



# Food Security in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

Newsletter for ECHO/DIPECHO DRR Food Security Partners

## Kabumbu community feeds flood victims through project

On March 17, 2011 heavy rains caused the Lifidzi River to overflow, leading to the displacement of about 136 households (of which 96 are female headed) to the evacuation centre at Naliomba Primary School in Salima District, Central Malawi. The floods destroyed seven homesteads and affected 182 gardens (450 ha), planted mainly with maize and rice.

The Kabumbu Village Civil Protection Committee (CPC) was able to address the emergency food needs of the displaced households through cash and crops resulting from the ECHO FS/DRR project. In December 2010, with support from COOPI, the CPC earned MK15,000 (approx. USD 100) from the sale of green maize grown on its one acre plot. MK11,000 was deposited into a bank account and 4,000 kept for petty cash. COOPI further supported the CPC with agricultural inputs for another acre for the summer crop.

After the floods, the CPC withdrew MK7,500 from its savings to purchase food. This was supplemented by giving each affected household 2kgs of the maize from the summer crop, an early maturing variety. The CPC's

maize garden was not affected because of a dyke reinforced with vetiver grass, which helped control runoff. This food sustained the vulnerable households while the government completed a full assessment and decided on a course of action. COOPI was also able to provide other food and non-food items to the community.

The Kabumbu Village experience shows how the ECHO and DIPECHO activities, namely capacity building and income generation helped the CPC *prepare* to effectively respond to the hazard; *mitigate* the impacts of the flooding through riverbank rehabilitation and the use of early maturing hybrid maize varieties, which minimized crop losses; and *prevent* disaster through the early warning system (hydrometric gauges and cell phones provided through DIPECHO) that alerted community members to evacuate and the dykes that kept water from the CPC maize garden.

For the full case study of the Kabumbu Village's experience of the floods compiled by FAO Malawi, visit: [http://www.disasteriskreduction.net/southern\\_africa](http://www.disasteriskreduction.net/southern_africa)



Left to right:

Lifidzi River-the major cause of flooding in Kambumbu; the foundation for the model grain storage unit; the top part of the grain storage unit , FAO Malawi, 2011

ECHO Food Security Implementing Partners



## Project's contributions to implementing the African DRR Strategy

The African Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (2006-2015) was developed by the AU, NEPAD, and others to address poverty eradication and sustainable development by mainstreaming DRR into development. The Programme of Action identifies six strategic areas of intervention and 36 areas of activity to streamline DRR activities in the region. The ECHO FS/DRR projects in Malawi, Mozambique and Madagascar address all six of the strategic areas of intervention. For details on project activities, see [http://www.disasterriskreduction.net/southern\\_africa](http://www.disasterriskreduction.net/southern_africa)

Strategic Area of Intervention	Related ECHO FS/DRR Project Activities
<b>Increase political commitment to DRR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy strategy development to highlight policy gaps</li> <li>• Provision of data on trends and tendencies related to the FS/DRR intervention activities</li> <li>• Mapping of DRR stakeholders at national and regional levels</li> <li>• Promoting increased resource allocation to FS/DRR activities through the development of a long-term proposal for up scaling successful activities</li> </ul>
<b>Improve identification and assessment of disaster risks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving the quality of information and data on food security-related vulnerability, including HIV and gender vulnerability with regards to natural hazards through a standardized baseline</li> <li>• An M&amp;E framework to guide national and regional data analysis to detect trends and tendencies related to the FS/DRR intervention activities</li> </ul>
<b>Increase public awareness of DRR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancing information dissemination through a monthly newsletter and a partner populated website</li> <li>• Effecting case studies on beneficiaries experiences of hazards during the FS DRR project-cycle</li> <li>• Identification of gender and HIV related activities being implemented by partners in the three intervention countries and possibilities for future mainstreaming</li> <li>• Specific targeting of vulnerable women and their households to increase their resilience to hazards (Care Madagascar and GOAL Malawi)</li> <li>• Facilitation of information exchange visits among local authorities in Madagascar</li> <li>• Facilitation of information sharing among implementing partners</li> </ul>
<b>Improve governance of DRR institutions &amp; reduce the underlying risk factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contributing to national and regional platforms through policy briefs and participation in national and regional DRR policy events</li> <li>• Encouraging decentralization by increasing local FS/DRR capacity in all countries</li> <li>• Identifying the gender-specific needs and HIV vulnerability to be included in FS/DRR policies through expert assessments</li> <li>• Engagement with/establishment of local-level FS/DRR structures, such as Civil Protection Committees (CPCs) in Malawi and communes in Madagascar</li> </ul>
<b>Integrate DRR in emergency response management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through the advocacy strategy and engagement with FS/DRR stakeholders, the FS/DRR partners advocate for the inclusion of FS/DRR measures in emergency responses</li> </ul>
<b>Support overall coordination &amp; monitoring of the implementation of the Regional Strategy for DRR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping exercise of existing national and regional DRR stakeholders</li> <li>• Implementation of a standardized baseline to establish the FS/ DRR needs of the intervention beneficiaries</li> <li>• Participation in national and regional FS/DRR fora and the development of a targeted advocacy strategy and long-term proposal to increase awareness and mobilize funds for FS/DRR interventions</li> </ul>

## Targeting women in the ECHO Food Security/DRR projects: experiences from Care Madagascar

FAO's *The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-11* makes the "business case" for addressing gender issues in agriculture and rural employment - [www.fao.org/icatalog/inter-e.htm](http://www.fao.org/icatalog/inter-e.htm), stating that women need equal access to resources and opportunities to be more productive. Similarly in its community assessment Care Madagascar observed that girls and women are marginalized, own less land, have less education and less access to income as compared to their male counterparts.

In an effort to address the gap, Care Madagascar is working with six community women groups in north east Madagascar to enhance their capacity to produce yams and rice. One of the groups in existence since 2008, comprises 14 members –11 women and three men, the majority of whom are single parents, is working on yam production. The group chose yams because they tend to weather cyclones better as they grow underground. Yams are also more nutritious compared to other tubers.

The group has one communal demonstration garden where the members develop skills to produce yams at household level. The group has also motivated 75 other vulnerable households to grow yams in their gardens. The benefits of the women's involvement include technical skills transfer from FAO and Care, access to high yield yam variety (15 to 20kg yield per plant) of which the surplus is sold to earn income and psychological support. Lack of market access is the major challenge faced by the group as yam is a relative new crop in this community.

Care is supporting another group of two women and a man with seed multiplication of an improved variety of rice (x265). With the help of a hired workforce who gain farming skills in the process, the group harvested 800kg of seed in December 2010 from one hectare of land, which is a 25% increase in production compared to the common local varieties. FAO bought 700kg of the seed for redistribution to other vulnerable households.



A women's group in Ambodiatafana in front of their yam seed multiplication plot, FAO REOSA 2011



Nanette, a mother of eight, in her yam garden, FAO REOSA 2011

### Considerations for Programming

- Conducting a gender analysis to understand gender differences, inequalities and capacities improves the effectiveness of humanitarian responses
- Where women are more vulnerable than men, discrete programmes targeting women would be more beneficial
- Routine collection and analysis of sex and age disaggregated data is crucial in assessing the impact of the response
- Establishing linkages between farmer groups and seed buyers will ensure market access and sustainability beyond the project.

## Country Updates

### Malawi

- GOAL is currently training farmers in Nsanje on vegetable production and the structural design of seed storage units, Beneficiaries are in the process of repaying the seed they received from the projects, the Makamgo CPC for example, has so far collected 630kg of millet from the households.
- In Salima COOPI is supporting land preparation for winter maize production and construction of seed storage units is at an advanced stage.
- In Chikhwawa, EAM is procuring seeds and irrigation equipment for the winter season. Farmers are preparing land for winter production of maize and vegetables. Repayment of seeds is also underway.

### Madagascar

- The rice seed multiplication fields have been established for in Antalaha and Fénérive Est. At present, 39 groups are involved in the multiplication of rice in the *grande saison*.
- By the end of April 37, 404 yam plants had been transplanted among 935 beneficiaries. 531 farmers benefitted directly from yam cultivation skills training.
- 14 technicians from ICCO/SAF and the public service, 40 farmers and 6 local authorities were trained in agroforestry in preparation for the establishment of 3 demonstration plots for coffee, cloves and fruit trees.
- In early May, FAO with funding from the Japan International Cooperation Agency held training for four SAF technicians and 28 farmers on the production and use of organic compost.
- FAO has recruited a new M&E Officer, Johanna Rakotoson to work with the partners.

### Mozambique

- FAO has procured 150kg fungicide and 150kg of pesticide for the second agricultural season crops
- On 27 May 27 FAO will support training on pest management through the farmer field schools.
- Through the nurseries established in the FS/DRR projects the farmers have learnt about maximum utilization of seed, improved cultivation techniques including staggering of crops in order to harvest incrementally– to spread the risk and avoid flooding the market.

## Upcoming Meetings

Country project partners hold regular coordination meetings. Contact the Country ECHO FS Project Coordinators (FAO) for dates and details:

### Madagascar (FAO)

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### Regional ECHO\DIPECHO Projects Coordination Meetings

#### FAO REOSA

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### ECHO FS/DRR Southern Africa Partners Website

This newsletter can be accessed on the partners website as well as more information on the projects. Visit:

[www.disasterriskreduction.net\\_southern\\_africa](http://www.disasterriskreduction.net_southern_africa)

### Editor's Note

Please note a correction from last month's edition. The feature on ICCO and SAF/FJKM wrongfully referred to the partner as ICCO/FAS. The project is implemented in partnership between ICCO (Interchurch Organization for Development Co-Operation) and SAF (Sampan' Asa momba ny Fampandrosoana) / FJKM (Fianganon' i Jesoa Kristy eto Madagaskara). Also note ICCO's new logo!

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