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Follow-up report to the management response to MTE

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For further information on this report, please contact:

Director, OED
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 1, 00153
Rome, Italy
Email: evaluation@fao.org

Mid-Term Evaluation of GCP/GLO/275/EC Programme – ‘EC/FAO Food Security Programme on Information Systems to Improve Food Security Decision-Making in European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) East Area

Follow-up Report – September 2013

Follow-up Report of the Management response to the Mid Term Evaluation of GCP/GLO/275/EC Programme			Date: September 2013
Evaluation Recommendation	Action Agreed	Comments on actions taken, including for actions not taken	Impact (changes of actions taken in terms of programme, policies and/or procedures)
General Recommendations			
Rec. 1.1. A 6 months no-cost extension and budget revision is recommended, including extension of the full-time contract of the Programme Coordinator and the Country Coordinators (CC).	<p>1. Prepare a budget revision, allocating additional resources to the posts of Programme Coordinator, Country Coordinators and Administrative Support Staff</p> <p>2. Revise Country Workplans (budget and planning of activities)</p>	<p>1. The budget revision was submitted and endorsed by the EC in summer 2012.</p> <p>2. The Country Workplans were revised , taking into account new priorities of countries.</p>	<p>1. The 6 month-extension of the programme and the extension of the Programme Coordinator and Country Coordinators allowed to finalize the implementation of activities with full-time support from programme staff.</p> <p>2. The revision of the Country Workplans allowed the programme to remain fully relevant by adjusting to country priorities.</p>
Rec. 1.2. A short exit-strategy or phase-out strategy should be prepared in collaboration with all stakeholders, outlining sustainability arrangements and responsible actors in relation to all activities.	1. For each component, prepare a note summarizing the proposed arrangements for the continuation of the activities when the Programme ends, together with national staff involved in the implementation of the component, and send it to the head(s) of the institution(s) concerned with the implementation of the component	1. After consultation with in-country partners, it was concluded that sending notes to the heads of the institutions concerned with the implementation of follow-up activities would not contribute much to sustainability. Instead it was decided to hold final workshops for the components where institutional measures have to be taken by partner institutions to ensure sustainability. A final workshop was organized for the components of Food Balance Sheet (all countries), crop forecasting (Armenia) and Market Information Center (Moldova).	1. The final workshops allowed to build consensus on follow-up measures that institutions have to adopt to ensure the sustainability of programme activities and identify responsibility and timing for the implementation of these measures.
Rec.1.3. The Logical Frameworks (Global and country level) should be revised and harmonized (in particular the indicators for	1. Revise the logical frameworks and harmonize the outcome indicators	<p>1. The logical framework of the programme was revised and the indicators harmonized.</p> <p>2. Programme staff endeavor to establish the</p>	1. The revision of the logical framework and the harmonization of indicators between the global logical frameworks and the country logical frameworks has led to more focus on outcomes and simplified reporting.

outcome); country level baselines should be established if possible.	2. To the extent feasible, establish baselines using the reviews of the capacity of targeted institutions which have been carried out for selected components	baselines for the main components in terms of capacity.	2. The baselines which has been established for the main components allow to assess progress made in terms of capacity development, highlighting the gaps which have been filled by the programme.
Rec. 1.4. The reporting/monitoring system should be simplified and harmonized (for instance Programme Assessment Framework and the progress scale) and comparison of time lines and actual implementation should be made possible.	1. Review the existing three reporting/monitoring systems and identify areas for simplification/harmonization 2. Implement improvements	1. The three monitoring systems have been reviewed. 2. An harmonized and simplified system has been designed and implemented, allowing for easy comparison of time lines.	1. The harmonization and simplification of the reporting system led to more transparency and easier monitoring of progress at country and global levels.
Rec. 1.5. Continue/strengthen capacity development of producers and users in understanding food security concepts and alternative food security policies and programmes that suit the post-soviet and price changing environment as well as improved data presentation and analysis.	1. Continue to sponsor the participation of national institutions in relevant events/training, including events organized in the other countries covered by the Programme 2. Give more emphasis to activities related to data presentation and analysis within each component, with the development of outputs which can be utilized for policy formulation (Ref. ES15)	1. The programme continued to sponsor the participation of national staff in relevant events. The programme sponsored the organization of as many as 40 national workshops and trainings, 10 regional workshops and trainings and 11 exchange visits, and sponsored the participation of about 30 national staff from the 4 countries in 4 events organized by FAO and other organizations. The programme also sponsored the enrollment of national staff in food security four month online training courses run by the university of Catalonia (UOC) (46 obtained the certificate). 2. The programme organized the preparation of a policy brief in every country with recommendations to better mainstream food security into agricultural policies. The policy briefs were based on the results of workshops organized in each country gathering all main stakeholders. The graduates from UOC played a key role in these workshops and the preparation of the policy briefs.	1. All the events organized by the programme have significantly contributed to improved awareness and understanding of food security (all its dimensions, not only availability) and the implications for policies in a number of areas related to food security. 2. The preparation of the policy briefs contributed to developing the skills of “country teams” (composed of UOC graduates) in presenting the food security situation and recommendations to policy makers. This approach, which consists of training nationals in food security and then helping them analyze the food security situation of their country and formulate relevant recommendations, is expected to be more sustainable and have more impact than the traditional approach (an “international expert” analyzes the situation and provides recommendations to stakeholders).
Rec. 1.6. Training in gender and other vulnerability disaggregation and targeting aspects should be	1. Identify the components of the Programme where gender has not been mainstreamed (and	1. Programme staff has identified the areas where gender should be mainstreamed and actions to be taken to achieve the expected results.	1. Staff efforts have probably bring some positive results in terms of attracting attention on gender issues. There is however very limited awareness and interest in

integrated into other trainings in preference to a standalone 'gender-mainstreaming training'.	where gender should be mainstreamed, a number of components being gender neutral) or has been insufficiently mainstreamed and summarize the results in a short note		the countries on these issues. Gender disaggregated statistics are also very limited, which does not support advocacy efforts.
Rec.1.7. Encourage staff members returning from trainings to pass on relevant learning to colleagues and other skills transfer methods, such as coaching and mentoring where it is not already happening.	1. Systematically ensure that the knowledge and skills acquired during a training, study tour or other capacity development event is shared with colleagues during a meeting specially organized for that purpose	1. A follow-up meeting was organized after each of the events organized by the programme to share the results with colleagues.	1. This is expected to increase the impact of capacity development activities and ensure some sustainability in knowledge and skills.
Rec. 1.8. Attempt to find a way to continue the production of Agriculture Highlights, possibly by extra-budgetary support to ESA (Country Briefs) as part of the Global Governance for Hunger Reduction Programme or by an earmarked EC-allocation.	1. Focus on the production and dissemination of country-specific information products, which are user-tailored products to support decision-making processes.	1. The programme focused on the preparation of a policy brief in every country with specific recommendations to further mainstream food security into agricultural policies. The policy briefs were prepared by the "country teams" (UOC graduates) on the basis of the discussions held during workshops organized in countries.	1. The policy briefs are key information products in the context of the programme. National staff, which have been trained in food security, were involved in the preparation of the briefs. Briefs are based on exchange and dialogue with stakeholders. Some of the recommendations are expected to be picked up by policy makers.
Rec. 1.9. Maximize the dissemination of Programme food security information and policies to external stakeholders including opening a dialogue between agencies with good field level knowledge (mainly NGOs) and government (for instance through NGO participation and presentation in workshops, disseminate Agriculture Highlights and other outputs to external stakeholders).	1. Include more development partners in the mailing list which is used to disseminate the Highlights and information related to capacity development events in countries 2. Invite more development partners in workshops and other capacity development events, offering them an opportunity to present their relevant activities	1. The mailing lists have been expanded, increasing in particular the number of NGOs. 2. A special effort has been made to broaden the participation of development partners in events organized by the programme.	1. Measures taken to further involve external stakeholders have contributed to broadening the debates on food security and to identify more opportunities for partnership in implementing activities.
Rec. 1.10. Georgia small farm survey format and/or the farm	1. Share farm survey questionnaire with national	1. The questionnaire of the small farm survey prepared for Georgia has been posted on the website	The actions ensured the dissemination of two important methodological pieces of work of the programme to the

typology of the FDMS in Azerbaijan could be used or adapted in the other countries in order to foster a broader understanding of typology of small farms (production, land endowments, access to market, etc.).	institutions potentially interested in carrying out such a survey 2. Prepare a note summarizing the method used to build a typology of small farms in Azerbaijan and post it on the website page of the Programme	page of the programme. The link has been shared with sent to stakeholders together with a note explaining the interest of the questionnaire. 2. A note summarizing the method used to build a typology of small farms in Azerbaijan has been posted on the website page of the programme and the link has been sent to stakeholders together with an explanation of the interest of building such type of typology .	potentially interested stakeholders in the four countries.
Rec. 1.11. A translator (in Russian) should be employed during Steering Committee meetings to allow full participation of the CCs from Armenia and Azerbaijan.	1. Recruit a translator for the next fully-fledged SC meetings (with participation of representatives from national institutions)	1. A translator was recruited during the last two fully-fledged SC meetings of the programme.	1. In practice, translation proved to be useless and very costly as the only country representative (Azerbaijan) who needed this translation left the first meeting after a couple of hours and canceled his participation at the last minute.
Recommendations for Armenia			
Rec. 2.1. The funding of the MoA TV Programme (revised Work Plan) should be considered with care or replaced by a few TV episodes specifically related to food security and agriculture.	1. Carefully review the options to take advantage of the opportunity to widely communicate with target group on food security and agriculture issues, taking into account MTE recommendations and implement the best option if agreed with national institutions	1. The June 2012 SC meeting recommended to the programme to sponsor the preparation of a few episodes as recommended by the Mid Term Evaluation but the Minister of Agriculture decided in August 2012 not to implement the TV Programme under the EC/FAO Programme.	
Recommendations for Georgia			
Rec. 3.1. Renewed advocacy for the implementation of the small farm survey in the remaining programme period; possibly in collaboration with the EC.	1. The recommendation had been rejected.		
Rec. 3.2. Recommend to FAO-Georgia that international food security (not just agriculture)	1. The recommendation had been rejected.		

expertise is provided to advice on the development of the Agriculture Strategy Action Plan			
Recommendations for Azerbaijan			
Rec. 4.1. Food Balance Sheet: The planned training (users/producers) by end 2012 should include higher-level staff MoA/State Statistical Committee (SSC) (deputy level) in order to increase the ownership of the FBS.	1. Invite high level staff from MoA and SSC to participate in the FBS final workshop	1. High level staff from MoA and SSC were invited to participate in the FBS final workshop in Rome but we had more or less the same level of representation than in the FBS inception workshop.	No impact.
Rec. 4.2. Further training of users (MoA and Ministry of Economic Development) in the adoption of the improved Food Balance Sheet (FBS), including the new interactive website.	1. Conduct training of FBS users as planned	1. A three day training was organized in each country. This was the first time that FAO organized a training for FBS users.	1. Staff from institutions concerned with food security are now much more aware of FBS potential for assessing and monitoring food security and more capable of analyzing FBS. There were some practical examples of effective use of FBS for policies in the countries (preparation of Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreements).
Rec. 4.3. The Farm Data Monitoring System (FDMS) should include gender-disaggregation with regard to farm manager and hired labour.	1. Include gender disaggregated indicators for farm managers and hired labour	1. Several gender sensitive indicators have been included in the questionnaires.	1. The institution running FDMS is now in a position to provide some statistics related to gender in agriculture.
Rec. 4.4. Allocation of funds, if available, for continued on-the-job support by the international consultant from Hungary in relation to the processing of the 2012 survey in March 2013. Focusing on extrapolation of data, preparation of Policy Briefs, and follow-up recommendations.	1. Organize an additional mission to process 2012 survey data in March 2013 if resources are sufficient	1. An additional mission was organized for the Hungarian agro-economist in 2013.	1. This mission contributed to further develop the analytical capacity of the institutions concerned with FDMS.
Rec. 4.5. EC and FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia	1. Identify other possible sources of funding to ensure further	1. All options have been explored but without success so far.	1. The full fledged development and sustainability of the FDMS could be compromise if no additional assistance

should consider funding further technical support to the Farm Data Monitoring System succeeding the phase out of the programme.	technical support		is provided to MoA.
Rec. 4.6. MoA should as soon as possible investigate the possibility of allocating an office for the CC.	1. Ask MoA to allocate an office to the CC in MoA central building	1. An official request has been presented to the focal point of the Programme in the MoA but with no success.	1. The Country Coordinator worked from home with limited contact with MoA staff.
Rec. 4.7. Training and capacity development in SSC should also target the younger staff.	1. Raise the issue with SSC management when the requests are made to designate participants in CD events	1. The issue was raised with the management of the institutions when the programme asked to designate participants but with no much result. There is a trade-of between age and responsibilities.	1. no impact.
Recommendations for Moldova			
Rec. 5.1. FAO and EC should assist government in getting additional technical and financial support to implement SITA (System for Identification and Traceability of Animals) so that it can fulfill its considerable potential.	1. Take all relevant opportunities to advocate for more technical and financial support to the SITA	1. The international consultant delivered several presentations to EU staff (delegation and missions) to demonstrate the potential of SITA.	1. EC will provide additional assistance to SITA in the near future.
Rec. 5.2. Increase attempts to find funding to implement the agro met component.	1. Systematically contact partners to discuss the proposal prepared by the international consultant to support Moldovan agro met component.	1. Partners were approached to finance the implementation of a crop forecasting system but without result. On the other hand, the Country Coordination Team decided not to give priority to crop forecasting activities when some resources were made available under the Programme after the cancellation of some programme activities	1. no impact.
Rec. 5.3. Renewed advocacy for the achievement of the analysis of the agriculture survey in the remaining programme period.	The recommendation was rejected.		
Rec. 5.4. Any change in emphasis from an agriculture survey to a 'community census' should only be taken if it is evident that this is a	1. Analyze the benefits which would be derived from supporting the Community Survey in terms of food security	1. The analysis has been carried out and has concluded that the CS was of limited interest for food security.	1. The recommendation was useful to avoid investing in activities which had limited interest for food security.

high priority from a food security perspective.	and take a decision on the allocation of the resources		
Rec. 5.5. The new CC to be employed should have a technical background, and preferably prior knowledge of the programme.	1. Recruit a new CC with technical background and preferably prior knowledge of the programme	1. A new CC was recruited taking this recommendation into account.	1. The new CC performed in a satisfactory way in the job, which was very important for the success of the programme.