

Government pledges \$5m to sustain EU, FAO agriculture recovery project

Monday 10 December 2012

Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

Press Release

Government pledges \$5m to sustain EU, FAO agriculture recovery project

10 December 2012. JUBA: A recovery project handed to South Sudan by the European Union and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations will form the base for the country to be food sufficient by 2014, a new target set by the government.

"This project has given us the foundation upon which South Sudan is starting," Martin Elia Lomoro, the minister of Animal Resources and Fisheries, has said. The target to achieve food sufficiency by 2014 was set at the recent agricultural fair. Some \$5 million, the minister said, has been budgeted to sustain the project. FAO and GIZ implemented it at a cost of EUR 36 million.

"It means that the budget will be directed to areas where the President's priorities lie," Lomoro said. "If you can't feed your stomach, you can't go to farm. A hungry army can't fight; they will even through the gun away."

The project - Sudan Productive Capacity Recovery Programme -prepared in 2004 and 2005, and handed over to South Sudan over the weekend, was meant to provide services - a peace dividend that would let people know that a state existed.

"The project has built the base for a more effective Governmental service delivery to farmers and livestock keepers, but for continuity the government must now take over," Massimiliano Pedretti, Programme Manager at the EU Delegation said.

"SPCRP has contributed substantially to the Institutional building and to the capacity building of farmers. This process has only started and will further be supported by EU."

Under the physical recovery, 5 state ministries of Agriculture headquarters and 14 County Agriculture Department headquarters, complete with generators and VSAT, were built. The project also procured some 20 vehicles and 28 motorbikes.

According to a report from the Office of Evaluation, FAO, the improved condition of the offices is boosting the quality of work and the commitment of government and staff members. "The means of transport are highly appreciated even though a dire need remains."

The project developed vital rural productive services, such as rural advisory and extension services, animal health, marketing systems and rural business support. The project put staffs in states where they didn't exist shortly after the peace agreement. It trained 1055 government staffs and 13,520 non state actors, and trained and equipped with bicycles some 200 Community Animal Health Workers who were provided with solar fridges. It established some 394 farmer field schools to do commercial enterprises and ensure agriculture sustainability.

"Smallholder groups have created knowledge that didn't exist before and have demonstrated utilization of improved technologies introduced by the project, such as improved fish processing and preservation, and vegetable production, but all these investments need to be maintained and kept functional," Pedretti said. "There is political will to keep the machinery running, but the budget is inadequate."

South Sudan suffers acute food shortages; more than half the food is imported, yet it has some of Africa's most fertile lands. The country's funding to the sector is 2.1 percent of the budget, but officials acknowledge that the country's prospects for prosperity lie with this industry.

"South Sudan has enormous potential in agriculture, livestock and fisheries development," Dr. Sue Lautze, Head of Office, FAO South Sudan, said. "We're currently working with the government and other stakeholders to develop its Country Programming Framework (CPF), which will guide all interventions in South Sudan as the country waits to become a full member state of FAO."

South Sudan is due to become a member state of FAO next year.

For further information please contact:

Dr. SUE LAUTZE

Head of Office, FAO South Sudan

Sue.lautze@fao.org

MS SUSAN KILOBIA

Chief Technical Advisor, Sudan Productive Capacity Recovery Programme

Susan.kilobia@fao.org; Tel: +211955450120

NOTE TO THE EDITORS

- SCRCF focused on two major components.
- The Capacity building component was implemented by FAO. It cost EUR 19.07 million in Sudan and EUR 22.57 million in South Sudan in all five states west of the river Nile, including Western Equatoria, Lakes, Western Bahr el Ghazal, Warrap and Northern Bahr el Ghazal.
- Support to rural livelihoods through financing and implementing investment projects component was implemented by Euroconsult Mott MacDonald in Sudan and by GIZ in South Sudan. It cost EUR 9m and EUR 13.2 million respectively.
- An independent evaluation report says: "Even though other donor funded programmes and projects are ongoing in the target areas, SPCRP is one of the few focusing on government capacity building. Not only was increased capacity found valuable, it was also deemed to be the most likely route toward sustainability