



Bringing Data to Life

SDG human impact stories
from across the globe

Contents

	Introduction	4
Goal 1	A Mother Faces up to COVID-19 (Philippines, UNIC Manila)	6
	'I Know It Saved Lives': What Growing up near an Active Volcano Taught One Humanitarian Worker about Preparing for Disaster (Indonesia, UNIC Indonesia)	8
Goal 2	Bhutan's 'Spicy' Journey to Preserve the Country's Taste for Chilli Peppers (Bhutan, FAO)	10
	Challenges and Leadership: Naso Tjër Di Women Reinvent Themselves to Face the COVID-19 Crisis (Panama, UNIC Panama)	12
Goal 3	Making COVID-19 Vaccines Available for the Homeless and Most Vulnerable (Philippines, UNIC Manila)	14
	Solar-Powered Medical Oxygen Systems Saving Lives in Somalia: Using Innovation to Accelerate Impact in a Fragile Setting (Somalia, WHO)	16
Goal 4	'It Will Help Me to Achieve My Dream': Helping Iraqi Girls Stay in School (Iraq, WFP/UNICEF Iraq)	18
	A Sunflower Named Ágata: The Happy Story of Going back to School (Brazil, UNIC Rio De Janeiro)	20
Goal 5	These Women Have Cut Hundreds of Girls. Now, They Lead the Fight to End Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) (The Gambia, RCO Gambia)	22
	Sowing Seeds of Change (Sri Lanka, ILO Sri Lanka)	24
	Meet the "Pad Man": Breaking Taboos and Transforming Lives in Papua, Indonesia (Indonesia, UNIC Indonesia)	26
Goal 6	Local Communities in Northern Clarendon, Jamaica Benefit from Improvements in Water Security and Sanitation (Jamaica, UNEP Jamaica)	28
	Harvesting and Harnessing the Rain (Senegal, FAO Senegal)	30
Goal 7	The 'Energy Patriots' Bringing Electricity to Indonesia's Remote Villages (Indonesia, UNIC Indonesia)	32
	Being the Visible Change in His Malawian Community (Malawi, FAO)	34
Goal 8	Tapping into a Flood Resilient Future in Sri Lanka (Sri Lanka, ILO Sri Lanka)	36
	In the Words of Amena El-Saie Says, "I Believe that Everyone Has a Role to Play in Enhancing the Inclusion of All Persons with Disabilities in All Communities." (Egypt, UN Women Egypt)	38

Goal 9	Innovating the Beekeeping Industry in Palestine with Recycled Beeswax (State Of Palestine, FAO)	40
Goal 10	A Tent Is not a Place to Call Home (Jordan, RCO Jordan)	42
	Dancing to Her own Beat (Sri Lanka, ILO Sri Lanka)	44
Goal 11	Champions of The Earth: Kyrgyzstan's Environmental Entrepreneur (Kyrgyzstan, UNTV Geneva)	46
	Tree Cities of the World (Global, FAO)	48
Goal 12	The International Trade Centre Supports Rural Youth with Waste Collection Tricycles to Improve Waste Collection Systems (The Gambia, RCO Gambia)	50
	Turning Plastic into Profit (Philippines, UNIC Manila)	52
Goal 13	Louise Mabulo: Farmer, Chef, Entrepreneur (Philippines, UNTV Geneva)	54
	Working as a Community towards a More Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (Senegal, FAO Senegal)	56
	Living Climate Change on the Coastline of Chile (Chile, FAO)	58
Goal 14	Making a New Wave (Sri Lanka, ILO Sri Lanka)	60
	Young Costa Ricans Find Their Life Purpose in the Protection of the Sea and Corals (Costa Rica, RCO Costa Rica)	62
	Fisherwomen at Work (Oman, Nigeria, Guyana, FAO)	64
Goal 15	Alessandra Korap: Coordinator of Pariri – Munduruku Indigenous Association (Brazil, UNTV Geneva)	66
	Georgian Red Wheat Bread Revives Tradition and Sparks Agritourism Potential (Georgia, FAO)	68
Goal 16	Women as Bringers of Peace (Philippines, UNIC Manila)	70
	Community Radio for Migrants from Venezuela to Brazil (Brazil, UNIC Rio De Janeiro)	72
	After 35 Years, the Nightmare of a Legal Limbo Ends for a Mother of 9 in Montenegro (Montenegro, RCO Montenegro)	74
Goal 17	Artificial Intelligence Ensuring Human Rights at the Heart of the Sustainable Development Goals (Denmark, OHCHR)	76
	A High-Tech Response Is Helping Countries Win the Battle Against Desert Locust (Global, FAO)	78



Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are our blueprint for people, planet and prosperity by 2030, as well as a symbol of the aspirations held by people around the world for a better future. ***The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2022*** tracks progress to achieve the SDGs at global and regional levels. The global and regional figures presented in the report represent the lives of millions of people. But behind these aggregated numbers are real-life stories of people who are struggling to get out of poverty, battling the effects of climate change in their daily lives, and dealing with the impacts of COVID-19, among other challenges. Achieving the SDGs means putting them first and transforming words into action on the ground in local communities across the world.

The following pages of this flip book showcase faces and stories behind the SDG numbers around the globe. They are provided by United Nations Information Centres (UNICs) and other United Nations agencies and organizations, who are responding to country needs and priorities to help them overcome current crises that are impeding progress on the 2030 Agenda. These selected stories* highlight individual and community initiatives, country interventions and assistance, as well as partnerships with the United Nations system that translate the SDG aspirations into action.

Going through these stories, the interlinked and interrelated nature of the SDGs is on full display. While they are organized by Goal, they cannot really be boxed into just one Goal, because each story touches upon multiple aspects of the SDG agenda. These stories illustrate how intervention in one or some areas can have positive or negative impacts on other areas, making it important that we exploit synergies and minimize trade-offs for effective implementation of the SDGs.

Much appreciation is extended to the UNICs and other UN agencies and organizations for their contributions to this flip book and *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2022*. **Most importantly, appreciation goes to those who have shared their stories, showing that behind the data points and SDG aspirations are the lives of many who cannot be left behind.**

*Please note that the stories included in the flip book are summaries, followed by a weblink to the full story for further information.



A Mother Faces up to COVID-19



© UNICEF Philippines

Naima Apinton and her family live in the small village of Daguang in Kapatagan, Lanao del Sur in the Philippines. Their family relies on her husband, Ansanodin, who makes a living as a pedicab driver, typically earning just 250 to 300 pesos (5 to 6 US dollars) a day. For Naima, therefore, keeping her family fed and clothed is a daily challenge. When COVID-19 began disrupting the lives of people in the area, it became even harder for Apinton's family to make ends meet.

In June 2020, Apinton received an emergency cash grant from the UN Joint Programme on Shock-Responsive Social Protection and used the funding to set up a small vending business selling banana fritters and other street food. With the additional income she earned, the family has managed to provide for their children's daily needs. Naima has been able to sustain her small business, and with her earnings, according to Naima, putting food on the table is no longer a matter of "squeezing sweat and shedding tears." Additionally, for the first time, she can also afford to bring her children regularly to the municipal clinic.

"I am thankful to the Ministry of Social Services and Development and to the UN for extending help to people like me."

Original story [link](#)



'I Know It Saved Lives':

What Growing up near an Active Volcano Taught One Humanitarian Worker about Preparing for Disaster



© UNFPA

Allam Amin is a humanitarian worker who supports some of Indonesia's most vulnerable people during emergencies and relief projects by coordinating logistics and supply chains for essential items like medicine, shelter and dignity kits.

"I am used to disasters," Allam says. "I grew up in eastern part of Indonesia and there was a volcano that regularly erupted." When he was just a boy there was a major eruption that forced his family to flee. "I remember the panic in this small town," he says. "The whole community moved to the next island all at once."

Growing up near an active volcano when he was young, he dedicated most of his time after school to projects distributing medical equipment to regional health networks for emergency preparation. When a series of disasters hit Indonesia early in his career, Allam shifted to use his logistics skills in humanitarian response.

He explains that the health of displaced families shall always be the priority in a disaster response plan, and he abides to this principle at all times. The model of planning Allam worked on has been woven into national preparedness plans that support health districts across the country.

"We need to come up with the idea of working closely with counterparts and donors to make sure that this capacity is available any time of the year," he says. Allam says a smart logistics system will have dynamic digital inventory that manages stock and storage with life-saving efficiency.

Original story [link](#)



Bhutan's 'Spicy' Journey to Preserve the Country's Taste for Chilli Peppers



© Bhutan Department of Agriculture/Sangay Dorji

Bhutan agricultural workers were not accustomed to growing chilli peppers or 'chillies'. An import ban persuaded a handful of farmers of a Gewog (group of villages) in Karmaling to start growing the crop despite the challenges. At first, the crop failed to grow because of the high temperature and humidity. The greenhouse that kept the growing environment warm seemed to backfire as well. To resolve the issues, they looked into a different potting method, using cups with a better and well-prepared potting medium to give the plant more protection than if they were to be planted directly in the soil. With this new seedling preparation technology, most of the plants survived. Taking on this success, the farmers become more open to experimenting with other new sustainable technologies. They further adopted drip irrigation facilities made available by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

"We didn't expect chillies to grow well here because there was no history of growing chillies in our village," reminisces Sancha Bahadur Subba, a farmer from Omchu village in Karmaling. "Now I am very happy because we are sending surplus produce to other Dzongkhags (districts). Indeed, we are earning good income from chilli."

Chilli farming is now commercialized and the chillies are sold even in the country's capital, Thimphu. Through the innovation, over two thirds of household in the Karmaling Gewog engage in chilli farming as a source of stable income.

Original story [link](#)



Challenges and Leadership:

Naso Tjër Di Women Reinvent Themselves to Face the COVID-19 Crisis

In the Bocas del Toro Province of Panama, two indigenous women, Rosibel Quintero and Isabel Sánchez, founded the United Woman of Bonyic (OMUB) to develop and manage community gardens. Seeing some children faint during class because they were not physically suited for the long-distance travel to school, Rosibel Quintero and Isabel Sánchez believed that the OMUB could be a solution to malnutrition among children and created a small vegetable garden at the school.

“At the time, we did not have universal scholarship or opportunity network subsidies for families, not milk and nutritional foods that kids have at school today provided by the authorities. Still, we didn’t want to see more children weak at the school”, said Rosibel Quintero, President of OMUB.

After 17 years of effort, their dream of a garden had grown into a small natural lodge for tourists with a vegetable garden containing cucumber, cacao, lettuce, plantain, tomatoes, cilantro, yam and other traditional crops. It also generated income to support the pursuit of university studies.

Due to disruptions to the tourist industry during the pandemic which left the women without income and resources, the community resumed community vegetable gardens, adding new crops with financial support of a small donations program from the United Nations Development Programme. They were able feed their children during the pandemic from the community gardens and saved enough to buy cell phone cards for children to continue their schools virtually.

Original story [link](#) (Spanish) | [video](#) (Spanish)



© CINU Panama / Janibeth Miranda



Making COVID-19 Vaccines Available for the Homeless and Most Vulnerable



(video) © WHO Philippines

The World Health Organization (WHO) and other international organizations, in an effort to leave no one behind, supported local government units around the Philippines that partnered with civil society organizations to provide COVID-19 vaccines to individuals, such as homeless individuals or survivors of gender-based violence or those living with a disability, which can create barriers to vaccination and make them more vulnerable to COVID-19.

Robert, one of three million homeless people in the National Capital Region of the Philippines, received his COVID-19 vaccine during a two-day vaccination drive. Usually, Robert avoids the village clinic despite his health needs, having been diagnosed with diabetes. “I haven’t asked for help from the barangay (village) clinic because I get embarrassed when I go there. When people see me, they are disgusted by my appearance. It is hurtful when I see people being disgusted by how I look, or just because I roam the streets, am homeless and don’t have an address,” Robert said. Medical volunteer Dr. Patrick Javier said, “There’s a certain stigma to being homeless...like anybody else, they deserve to be vaccinated.”

This vaccination drive is part of a wider project to reach people from a variety of situations, which bar them from access to this effective tool against COVID-19. This pilot community vaccination serves as an inspiration and proof of concept of how the Department of Health and civil society partners can reach vulnerable populations to protect their right to health. Apart from vaccinations and information on COVID-19, the drive also included transport, meals, childcare and health services.

Original story [link](#) | [video](#)



Solar-Powered Medical Oxygen Systems saving lives in Somalia: Using Innovation to Accelerate Impact in a Fragile Setting

Somalia had no medical oxygen available when the first laboratory-confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported in the country. In collaboration with Grand Challenge Canada, WHO installed solar-powered oxygen concentrators in the Hanaano General Hospital for treating children in paediatric wards.

Within the first two months of installation, 45 patients with different medical conditions promptly received medical oxygen from these stations. Among these, 30 were children, including Zahra's* newborn who was diagnosed with asphyxia at birth and was having difficulties in breathing. "I cried and was worried when I saw my child very ill. I believed she would die," said Zahra. Doctors immediately rushed her to the maternity ward where she could receive oxygen 24 hours a day. Her oxygen rate reached 94 per cent, compared to only 40 per cent when she was born. "Now I am very happy — I saw the situation of my child improving," said Zahra.

"I was responsible for laying the first brick in the Hanaano Hospital," said Dr Mohamed Abdi, the Hospital Director at the Hanaano General Hospital. "This is the first time I have seen how one timely investment can save lives. Last year, sadly, more than 180 patients died in the hospital, due to the lack of oxygen. Many of them were children. This system will save many lives, and we are really grateful to the Government, WHO, and all the actors who supported this intervention."

**name changed to protect privacy*

Original story [link](#)



© WHO/Ismail Taxta



'It will Help Me to Achieve My Dream': Helping Iraqi Girls Stay in School



© UNICEF/Photo from UN News article [*here*](#)

When COVID-19 hit Basra in southern Iraq, the academic prospects for many schoolgirls were put at risk as institutions closed to slow down the spread of the virus. In response, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP) conducted a trial cash stipend programme to support 2,570 primary school children for their continued education.

"This will help me achieve my dream of becoming a dentist," says 12-year-old Baneen. Many families receiving the stipend use the money to buy their children a mobile phone for the sole purpose of online and e-learning activities. Girls in the

project also joined a newly created coding club, for studying in a safe environment, learning new tech skills and innovating to create digital solutions. By keeping girls in school and completing their education, their expanded opportunities help prevent girls from marrying or working too early.

"The mobile phones have been helping with online study", explains Principal Zainab Karim, a headteacher in Basra. "Many schoolchildren live in the same home as several other children, and share the same phone as their moms and dads. The students benefit from having their own phones."

Original story [link](#)



A Sunflower Named Ágata:

The Happy Story of Going back to School



© UNICEF



Ágata Melo, 8, on photo left loves to draw on the board and paint and she cries when there are no classes in school. With the pandemic, her school closed and she moved to another city because of a family problem. Ágata lost contact with teachers, friends and also repeated the grade.

To avoid problems like these, the Education Secretary of Vigia, a small town in Pará state, North of Brazil, decided to go after every girl and boy out of the school in 2021. On foot, by bike, moto or car, directors and teachers from all the schools on photo

right, in the city and in the rural area, knocked from door to door to find out of school children or those with learning difficulties brought by the remote teaching. That's when Ágata was found. Now she receives materials from her teacher to continue study from home.

"I became happy," she tells. Back at school, a sunflower was called Ágata after her. The initiative from UNICEF and with the support of Education, Social Assistance and Health local authorities, has brought more than 80 children back to school in Vigia.

Original story [link](#) (Portuguese) | [link](#) (English)



These Women have Cut Hundreds of Girls.

Now, they Lead the Fight to End Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)



© UNFPA The Gambia/HJonga

“I did not know that through upholding this tradition [female genital mutilation, FGM], I was contributing towards holding women and girls back and promoting their suffering,” says Sarjo Touray.

In The Gambia, the role of a female circumciser is passed from matriarch to matriarch across generations. Women inherit the responsibility from their mothers and later pass it on to their sisters, daughters, or nieces. In many communities where FGM is practiced in The Gambia, it is done from a place of care and love for their girls and as a symbol of what is believed to be their initiation into womanhood. However, it has severe immediate and long-term consequences on the sexual and reproductive health of those subjected to the practice.

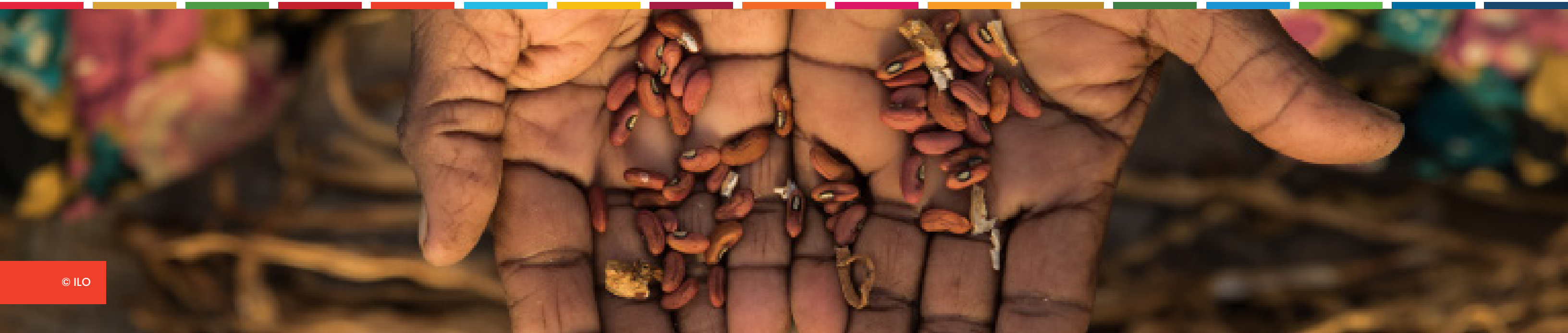
Among the 27 ex-circumcisers who took an oath to stop FGM practice is Sarjo Trawally. After she learned about the negative health implications, she decided to drop the knife. Today, she is part of a network of ex-circumcisers who have not only dropped the blade but are also leading the campaign against FGM through a ‘dropping the knife’ initiative. At left, they are seen dropping their blades and knives in a symbolic ceremony to show their stance against FGM.

Currently, 1,035 communities and 215 ex-circumcisers in The Gambia have abandoned the practice, so, today, fewer girls and women in the country, are at risk of being subjected to FGM than ever before.

Original story [link](#)



Sowing Seeds of Change



© ILO

“Whenever my brothers visit, they look at my hands and remark that it’s time I rest my hardened hands. I laugh it off. Farming is my passion, it is the lifeline that kept us afloat. Until my last breath, I want to be a farmer.”

Arulrahini started farming at 12 to support her parents who were severely ill. Despite the social pressure telling her otherwise because of her gender, she continued to work in the farm even after marriage at age 26.

In 2017, Arulrahini joined other women, including Nagulan Vijayaluxmi, and formed the Malarumboomi Women’s Agriculture Development Cooperative. With support from both family and the Cooperative, her income has grown significantly.

That same year, she also received an interest free loan to help her grow her farm. “I bought about 500 kilos of onion seeds from the loan, sold the harvest and used the money to expand my farm gradually. Malarumboomi provided me with a second loan to cover the expense to dig another well, so I could engage in farming all-year round without relying only on the rains,” she says.

“We started with 35 members and now are 114 strong. At the onset, there was a lot of pushback from men who did not see the need for an all-women Coop but we were adamant. As a women’s coop we can discuss issues faced by women famers, work towards solutions, support each other, and have a platform to voice our concerns,” says Nagulan Vijayaluxmi.

Original story [link](#) | [video](#)

Meet the “Pad Man”: Breaking Taboos and Transforming Lives in Papua, Indonesia

In one of the poorest provinces in Indonesia, Demianus is working for a local non-governmental organization – Noken Papua Foundation, focusing on health and education development. Demianus is breaking through the strong patriarchal culture that makes menstruation a taboo topic educating communities on menstrual health and hygiene management and also teaching students, teachers and headmasters how to make reusable sanitary pads from cloth.

“I may get bullied from my friends because I am talking about menstruation,” he said. “But I take this risk so that girls in Papua can realize their right to health and hygiene access at school, even when they are menstruating.”

As part of his effort, Demi hosted a three-day training camp in which participants learned how to make reusable sanitary pads from readily available cloths. By involving both male and female students in his three-day training, Demianus hopes that the participants will be able to dispel the long-standing myths and stigma around menstruation among schoolchildren. He hopes that through the programme, students, teachers, and headmasters would become health cadres and educate their community on menstrual health and hygiene management in their respective schools.

“Menstruation is a normal process for girls, and they have to be in class to study even when menstruating,” said Demi. “Therefore, it is important to create a comfortable environment for female students at schools.”

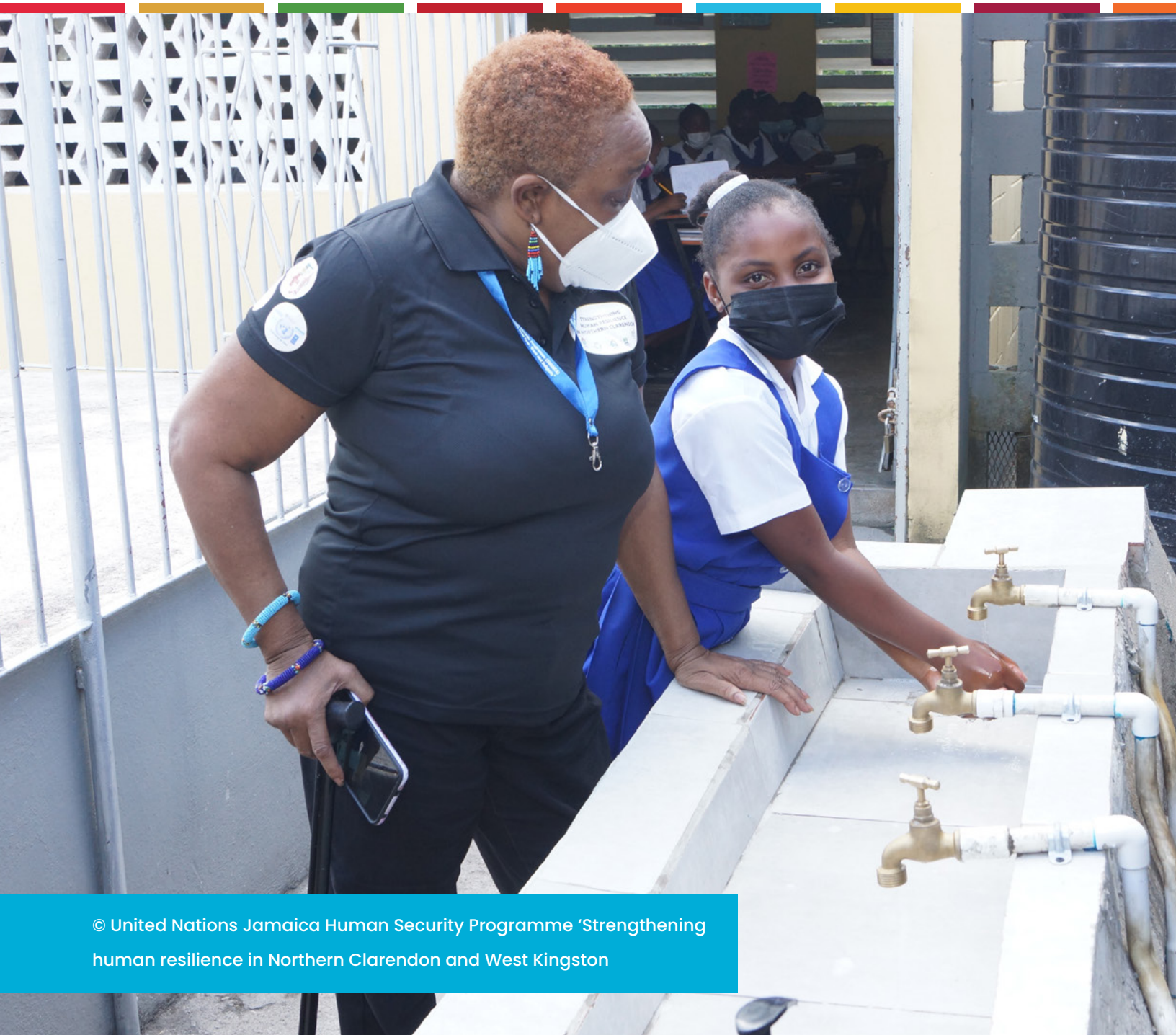
Original story [link](#)



© UNICEF/Reza Hendrawan



Local Communities in Northern Clarendon, Jamaica Benefit from Improvements in Water Security and Sanitation



© United Nations Jamaica Human Security Programme 'Strengthening human resilience in Northern Clarendon and West Kingston

Residents in communities of Northern Clarendon, Jamaica, are facing water stress. Without water, sanitation and hygiene are at risk; food production is hampered; and school attendance rates are also affected.

The United Nations Environment Programme Cartagena Convention Secretariat partnered with the Clarendon Parish Development Committee Benevolent Society (CPDCBS) to implement sustainable solutions to address water scarcity, sanitation, and build community awareness about environmental protection and pollution reduction. Efforts included the installation of rainwater harvesting systems, handwashing stations, wastewater reuse systems, and labelled waste disposal bins to encourage recycling in schools.

Gutters were installed to catch rainwater and fill tanks. A solar power system was also set up at the schools to pump water from the tanks, which will contribute to less dependency on petrol and fossil fuels.

"Before this programme, we had severe water challenges, especially this time around. The drought can be harsh on us and we have to purchase water which is very expensive, and considering the fact that the cost of fuel is going up then you know that the cost of water will also go up. At this point, all our tanks are catching their own water and this will build our water capacity. We are just waiting on the rain to fall," said Ms. Aldith Stewart, Principal of Park Hall Primary and Infant school.

Original story [link](#)



Harvesting and Harnessing the Rain

“With the simple rainwater harvesting system that was built for us, we were able to collect 5,000 precious litres of water in the last six months,” said Ramata Faye, a 68-year-old grandmother and farmer from the municipality of Cherif Lô in Thiès in Senegal. Crop cultivation has been especially challenging due to climate change, ultimately resulting in either too much or too little water. The dry season now lasts more than 9 months. Sudden torrential rainfall could also occur, leaving the farmland inundated. Close to 90 per cent of farming households in Senegal practice rain-fed agriculture.

More than 450 households benefit from the nine rainwater harvesting systems. Another 200 people were trained to maintain them to provide a reliable water source to keep the fruit trees and vegetables watered. “Now we can use rainwater in the dry season. Inhabitants of neighbouring villages now want to set up a garden like ours. It’s important the whole community is involved in this type of initiative,” explains Ramata.

Thanks to the water harvesting system, Ramata is able to keep the gardens and the nurseries thriving. It also gives her a new sense of purpose and the power to provide essentials like medicines to her family. The thriving gardens continue to provide a source of income for her to send her children to school with extra to save for the future.

Original story [link](#)



© SUCO



The 'Energy Patriots' Bringing Electricity to Indonesia's Remote Villages



A consistent rural electricity supply supports opportunities for greater economic development and helps people in remote villages live healthier lives. For millions of villagers among the 17,000 islands in Indonesia, a 12-hour-per-day erratic electricity supply in remote areas is the norm.

With students studying by candlelight at night and health centres not running at full capacity, these communities face an uphill struggle to improve their well-being. A UN-backed initiative from the Indonesian Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (MEMR) is putting “energy patriots” in local villages to prepare infrastructure for solar energy generation.

Ristifah is one of 23 energy patriots overseeing the installation of off-grid solar-power plants. Growing up in a rural village, Ristifah understands the struggle with limited electricity supply. “We only had three hours of electricity a day,” says Ristifah.

She will move 1,500 km away from her home to a coastal fishing village in Muna. Like most island villages, Muna is heavily dependent on fuel-fired generators for its electricity, compromising the inhabitants’ health. The solar-power system will offer the village a clean energy option and the opportunity for greater economic development. As an “energy patriot”, Ristifah will be helping the community determine electricity tariffs, liaising with contractors, recruiting operators and technicians, and helping the local renewable energy service providers manage new power plants.

“I hope to inspire more girls to achieve higher education,” she said. “I dream of the day when the houses sparkle with lights that the community installed, and children can have a better future.”

Original story [link](#)



Being the Visible Change in His Malawian Community

“I was inspired by the visible changes that I saw the project was bringing and got encouraged to take up the leader role so that I could inspire others to take part in nutrition activities and be a part of bringing change to our community,” he says with enthusiasm.

Tael is a food hero living in Chikoya, Malawi, near the outskirts of Mzuzu city. With his family, they serve as a role model for other community households wanting to learn about good nutrition and hygiene practices. In addition to his full-time occupation as a farmer, he also volunteers as a community leader passing on his knowledge of food nutrition and construction of energy-saving stoves to the households he supports. The introduction of energy-saving stoves reduces the time needed for household members to fetch fuelwood and there is less pressure on neighbouring woodlots.

“The kitchen was an empty room where we cooked on an open fire. It required a lot of firewood, which ran out quickly. We were contributing to the destruction of the environment,” says Tael’s wife, Mary Phiri. With the new energy-saving stoves, the family only requires a fraction of the fuel that they needed. “You find that we use perhaps two small logs, and the food is ready and this, in a short space of time since the stove retains heat,” Mary adds.

Original story [link](#)



© FAO/Towela Munthali



Tapping into a Flood Resilient Future in Sri Lanka

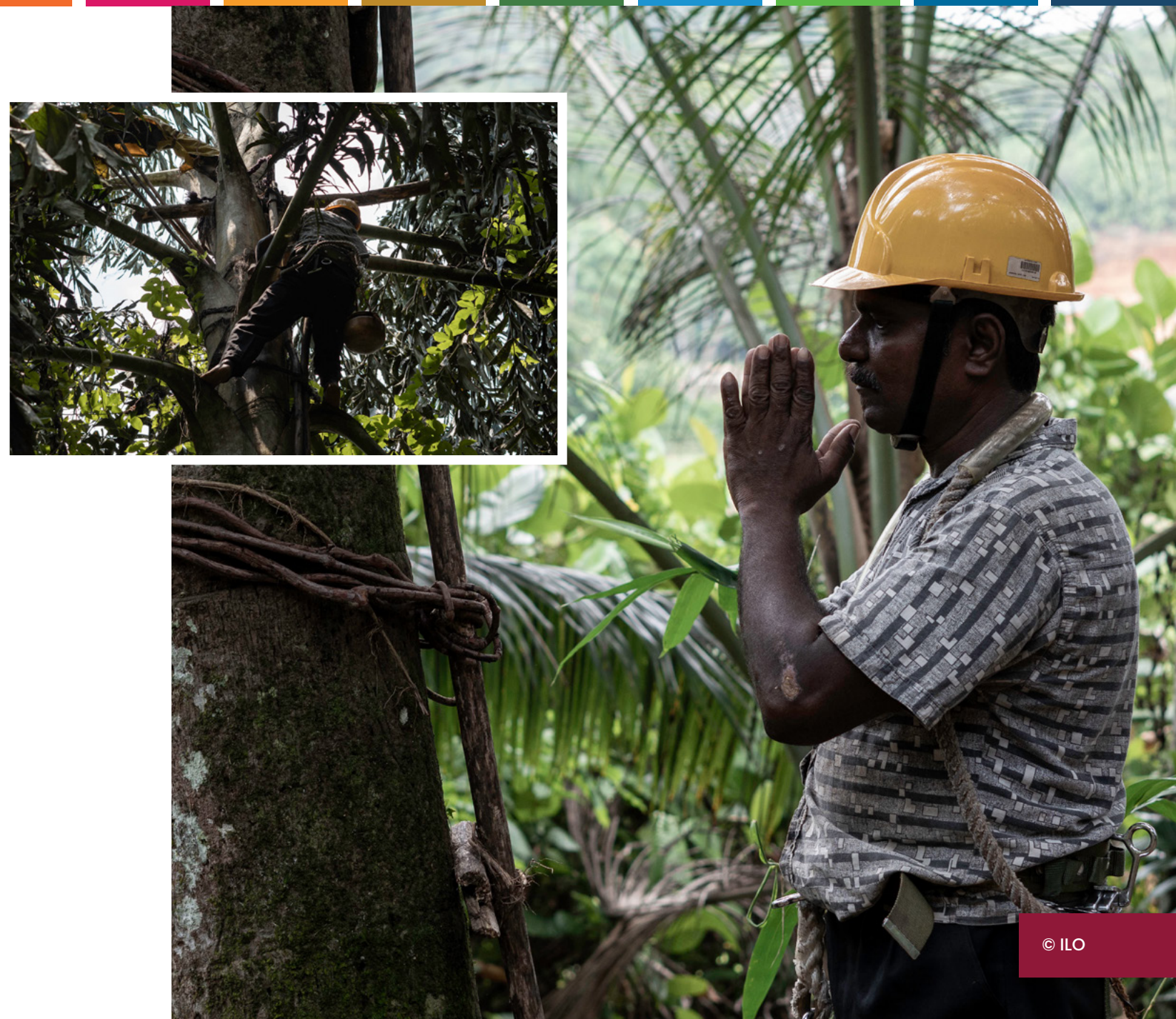
“Many of these trees have been alive since my grandfather’s time, and I inherited several of them,” says Nishantha. Families like Nishantha’s have been farming Kithul tree (Fishatail Palm), which is native to rural Bulathsinhala, a village in the Kalutara district in the Western province of Sri Lanka. Although it can take up to 15 years for a Kithul tree to mature, it can produce sap for generations and be processed into jaggery, treacle and even flour.

However, the Kithul tree industry has been declining as the rural population migrates to the city. Most resist passing on the skills to the next generation because of the danger and risks.

With the help of the International Labour Organization (ILO), Nishantha received insurance policies that cover injuries and accidents. He now also has access to equipment to continue to tap Kithul trees with greater protection. “The hard hats and the safety belts we have received make our jobs safer, but also much more easy”, explains Nishantha. The ILO programme also brought together Kithul farmers across the country. They share their knowledge and expertise to ensure that the tradition will not be lost. For Nishantha, the art of growing a Kithul tree is a lifelong learning experience.

Nishantha treats his trees with the utmost respect for what they have provided him. He remarks, “The Kithul trees in my garden are what helped me and my family survive. I feel safe because my Kithul trees have been there for me.”

Original story [link](#) | [video](#)





In the Words of Amena El-Saie Says, “I Believe that Everyone Has a Role to Play in Enhancing the Inclusion of All Persons with Disabilities in All Communities”



© Shrouk Tarek

“In 2011, when I was a university student, one day I was hanging out with my friends, and we were discussing incidents in our lives that made us understand some of the challenges that some persons with disabilities face in their lives,” Amena recalls. “After this discussion, Ramez Maher [Helm’s co-founder] and I asked ourselves, ‘what can we do to address some of the challenges that persons with disabilities face in our community?’ and this was how the idea behind ‘Helm’ was born– as a students’ project and eventually as a dedicated social enterprise. Today, and after years of trials and errors, we are one of the most influential social enterprises in Egypt and the Middle East and North Africa region that is dedicated to this cause.”

Amena El-Saie founded Helm with Ramez to promote effective and sustainable inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in the workplace. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, Amena and Ramez continue to provide multiple advisory and training services to ensure that women with disabilities receive employability skills training and career guidance for a better chance to enter the job market. “Resilience and adaptability were key to be able to successfully respond to such difficult and unprecedented challenge,” she says.

To address the challenges facing persons with disabilities, Amena advises, “Never make assumptions about the needs of people with disabilities. Instead of making assumptions about their needs, ask questions and educate yourself. I believe that everyone has a role to play in enhancing the inclusion of all persons with disabilities in all communities.”

Original story [link](#)



Innovating the Beekeeping Industry in Palestine with Recycled Beeswax

In 2017, fifteen (15) aspiring beekeepers joined forces to create the Al Hannoun honey cooperative to tap into the beekeeping industry in the State of Palestine. Within three years of operation, members of the cooperative have witnessed success and begun to seek environmentally friendly investment opportunities from abroad. By 2020, they secured an advanced beeswax recycling machine and tailored technical guidance to maximise its use through the FAO.

Prior to the introduction of the recycling machine, Al Hannoun relied on imported industrial beeswax to lure bees to visit wooden hives. Beeswax from old hives is usually damaged or destroyed and therefore could not be reused. With the machine, beeswax collected by the farmers from old hives can be recycled and upcycled. The machine melts, homogenizes and purifies the old beeswax and moulds to new ones. Thanks to this innovative technology, a large amount of used beeswax can be recycled and upcycled, to create new products like scented candles and other speciality items. As a result, the cooperative was able to save an estimated \$5,840 (ILS 18,000) on beeswax.

Today, the cooperative has expanded to include 50 young members, all relying on beekeeping as a reliable source of income.



© FAO/Hend Younis

Original story [link](#)



A Tent Is not a Place to Call Home



© WFP

For Fatime, life is an inescapable nightmare. Since fleeing from Syrian to Jordan in 2012, her family of eight has been living in one of the many small tents forming a temporary settlement. With the influx of population, her husband has had a hard time finding a job and they depend on 23 JOD per person, per month of assistance from the WFP, surviving on the bare minimum.

More than 80 per cent of refugee families are living in communities that are either food insecure or at risk of becoming so. In light of the ongoing impact of the pandemic on the socio-economic situation of refugees, most families rely heavily on WFP assistance and turn to negative coping strategies such as restricting adult consumption to feed children more, early marriage, or taking illegal jobs to survive.

“Life in a tent is not a life,” says Karema, one of Fatime’s neighbours. It is a quote shared by so many people living in these shelters surrounded by snow and cold. Karema talked about how her brother’s child, Abdulla, had sneaked out to play in the snow but returned a few minutes later, soaking wet and cold, barely feeling the heat from the fire. He leaned against the fire pit stove, which was used to heat their tent with branches collected from nearby trees, leaving pieces of his burnt skin on the stove.

“What we’re going through isn’t right, neither for us nor for the children. The international community must come together to help us and recognize our existence. Life has brought us here, and there is nowhere else for us to go. We need all the help and support we can get to help us survive.” Karema stated.

Original story [link](#) | [video](#)



Dancing to Her own Beat



© ILO Sri Lanka



Losing her leg during the 30-year civil war in Sri Lanka, Ratnasingham Tharshini suffered a lot of hardship in her early post-injury years. The Northern Province of Sri Lanka was heavily affected by the civil war, and over 10 per cent of the population is comprised of persons with disabilities who are at a high risk of poverty and social exclusion. “I sought employment from many places, but the general response was ‘You are disabled, what will you do?’, it left me feeling broken. I had stopped dancing after the amputation of my leg,” explains Tharshini.

“I didn’t let myself be disheartened by it,” adds Tharshini. She was tenacious and she was determined to lead her life. She found employment at Sivanarul Products — a social enterprise producing rice-based snacks. “This job at Sivanarul not only opened up employment for me, but also reignited my passion for dancing.” Today, she is a valuable employee at her workplace and is known as a talented dancer, having won second position for dancing at the national level for three consecutive years. “Even if one person changes their way of thinking because of me, I’d be happy,” she says.

Original story [link](#) | [video](#)



Champions of the Earth:

Kyrgyzstan's Environmental Entrepreneur

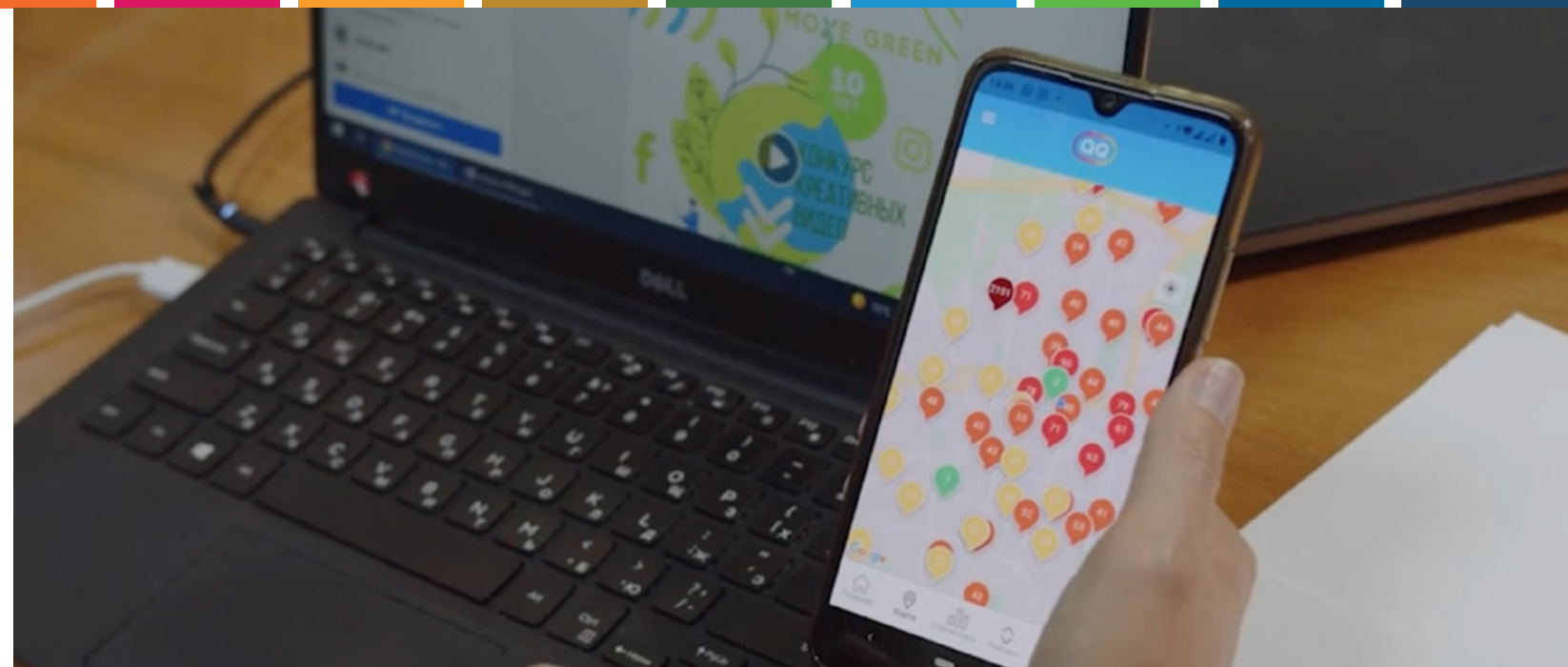
When Maria Kolesnikova saw in 2017 a photo of Kyrgyzstan's capital Bishkek where the entire city was covered with smog, she decided to start raising awareness about environmental issues, to offer green solutions and to educate young people about all these topics.

"We wanted to understand more about what was in the air that we were breathing, and what data the city was collecting in order to try and make things better," said Kolesnikova. "But we didn't find any relevant, actual data – either it was not being collected or it was not being shared. So, we decided to produce data ourselves."

Her organization Movegreen started with installing only three sensors, but now has expanded to a network of over 100 sensors to measure levels of fine particulate matter. The monitoring helps warn schools to keep their windows closed and educators to warn parents to keep their children from exposure to fine particulates. She also led the team to develop the AQ.kg mobile app, to allow everyone with easy access to timely data on air quality.

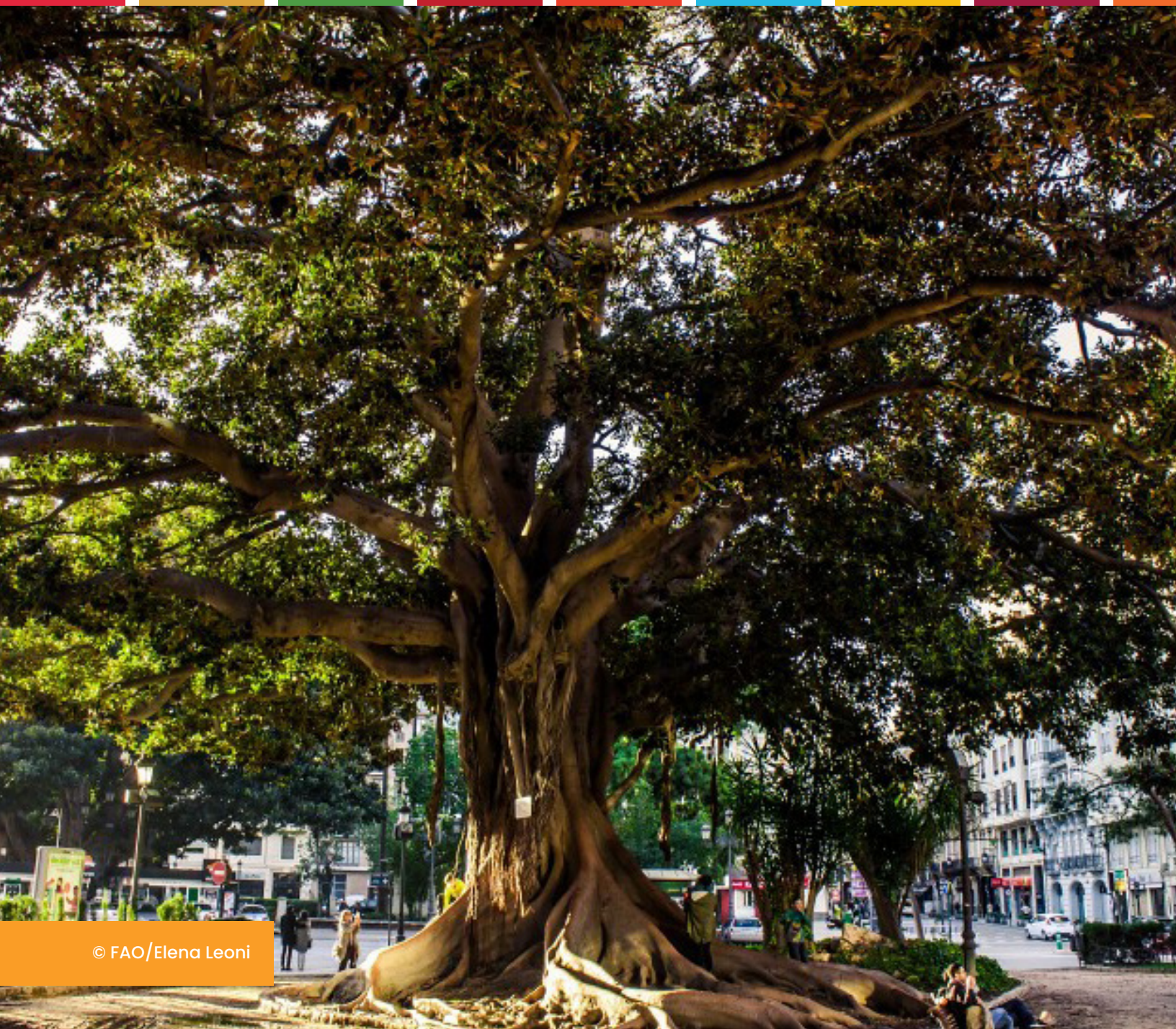
"Our data has been challenged, our methods have been challenged – by those who say that citizen monitoring data is unreliable," said Kolesnikova. "But we kept having meetings and we kept going back and now, they listen. The result of our work has been connection with the government, to improve environmental monitoring in Bishkek, to do a better job of monitoring and reducing emissions."

Original story [video \(UNTV\)](#) | [video \(UN News\)](#)





Tree Cities of the World



© FAO/Elena Leoni

FAO and the Arbor Day Foundation started the Tree Cities of the World Programme as a worldwide initiative to encourage the development and management of urban forests and trees. Trees play a crucial role in the carbon cycle and help mitigate the negative impacts of climate change, making cities more liveable. They're also critical for places with warm climates. In fact, strategic placement of trees in cities can help cool the air between two and eight degrees Celsius.

Since the launch in 2019, the number of cities participating in the programme has almost doubled, covering 120 cities from 23 countries. Cities in the United Kingdom, Brazil, Uganda, and India are among those planting saplings and creating green spaces to expand their urban forests as part of this programme.

In Birmingham, U.K., the local government initiated the "Route to Zero" plan, aiming to transform the city to become a net zero carbon emitter by 2030. At the centre of the initiative is the creation of green corridors, such as the Cole Valley — a park, cycle route and natural space alongside the river. Not only does green space help combat with the heating effect of global warming, but it also promotes the uptake of sustainable commuting methods, such as cycling and walking.

Original story [link](#)

The International Trade Centre Supports Rural Youth with Waste Collection Tricycles to Improve Waste Collection Systems

The Gambia is one of the few countries that are on track to meet the Paris Agreement. Nevertheless, it too is feeling the negative impacts of the global climate crisis. Erratic rainfall, sea-level rise and heavy windstorms continue to threaten the lives and livelihood of farmers in The Gambia.

To protect the environment and mitigate the impacts of climate change, Green-up Gambia is promoting a circular economy as a strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Early in 2022, Green-up Gambia brought together forty young people from Central River Region, Lower River Region, and North Bank Region. Through this project, Green-up Gambia is training and coaching on sustainable waste management and recycling, thereby encouraging the beneficiaries to be champions in leading a sustainable lifestyle. In addition, representatives from each of the regions received waste collection tricycles that will help improve the waste collection systems in the selected regions.

“The training we have received is life-changing. I am hoping that we will all translate what we have learned into practice for the benefit of our communities, ourselves, and the world at large,” says Alfu Marong, one of the beneficiaries of the programme.



© ITC Gambia

Original story [link](#)

Turning Plastic to Profit



© Brgy. 412, Manila City

“Before, I used to just lay around the house and do house chores. Now, I am productive, I am able to earn a little even if I don’t have a job,” says Jade Sarah Joven Suren, a mother of one, who tries to augment her husband’s income as a cable TV agent and barangay (village) secretary. “More than that, I learn new skills and get to enhance my knowledge. I also get to bond with other women in the community.”

Jade is a member of Women Waste Warriors (3Ws) from Barangay 412 in Sampaloc, Manila. 3Ws is a community-based organisation promoting proper waste management within their homes and community and to explore alternative reduce, reuse, recycle (3Rs)–related livelihood projects. Jade is often working with other women, spending most of their day at the barangay daycare centre. In a busy week, they would repurpose PET bottles into 5,000 urban gardening pots to be supplied to the Philippine Council for Agricultural, Aquatic, and Natural Resources Research and Development.

To support their work, another group of warriors drives around different barangays to source used PET bottles from junk shops. It is estimated that 50kg to 100kg of plastic are diverted away from sanitary landfills every week.

Original story [link](#)



Louise Mabulo:

Farmer, Chef, Entrepreneur

Louise Mabulo started her Cacao project in the aftermath of the unusual super Typhoon Nock-ten that struck the Philippines in the winter of 2011, destroying 80 per cent of agricultural land in her hometown. After the storm hit, she was surprised to find that cocoa trees were still standing. “They didn’t seem to be affected by the storm. I realized that cocoa is an ideal climate-resilient crop because it is fully grown in five years and ripe for harvesting in two or three,” she says.

With her Cacao project, Louise started to create a more holistic, sustainable food system through which she hoped to empower farmers to build a resilient food system. She worked with over 200 farmers with whom she has planted over 70,000 trees across 70 hectares of land for local consumption. She also founded the Culinary Lounge – a laid-back farm-to-table kitchen studio. The studio attracts people from all walks of life to enjoy the food produced by the project, to learn about where and how it is grown, and celebrate the work of farmers.

“**There will always be typhoons** in future, and we are building long-term resilience in our environment,” she said. “In the meantime, our strength is in fostering respect with and for the community. That is something that can’t be destroyed.”

Original story [link](#) | [video](#)





Working as a Community towards a more Sustainable Management of Natural Resources



© CNCR

Unlike the rest of Senegal, Niayes is situated in the west of the country where vegetation flourishes due to favourable weather conditions, allowing for year-round food production. Nevertheless, recent changes in the climate and deforestation are leading to encroachment of the desert into this once-veritable land. Livelihoods in Diogo and Diender, two municipalities of the area, are gravely affected as a result. In Lake Tanma, near Diender, water levels have been steadily decreasing as underground water is depleted. A decrease in rainfall and deforestation are causing deterioration of soil health as salt minerals accumulate on the surface in nearby farms. Closer to the sea, in Diogo, a reoccurring issue has been the siltation of market gardens, a phenomenon notably aggravated by deforestation.

In response, the committee in Diogo has prioritized activities aimed at limiting silting and increasing farmers' revenue. To do so, local communities planted 30,000 fruit trees to avoid further soil nutrient depletion and to protect the market gardens. The fruit trees also serve as an alternative income source, producing 600 citrus and 100 cashew tree saplings, which were distributed to farmers. In addition, farmers were trained on good practices for successful tree planting, forest fire limitation and fertilization through organic compost. Finally, a code of conduct was established to regulate tree pruning.

Much of Senegal's arable land is classified as arid or semi-arid. A consulting club on soil health is bringing together 60 farmers to protect the natural environment of Senegal.

Project overview [link](#) (French)



Living Climate Change on the Coastline of Chile

“We are seeing changes that we have never seen before – excessive rain, inexplicable things,” says Alejandro Naiman, a hake fisher and community leader from El Manzano in southern Chile. Small-scale fishing is the lifeline for most people living in this coastal community, which is now threatened by the changing climate. Dramatic environmental changes are affecting the availability and abundance of species, forcing artisanal fishers and small-scale fish farmers to modify their livelihoods.

To mitigate the impact on their livelihoods, people from El Manzano and other coastal communities have come together to learn new ways to add value to their products and diversify their production. “People talk about climate change; we are living it every day,” says Juan Torrejón, head of the local aquaculture association in Tongoy. “...We have a proposal for a processing plant, so our associates and cooperative are not just individual producers, but we can also offer products.”

They are also considering developing sustainable tourism as an alternative source of income. Matías Torres, a fisher from Coliumo, explains, “Coliumo offers more than fishing. There is diving, nature trails, trekking and gastronomic products with a local identity. All these activities together allow the people of Coliumo to have alternatives to better adapt to the effects of climate change.”

Original story [link](#) | [video](#)



© FAO/Max Valencia



Making a New Wave



Navaratnam Rasakulam is the first person to start cucumber farming in the coastal village of Pallikuda in Sri Lanka, a thriving industry that is supporting the livelihood of hundreds of families in the region. “I have been engaging in fishing since I was 16 years old. From a young age, I was interested in and wanted to get into the sea cucumber business. So, whenever I am out fishing, I used to gather sea cucumber in small quantities,” recalls Rasakulam.

When Rasakulam first started farming the animal, there was little domestic demand for it. However, sea cucumbers have become a coveted ingredient in East Asia and Sri Lanka exported 318 metric tons in 2020, generating a revenue of over 1.8 billion rupees. With the soaring demand, wild sea cucumber population was under threat of overexploitation and declining in recent past. Rasakulam understood that his source of income could be at stake and sought to artificially-breed juvenile sea cucumbers from a hatchery. Hatchery based artificial breeding is the most environmentally sustainable technique of raising sea cucumbers and helps to ensure wild populations are protected.

Now, over 190 sea cucumber farms operate in Sri Lanka. Rasakulam takes pride in spearheading this movement, “After seeing the success of my farm, now in Pallikuda, several others have also started their own sea cucumber farms with the support of the National Aquaculture Development Authority (NAQDA) and ILO. I am very happy about this; I want everyone to prosper.”

Original story [link](#) | [video](#)

Young Costa Ricans Find their Life Purpose in the Protection of the Sea and Corals

Among the 30 young divers from Puerto Viejo, Costa Rica, Róger started diving when he was just a child. To him, it is “a kind of a heavenly garden, a promised land under water, dancing among multicoloured fish, algae and live corals, singing turquoise melodies”. Today, Róger still frequents to the sea to take a plunge. On top of the excitement and the joy, however, he now also bears the responsibility to protect the sea.

For Róger, Esteban and 30 other young divers from Puerto Viejo, Costa Rica, being the Ambassadors of the Sea represents an opportunity to overcome adversity and find meaning in life amid the difficulties and threats they experience. “Most of the young people in my school have been involved in criminal problems, have fallen into drug trafficking or are currently in prison. You have to have a lot of discipline to avoid falling into this,” says Esteban Gallo.

The Ambassadors spend their days supporting research and conservation projects for beaches and marine coral restoration. The youth will also be in charge of seeing the evolution of the reef, once a wastewater management system is completed in the area, which aims to reduce sources of contamination to the reef. They face challenges, since many people in the community struggle to provide for their family and are prepared to exploit the ocean’s resources to secure a living. But the young Ambassadors of the Sea have dreams to continue to preserve the natural wealth of the reef.

Original story [link](#) (Spanish) | [video](#)



© UNOPS Costa Rica/Carla Soto



Fisherwomen at Work



© FAO/Fahad Al-Dhuhli

Women have played a vital role in fisheries and aquaculture for centuries and across the globe, and more and more women are setting up their own businesses in these sectors, which currently employs more than 50 million women.

“I think all of us can do it, but we have to tell ourselves that we can do it,” says Muzna Saif Rashid Al Hatmi from Oman. “It is three years since we launched our small fisheries enterprise. We are working on marketing and gaining the trust of customers here in Oman. We are also working to get the products online in Gulf countries, the Middle East and East Asia.”

In Nigeria, Agbato Olubunmi shared a similar story. Having graduated with two degrees in fisheries and aquaculture management, Agbato started her aquaculture business with one pond, which has now grown to eight. “I’m talking about having a fish processing community, where all the women who are engaged in fish farming or fish processing can come along with their produce and sell it at a ready market,” she says.

Across the Atlantic in Guyana, 33-year-old Subrina Singh works as a senior quality manager for the largest fish and shrimp processing company in the country. Working with FISH4ACP, Subrina explains that the impact of climate change is felt across the industry. As a result of climate change, catch numbers decreased, while the biomass of sargassum seaweed exploded. Despite external challenges, Subrina is confident in her role interacting and training other employees on the safety management system that she developed.

Original story [link](#)



Alessandra Korap:

Coordinator of Pariri – Munduruku Indigenous Association



(video)© UNTV Geneva

Alessandra Korap is the first woman to lead the Pariri Indigenous Association, which fights to uphold free, prior and informed consent for construction in protected indigenous areas of the Amazon. Construction and mining activities can affect the ecosystem and threaten the way of life for indigenous people. Warriors, women and the elderly from local tribes go into the forest to self-demarcate, put up signs, and expel loggers or land grabbers from their ancestral lands.

“For us this territory is life. All the ethnic groups of Brazil, of which there are more than 305 peoples are suffering attacks. Our brothers, the Yanomami, the children are malnourished because of mining. We very often take on the inspection role that today is called auto-demarcation.”

“If people do not perform this role of territorial inspection, the land will be pillaged and burned in order to create pastures and soya fields, open for gold miners. As a woman I faced barriers. In the beginning it was not easy because of the patriarchal culture. Men have voices, women don’t. But we showed that we are capable and that we wanted to defend the territory. Women don’t negotiate lives of our children. We never negotiate the lives of our people. And we will continue to resist.”

Despite the intensifying intimidation and threats against her and her family, Alessandra continues to fight for her community. “If one day there is news that Alessandra was killed, at least I did something to defend my territory and my people,” says Alessandra.

In 2020, Alessandra was awarded the 2020 Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights prize for her invaluable work in defending her communities’ rights and ancestral lands in Brazil.

Original story [video](#)



Georgian Red Wheat Bread Revives Tradition and Sparks Agritourism Potential

GOAL 15

“My grandpa, for land cultivation and seeding, used an ox and plow; he harvested and cleaned the wheat by hand and milled the grain in the watermill of the village. In the end, we had freshly baked delicious bread on our table,” says Zaza Ivanidze, a farmer and baker living in the Samtskhe–Javakheti region, Georgia.

Due to the laborious process involved in cultivating the Akhaltsikhe tsiteli doli wheat, this local red variety has become endangered. Yet, the species is nutritious and particularly suited to Georgia’s climate. To preserve the traditional technique and the local ecosystem, Zaza decided to diversify his business and opened a bakery with his wife in 2021.

Referencing a decade-old family recipe, Zaza made his first bread using the flour from the ancient wheat variety. “At first we were amazed by its flavour, which revived our childhood memories,” says Zaza. “In time, we also learned that the bread is not only rich in nutrients but also has a longer shelf life. No wonder that many people these days believe that older generations lived longer, healthier lives.”

His bread was quickly treasured by locals for its inviting smell. Zaza also took to the internet and set up a Facebook page for the bakery. They now offer on-the-spot tastings for tourists to help preserve the traditional culture and the cultivation of the endangered wheat variety.

Original story [link](#)



© FAO/Paata Vardanashvili

Women as Bringers of Peace



© IOM Philippines

Lagunde, Pikit, North Cotabato, is one of the identified conflict hotspots for more than 40 years located in the Philippines. A mother of four, Mryna has witnessed with her own eyes how communities and families shatter in conflict and violence. “I can still remember that day. We were all in a hurry to flee our homes, and I was still pregnant with my first child,” shares Mryna.

Mryna is a devoted member of the Social Welfare Committee of Barangay Lagunde. Once a week, she would gather with all Muslim mothers to transfer her knowledge to make sure that their families are cared for. More importantly, she is helping with the advocacy for the prevention of Violence Against Women and Children.

Currently, she is also taking part in the “Promoting Conflict Prevention, Social Cohesion and Community Resilience in BARMM” [Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao] in the Time of COVID-19 with 252 other community leaders. In this programme, community leaders work with other leaders from local government and community-based organizations to promote peace as the pandemic coincides with the political transition period, following the formal establishment of the BARMM in 2019 through the ratification of the Bangsamoro Organic Law.

Original story [link](#)

Community Radio for Migrants from Venezuela to Brazil

“This is La Voz de los Refugiados, providing you with the news so it’s all clear. My greetings to all my brothers, Brazil and Venezuela holding hands,” speaks Erasmo Rangel into the microphone, broadcasting his message to the people living in the camp.

He sits in a studio inside Rondon III, one of the Venezuelan refugee camps in the Capital of the State of Roraima, Brazil. More than 1,200 people take shelter in Rondon III with little access to timely and accurate information about COVID-19, documentation, access to rights in Brazil, and job search.

“Many people at the shelter are ashamed and have difficulty with the language, so they don’t ask Brazilians about their doubts. In addition, shelter residents circulate unreliable information among themselves. The radio is helping a lot,” says Katiuska Rodrigues, 56, resident of Rondon III.

Maria Andreina Gil is one of the eleven volunteers who record podcasts and answer common questions within the community to combat misinformation. “We talk about labour laws, discrimination, documentation and many other topics. But the main thing is to identify that information error, that little lie that is circulating in the community and that could end up harming someone,” she explains.



© UNHCR/Allana Ferreira

Original story [link](#) (Portuguese) | [link](#) (English)

After 35 Years, the Nightmare of a Legal Limbo Ends for a Mother of 9 in Montenegro



© UNHCR/Zoran Jovanovic/Photo from UN Montenegro article [here](#)

In Montenegro, many Roma families have no identity documents, which deprives them of basic human rights. The Radosavljević–Dobrani family of 11 is among those who were denied access to healthcare, financial institutions, and employment opportunities due to their stateless status.

Without any identity documents, Valentina Radosavljević had a hard time raising her children. “Not being recognized as a national of any country can create insurmountable barriers to healthcare, social care, jobs and stifles overall life prospects. Statelessness can often have a devastating psychological toll not only for young people, but can also rip apart entire families, as it creates legal schism. The ID documents made a huge difference in their lives,” Valentina says.

In 2021, Valentina got a helping hand from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), its legal aid partner Civic Alliance and the Serbian Embassy in Montenegro and after 35 years of struggle, she finally received an ID document. “Until today, I felt lost all my life. You have to understand that statelessness is like a family virus – you pass it down to your children and wearing a mask and washing hands does not help. I am very happy that this nightmare is over,” she exclaims.

Statelessness can often be passed down from one generation to the next. The issuance of identity documents is an important safeguard and a stepping-stone to acquiring citizenship, which prevents a lifetime of discrimination.

Original story [link](#)



Artificial Intelligence Ensuring Human Rights at the Heart of the Sustainable Development Goals



© Su San Lee

With the literature on human rights guidance continuing to grow, it has become challenging to manage the library. It is even harder to track whether the guidance has a real and positive impact on human rights. Hence, UN Human Rights has partnered with Specialisterne – a Danish social enterprise – to develop a new algorithm, making human rights analysis, programming and planning much easier for governments.

“We are talking about a level of information that no one human being can possibly digest,” says Birgitte Feiring, Director of Human Rights and Sustainable Development at the Danish Institute for Human Rights. “In pulling together these three very different organisations, at the end of the day, our common goal is to make human rights more accessible to rights holders, and to help them bring governments to account.”

For Birgitte Feiring, the new algorithm makes human rights analysis, programming and planning much easier for governments. “When governments have to design a plan for sustainable development, for example, or for sustainable recovery from COVID-19, in a few clicks, they can find out what are the human rights problems facing older persons, or what the issues are related to access to healthcare and vaccines. They are also directed to the solutions, as advised by the various human rights mechanisms.”

Original story [link](#)



A High-Tech Response is Helping Countries Win the Battle against Desert Locust

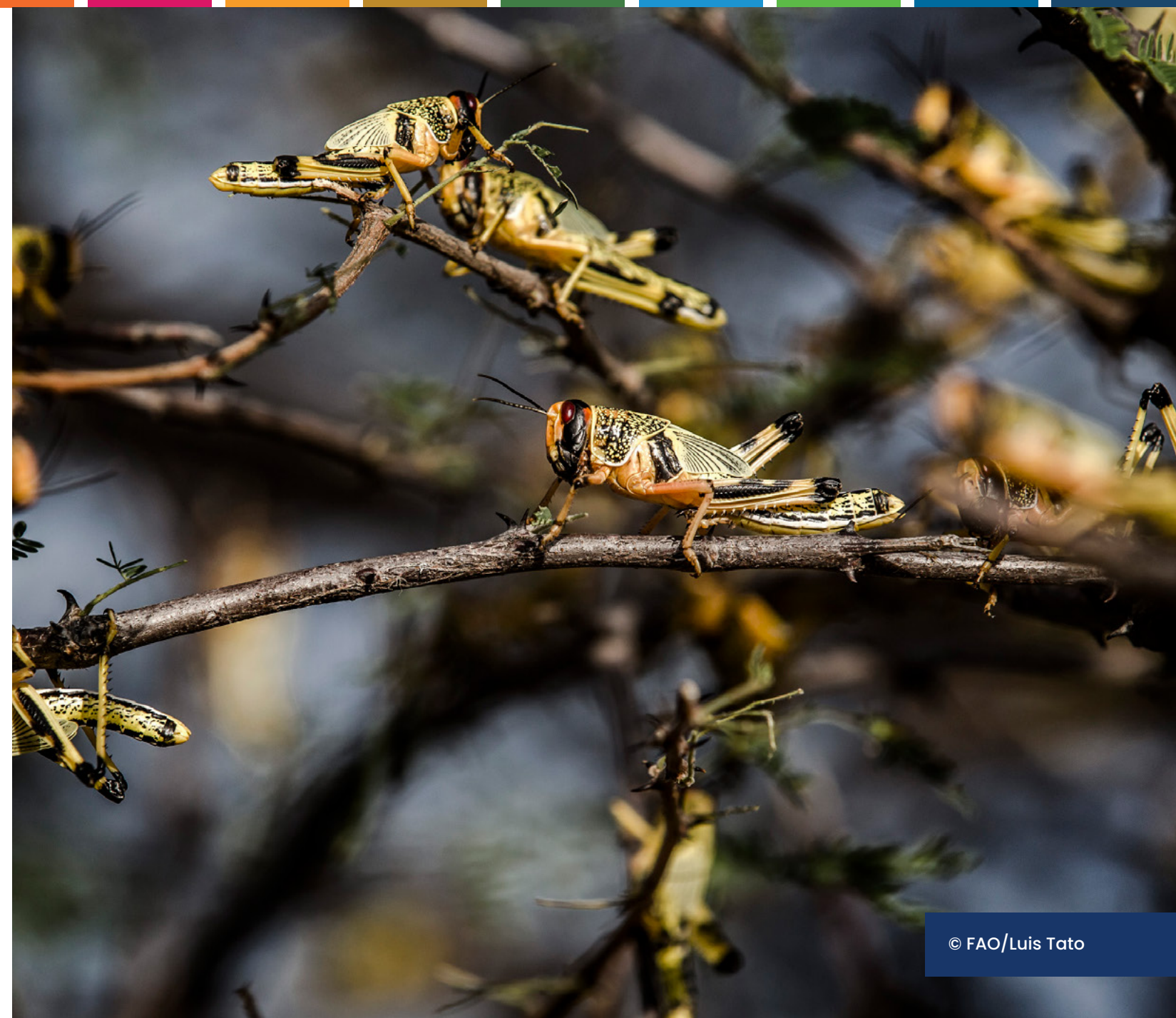
Desert locusts have long been a serious threat to the global food system. In recent years, these pests have swept across East Africa, Yemen, and Southwest Asia in massive swarms, devouring vast amount of crops and pastureland.

Leveraging on its partnerships and donors, FAO is developing a series of high-tech tools to detect, monitor, and control the pests. With the eLocust3 tablet, field teams collect crucial climate data and feed them into FAO's Desert Locust Information Service, enabling FAO and national authorities to track and predict locust movements.

Facing the shortage of skilled workers to collect essential data, researchers from Pennsylvania State University were brought in to build on top of existing tools. The result is a simple smartphone app that allows anyone to collect locust data in the field. To ensure that data is available in areas with poor connectivity, FAO has forged a new partnership with global GPS supplier Garmin, to modify a satellite data communicator.

Through this programme, FAO now receives up to 2,500 records of data per day and helps inform field workers on the location of locust swarms for their pest control operations.

Original story [link](#)



© FAO/Luis Tato

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For more information, visit the Sustainable Development Goals website of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Statistics Division at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs> and the respective links provided with each story.