



FAO'S ROLE IN THE REVISED 2008 CRISIS FLASH APPEAL FOR GEORGIA

October 2008

Background

The escalation of conflict between Russian and Georgian forces in August 2008 led to the displacement of 127 499 people in Georgia. The majority of families living in the conflict zone depended on agriculture for their livelihoods. This population has suffered significant losses resulting from displacement, looting and destruction. The outbreak of conflict coincided with the summer harvest, which resulted in many farming families losing almost their entire summer crop as they fled to safety.

Many of the displaced rural families have not yet returned to their homes, owing to the fear of hostilities, harassment and general insecurity. The recent arrival of European Union monitors and withdrawal of Russian troops from conflict-adjacent areas is facilitating a partial return of affected rural populations to their farms.

Challenges facing food security and agriculture

Some 53 percent of Georgia's population depend on agriculture-related activities for their livelihood and, for many, as a means to feed their families. The outbreak of military confrontation in the region led to the widespread destruction and theft of the productive assets of farmers, which, when compounded with their high debt levels, has left them without sufficient resources to resume agricultural activities.

Assessments led by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) have highlighted the immediate and long-term negative impacts of the recent conflict on the agriculture sector. Small-scale farmers who were unable to harvest their summer crops are not likely to succeed in planting their winter crops because of time restraints and insecurity caused by the presence of unexploded ordnance. Farmers who did manage to harvest part of their crops have been unable to sell their produce because of poor quality and market disruption. Furthermore, as vital water supply channels originating in South Ossetia have been cut off, this has disrupted irrigation water supplies, which has already caused losses to the wheat and maize harvests, as well as damage to fruit and vegetable production.

This situation has drastically affected the local population's access to food and income, as well as the farmers' ability to feed and maintain healthy livestock during the winter.

Because of their debilitated state, livestock are presently particularly susceptible to animal diseases and are in need of improved bio-security measures and veterinary assistance.

FAO's response

In response to the Georgia Crisis Flash Appeal launched in August, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) contributed USD 112 714 to fund an FAO multidisciplinary agriculture sector assessment mission. Based on the findings of this mission and other ongoing assessments, including the Joint Needs Assessment led by the World Bank, FAO prepared the agriculture component of the Revised Georgia Crisis Flash Appeal, which was launched in October. In this appeal FAO is immediately seeking **USD 10.6 million** to support the people of Georgia and government efforts to rapidly restore agriculture-



FAO aims to support livestock of affected farmers

based livelihoods, crop production and self-reliance through to March 2009. Over the following two to three years, FAO assessments have identified additional complementary funding requirements of at least USD 18.5 million to rehabilitate the agriculture sector. Furthermore, as part of the in-country humanitarian coordination agreements to strengthen the humanitarian response, FAO is co-chairing the Food Security Cluster in Georgia together with the World Food Programme (WFP).



FAO's proposed emergency activities include:

- providing animal feed to vulnerable and food insecure **livestock-owning farmers** to ensure the survival of their stock through the winter;
- providing rain-fed seed varieties and related inputs to **conflict-affected farmers** to mitigate the negative effects of the disruption of irrigated water supplies and restore agricultural production for the spring planting season;
- supporting **livestock owners** with veterinary services to prevent the outbreak and spread of disease; and
- providing technical assistance and **coordination** support to the Food Security Cluster to maximize efforts and avoid operational gaps.





FAO'S COMPONENT OF THE REVISED GEORGIA CRISIS FLASH APPEAL 2008

Total funding required: USD 10.6 million

Project Title: Agriculture Sector Emergency Coordination and Programme Support Unit (GEO-08/A03)

Objectives: Provide operational and technical assistance to coordinate agriculture-based livelihood support interventions.

Beneficiaries: Up to 50 000 conflict-affected families and Food Security Cluster stakeholders.

Implementing Partners: Government ministries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), contractors and UN agencies.

Funds Requested: USD 550 000

This project aims to provide technical, coordination and project management support to assist in the restoration of agricultural livelihoods of internally displaced persons, returnees, host families and other conflict-affected families. The Emergency Coordination and Programme Support Unit will strengthen the Food Security Cluster by engaging relevant stakeholders (UN, World Bank, NGOs and CBOs) and technical line ministries (central and district level) in agriculture and food security matters. The Unit will encourage humanitarian partners involved in agricultural relief operations to implement coherent, relevant and effective programmes, which will ensure consistent beneficiary coverage and avoid gaps and overlap.

Project Title: Emergency Supply of Livestock Feed in Conflict-affected Areas (GEO-08/A04)

Objectives: Prevent de-stocking owing to lack and/or high cost of feed and water supply for livestock during winter 2008.

Beneficiaries: 10 000 livestock owners/households in conflict-affected areas of Shida Kartli region.

Implementing Partners: Food Safety, Veterinary and Plant Protection Units of MoA, CBOs, NGOs, UN agencies.

Funds Requested: USD 5 000 000

The overwhelming loss of summer produce in the conflict area, as well as the lack of means to produce quality feed, has limited production of and access to feed for the winter season. This situation has been compounded by the chronic disruption of irrigation. Affected livestock farmers urgently need external support in the form of feed and other assistance to ensure survival of their livestock throughout the winter, as well as sustaining the animals' productivity and reproduction. The project aims to assist 10 000 livestock owners through the provision of emergency feed for their stock, thereby avoiding the slaughter of animals as an extreme measure. The intervention to ensure the survival of livestock will safeguard the owners' dairy production capacity and provide a valuable food security buffer and future income-generating opportunities.

Project Title: Emergency Assistance to Prevent Trans-boundary Animal Diseases in Livestock in Conflict-affected Areas (GEO-08/A05)

Objectives: Improve surveillance of major trans-boundary animal diseases and enhance biosecurity to minimise risk of incursion and spread of disease.

Beneficiaries: 100 000 conflict-affected livestock owners.

Implementing Partners: Food Safety, Veterinary and Plant Protection Units of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), CBOs, NGOs and UN agencies.

Funds Requested: USD 590 000

Livestock have become exceptionally weak as a result of insufficient feeding and abandonment, which has led to a deteriorating state of health. This has decreased livestock productivity and increased their vulnerability to disease. The area is at risk of the emergence and spread of avian influenza, foot-and-mouth disease, African swine fever and classical swine fever. Outbreaks and the threat of disease spread have disrupted markets in the past. The project will provide veterinary assistance to increase the resilience of livestock, prevent the risk of outbreaks and improve capacity to control the spread of disease.

Project Title: Emergency Assistance for Spring Planting for Food Crop Production for Small-scale Farmers in Conflict-affected Areas (GEO-08/A06)

Objectives: Restoration of crop production and food security for the most vulnerable conflict-affected farmers.

Beneficiaries: 10 000 conflict-affected families.

Implementing Partners: MoA, CBOs, NGOs and UN agencies.

Funds Requested: USD 4 500 000

The provision of rain-fed seed varieties and related agricultural inputs for the spring planting season will help mitigate the potentially prolonged negative impacts of the disruption of irrigation in conflict-adjacent areas. FAO's intervention will help restore the food production capacity of 10 000 vulnerable conflict-affected farming households in areas cleared of unexploded ordnance and mines. Activities will directly support the resumption of agricultural livelihoods, which have been disrupted through loss of farming assets and insufficient cash flow, exacerbated by farming debts and the loss of the recent summer harvest. The provision of agricultural assistance will support life sustaining initiatives in rural areas for returnees, resettled internally displaced persons and vulnerable rural households. This intervention is expected to catalyse the rapid and sustainable resumption of rural-based agricultural activities.

For more information please contact:

Mr Mamuka Meskhi
Assistant FAO Representative for Georgia
(Office in Ministry of Agriculture)
6 Marshall Gelovani Avenue, Tbilisi 0159
Mobile: +995 32 37 80 48
Email: FAO-GE@fao.org

Mr Cristiano F. Mandra
FAO Emergency Coordinator
6 Marshall Gelovani Avenue, Tbilisi 0159
Mobile: +995 58 75 34 78
Mobile: +39 34 81 55 63 24
Email: Christian.Mandra@fao.org

Ms Fernanda Guerrieri
FAO Representative in Georgia
FAO Regional Office for Europe
and Central Asia
Office: +36 (1) 461 2033
Email: Fernanda.Guerrieri@fao.org

website: www.fao.org/emergencies

Ms Hilde Niggemann
Senior Operations Officer
FAO Emergency Operations Service
Viale Terme di Caracalla, Rome 00153
Office: +39 (06)570 53286
Email: Hilde.Niggemann@fao.org