

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Georgia

Newsletter

Issue

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Photo gallery



Animal feed distribution in Ortasheni village, Gori district



Deworming treatment in Ruisi village, Gori district, by local veterinarian



Newly installed water troughs in Shavshvebi village, Gori district

Emergency and Rehabilitation Activities

Emergency Rehabilitation Coordination Unit (ERCU)

Project OSRO/GEO/802/USA

Project activities supported by:  USAID
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Emergency supply of animal feed to conflict affected small-scale farming households and support to the agriculture sector and Food Security Cluster coordination in Georgia

Background

This project aims to protect the livelihoods of vulnerable livestock owners in areas affected by the August 2008 conflict through the provision of FAO technical assistance and coordination of the support to the agriculture sector. FAO has helped vulnerable small-scale farming households in 127 conflict affected villages in Shida Kartli, distributing 4 240 metric tonnes of concentrated animal feed to 18 244 beneficiaries.

The intervention was implemented in close cooperation with four local implementing partners: CARE International, Save the Children, World Vision and International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC). FAO is grateful for the logistical support received from United Nations World Food Programme (WFP).

In order to improve the general health of local cattle, and reduce susceptibility to disease, FAO dewormed 46 905 animals, covering almost 78 percent of all cattle in the target area. This treatment programme will help improve cattle nutrition, and thus help increase milk yields.

To ensure sufficient water availability for cattle, the project includes the construction of cattle water troughs and the replacement of water pipe lines where they have been damaged, removed or destroyed as a result of the conflict.

As part of the in-country interagency coordination agreement to strengthen the humanitarian response, FAO is co-chairing the Food Security Cluster in Georgia together with the World Food Programme.

Recent Activities

- A second round of de-worming was completed in June 2009. The treatment was implemented in close cooperation with the Veterinary Services of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and CARE International and IOCC.
- Installation of 35 cattle water troughs was recently completed in seventeen villages in Shida Kartli region

"All the cattle in the area had to be dewormed in order to reduce the risk of reinfection had we left animals untreated," Ketevan Chumburidze, national livestock expert, FAO, Georgia.

Photo gallery



Vegetable seed and fertilizer distribution in Takhtisdziri village, Kareli district



Training on vegetable planting and growing practices in Brotsleti village, Gori district



Gender advisor with local communities in Uravelti village, Samtskhe-Javakheti region

Project OSRO/GEO/803/ITA

Project activities supported by:



Emergency provision of agricultural inputs and support to agriculture sector and Food Security Cluster coordination in Georgia

Background

This project will help protect the livelihoods of vulnerable households in conflict affected areas by restarting agricultural production through the provision of vegetable seeds, fertilizer and agronomic technical assistance.

Vegetable seeds and fertilizer were distributed to 7 369 beneficiaries in 22 villages in Shida Kartli region, comprising nearly five metric tonnes of vegetable seeds (including tomato, cabbage, carrot, cucumber and beetroot) and 368.8 metric tonnes of NPK fertilizer. For each vegetable variety, detailed instructions of good agricultural practices were prepared by FAO technical staff, translated and disseminated amongst the farmers. It is hoped this will help improve cultivation and crop production practices as well as on-farm water management.

To support this, training sessions on modern vegetable planting and growing techniques were designed by FAO and conducted in all target villages by CARE International and World Vision International, FAO's local implementing partners.

Recent Activities

- The FAO field officer in Gori has started monitoring and evaluation to measure the impact of the distribution of seeds and fertilizers and associated training.
- World Vision International has established 11 demonstration plots to support the initial training programme. This will help beneficiaries to improve practical skills.
- The next round of training, to focus on harvesting, storage and conserving of vegetables is currently being designed.

"We presented useful tips on shielding plants from insects and worms," said Irakli Merkvilishvili, a trainer for FAO. "The farmers were very active and they really wanted to learn new ways of growing vegetables that would help them to increase productivity."

Needs assessment - a gender approach among IDPs and other conflict affected population to identify the different and specific needs of rural communities

Project activities supported by:



Background

The IASC Gender Standby Capacity (GenCap) is a project of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) Sub-working Group on Gender in Humanitarian Action.

GenCap seeks to build capacity of humanitarian actors at country level to mainstream gender equality programming, including prevention and response to gender-based violence, in all sectors of humanitarian response.

A gender advisor plays a critical role in building inter-agency capacity on the integration of cross-cutting issues into humanitarian reform process, in particular the cluster approach.

Recent Activities

UNIFEM/FAO ERCU GenCap Gender Adviser, Maud Edgren-Schori, is supporting the work of a needs assessment in three regions in Georgia: Shida Kartli, Samtskhe Javakheti and Kvema Kartli. The needs assessment aims to identify specific needs in the agricultural sector of conflict affected men and women. The objective is to capture the different needs, roles, priorities, abilities and responsibilities of men and women in order to develop next phase programs and projects based on gender analysis. The methodology uses semi-structured group interviews of mixed and single-sex groups.

What's New

TCP/GEO/3201



Hydrology and irrigation assessment in Shida Kartli region of Georgia

Background

The main objective of the activity is to prepare a problem-oriented description and result-oriented analysis of the hydrological and irrigation situation in Shida Kartli. The aim is to promote:

- Reduced dependency on traditional irrigation practices
- Improved and more efficient use of natural resources to augment agricultural production
- More sustainable agricultural livelihoods for conflict affected populations

Recent Activities

A mission consisting of two international consultants (one hydrologist and one irrigation engineer) arrived in Georgia on 5 June 2009 to carry out a reconnaissance and assessment mission in the Gori and Kareli districts of Shida Kartli region to assess the current status, needs and feasibility of irrigation in support of returnees and internally displaced populations (IDPs) in resettlement areas.

Development and other Programme Activities

TCP/RER/3003 (A)



Food safety capacity building

Background

Accomplishments of the project in Georgia have included:

- assessment and guidance on strengthening the management of food control activities,
- technical support and training on Codex Alimentarius
- equipment for the improved operation of the National Codex Contact Point
- assessment and advice on strengthening food control laboratories

Recent Activities

- FAO conducted the training of relevant staff of the Ministry of Agriculture/National Service on good hygiene practices (GHP) and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP).
- A draft food safety strategy has been prepared, currently awaiting feedback from national counterparts.

MTF/INT/003/EEC

Project activities supported by:



Strengthening Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) prevention and emergency response capacity in the Trans-Caucasian countries

Background

The project goal is to assist the countries of the South Caucasus to put into place a system to effectively manage the threat of FMD incursion through effective prevention measures including vaccination programs and efficient disease reporting and emergency control plans and procedures.

The programme for the Caucasus countries has three main components:

1. Regional Coordination of national FMD prevention actions, policy development and implementation support
2. FMD surveillance, FMD control, incl. vaccination, information management, and emergency planning
3. Laboratory capacity to support FMD surveillance and control programmes

The aim of the project is to re-enforce regional bio-security, especially at the borders between the Transcaucasus, Turkey and Iran.

Recent Activities

- Regional FMD simulation exercise for veterinarians from Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in Gurjaani was held at the beginning of May 2009.
- 275 000 doses of FMD vaccines were delivered to Georgia at the end of May. The seasonal vaccination campaign has started in Adjara region and is about to start in the Samtskhe-Javakheti region.

What's New

Development of FAO National Medium Term Priority Framework (NMTPF) for Georgia

Background

NMTPF is a planning and management tool of FAO assistance to Member Countries. The NMTPF document outlines how FAO can best assist Georgia in meeting its priorities in the areas of food security, agriculture, rural development and natural resources management. The NMTPF preparation is based on a national consultation process which results in jointly agreed strategic priorities for Georgia – FAO collaboration in the medium run and the related action plan for next 3-5 years. The identified priorities reflect areas of FAO comparative advantages *vis-a-vis* other partners as well as complementarities in terms of expertise, experience and capacity to deliver. NMTPF contributes towards the achievement of national development objectives and is fully aligned with frameworks such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

Recent Activities

The first FAO NMTPF experts' mission to the country took place from 27 May to 3 June 2009. The mission has undertaken the following activities:

- Met with appropriate Government officials (constituency building) to discuss specific FAO-Government collaboration priorities.
- Met with the main donor agencies to discuss their present and future programs and identify areas for FAO collaboration with donor partners and government.
- Set up an NMTPF Steering Committee, including nomination of the Government's Focal Point for the NMTPF, within the Ministry of Agriculture.
- Identified areas where further information is required.

The next NMTPF mission will take place at the end of July to present and discuss the first draft of the NMTPF document.

TCP/GEO/3103 (E)



Emergency assistance for the control of African Swine Fever (ASF) in Georgia

Background

African Swine Fever (ASF) was first confirmed in Georgia at the beginning of June 2007, being the first report of ASF in the Caucasus region. The first clinical cases were seen in the port of Poti. Evidence so far suggests that the ASF virus has been introduced into the country by improperly disposed waste from international ships carrying contaminated meat or meat products.

The development goal of the project is to enhance the monitoring and disease control surveillance system for ASF, which should lead to the spread of the disease in non-affected areas of the country or to neighbouring countries being prevented.

Recent Activities

A training workshop in epidemiological sero-survey for private veterinarians was held between 3 and 4 June 2009. Epidemiological surveillance in wild boar and soft ticks will be conducted in July 2009.

TCP/INT/3202 (D)



Improving migratory and other locusts management in the Caucasus and Central Asia

Background

Locusts and grasshoppers are the most important threat on agriculture in the Caucasus and Central Asia. During infestations and outbreaks, the three main locust pests, the Migratory, the Italian and the Moroccan locusts, attack cereal crops, sunflowers, vineyards, vegetable, orchards and rangelands and cause severe damage at agricultural, economic and social levels. They jeopardize food security and livelihood

The strategic long term objective is to reduce the occurrence and intensity of locust outbreaks in the Caucasus and Central Asia, thus preventing damage to crops and rangeland as well as related impact on food security and livelihood of the most vulnerable rural communities.

The immediate objective is to improve national and regional locust management in the Caucasus and Central Asia through regional cooperation and capacity-building.

Recent Activities

The expert mission was held in Georgia to transmit a detailed questionnaire to anticipate and facilitate information collection. The mission of FAO experts met the Government officials as well as representatives of the international organizations, NGOs and research centres. Accordingly a detailed and analytical report will be prepared, bringing to light common features as well gaps, problems, constraints and challenges on locust situation and management, especially in areas near/across borders, and presenting conclusions, findings and recommendations.

TCP/RER/3102



Capacity building in agricultural biotechnologies and bio-safety (D)

Background

In view of FAO experience in the field of capacity building in biotechnology and biosafety and the harmonization of biosafety regulations, provision of science-based advice and guidance in biotechnology, the Governments of the Republic of Armenia, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova requested the assistance of FAO under its Technical Cooperation Programme. This involves capacity building in agricultural biotechnology and biosafety to help to improve agricultural productivity in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner.

Ongoing Activities

An FAO Technical Officer will undertake his/her first mission to establish contacts with the counterpart institutions and jointly prepare a detailed work plan for the project activities, design the academic and logistical aspects of the training activities and identify suitable participants for the training courses.

TCP/GEO/3102 (A)



Strengthening the capacity of the Agricultural Marketing Unit of the Ministry of Agriculture

Background

Government has requested FAO technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of the newly established Marketing Research and Strategic Studies Division (MRSSD) of MoA and assist in the preparation of technically sound marketing development policy proposals and action plans for sustainable investments in infrastructure and services and in creating the necessary conditions for increasing private sector investments in marketing. The following activities have been undertaken so far:

- updating and revising responsibilities and functions of the marketing unit of the MoA.
- traditional and on-the-job training, of unit staff and other selected technical staff in the MoA (in headquarters and in regional departments) in market and marketing research methods; farmers-market linkages; agricultural marketing systems analysis and value chains development; agricultural export marketing; agribusiness and private investment promotion as well as in the formulation of appropriate marketing policy and plans of action;
- leadership by each officer of unit in specific technical issues: undertaking field visits, contacts with farmers and traders, studies and global assessments, action plans and organization/leading thematic workshops;

- (pilot) training activities of farmers and traders in selected areas and for selected products and assistance in the preparation of marketing plans.

Recent Activities

- A number of local and regional training workshops on agricultural marketing systems development, post-harvest handling, agricultural export promotion, food marketing and value chain development, was recently completed or underway.
- Training on quality and safety issues in food marketing will be organized shortly. Also, FAO assistance in creating/designing a website for the MRSSD is about to start.
- Currently, two representatives of the MRSSD are on study tour in Italy.

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