

## A+FS Network Newsletter 09/2013

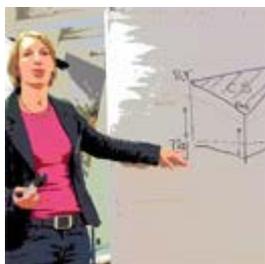
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Dear Agriculture & Food Security Network members

Please find below our summer edition of the A+FS Newsletter compiled by Séverine Erismann. This Newsletter sets a focus on outcome indicators, and monitoring and reporting of agriculture and food security issues and it presents our latest news on food security and nutrition.

Séverine Erismann

### Feature



### A+FS Outcome Monitoring

**Impact measurement in agriculture and rural development remains a challenge for many cooperation agencies.** The A+FS network is opting for a more strategic monitoring of SDC's agriculture and food security programmes at the country and regional level. The Network has committed to facilitate the exchange on good methods and competent partners among its members in order to provide relevant inputs for national and global policy debates.

In 2012 many new country strategies with A+FS as a priority theme have been approved. The network observed that its members were challenged by the definition of outcomes and indicators. Subsequently, the network facilitated a peer exchange and learning between Cooperation Offices and headquarters (e.g. [Blog of A+FS f2f 2012](#)), analyzed the indicators in annual reports of 20 countries and proposed 4 common strategic fields of observation covering **productivity, income, land tenure, and food gap**.

The four common strategic fields are:

1. Increase in agricultural and livestock production and productivity on family farm level (gender differentiated)
2. The percentage of smallholder farmers with secure land tenure (gender differentiated)
3. The increase in income of agricultural and livestock farms and small rural enterprises (gender differentiated)
4. Reduction of the food deficit or of the length of the lean season while taking account of the availability of food over the course of the year for men, women and children in families

With SDC's 2013-2016 Dispatch and many new country Cooperation Strategies (CS), this year the focus lies on how to measure the Outcome indicators in the 4 common fields. For this purpose, the network has taken a further step and released a suggestion in July to all country offices concerned, as a first step, to present and organize the information of their programmes and activities of the Annual Report 2013 in such a way that the direct effects will become visible in A+FS for those common 4 fields of observation. In this way, the network aims at facilitating the exchange and knowledge on monitoring and reporting of A+FS issues, which will, in a second step, allow for an aggregated reporting of SDC on the organisation level as well as for the monitoring of the 2013-2016 Dispatch.

So far, the network has received many positive feedbacks on this process. Different case studies shall be presented and discussed at the next A+FS F2F in 2014 to draw conclusions and to identify the next steps to take. We are looking forward to further reactions and to a continuing fruitful discussion.

More information:

[Blog of A+FS f2f 2013 \(Accra\) >>](#)

[Blog of A+FS f2f 2012 \(Switzerland\) >>](#)

### Focus Area: Rural Advisory Services

## GFRAS Annual Meeting in Germany

The 4th Annual Meeting of the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) will



take place on 23-26 September in Berlin, Germany. The meeting will contribute to the thematic exchange on rural advisory services (RAS) in plenary and parallel sessions, group discussions, side events, a field trip and a share fair.

In particular, on September 23rd, a series of side events will stimulate discussions around RAS networks and the engagement in RAS:

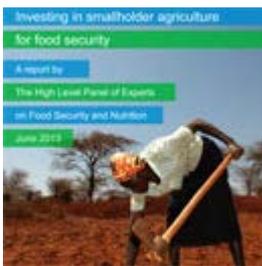
- A founding meeting of the European Forum of Farm and Rural Advisory Services (EUFRAS) will take place, while the regional RAS networks RELASER (Latin America) and AFAAS (Africa) will exchange on their experiences regarding the establishment and support of RAS country fora.
- Thematically, Switzerland will be well-represented, as the Swiss Forum for Rural Advisory Services (SFRAS) will make an active contribution by organizing a side event on the topic of "Embedded services as modality for sustainable RAS". Real life cases from the experience of SFRAS members showing a diversity of embedded RAS will be presented followed by a panel discussion. Simultaneously, meetings on extension education (GFRAS), on good practices in agricultural extension (GIZ & GFRAS) and on Innovation in Family Farming (FAO) will take place.

[Programme of SFRAS side event >>](#)

- This busy day will also see a side-event organized by the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development (GDPRD) to which SDC will be contributing actively. Development partners will share their strategies of support to promote RAS at local, national, regional and global levels, and discuss the importance of RAS in the Joint Donor Concept for Rural Development.

[Programme of GDPRD side event >>](#)

## Focus Area: Land Governance



### Investing in smallholder agriculture

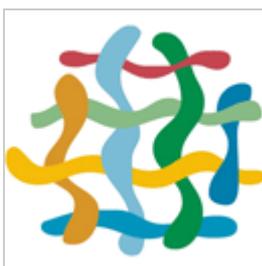
The High Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition (HLPE) - which is the science-policy interface of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) - released a new report on Investing in smallholder agriculture: a new deal for food security and nutrition in June 2013. The report highlights the role of smallholder farmers, reflects upon the very future of small-scale agriculture across society in developing countries and it calls for a new deal for smallholders: Investment for agriculture and especially for smallholders is acknowledged to be an absolute necessity, especially as the

majority of the hungry people in the world are involved in scale-scale farming, fishing and livestock rearing activities.

In October 2013, this report will nourish the debate on "Investing in smallholder agriculture for food security". The report will be equally relevant to the ongoing work of the CFS on preparing principles for responsible agricultural investment ("rai") heading towards 2014. It also makes a substantive contribution to the preparation of the International Year on Family Farming 2014.

In the next Newsletter, we shall update you on the discussions held at the CFS and in particular we shall present its output on that issue.

[HLPE-Report "Investing in smallholder agriculture for food security" >>](#)  
[Committee on World Food Security >>](#)



### New Global Working Group on Land

As a sign of recognition of the need to foster information exchange and cooperation on land governance issues at global level, bilateral and multilateral donors agreed to establish a new Global Working Group on Land, facilitated by the Secretariat of the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development. This working group was officially launched a few weeks ago. While the workplan for the first year is currently being finalised, the UK (Department for International Development, DFID) has agreed to take the inaugural chair.

This Global Donor Working Group on Land has been created to support improved delivery in a climate of heightened attention, need and awareness of existing challenges and lessons.

[Global Donor Working Group on Land >>](#)



## Voluntary Guidelines Newsletter

The latest edition of the Newsletter of the Voluntary Guidelines on Tenure Governance Initiative provides useful highlights from the past year as well as the work expected in the near future.

[Newsletter - August 2013 >>](#)

### Focus Area: Postharvest Losses



## PHM Subgroup Meeting in Addis

The Postharvest Management (PHM) Network's Subgroup is organizing its first workshop in Addis Abeba on 29th October to 1st November 2013. This Workshop will be held back-to-back with a meeting of GPFS's regional PHM coordination and advisory group, and after the official launch of the Ethiopian PHM program. The workshop will allow for a thematic deepening and knowledge sharing between experts and implementing practitioners. It will provide insights and lessons learnt from SDC's recent PHM experience in Latin America, Kenya and Malawi. Also, results of pre-

assessments in Tanzania and Ethiopia will be discussed in order to identify challenges and next steps for the PHM programmes implementation in Sub-Saharan Africa. More information on the meeting will follow.



## New post-harvest management projects

Currently, SDC is supporting PHM projects in Sub-Saharan Africa through the Regional Cooperation Division East and Southern Africa and the Global Programme Food Security (GPFS). This month, two new PHM projects have been approved, one in Tanzania from the East and Southern Africa Division, and the second one in Ethiopia as part of three GPFS financed PHM projects in the region:

**The SDC Regional Cooperation support to grain post-harvest management in Tanzania** aims at increasing food security of rural households and improving livelihoods and incomes through the promotion of better storage methods, appropriate technology, capacity building and informed policy. The project reduces post-harvest grain losses leading to increased availability and quality of food for home consumption and income generation by addressing systemic impediments to improved household grain storage.

The objective of the **GPFS supported PHM project in Ethiopia** is also to contribute to food security through the reduction of crop post-harvest losses. In Ethiopia, at least 30% of this production is lost annually whereas about 15% of the population is food insecure. Poor post-harvest management practices are the major reason for this level of losses. So far, limited efforts have been made to reduce these losses but global and national awareness is rising that for improving food security not only increased agricultural production is needed but also reduced post-harvest losses. To reduce these food losses the project implemented by the Government of Ethiopia with technical assistance of FAO Ethiopia will: raise awareness, develop capacities of farmers and other actors, disseminate improved practices in selected regions and formulate a post-harvest management policy.



## Case Study: PHM in Nicaragua

The study was conducted in the framework of actions promoted by ASOCAM working for capacity building and the promotion of a systematic approach to Market Development (M4P) in Latin America. The SDC funded Postcosecha / Post-harvest Management programme has been one of the most successful market-development programmes in Nicaragua.

[Estudio de caso del proyecto Postcosecha en Nicaragua con un enfoque sistémico >>](#)



## Post-harvest losses in Benin

The latest A+FS Network Brief provides a case study from northern Benin where post-harvest losses of grains - often caused by the wheat weevil - compromise food security.

[A+FS Network Brief No 4 \(english\) >>](#)

[A+FS Network Brief No 4 \(french\) >>](#)



## International Year of Family Farming

The UN General Assembly declared the year 2014 the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF). Many regional SDC partner organizations such as the West African Network of Farmers Organisations (ROPPA) or the East African Farmers Forum (EAFF) as well as quite a few national IYFF committees plan a series of activities and events to raise awareness on the importance, the challenges and opportunities for family farms.

For SDC and partners this year presents an excellent opportunity to communicate on our activities in support of family farming that in developing countries are often equal to smallholder farms. The Global Programme Food Security participates in the Swiss Committee on the IYFF and co-organises a national conference on the topic on 27/28 June 2014.

[International Year of Family Farming: Global website >>](#)

[International Year of Family Farming: Swiss website >>](#)



## Forests for food security and nutrition

The Climate Change and Environment Network and the A+FS Network co-organized a brown bag lunch on: "Forests for Food Security and Nutrition – Increasing the benefits for rural people". The International Conference on Forests for Food Security and Nutrition, organized by FAO and held from 13-15 May 2013 in Rome, highlighted the important role of Forests, trees and agroforestry systems as valuable contributions to food security and nutrition, especially in developing countries. On the occasion of the brown bag lunch, Maria Chavez (HAFL) presented the main findings of the FAO

conference, shedding some light on the important interface between forestry, food security and nutrition. The conference and the brownbag lunch at SDC represented an opportunity to obtain current knowledge on the cross-cutting topic of forests, climate and food security. The events also showed possibilities to increase cooperation between the two SDC networks, and with global players like FAO and other UN-institutions, where there is congruence between their core mandate and Swiss priorities to support sustainable local food production and to see forests and trees as part of a sustainable solution.

[FAO Conference "Forests for Food Security and Nutrition" >>](#)

## Regional Issues



## New Swiss Cooperation Strategies

### Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Mekong 2013-2017

This new SDC strategy for the Mekong region reaffirms and renews Switzerland's development policy commitment in the Mekong region and in the three countries with bilateral programs: Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Vietnam. The Strategy focuses on Local Governance and Citizen Participation, Agriculture and Food Security, as well as Employment and Vocational Education as the three main domains of SDC's cooperation. It responds to the major challenge the region is facing: the start of the

ASEAN Community in the end of 2015. The strategy responds to the needs of the partner countries and is in line with the principles of Swiss development policy, as defined in the Parliamentary Bill on International Cooperation 2013-2016.

### Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Bolivia 2013-2016

In recent years, Bolivia has made significant progress in the reduction of poverty and inequalities. The new SDC strategy is supporting Bolivia in its efforts to continue this trend, by especially focusing on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups: women and indigenous people. The new strategy is focusing on the consolidation of the democratic process, on climate change adaptation and on reinforcing and diversifying economic productivity.

[Strategy document in German >>](#)

[Strategy document in Spanish >>](#)

### Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Benin 2013-2016

Benin has been an SDC priority country since 1983. The SDC focuses its activities on the poorer areas in the north of the country (the Borgou and Alibori administrative regions), with a gradual opening to the Southern region. The SDC's aim is to reduce poverty and inequality by helping women, men, children and institutions to develop their potential through their own efforts. The new cooperation strategy provides for three main areas of activity: Economic development in rural areas, decentralisation and local development, as well as employment and

vocational education. Cross-cutting issues, such as the promotion of gender equality or supporting smallholder farmers to adapt to climate change complement the activities of SDC in Benin.

[Strategy document in French >>](#)

### Swiss Cooperation Strategy for Chad 2013-2016

Recurrent humanitarian crises, a fragile State and poor governance, weak agricultural productivity and growth as well as population growth and its effects on social sectors, health and education are all challenges that must be overcome to ensure lasting peace, stability and the fight against poverty in Chad. As part of its new strategy 2013 - 2016, SDC will support Chad to face these challenges.

[Strategy document in French >>](#)

## Who is Who?

Some of the A+FS Network members are probably familiar to you, others are not.

In order to give a face to the names on the members list, every Newsletter shortly presents some of the A+FS Networkers:



### Jacqueline Birrer

holds a Master degree in International Relations from the Graduate Institute of International Relations in Geneva. She is a Swiss citizen. Since 2011, Jacqueline Birrer has been working within the SDC Humanitarian Aid Multilateral Affairs Division where she is holding the position of a Programme Manager. In her current position she is in charge of the World Food Programme one of the biggest humanitarian organizations that is present in about 80 countries. She is mainly dealing with food security and various forms of food assistance interventions in humanitarian contexts.

Previous assignments include assignments to the Permanent Representation of Switzerland to the FAO, IFAD and WFP in Rome, the Multilateral Division of the Federal Office for Agriculture and the Economic Affairs and Communication Section of the Consulate General of Switzerland in New York.

Jacqueline Birrer's expectation towards the Network is to provide an experience exchange platform and to connect practitioners in the field and at HQs in the area of food security.



### Juan Bravo

is from Ecuador, currently living in Quito. He has graduated as Agricultural Engineer and specialist of Business Administration and has over 26 years of experience in rural development. He is a specialist in national and regional post-harvest management programs, and in technical and business trainings in Central America. In 2012-2013, Juan Bravo has worked as a Project Manager in Climate Change Adaptation for the World Food Programme and for the Ministry of Environment in Ecuador. Previous to this assignment, he was a Technical Advisor for the SDC in the Regional

PHM/Postcosecha Programme in El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Honduras (1995 to August 2002). He was responsible for the technical replication of metal silos in Cuba and Peru and has also worked as a national expert of a post-harvest project implemented by FAO in Ecuador. As a contribution to knowledge management, he wrote the [book](#) "Metal silos and food security, Lessons learned from a successful Central American Postharvest Management Programme" funded by SDC and he maintains a [blog](#) on post-harvest management.

Juan Bravo's expectation of the A + FS Network is to have a space of technical and managerial knowledge, to facilitate this knowledge exchange in order to promote effective technologies for the reduction of poverty, and to support climate change adaptation measures for smallholder farmers in order to increase their resilience.

[A+FS Network members list >>](#)

## Further Information

### Food Systems for Better Nutrition

Malnutrition in all its forms – undernutrition, micronutrient deficiencies, and overweight and obesity – imposes unacceptably high economic and social costs on countries at all income levels. Improving nutrition and reducing these costs requires a multisectoral approach that begins with food and agriculture and includes complementary interventions in public health and education. The traditional role of agriculture in producing food and generating income is fundamental, but the entire food system – from inputs and production, through processing, storage, transport and retailing, to consumption – can contribute much more to the eradication of malnutrition.

[FAO Report: The State of Food and Agriculture 2013 >>](#)

## Women's Empowerment as a Tool against Hunger

In July 2013, Olivier De Schutter, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, produced a new report entitled Gender Equality and Food Security as part of a joint undertaking between the Asia Development Bank and the FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific.

This publication analyzes gender inequalities that constrain women's roles in agriculture and food production, and in the long run undermine achievement of food and nutrition security in the Asia and Pacific region. It recommends priority interventions and argues for policy reforms to advance gender equality and strengthen country-owned food security strategies.

[Report Gender Equality and Food Security >>](#)

## Unified Approach to End Hunger in Africa by 2025

On 3rd July 2013, Heads of State and Government of African Union Member States, together with representatives of international organizations, civil society organizations, the private sector, cooperatives, farmers, youths, academia and other partners unanimously adopted a Declaration to End Hunger in Africa by 2025. The declaration calls for a combination of policies to promote sustainable agricultural development with social protection, for a budgetary allocation focused on the poor and recognizes the importance of non-state actors to ensure food security.

[Declaration: Towards African Renaissance >>](#)

## Hidden Hunger Index

The unified global efforts to mitigate the high burden of vitamin and mineral deficiency, known as hidden hunger, in populations around the world are crucial to the achievement of most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Hidden Hunger Index was developed in consultation with high-level scientists, academics and decision makers from a range of global institutions, including UN agencies, U.S. government agencies, universities and international NGOs. Working together, these actors developed indices and maps of global hidden hunger to help prioritize program assistance, and to serve as an evidence-based global advocacy tool.

[The Global Hidden Hunger Indices and Maps: An Advocacy Tool for Action >>](#)

### Upcoming Events

7-8 October, Paris, France:

#### [34th International Conference on Food Security and Nutrition](#)

Objective/Theme: Bring together leading academic scientists, researchers and scholars to exchange, share experiences and research results on Food Security and Nutrition, and discuss the practical challenges and the solutions adopted.

7-11 October, Rome, Italy:

#### [Committee on World Food Security](#)

Objective/Theme: Main policy themes are biofuels and smallholder investments

16 October, worldwide:

#### [World Food Day](#)

29 October - 1 November, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia:

#### [Post-harvest management Subgroup meeting](#)