea.**

FAO's work on gender and the Dimitra Clubs approach were illustrated last August in a presentation entitled "*Global and Regional Perspective on Gender Inclusivity in Sustainable Agriculture and Fisheries*" and a panel discussion on "*Policy approaches to support economic empowerment of women*". Delegates of the APEC regional economic forum and the Ministry of Agriculture of Papua New Guinea demonstrated particular interest in the best practices, case studies, and recommendations related to gender in agriculture and fisheries.

**A two-day regional review workshop was held in Beirut, Lebanon, bringing together stakeholders of FAO regional project "strengthening national capacities of producer organizations and cooperatives in the Near East and North Africa (NENA) Region".**

Participants included representatives of national institutions, producer organizations and cooperatives from Lebanon, Oman and Sudan took part, as well as the International Cooperative Alliance, the Arab Peasants and Agricultural Cooperatives Union and the Sultan Qaboos University.

## NEXT ISSUE

- Impact study of the FAO-Dimitra Clubs in Niger in terms of gender equality and rural livelihoods
- Training workshop on "Agricultural Loan Analysis" with AFRACA in Kenya

Check out the RISE team's website:  
<http://www.fao.org/rural-institutions>

## Team Updates

Our colleague, friend and team leader **Vito Cistulli** will retire at the end of October 2018.

Vito's leadership has been instrumental in the development of the Team's vision, and overall direction over the last three years. His ability to see value in everyone's contribution and to empower his team members have been cornerstones of his leadership.

Congratulations to Vito for his accomplishments and the best of luck for this new beginning!



## THE FAO (RISE) TEAM

aims to strengthen formal and informal rural institutions and organizations to reduce rural poverty and empower rural populations through four areas of work:

### TERRITORIAL APPROACH

The prevalence of poverty and hunger and wide geographic disparities around the globe calls for a paradigm shift capable of capturing the diversity and the multi-dimensional nature of food insecurity and poverty and to ensure inclusive solutions to these challenges.

Contact: [Vito.Cistulli@fao.org](mailto:Vito.Cistulli@fao.org)

### INCLUSIVE PLURALISTIC SERVICES

Today's farmers and producers require access to a wide range of services that enable small-scale producers and their organizations to meet specific needs and demands; engage with markets and improve their livelihoods.

Contact: [May.Hani@fao.org](mailto:May.Hani@fao.org)

### RURAL FINANCE

Increasing finance and investments in rural areas is a vital part of addressing food security and poverty reduction and for achieving greater financial inclusion, seizing investment opportunities and mitigating risks for rural communities.

Contact: [Azeta.Cunqu@fao.org](mailto:Azeta.Cunqu@fao.org)

Join the Rural and Agricultural Finance and Investment Technical Network (RAFI-TN) at [RAFI-TN@fao.org](mailto:RAFI-TN@fao.org)

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

Gender and social inequalities hinder the rural transformation that is needed to reduce rural poverty and hunger in developing countries. Participatory communication, community mobilization and gender transformative approaches that enable people take ownership of their own development.

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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)  
Social Policies and Rural Institutions Division  
Rural Institutions, Services and Empowerment (RISE) Team

*The RISE Team has taken important steps to advance its work in various areas:*

### LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

An institutional capacity-strengthening programme targeting rural microfinance institutions (MFIs) in Laos is now in its second phase of activities. In October, rural finance colleagues assisted MFIs with market-related studies to inform their rural outreach strategies.

### NIGER

With special attention on women and youth, the FAO-Dimitra Clubs approach is used as a tool for empowering people and for building resilience in an emergency context in the Diffa Region. The Swedish-funded programme, «Emergency assistance to refugees/returnees and Internally

Displaced Persons (IDPs) victims of Boko Haram crisis and resilience-building in Diffa Region» has allowed 124 Dimitra Clubs to be set up in three refugee camps to date.

### INDIA

Through the FAO Partnership with the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), the RISE Team initiated an important new area of work on women's land rights in India. Working in collaboration with the Milan Center for Food Law and Policy and FIAN Nepal, FAO facilitated a participatory needs assessment and capacity development workshop on the Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure (VGGTs) with rural women in the SEWA network facing discriminatory land access practices.

## In the pipeline

### FAO-UNDP COLLABORATION REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT: TOP POLICY PRIORITY OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

FAO and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) undertook a scoping mission to Bishkek from 24-28 September, 2018 to gain a better understanding of the country's Regional Development Policy (RDP), and to explore the ways in which the two organizations could assist Kyrgyzstan in achieving sustainable development of the Osh Region in the medium and long-term.

The mission underlined the need for a comprehensive strategy that includes urban and rural areas, and that ensures that the

regional strategy is harmonized with existing strategies and actions at the local and central level; the strategy is based on sound, underpinning models, and evidence and review of international best practices; the regional strategy is driven by a true bottom-up approach; no one is left behind; and resilience of local communities to climate change is increased.

Following the mission, FAO took the lead in preparing a jointed concept note for UN support to the identified region.

This will be presented and discussed by the UN Resident Coordinator at a forthcoming High-Level Event organized by the Government of Kyrgyzstan.

## MISSIONS COME AND GONE

### Kyrgyzstan: 24-28 September

FAO-UNDP Joint mission to Bishkek to explore collaboration opportunities with Government

### Lebanon: 30 October-2 November

Regional workshop on strengthening national capacities of producer organizations/cooperatives in NENA region

### Kenya: 26-29 November

Regional training event with African Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (AFRACA) on agriculture loan appraisal

### Niger: December (Dates tbc)

Dimitra Clubs' Coordinator to support final workshop on the mid-term review of the Rural Women's Economic Empowerment (RWEE) Joint Programme in Niger

### Zimbabwe: December 1-14

Joint RISE/TCI mission to develop the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of rural finance activities of the recently extended Zimbabwe Livelihoods and Food Security Programme (LFSP)

