



fao
Casa
gazette

JANUARY 2011

Sala de México
"Un tapiz original de
Temoaya"

A Cat's Whisker's of a
Christmas,
Part 2: New Beginnings

How did you ever learn it???

Towards Sustainable
Agriculture
& Rural Development in
China: Lessons of Experience

Haiti-an Ongoing
Humanitarian Crisis

fao CASA gazette

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photo credit FAO/Giulio Napolitano

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Typewritten electronic contributions for the FAO CASA Gazette are welcome. These can be in English, French, Italian or Spanish - articles, poems, drawings, photographs, etc. in fact anything interesting that staff members and/or their families in Rome or the field may like to contribute. No anonymous material will be accepted, and the Editor reserves the right to choose and/or reject material that is not in keeping with the ethics of the Organization. Send contributions electronically to the Editor at jill.stevenson@fao.org or leave signed copies with the COOP Office on the ground floor of Building E. The deadline for editorial material is due on the 1st of the month preceding the date of issue.

The Editor may schedule articles according to the priorities and editorial requirements of the FAO Staff COOP.
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Sala de México “Un tapiz original de Temoaya”

por Flavia Carbonetti



photo credit: FAO/Giulio Napolitano

Sala de México

Un magnífico tapiz orna la pared principal de la Sala de México en el cuartel general de la FAO en Roma. Diseñado en mayo de 1982 por el famoso y prestigioso arquitecto mexicano Pedro Ramírez Vázquez, a petición del Representante de la FAO en México en ocasión de la inauguración de la Representación en México, fue donado a la FAO por el Gobierno Mexicano. El arquitecto Ramírez Vázquez (México, DF, 16 de abril de 1919) es uno de los más afamados arquitectos mexicanos; sus obras forman parte del México moderno y son muy conocidas en el extranjero. En su vida profesional ganó muchos premios, distinciones y reconocimientos realizando todo tipo de diseños: arquitectónicos, urbanos, utilitarios y diseños gráficos. Algunos de sus proyectos en México son, por ejemplo: el Museo Nacional de Antropología (obra del movimiento moderno), la nueva Basílica de Santa María de Guadalupe, la Torre Mexicana de Aviación, el Estadio Azteca, la Torre de Tlatelolco, el Museo de Arte Moderno, los inolvidables gráficos de las Olimpiadas de México de 1968; entre sus proyectos en el extranjero destacan por ejemplo: la Capilla de la Virgen de Guadalupe dentro de la Basílica de San Pedro en la Ciudad del Vaticano en Roma, el Museo de las Culturas Negras en Dakar, Senegal y muchos más, haciendo de él una figura nacional e internacional muy importante.



Tapiz Sala de México, 7,50 m x 1,90 m
photo credit: FAO/Giulio Napolitano

Un campo de maíz es el sujeto principal del tapiz y fue expresamente realizado por el arquitecto Ramírez Vázquez para subrayar la intensa actividad agrícola en México. El cultivo del maíz tuvo su origen, con toda probabilidad en América central, especialmente en México, de donde se difundió hacia el norte hasta Canadá y hacia el sur hasta Argentina. Los relatos míticos otorgan al maíz un papel de protagonista y lo convierten en una planta sagrada. Los mitos más antiguos de Mesoamérica narran que el mundo fue creado por los Dioses del maíz quienes, al mismo tiempo, crearon los seres humanos y les dieron el alimento para sustentarlos. En la cultura Maya el Dios del maíz, era Yum Kax, representado siempre como un joven de larga cabellera y hermoso rostro que lleva en la cabeza o en las manos una mazorca de maíz y sus hojas; para los Aztecas el Dios del maíz era Centeotl representado como un joven Dios, espíritu masculino del maíz, hijo de la Diosa Chicomecóatl, espíritu femenino del maíz. Una leyenda de los Mayas cuenta que el hombre fue plasmado por los Dioses de una bolita de maíz y agua; mientras una leyenda, muy poética, de la cultura de los Aztecas, cuenta que cuando Dios creó la tierra, el sol se reventó y millones de gotas doradas cayeron sobre ella para convertirse en granos de maíz.



Yum Kax



Chicomecóatl



Centeotl

De una textura muy fina y de una riqueza cromática personalmente indicada por el arquitecto Ramírez Vázquez, el tapiz de la Sala de México fue tejido en Temoaya en el Estado de México. Fue el arquitecto Ramírez Vázquez quien eligió en 1982 la fábrica Tapetes Mexicanos “*por su prestigio, calidad y cuidado en su manufactura*” siendo el resultado una verdadera obra maestra. El tapiz es muy grande: de tamaño 7,50 m x 1,90 m, anudado a mano fue hecho, como todos los tapetes de Temoaya, con lana virgen de borrego Lincoln criado en Argentina sobre alma de algodón en unos telares gigantes. El Señor Antonio Gutiérrez Hernández, Presidente de la Sociedad Cooperativa Tapetes Anudados a

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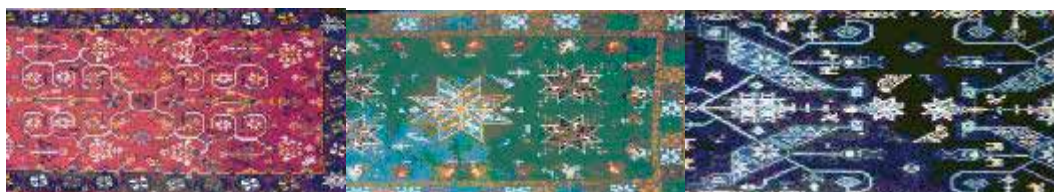


Detalle del tapiz
photo credit: FAO/Giulio Napolitano

Mano propietaria de la marca Tapetes de Temoaya, en una conversación telefónica, me confirmó que: *“para hacer un metro cuadrado de tapete se necesitan 45 días con jornadas de ocho horas”*. Un trabajo lento que requiere paciencia, gusto, concentración y dedicación.

El Señor Gutiérrez Hernández me contó que empezó a trabajar en Temoaya en 1970 enseguida de que en 1969 los artesanos de Temoaya aceptaran la propuesta de unos maestros enviados por el gobierno estatal y federal de enseñar la técnica del anudado indio. A partir de aquí, el anudado se extendió a gran parte de los tejedores tradicionales y en 1972 se integró la empresa estatal Tapetes Mexicanos con participación del Banco de México, la Secretaría de Hacienda y el Gobierno del Estado de México. Esta compañía paraestatal logró proyectar a nivel internacional los tapetes de Temoaya mediante exposiciones en Estados Unidos, Canadá, Japón, Alaska, España y otros países europeos. En la ciudad de México existía una tienda de tapetes de Temoaya con mucha demanda entre el turismo extranjero y sectores de clase media-alta y alta. En 1980, las cosas comenzaron a cambiar debido a la

reorientación de la política económica del país y en 1983 el Banco de México, la Secretaría de Hacienda y el gobierno estatal del Estado de México se retiraron de Tapetes Mexicanos. Para enfrentarse a la nueva situación buena parte de los artesanos formaron en 1988 la Sociedad Cooperativa Tapetes Anudados a Mano y esta organización *“ahora agrupa sólo a 120 artesanos”* de los 350 miembros iniciales y afronta en este momento una crisis importante no tanto por la falta de trabajo como por la dificultad en la venta de los productos. Para admirar los tapetes de Temoaya, conocer y apreciar un poco mejor el trabajo de la Sociedad Cooperativa Tapetes de Temoaya Anudados a Mano, pueden consultar el sitio: <http://www.tapetesdetemoaya.com/>



papantla

otomí

cora

photo de algunos tapetes de Temoaya

Se agradece mucho la amable cooperación de la Embajada de México en Roma, del arquitecto Pedro Ramírez Vázquez, del Señor Antonio Gutiérrez Hernández y del Señor Otto Erik Wagner.

A Cat's Whiskers of a Christmas. Part 2: *New Beginnings*

by Peter Steele

The family had shifted home just before Christmas and left their treasured house cat behind for the incoming family. Only fate had taken a hand - their well-prepared plans had come to nothing, and the cat found herself essentially abandoned. Urgent messages had been sent to Father Christmas by the youngest member of the family to provide for the cat, and the Christmas team at the North Pole had been instructed to comply. Now read on ...



Kids' home. The plastic shelter in the hotel car park where Mango lived briefly with her newly adopted family was something of a challenge during the monsoon.

Mango escapes

The cat had joined her family as a kitten just after the first born daughter had turned two; she was a Christmas present to the family from the family, and became attached to the little girl by an invisible umbilical cord - they were inseparable. Christmas came at the height of the mango season in the host country; and this, by default, gave the cat her name - Mango. And Mango she remained to everyone in the compound - both the family living in the main house and the maids and others who came to work there each day.

Maturing and growing old in the compound provided security for Mango that was in strict contrast to the hard life of the streets of the city; and if not in the immediate neighbourhood which was elegant, clean and rich, and sanitized by the municipal authorities as befalls a diplomatic enclave in a rapidly expanding capital city, but elsewhere where the majority of the people lived.

By the time the death of the gardener had filtered back to the family - having



Collecting trash. Some hundreds of people in the city live on the basis of collecting waste and selling materials with commercial value to wholesalers and others.

celebrated Christmas and planned for the New Year – the cat had long gone from the garden. A friend in the city was requested to check the house and to take care of the cat but, he eventually wrote, the cat was nowhere to be found. The house remained locked and there was no one minding the garden and grounds apart from an occasional security car. The messages sent back to the home country were hard on the family.

But the cat had struck lucky with her venture into the unknown. Hungry and virtually unable to fend for herself in the garden, which was a haven for birds and small rodents alike, the cat had simply grown thinner; her coat a little more matted and her anxiety more pronounced. There was the danger that she may simply starve locked in what was essentially a prison yard; the brick walls were too high and too smooth to climb, there were no trees within reach and the two main road gates fitted flush to their steel pillars and the paving.

What to do?

It was the side gate that eventually provided freedom early one evening, for the cracked masonry around the lower hinge had been forced by a climbing plant and provided an escape route for a young rat that the cat had chased and which she could, with some effort also squeeze through. The cat dropped a metre or more down the outside wall and never looked back.

The streets of the city represented a jungle for the inexperienced embassy cat and her chances of escaping the attention of the packs of stray dogs, coming to terms with the hundreds of feral cats that occupied the night and, equally as dangerous, the quasi-legal bush meat markets were slim. *Fate, however, had seen things differently.*

Street kids

The two little kids were hungry and had been snacking all day – whenever and wherever they had been able to find edible food. Their garbage route took them round



Time after time

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DE BESI - DI GIACOMO

the more affluent suburbs, a small industrial centre and the old French town alongside the river that had become a backpackers' ghetto. Here they collected the spent cardboard cartons, old newspapers and discarded aluminium cans that provided their daily earnings. With their bags of waste piled high on their rickety hand trolley, the kids were hunkered down on the edge of the kerb just 100 metres from the back of the garden from where the cat had escaped. Sharing a plastic bag with 'Lucky Supermarkets' printed down one side, they were eating the last of the croissants left over from the day and given to them earlier by a friendly bar owner as he shut up for the night. The cat stared hungrily at the kids and their food and, when the little boy threw her the remains of his croissant, she wolfed it down. When the kids got up to move, the cat followed them.

For more than two years the kids had been

living under a plastic sheet tied over a branch of an acacia tree on the edge of the car park outside the hotel on the river front, at a point where the public gardens sloped down to the river bank. Relatively tidy and unobtrusive, the hotel had tolerated the shelter and the kids and, from time to time, sympathetic staff had provided a worn or damaged blanket, unwanted food and spare clothing from home. The kids survived in much the same way as the other estimated 19,000 street kids did in the capital city; on their wits and with not a little luck, for this was a tolerant society. At eight and two years older than her brother the little girl, however, would need luck by the bucketful to survive intact through the next period of her young life.

The cat followed the kids with their trolley back to their plastic shelter and, when the kids settled down for the night, simply did the same - sleeping just a few metres from their tree. Fortunately, the rains had ceased



Father Christmas. One of several hundred sleigh and reindeer teams that criss-cross the world each Christmas Eve, this one featured light-weight construction with additional animals to enable it to cover the distance and speed required from the North Pole to the host country in the time available that night. An air-conditioned seat provided comfort for the driver once in the tropics.



Mango the embassy cat. Cats are good at making a home with people. Never actually 'owned' by anyone, cats provide people with the pleasure that comes of looking after them; this is termed in cat language the 'cat's whiskers'

a month earlier, and the night was dry. Early next morning the three of them – all equally hungry – set off on their garbage rounds again with the cat trailing the kids. Also, leaving the car park the Christmas agent assigned to the city was fortunate to see the cat for the first time; and followed them making notes. He had missed them the previous day outside the embassy garden.

Catholic legacy

The legacy of the French colonial administration 50 years back had resulted in some fine buildings in the old port quarter (many of which were now seriously dilapidated), a language spoken by an elderly minority and, secure in the traditions of their belief, a small but viable Catholic Christian community. Many people in the country celebrated the Christmas holiday irrespective of belief, but it was the Catholic community that provided a focus for deliveries on Christmas Eve. The same

community also provided the financial resources for a handful of Catholic NGOs that cared for small numbers of orphans.

The challenge for the reindeer team responsible for logistics and country planning at the North Pole Headquarters was one of choices; how to meet the requests made by the youngest member of the embassy family - to provide for a cat that no longer had a fixed address. Directed into the *'Last minute/too difficult to achieve'* files, these requests may have become lost except that Father Christmas particularly enjoyed a challenge out of the normal; and instructed the team to re-double their efforts and come up with something – like pronto.

Christmas gifts

There was no easy way of delivering presents to a couple of kids living in a plastic shelter under a tree on the edge of a tropical river; but a drop-off was scheduled anyway.

And, on Christmas Eve, the sleigh and reindeers touched down quietly on the tar seal of the hotel car park and a large jovial looking man in a red costume – clearly hassled and rushed – placed a box of cat food, a plastic mouse and a ball of twine together with a collection of clothes, shoes and confectionary (with everything wrapped up in gaily patterned paper) under the edge of the plastic sheet; and without waking either cat or children. The reindeer had taken bets amongst themselves on the cat waking up.

The real clincher for Christmas came, however, from Planning which thought up the ultimate in presents for both the cat and the kids. Hacking into the single computer belonging to the largest of the three Catholic orphanages in the city, Planning added fictitious names for the two children living in front of the hotel to the lists of kids scheduled to be offered places during the

New Year; and provided a location, and dates when they should be picked up. *A footnote was added to let them take their cat with them.* This information was cross-referenced with the municipal social welfare office responsible for the district; instructing them by e-mail to provide pick-up and delivery services. And both orphanage and services were further linked by computer into an Australian Government agency in the city that provided sponsored immigration places for the youngest and most vulnerable street kids; adding the names of both kids to their waiting lists. *The kids would be set up for life.*

And Mango (now simply called ‘cat’ by everyone)? Well she served out her time as a welcome guest at the orphanage in a quiet suburb of the capital city and, two-years later, 18 months after the kids had departed she forgot to wake up from her sleep one night ■



*From the FAO terrace after a hail storm in Rome 2009.
Photo by Dina Franchi*




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How did you ever learn it????

ONLY THE ENGLISH COULD HAVE INVENTED THIS LANGUAGE !!!

We'll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes, But the plural of ox becomes oxen, not oxes.
One fowl is a goose, but two are called geese, Yet the plural of moose should never be meese.
You may find a lone mouse or a nest full of mice, Yet the plural of house is houses, not hiee.
If the plural of man is always called men, Then shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?
If I speak of my foot and show you my feet, And I give you a boot, would a pair be called beet?
If one is a tooth and a whole set are teeth, Why shouldn't the plural of booth be called beeth?
Then one may be that, and three would be those, Yet hat in the plural would never be hose,
And the plural of cat is cats, not cose.
We speak of a brother and also of brethren, But though we say mother, we never say methren.
Then the masculine pronouns are he, his and him, But imagine the feminine: she, shis and shim!

Let's face it - English is a crazy language.

There is no egg in eggplant nor ham in hamburger;
neither apple nor pine in pineapple.
English muffins weren't invented in England ...
We take English for granted, but if we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square, and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig.
And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham?
Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend.
If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?
If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught?
If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat? Sometimes I think all the folks who grew up speaking English should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane.
In what other language do people recite at a play and play at a recital?
We ship by truck but send cargo by ship.
We have noses that run and feet that smell.
We park in a driveway and drive in a parkway.
And how can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise man and a wise guy are opposites?
You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out, and in which an alarm goes off by going on.
And, in closing, if Father is Pop, how come Mother's not Mop?



Towards Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development in China: Lessons of Experience

by Fahmi Bishay

‘The miraculous success of the Chinese economy during the last two decades is remarkable. One of the country’s great achievements in agriculture has been in working towards Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD) through Chinese Ecological Agriculture (CEA). Many a developing country is facing this difficult challenge. Based on his FAO’s working experience in China, the author of this article summarises a number of lessons learned from China in achieving this goal. Those lessons, however, must be tailored to fit the existing conditions, challenges and aspirations of concerned countries prior to implementation.’



Photo 1. The author with FAO and Chinese colleagues at an FAO project site in Sichuan China

China is currently the world’s second largest economy after the United States. The country’s purchasing power parity was \$8.77 trillion in 2009. China is the world’s fastest-growing economy, with an average **growth rate of about 10 percent for the past 30 years**. In 2009, China’s per capita income was \$6,567 (IMF). China is also the second largest

trading nation in the world and the largest exporter and second largest importer of goods.

China is one of the world’s largest producers and consumers of **agricultural products**. Virtually all arable land is used for food crops. China is the world’s largest producer of **rice and is among the principal sources of wheat, corn (maize),**

tobacco, soybeans, peanuts (groundnuts), cotton, potatoes, sorghum, peanuts, tea, millet, barley, oilseed, pork and fish. Major *non-food crops*, including *cotton, other fibers and oilseeds*, are also produced in China but constitute a smaller proportion of the country's foreign trade revenue.

Yields in China are generally very high due to intensive cultivation. China ranks first worldwide in farm output per hectare in many agricultural products. In 2003, China *fed 20 percent* of the *world's population* with only *7 percent of the world's arable land*.

SARD and CEA in China

The *Chinese* drive towards SARD through CEA is based on a *comprehensive approach for the incorporation of environmental considerations into agricultural development*. That is, the main characteristics of CEA and SARD include an agricultural production system that adapts itself to enhancing the *environment, conserving the natural resource base*, maintaining the balance in the *ecosystem*; entailing an *optimum agricultural system* with *sound social, economic, ecological and environmental effects*. The Chinese model for SARD and CEA *integrates* sound practices of *traditional Chinese agricultural technology* with *modern science and technology* to create *sustainable agriculture and rural development* in the country.

There are many carefully adapted *indigenous and modern techniques* which are commonly utilized in *CEA farming systems* in China to achieve *sustainable agriculture and rural development (SARD)*. The following are some key examples:

- Using *labour and technology-intensive*

cropping systems (often emphasizing complex inter-cropping systems with high-value crops, using large amounts of organic manure).

- Developing *rural energy resources* including *biogas, wind energy as well as other energy saving techniques but used on a small scale by households* (this is designed to utilize seasonally abundant and surplus labour).
- Adopting effective *dryland farming technologies*, including such techniques as deep ploughing, soil moisture conservation, the use of straw and stock manure for soil and moisture conservation, etc.
- Introducing *integrated pest management* methodologies, including techniques which combine the use of limited amounts of farm chemicals applied at specific times along with utilization of natural methods, such as crop rotations and the use of other natural, labour-intensive methods.
- Utilizing *integrated plant nutrition management approaches*, including a combination of applying chemical fertilizers according to technically efficient timing schemes and combining them with applications of organic manures and recycled plant wastes.
- Incorporating *anti-soil erosion technologies* which use integrated systems of combining land terracing, the conversion of land from cultivated land to pastures and forests, the extension of sustainable forest and livestock management systems.
- Developing, treating and utilizing *sewer water irrigation schemes*, using urban and industrial wastewater to safely irrigate land in areas that are extremely water short. In addition, this includes the use of treated wastewater for increasing the organic nutrients in the soil; use of physical recycling; the integration of multi-cropping and pond




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- fisheries systems into single crop rotation systems where the latter exists.
- Raising of *fish and ducks in paddy fields*.

Lessons of Experience

With the above in mind, the following are selected lessons learned from the Chinese model.

Resilient and Endogenous agricultural technology

- The first factor for the success of China's CEA and SARD programmes is mainly inherited in the resilient and dynamic attributes of traditional Chinese agricultural technologies (indigenous) based on a highly participatory approach. Endogenous SARD models that are based on appropriate technologies that fit within the concerned country's traditions and cultural background are, thus, having the highest chances of success.

Integration of traditional with modern technologies

- The Second factor is that, traditional farming systems in China have always ***combined conventional techniques with modern*** (sometimes transferred from within the sector and/or from abroad) ***agricultural technologies***. Chinese producers have always created technological systems on the basis of each area's unique set of factor endowments. Those carefully designed enterprises produced an agricultural system that is highly productive yet causing relatively low stress on the environment. In general, the techniques in the CEA's farming system encourages ***low material input, recycling, high***

labour use, and balancing the level of modern inputs with traditional agronomic practices. Therefore, careful integration of traditional and modern agricultural production techniques is another factor for efficient and pragmatic SARD.

Policies for sustainable agriculture and rural development

- The third key factor for the success of CEA and SARD approaches in China is the careful design and implementation of a comprehensive and complementary set of ***policies for sustainable agriculture and rural development***, and the incorporation of those policies along with appropriate technology into the national planning process. The incorporation of SARD dimensions into agricultural policy and planning in China has been focusing on the following measures below:
 - Integration of ***growth (efficiency), equity and sustainability*** within a coherent and operational framework. ***Incorporation of SARD objectives into the national planning and objectives*** - in particular: contribution to GDP; population and employment; improved income distribution and poverty alleviation; balance of payments; and environmental protection and natural resource conservation.
 - ***Integration of SARD dimensions into the agricultural development process***; in particular, in the national development strategy developed at the macro-stage; in the multi-sectoral analysis developed at the sector-stage; and in the extended scope of project analysis to incorporate sustainable development and environmental protection criteria developed at the project stage.

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Photo 2. A Chinese farmer (third from left) discussing his actual technological and socio-economic constraints with concerned local officials and FAO team: a highly participatory approach.

Minimization of the depletion and degradation of the natural resources base

The critical elements incorporated in the formulation of **policies** and technological innovations for sustainable agricultural and rural development that simultaneously minimize the depletion and degradation of the natural resources base in China included, *inter alia*:

- enhancing the development and access to **modern (efficient) agricultural technologies**;
- strengthening efficient **marketing systems** that provide producers with the incentives to engage in sustainable agricultural production and marketing activities;
- stressing technical and economic support to areas known to have high **potential** for sustainable agricultural production;
- enhancing local **farmers' participation** in CEA and SARD programmes through such measures as the “contracting

- systems” and market incentives;
- creating and disseminating new technologies through strengthening applied **research** and efficient **extension** services;
- expanding the scope of agricultural system to stress **integrative practices**;
- Stressing **regional decentralization**;
- developing and implementing measures for **poverty alleviation**.
- Formulating and implementing complementarity **rules and regulations**; and
- Setting up an efficient national and regional institutional framework for the formulation and implementation of CEA and SARD programmes.

A highly participatory approach

Another essential factor for the success of the Chinese model has been the farmers' highly participatory approach. On a continuous basis, farmers meet among themselves and with concerned governmental, non-governmental (NGOs), FAO and other concerned national, regional

and international bodies, as appropriate, to discuss their challenges and come up with operational solutions. To stimulate this fruitful process, certain non-monetary incentives are provided by GOC to local farmers. For instance, photo 3. below shows

a local Government and FAO joint meeting in Sichuan where four selected *local farmers* who have *achieved substantial increases* in their farm productivities were *honoured* and received honorary certificates.



Photo 3. Honouring four outstanding local farmers in Sichuan.

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Haiti – an ongoing humanitarian crisis

by Edith Mahabir



The plight of the Haitian population has not changed very much in the past months. The situation is still one of emergency and most people who have lost all their belongings still do not have homes and depend on international and local assistance for their sustenance. The passage of Hurricane Tomas further contributed to worsening the devastation wrought by the earthquake, cruelly destroying the crops planted in the country, for example in the Commune des Abricots. This small commune earlier 5 000 souls acquired over 8 000 more and now has a population of over 13 000. The Mayor has confirmed that they have to re-start from scratch and funds, seeds, fertilizers and other materials are required in addition to the basic necessities such as food, medicines, clothing, etc. for the population - thousands of people still live in the tent villages with very cramped spaces and poor hygiene facilities and total absence of any privacy.

The children also need to resume school and

hence they also need exercise books, pens, pencils, erasers, text books and all those basic tools to be able to study. Medicines, vaccines, sterilized bandages, plasters and other hygienic aids are in severe demand – the recent outbreak of cholera is testimony to this with the very tragic toll of over 3000 persons succumbing.

The Caribbean Cultural Group has an ongoing fund raising campaign to assist in bringing relief to the Haitian population. The money collected is from individual donations, proceeds from charity sales and other events and parties organized in the course of 2010, donations from the FAO Staff Coop Social Fund and Cookbook sales. The Coop itself recently donated Euros 1,500.00 from the food sold at the Stadium at the October 2010 Run for Food Race to the Telefood “Fruit Trees for Haiti project”.

The first relief assistance donated was the proceeds from the December 2009 Charity Sale organized by the CCG at FAO together with spontaneous donations from



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colleagues, relatives and friends. A total of €2,000.00 was given to the President of the Médecins sans Frontières in Rome. This donation was used to help fund the setting up of an emergency operating theatre needed also for urgent amputations.

In February 2010 a fund raising dinner was organized by GN Communication under the sponsorship of the Caribbean Group and FAO Staff Coop with the participation of



Max de Angelis and his Band who provided music and entertainment. The sum of €2,500.00 was raised and donated entirely to the Cuisines de Solidarité MUCI (Ruelle Vaillant aile droite #30, Port-au-Prince, Haiti). MUCI provides lunches and dinners to destitute and poor people daily. They were operating before the earthquake assisting the poor and, needless to say, their work has more than tripled in the aftermath of the earthquake. They have now launched an education programme for homeless children victims of the earthquake. Those wishing to contribute personally to their activities can contact them directly at cuisinesolidaritemuci@gmail.com or volontaire_muci@yahoo.com.

A collection of clothing, toiletries, sheets, blankets and other basic necessities was also made. A large amount of scholastic material was bought by some CCG members and given to Dr. Ricardo Augustin, Pre-sident of the Associazione Fraternité Haitiana who personally saw to its distribution, together with that collected by his association and the IPSCT Giulio Verne.

It is proposed to donate all the

additional funds raised during the past year and future donations to other local Haitian projects to benefit other people who may not have received long term assistance from us. We have contacted Chantal Laurent, who lives and works in Haiti, to request ideas on projects for consideration. She has provided the dramatic information below and some suggestions:

“There is still a great number of orphans in the Commune of Les Abricots; they arrived after the earthquake and have been placed in families in the Commune, but feeding them in this condition of famine, schooling, etc... is very difficult. Helping in job creation and SMEs will also help taking care of these orphans“.

“All the international help is going to Port-au-Prince, compromising the decentralisation policy. This is absurd. As my driver says: les 250,000 morts ont resuscité. Il y a trop de monde à Port-au-Prince (streets are full of people, traffic is hell, and nothing changes). So, instead of changing place, keep on funding Les

Abricots:

They were hard hit by hurricane Thomas: 80 percent of the crops destroyed and the Commune is under starvation (“facing famine”).

Cholera is hitting them hard: Mica’s maid just died of cholera, so did her son; it’s a real disaster.

And Mica de Verteuil (Fondation Paradis des Indiens) is fighting hard to help the people. So is the Mayor, Jean-Claude Fignolé.”

Suggestions from Mica de Verteuil (Paradis des Indiens) for longer term assistance to give people a livelihood:

Une petite entreprise pour faire des briquettes à partir de noix de coco, avec l’enveloppe fibreuse sèche, femmes seulement

- A small enterprise to produce mamba or peanut butter using peanuts bought



directly from the farmers of Les Abricots, for women only.

- A small enterprise to make soap, for women only.

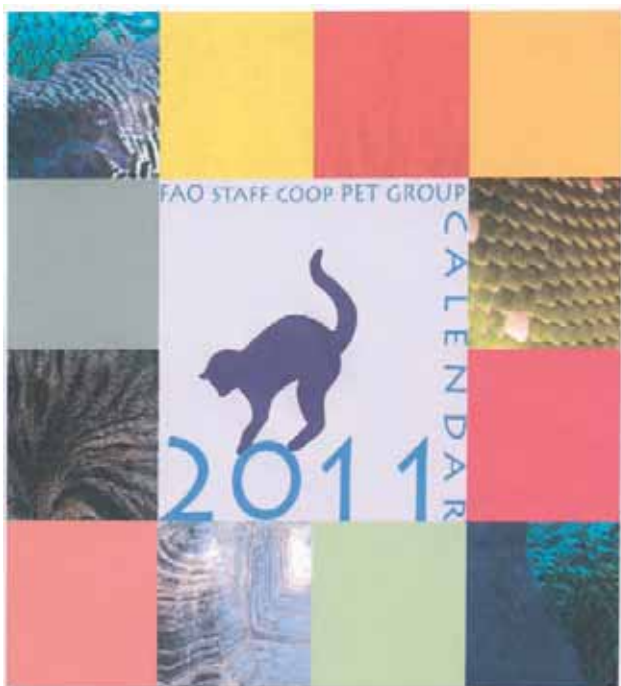
- A small enterprise to make underpants or

knickers, then later on brassieres, for women only.

- A small enterprise to make cartons (boxes) from the dried fibre of coconut shells, women only ■

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2.	Achat d'un moulin industriel ou semi-industriel pour faciliter une production aisée du mamba dans de bonnes conditions d'hygiène.			50,000g		
3.	Achat d'équipement et de petit équipement pour assurer que la production soit continue même si le gros équipement venait à tomber en panne. 20 moulins à 1000g chacun qu'il faudra maintenir dans un état parfait de propreté avant qu'il soit range = 20,000g.			20,000g		
4.	Achat de 2000 Pots en verre ou en plastique avec bons couvercles, pour commencer, à 25g = 50,000g. Achat de 40 spatules, de cuiller en bois, de fouets solides pour fouetter le mamba, de 10 chaudières (chaudrons) à 1500g = 15,000g. Achat d'étiquettes et de boîtes d'emballage.			150,000g		
5.	Achat de 2 fours au gaz propane pour griller facilement les pistaches sans les brûler. Achat de bonbonnes de 200lbs de gaz propane.			80,000g		
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Beef and potato stew (a Caribbean favourite)

by Edith Mahabir

Ingredients

*2-3 kg good quality beef
2 large onions
4 cloves garlic
4-5 tbsp brown cane sugar
3 tbsp soy sauce
6 tbsp peanut oil
4 tbsp tomato ketchup
salt, ground black pepper
½ litre water*

4-5 lmedium potatoes – in thick slices

All-purpose seasoning (to make your own combine finely chopped onion, garlic, celery leaves and a little stalk, thyme and chillies – can be fresh or dried). Chief Brand from Trinidad & Tobago is very good.



Method: Remove all fat and any gristle from beef and cut into cubes. Finely chop onion and garlic. Heat a large heavy pot or casserole (large enough to hold meat and water), add the peanut oil and when hot (but not smoking) add the brown sugar. When the sugar becomes frothy and caramel brown in colour add the beef and mix well to coat all the pieces with this browning. Cook for 3-4 minutes over high heat, then stir in the chopped onions and garlic, cover and cook a further 5 minutes. Add the soy sauce, tomato ketchup, a generous amount of all-purpose seasoning, mixing to amalgamate ingredients well, cover and cook 5-6 minutes, then add the half litre of water and bring contents to the boil. Once boiling point is reached lower the heat to moderate and simmer for about 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

In the meantime peel the potatoes and cut into thick slices or large cubes, as preferred. Add these to the pot, verify the salt (adding some if necessary), add black pepper and more hot water if needed to prevent dish getting dry and to cook potatoes. Normally an additional 20-30 minutes are needed to ensure meat is tender – stir delicately during this phase to avoid mashing up the potatoes. The dish should be moist and have some sauce but not swimming in it.

Serve with white rice and ratatouille (see next recipe from Cooking Fantasy). Good also with rice and bean/peas pilau and cole slaw (grated fresh carrots, cabbage, little green onion and mayonnaise).

Ratatouille

Ingredients

*4-5 zucchini (courgettes)
2-3 aubergine
4 ripe tomatoes
1 fennel (optional)
2 sweet peppers (red and yellow)
2 large onions
1-2 cloves garlic (finely chopped)
12 black olives
parsley chopped
8 basil leaves
Olive oil
Salt, pepper*



Method: Wash all vegetables and herbs, cut off stems from zucchini, aubergines and sweet peppers (pepperoni) and cut into 2 cm cubes (all the same size). Discard the green parts from the fennel and cut into cubes same size as the other vegetables. Peel and slice onions coarsely and chop garlic finely. Cut up the tomatoes in wedges and remove the seeds.

In a large casserole heat about 5 tablespoonfuls of olive oil, add the zucchini, aubergine, fennel and onions and stir to coat with oil. Cook covered stirring occasionally for about 10 minutes, then add the peppers, tomatoes, garlic, the basil leaves shredded with the hands and the olives. Season with salt and pepper; when it begins to boil reduce the heat to low and simmer gently for 15-20 minutes turning occasionally. Sprinkle with chopped parsley before serving.

Accompany with any grilled, roasted or stewed meat or with fried, poached or boiled eggs OR simply enjoy with bread of your choice.

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