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## ITALY

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### REVERSE THE DECLINING IN INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURE TO IMPROVE FOOD SECURITY

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In the biennium 2009-2010, Italy has disbursed US\$ 349,1 million to support agricultural development, food security and rural development. A few significant experiences are:

#### **Actions and best practices**

Senegal (Middle Casamance) aiming at improving the living conditions of rural population through the funding (US\$ 4.14 million) of micro-projects on agricultural production and marketing, and promoting access to basic services.

#### **Results**

9 Middle Casamance municipalities and its 32 rural communities received financial and technical assistance through 177 micro-projects. Agricultural services were boosted, family income increased, basic services upgraded and youth's and women's (9,250 participated) needs addressed.

#### **Actions and best practices**

Afghanistan: US\$ 27.85 million were mobilised in favour of the National Solidarity Programme to reinforce the capacity of Afghan communities to identify, plan, manage and monitor their own development projects.

#### **Results**

Living conditions of rural communities of 7 Afghan provinces were improved and the local government structure consolidated. 900,000 beneficiaries of 879 rural communities received financial and technical assistance through the implementation of 1,188 micro-projects on infrastructural interventions in sectors like; water supply and sanitation (258), transport (255), irrigation (218), power generation (148), maintenance (137), education (74), rural development (72) and livelihood (26)

#### **Actions and best practices**

Niger (Keita region): in 2009, the Rural Development Programme (RDP), which received Italian funding (bilateral and multilateral- FAO) for more than 100 million euro, over a period of more than 20 years, was completed.

The Programme objectives were: 1. the promotion of economic growth in rural areas trough the strengthening of commercialization capacity of small farms in areas with recognized potential market; 2. to fight against the desertification; 3. to reduce rural poverty by providing rural infrastructures, technology, increasing production productivity, social services and promoting sustainable use of natural resources.

#### **Results**

The RDP rehabilitated 36,000 hectares of land, 20 million of trees were planted, 313 km of rural road constructed, 708 wells and 40 dams built, 329 farmers' associations "*groupements*" created with an active membership of 13,600 people. At large, also 400,000 indirect beneficiaries were interested by the intervention.

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### SUPPORT REGIONAL AND COUNTRY LED PROCESSES AND PLAN IN SUPPORT OF RESPONSIBLE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

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Italy supports regional and national agricultural development programmes in coordination with other donors and actively participates in agricultural development fora. At the regional level, Italy supports the development and implementation of sustainable food security policies and strategies and the work of the key organisations and platforms involved.

### **Actions and best practices**

In Africa, in the framework of the AU/NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), Italy is supporting through FAO the implementation of the process towards the finalization of investment plans and identification of needs through strengthening the capacity of the AUC/DREA (Department of Agriculture and Rural Development) and NPCA (Nepad Planning and Coordination Agency).

### **Results**

The capacity of the two continental Institutions of AU (DREA AND NPCA) strengthened and the finalization of CAADP investment plans in countries which have already signed the Compact accelerated.

### **Actions and best practices**

Furthermore, Italy is supporting the Sub-Saharan Africa Challenge Programme (SSA-CP) in the CAADP Pillar IV, led by the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA).

### **Results**

The SSA-CP has experimented a new approach to Innovation Platforms for stakeholder's involvement in agricultural development. In the three year research phase from 2008 - 2010 the program has developed innovative implementation modalities for Integrated Agricultural Research for Development (IAR4D), has established 36 projects (innovation platforms) across a broad spectrum of agricultural systems in 8 Countries of sub - Saharan Africa, has implemented a complex experimental design to test proof of concept, and has put in place the baseline survey, M&E methodology, and an analytical support team to implement the Randomized Control Trial. This approach will allow in the near future to scale up the methodology for the benefit of African smallholder farmers, with concrete development outcomes in terms of food security, poverty reduction and sustainable management of natural resources

### **Actions and best practices**

In the framework of the Italian Special Contribution to the FAO Global Trust Fund for Food Security and Food Safety (ITF FS FS), the Italian Government is funding the "Food Security through Commercialization of Agriculture (FSCA)" Programme in West Africa. With a total budget of USD 21.3 million it is implemented through seven national projects: Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Gambia, Liberia, Mali, Senegal, and Sierra Leone. A regional coordination project, based in Dakar, Senegal, is coordinating the seven national projects by ensuring their coherence to the same strategic framework of Food Security through Commercialization of Agriculture that is a trust of the whole ITF FS FS at FAO.

The FSCA Programme started in 2008 in Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Senegal and Sierra Leone, and in 2010 in Gambia and Guinea. Most of the activities are expected to be finalized by the end of 2012.

The Programme aims at supporting competitiveness and modernization of agriculture within the framework of NEPAD process and CAADP mid-term investment plans supporting the development of entrepreneurship among small-scale farmers and the emergence of a local private sector that could take up some of the upstream and downstream activities of interest to agriculture. The programme aims to contribute significantly to the development of West African agriculture into a modern, competitive and commercially vibrant sector, while building on the achievements and lessons learned from National Programmes for Food Security.

The national projects have a common strategy based on agricultural modernization, with a special focus on value addition, marketing and inter-regional trade opportunities. The global strategy also aims at: (i) supporting food sovereignty, commercial valorisation of agricultural biodiversity and development of local and regional markets, and (ii) applying communication methods and tools in order to ensure efficient involvement of farmer's organizations in project activities, with particular focus on gender issues.

Activities in the field are supported with appropriate capacity building of Farmer-based Organizations

and related local technical offices of the Ministries of Agriculture through specific institutional building activities.

The Programme also addresses regional issues, such as access to regional and international markets, food quality and safety, cross-border trade, and harmonization of policies and institutions to support competitiveness and modernization. A communication for development component has been developed with the aim of supporting the overall framework strategy.

### **Results**

In 2011 the first Tripartite Reviews have been carried out for Senegal and Guinea Bissau Projects. They highlighted the achievements of important results as the identification of profitable agricultural value chains, starting up of adding value activities and marketing opportunities, strengthening of Farmer-based Organizations and, within them, the women's productive and managerial key role; local authorities have been involved in order to create a conducive environment, as well as value chain coordination and linkages, by improving mechanism for market development and promotion, while supporting partnerships between public and private sectors. Canadian Cooperation has committed 3 million of Canadian dollars through FAO to support FSCA project in Senegal on expanding its activities to new areas

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## **SUPPORT STRATEGIC COORDINATION OF FOOD SECURITY ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING THROUGH REFORM OF THE INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION ARCHITECTURE**

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### **Actions and best practices**

In 2009, under the Italian Presidency of the G8, the Aquila Food Security Initiative (AFSI) was launched with the aim of promoting a comprehensive approach to food security, emphasizing effective coordination, supporting country-led processes and a stronger role for multilateral institutions

### **Results**

AFSI platform (gathering more than 40 countries and organizations) has been meeting twice a year to advance the implementation of its commitments and achieve greater harmonization, alignment and accountability, while maintaining the political momentum to achieve a more effective Global Partnership for Food Security and Nutrition.

### **Actions and best practices**

Support to the reform of CFS in order to involve a wider group of stakeholders (governments, international institutions, researchers civil society and the private sector) to enable the Committee to play a more efficient role in promoting policies to ensure food security at the global level .

### **Results**

In October 2010, the reformed CFS had its first Session in Rome.

### **Actions and best practices**

Support to the reform process of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) to achieve greater impact of research and better donor harmonisation with external partners.

### **Results**

In 2010, the Consortium of the 15 International Agricultural Research Centres was established.