



# Food Security in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

Newsletter for DIPECHO / ECHO DRR Food Security Partners

## ECHO FS/DRR Intervention Success Generates Interest in Mozambique

In the Mossuril, Ilha de Moçambique and Mogincual Districts of the Nampula Province, Mozambique, OIKOS, an international NGO, and FAO Mozambique are collaborating to reduce vulnerability to disaster through the ECHO-funded FS/DRR intervention.

### The Farmer Field School Concept

A central feature of OIKOS and FAO's FS/DRR strategy is the targeting of farmers through the Farmers Field Schools (FFS) and Training and Demonstration Units (TDUs). The FFS concept was developed through FAO-supported work in South-East Asia and involves the use of participatory community approaches to farmer education. Through the FFS and TDUs, beneficiaries are able to compare various crops, for example local varieties with introduced varieties and learn techniques such as pest and disease management and soil fertility management.

The FFS also offers a space to discuss pressing food security and livelihood issues, such as nutrition and HIV and AIDS among farmers and stakeholders including NGOs, government officials and researchers.

### Matibane Farmer Field School

The benefits of the ECHO FS/DRR intervention are beginning to emerge. The Matibane FFS group in the Mossuril district had never planted maize, sorghum, or beans. Following the Agro Ecologic System Analysis (AESAs), conducted with the support of local extension officers as part of the intervention, the 26 member group (25 men and 1 woman) identified the Matuba short cycle maize variety as the most suitable for their agro-ecological zone.

The members then planted 40 ha of maize for seed multiplication, with 4 ha of sesame, 0.1 ha of sorghum and 2 ha of mung beans in compliance with conservation agriculture principles of intercropping and crop rotation. This will contribute to households' consumption needs and income generation to purchase seed for future seasons.

As a result of the skills and success acquired through the intervention the Matibane FFS members and the TDU are increasingly becoming a reference point not only for the community and Mossuril district but for the Nampula province and beyond. Researchers,



The Matibane FFS is generating much attention from FS/DRR stakeholders – they were recently featured in local media. Here, exchange visit participants inspect the FS/DRR project short cycle maize field, FAO Mozambique, May 2011

extension officers, the media and government officials from Nampula and neighbouring Cabo Delgado Province have all visited the group to learn from their experiences.

### The Way Forward

OIKOS and FAO are now supporting the Matibane FFS and other FFSs in the intervention areas, with post harvest activities, such as construction of hazard-proof grain and seed storage; capacity building on pest control and market access.

## Promising Agricultural Season in Project Areas

The flooding period has ended across southern Africa and the dry season is beginning. There has been limited flooding and cyclone activity in the ECHO FS/DRR project areas, leading to a good season for agriculture.

Following the forecasted higher than normal rains in the region and unusual dry spells the overall agricultural production looks to be positive. Prices of staple food in Madagascar, Mozambique and Malawi are starting to fall. In May, prices of maize in **Mozambique** fell by 12 to 33% (well below levels of May 2010) and in **Malawi** by between 11 to 16%.

In the highlands of **Madagascar**, local rice prices fell by 12% even though there are concerns that rice production has dropped by 30% due to delays in rains. According to reports from FAO in Madagascar's Eastern project site, there has been lower than normal rainfall. Reports of locust activity have been issued in south-central project areas.

## Madagascar Yam Producers Exchange Visit

In early June, ECHO FS/DRR project partners in Madagascar, in collaboration with SAHA, an NGO facilitated a four day, six-site yam producers' exchange visit in Fianarantsoa in the south-east of the country. 30 lead farmers from the ECHO FS/DRR intervention areas in the north-east and south-east, 19 farmers from SAHA interventions from the south-west and north east and 36 technicians, researchers and local authority officials participated in the exchange

At the end of the visit, the participating farmers:

- Demonstrated understanding of the improved yam cultivation techniques learnt during the ECHO FS/DRR intervention in 2010-2011
- Could identify good practices such as compost use and organic pest treatments
- Could identify host farmer strengths in planning for and in implementing farming activities
- Exchanged information on yam marketing

The visit will be followed by more in-depth training in yam harvesting techniques and post-harvest handling.



Participants came from across the country to exchange information on improved yam production.

Yellow= SAHA participants  
Orange= ECHO FS/DRR participants



Participants take notes during the exchange visit, *FAO Madagascar*, June 2011

### Save this date!!

The second and final regional workshop for DIPECHO and ECHO Food Security partners and stakeholders is planned for **20-22 September 2011** in the bustling and energetic city of Johannesburg! It is jointly organized by CARE and FAO, the two regional coordinators. This will be an excellent opportunity to share experiences and demonstrate what worked and didn't in projects to save lives and livelihoods by reducing the risk of disaster caused by floods and cyclones. The information will be shared with implementing partners, governments, donors and other FS/DRR stakeholders.

### 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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#### About this Newsletter

*This monthly newsletter aims to share information on activities, lessons learnt and information of interest to ECHO/DIPECHO project partners and stakeholders.*

#### 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)

#### For more information please contact:

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## Country Updates

To date in **Madagascar**, 19,807 households have benefitted from support provided by ICCO/SAF, CARE and FAO. 17,980 households benefitted from improved seed varieties, 892 households benefitted from seed multiplication and 935 from improved yam cultivation techniques.

In **Malawi**, 9,349 households been reached by CA/EAM and GOAL Malawi. CA/EAM has targeted 2,874 beneficiaries with inputs and training and the rest with livestock activities; GOAL Malawi has reached 6,120, which all received improved variety seeds and within that group significant numbers were trained on seed multiplication, crop management, nutritious plants and tree nursery management. In addition, about 612 beneficiaries participate in the cash for work programme.

Oikos and FAO have reached 6,489 beneficiaries in **Mozambique**: 940 through the National Institute of Agronomic Research demonstration plots, 2,260 beneficiaries with seed multiplication, 2,296 through farmer field schools, and 993 with vegetable production.