

# Development policy guidelines on agriculture and food security



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#### **Foreword**

Food security has become one of the most important issues in international development policy. The lack of investment to develop agriculture in the last decades, land degradation, climate change and population growth are all contributing to an increase in the number of people suffering from hunger. The food crisis finally opened the eyes of the international community to the complex web of issues influencing food security. The goal set by the UN Millennium Declaration – to halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger by the year 2015 – will not be achieved unless global food security is ensured in a sustainable way.

The national responsibility of every nation both – industrialised and developing – is to ensure the food security of their own country. However, developing countries are not able to do this on their own and need support from industrialised countries to further develop their agricultural sector. Broad agreement was reached at the World Summit on Food Security held in Rome in 2009 to improve global food security. In this new international climate, it has become necessary to formulate national development policy guidelines on agriculture and food security.

Finland advances agricultural production in developing countries, which improves food security in these countries. Every country bears the main responsibility for the food security of its own population. Thus, production that serves domestic demand must come before production for export. The export of agricultural products of developing countries should primarily be channelled to growing markets in other developing countries.

The efforts to improve food security require national and international policy coherence. More effective integration of trade and development policy measures can assist developing countries achieve sustainable food security and simultaneously create opportunities for development in other sectors. The importance of local markets and food should be emphasised in developing countries as well.

The challenges of agriculture and food security should be approached in a holistic manner. The problems of the 'farm-to-fork' chain must be effectively addressed so that products from smallholder farmers reach markets. These guidelines set out the areas of operation in which Finnish expertise and resources can bring about sustainable results in improving food security and fostering agricultural development in developing countries. We focus on areas of convergence between Finnish added value and the needs of developing countries. These guidelines will further strengthen Finland's investment in agriculture and food security in development cooperation, and will enable Finland to undertake more effective cooperation with developing countries in these fields.

September 2010
Paavo Väyrynen
Minister for Foreign Trade and Development

#### Introduction

The basis for these policy guidelines on agriculture and food security is Finland's 2007 Development Policy Programme, "Towards a Sustainable and Just World Community". The EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges has been taken into account in the preparation of this paper. The new agriculture and food security guidelines supplement the forest sector and environment development policy guidelines as well as the International Strategy for Finland's Water Sector and Humanitarian Assistance Guidelines. The precursor to these guidelines, Finland's Rural Development Strategy for International Development from 2004, outlined the comprehensive rural development measures in Finnish development cooperation.

Halving the proportion of people suffering from hunger and malnutrition by 2015 was set as an objective in the UN Millennium Declaration. The global population is expected to reach 9 billion by the year 2050. Inadequate food, or weak food security, is the central dimension of poverty that will be exacerbated by the increase in population. Nearly half the population in developing countries, around 2.5 billion people, live in rural areas and earn their living either



directly or indirectly from agriculture. Over two-thirds of people living in extreme poverty are rural dwellers. As a result of rapid urbanisation in developing countries, poverty and malnutrition have become a growing problem in urban areas as well.

Food security and agricultural issues have risen rapidly up the international development policy agenda. The right to food is part of the right to live in dignity. In accordance with the development policy guidelines of 2007, Finland is already working to promote food security in developing countries by improving agricultural productivity, strengthening the agricultural value chain and increasing the vitality of rural areas. The stronger focus in a holistic way on developing the 'farm-to-fork' chain, new forms of cooperation, the consideration of climate change, and an emphasis on donor coordination are new issues in the present guidelines. The inclusion of quality, nutrition and food safety perspectives in developing food security is in line with EU policies and other international frameworks.

These guidelines focus on the issues of agriculture and food security in rural development. However, it is important to address rural development in a comprehensive manner so that rural areas remain good living and operating environments. Fluent and smooth interaction between rural and urban areas, which is promoted by well functioning rural and urban communities, is a prerequisite for improving food security in urban areas.

Food security comprises of on one hand food availability and on the other hand of people's access to food for their own use. Food security also involves the quality of food, the continuity and regularity of its supply as well as distribution among different population groups and areas, and within households. These guidelines focus in particular on improving the availability and quality of food.

## Development challenges in agriculture and food security

#### 2.1 Global challenges to agriculture

The global challenge in agriculture is to produce food, feed and fibre for the increasing needs of a growing population in a financially viable as well as environmentally and socially sustainable way. The poorer the country, region and family, the more likely it is that the responsibility for producing and preparing food for the family falls on women and girls, who nevertheless too often receive an unreasonably small share of the food consumed by the family.

Food production must be increased without essentially expanding the area under cultivation at the same time. Farming should not be extended into areas that are already being used sustainably, for example as forests. It is key to improve productivity in existing areas under cultivation. In addition to agriculture, the importance of fisheries and forestry, especially agroforestry, to food security must be acknowledged. Furthermore, the production of other commodities, such as feed and bioenergy, promotes farmers' income and subsequently food security. Climate change will make productivity gains harder to attain in areas where cultivation is already difficult. Land ownership and administration issues and the incentive structures that arise from them have a significant impact on the effectiveness of food production. The continuous increase in demand for food and the connection between food production and the energy sector are most likely leading to a rise in international prices for agricultural products and increasing price volatility.

Increasing agricultural production requires not only technological development but also controlling the challenges relating to education and health, for example controlling malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. These have a devastating impact on agriculture as losses in labour force, knowledge and wealth.

Agricultural production is not only a question of maintaining an adequate supply. In many developing countries agriculture plays a key role as an engine for economic growth and in reducing poverty. Employment and livelihoods in other sectors – both in rural and urban areas– are often linked to the success of agriculture. A vital agricultural sector acts as a safety net that maintains economic development and employment.

### Climate change – new challenges for agriculture and food security

Climate change is making the attainment of food security and agricultural objectives more difficult. A particular threat is worsening droughts in the central zones of the world and the rise in water levels in coastal farming areas. The lack of water needed for farming is forecast to get worse in areas which already have the worst food security problems. In the future, farming systems will have to adapt to climate change and the overall amount of greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced by sequestering carbon in soils and vegetation through good agricultural practices. The available water must be used more effectively, for example by developing irrigation systems.

Women are often responsible for agricultural production and therefore need information and resources for mitigating climate change and adapting to it. On the other hand, their know-how should be exploited in planning climate actions.



### 2.2 Food security – the outcome of several policy sectors

The key issue when improving agriculture and food security is to ensure development policy coherence between the various policies and instruments. Agriculture and food security are not only affected by development policy but also by trade, agriculture, energy, security, environment, labour, social and economic policy as well as policies on managing natural resources.

Through trade policy devices agriculture and food security can be improved in developing countries. Agricultural and export subsidies, import and export restrictions, various quotas, preferential regimes and trade agreements all have an impact on the price of food, international and local markets, the profitability of agriculture and the willingness to invest in agriculture.

One of the most important tasks of economic and social policy is to ensure that the right to food is realised in the life of every human being. Investing in creating sustainable and decent jobs, developing the quality of the workforce and employment services, making income distribution more equal as well as strengthening social security are important actions also with respect to food security. Agricultural policy has considerable potential to promote both health as well as agricultural objectives. Moreover, rural policy enhances the functioning of local communities and at the same time factors relating to employment and the labour force. Maintaining food security is also a strategic security factor. Food security issues play a critical role in terms of social stability in fragile states.

#### Finland:

- promotes development policy coherence in cooperation with the ministries responsible for the various policy sectors
- reduces the detrimental impact of trade policy on developing countries in various policy sectors

# Cooperation priorities and instruments in agriculture and food security

#### 3.1 Finland's priorities

Bilateral development cooperation in agriculture and food security supported by Finland is based on the development strategies of partner countries. The policy guidelines and strategies of partner countries, the institutions necessary for their implementation and the monitoring of policy impacts create the foundation for favourable development in agriculture and food security. Finland together with other donors participates in developing and monitoring sector-specific policies. Long-term commitment is given to cooperation programmes in order to meet sectoral development challenges and to improve aid predictability. Effective evaluation and monitoring ensures aid effectiveness and that it is channelled towards the objectives.

Finland promotes agriculture and food security in developing countries through complementary instruments in cooperation with the recipient government and other donors. The key criterion for instrument selection is appropriateness: the instrument must meet the need and lead to the attainment of the objectives. In the future, cooperation, the division of labour and the exchange of information and experiences between different actors will be the focus of greater emphasis.

Sectoral and multilateral cooperation will focus on the coordination and cooperation of organisations and financing institutions, as well as highlighting cross-cutting themes in their activities. The role of the Committee on World Food Security in coordinating global cooperation on food security will receive particular support. In addition, sectoral and multilateral cooperation will supplement bilateral cooperation, especially in sectors and themes in which Finland does not have enough resources or in situations where the potential of an individual donor to have an impact is limited.

Finnish NGOs support their partner organisations in developing countries in their work and by developing their operational capacity. Many rural development projects aim at increasing the population's food security, among their other activities. The activities of NGOs are especially important in improving the food security of the most disadvantaged groups of people and the income they earn from agriculture.

New forms of cooperation and partnerships can also be implemented in developing agriculture and food security. These include strengthening South–South cooperation, aid for trade, institutional cooperation, the Transatlantic Partnership for Sustainable Development (intensive dialogue on development policy between the EU and the USA, within the framework of which food security has been identified as one area of cooperation), cross-sectoral cooperation to build social protection floors for vulnerable groups, various tripartite arrangements and regional cooperation. Research cooperation is one of the key factors in several instruments.

The aim of Finland's development policy regarding the agricultural sector and food security is to improve the conditions for production and livelihood opportunities of **smallholder farmers** in poor countries in particular. Local people are included in planning, implementing and monitoring projects to ensure ownership. Sustainable alternatives and practices are needed especially to meet the challenges faced by agriculture in poor countries as a result of climate change.

Good, effective, responsible and transparent governance is the objective in all development cooperation funding allocated to the agricultural sector. The opportunity of the various actors in the sector to participate in planning, implementing and monitoring agricultural policy must be strengthened. Anti-corruption

activities must be incorporated into agriculture and food security cooperation.

Finland participates in development work through various instruments, concentrating on those areas where the countries' needs and Finnish resources and added value converge.

There are actors in the Finnish 'farm-to-fork' value chain, and experts on cultivation systems of developing countries as well as on social policy related to agriculture and food security, who have the capacity to make a positive contribution to development cooperation.

#### Finland:

- supports agricultural production that promotes the attainment of food security in developing countries
- is continuing the controlled increase of development cooperation funding that is channelled to agriculture and food security. Finland has increased development cooperation funding allocated to agriculture since 2007. Finland's bilateral aid for the agricultural sector has increased from around six million euros to 34 million euros in 2006–2009. The share of the agricultural sector in bilateral development cooperation funding has risen from just under two per cent to over six per cent during the same period.
- assesses potential Finnish expertise to capitalise on Finnish added value and directs it, where applicable, for use in development cooperation. Assists young experts to gain access to multilateral organisations and bilateral projects.

#### 3.1.1 Food availability

The starting point for developing agricultural production must be the development of the entire 'farm-to-fork' value chain so that products can be made accessible to those who need them. The development of local, national and regional markets for agricultural products is

restricted by a lack of or weak infrastructure. Securing financing is one of the biggest bottlenecks in developing agricultural production and the rural economy. Agriculture cannot function without links to production input, financing and product markets, so instruments for dealing with all levels of the value chain are needed. A good example of these are the various partnerships between public and private actors.

The investments made into research on agriculture and food security by developing countries will pay for themselves many times over in form of increased food production. Exploiting research data in practical work calls for functioning innovation and advisory systems. The extension, statistical and other support institutions of partner countries play a key role in the practical application of research results. In order to ensure the development of the entire production sector, there is a need to make education more effective at the university level, in vocational teaching as well as in practical farming. It is especially important to ensure that women and girls can gain access to education and advice on domestic science and agriculture.

Sustainable promotion of food security requires both domestic food production and trade. Ensuring food availability is primarily a national obligation and over-dependence on imports is a risk in terms of food security. Opportunities provided by local, regional and international trade must be capitalised on, in a way that allows food security to be guaranteed globally. International trade enables the effective use of resources and provides competitive producers in developing countries with an opportunity to benefit from markets in industrialised countries as well as in other developing countries. Advanced trading systems promote the regular availability of food and stable price levels. Barriers to trade must be removed within developing countries as well as regionally and globally.

### ICT as a developer of the agricultural sector

Information and communications technology (ICT), which includes the Internet as well as traditional means of telecommunication, can be used to develop and strengthen the agricultural sector through increasing the incomes of small farmers and thus reducing poverty. ICT could be a key aid for finding new markets, compiling yield data, developing the skills of actors in the sector and marketing products. Farmers can also use ICT to obtain information on sales and purchasing prices and assistance on production questions. ICT projects have been observed to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of agricultural production.

Issues relating to land administration, ownership and use are often significant problems, especially for women. These problems will not be resolved merely through technical solutions; what is required is legislation on gender equality, policy guidelines, and a change in attitude as well as good and transparent governance. The enthusiasm of rapidly developing economies and their companies to acquire land from developing countries reflects the concerns caused by the variation in the prices of food and natural resources. It is important to create common guidelines on good practices in land leasing activities in developing countries. Furthermore, questions relating to water resources have emerged as an issue.

Finland participates in increasing agricultural productivity:

- by enhancing the functioning of the entire food value chain.
- by promoting research, education and extension, supporting the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and national research institutes as well as inter-institutional cooperation.

 through cooperation on land use and ownership in close cooperation with multilateral actors and other donors.

#### 3.1.2 Food quality and safety

The amount of calories and the nutritional quality of food are important factors in mitigating the severity of malnutrition. There is often a shortage of good-quality protein, essential vitamins as well as minerals and micronutrients. The nutrition of women and children in developing countries must be supported in particular because malnutrition during the foetal period and early childhood causes lifelong damage.





Food safety is a key component of quality and comprises hygienic quality as well as various residues and contaminants. Spoiled food alongside dirty irrigation and drinking water continue to be some of the major causes of disease in developing countries. Food quality and safety problems are often a barrier to trade between developing countries and likewise between industrialised and developing countries.

Storage is often a problem both in terms of the amount and quality of food. The FAO estimates that losses from packaging, transportation and storage deprive producers of 15– 50 per cent of their harvest depending on the product and conditions. Warehouses make it possible to increase flexibility in terms of the sales window of the product and their importance will be highlighted in the future as the need for a buffer due to yield variations increases.

Finland participates in improving food security and safety by supporting:

- nutrition and health education
- work on food safety at the country level and in international organisations
- the development of small-scale warehousing close to primary producers of the food chain, for example by supporting the planning and building of warehouses close to village communities or groups of farmers and the development of their management.

### 3.1.3 Access to food by the poor and crisis situations

One element of food security is **people's ability** to obtain food for their own use. The price of food and changes in purchasing power are extremely important factors in countries in which 60–80 per cent of the available income is spent on food. An increase in production means the food security of smallholder farmers improves, because there is a greater amount of food for their own consumption and for selling. It is also important to ensure a more even distribution of food and incomes than is the case at present.

The diversification of rural as well and urban economies will reduce food insecurity by increasing household incomes and purchasing power. This calls for education and training coupled with development of the infrastructure, markets, entrepreneurship and financial services. New types of social protection networks and risk management systems are needed to protect against price and yield variations. Early warning mechanisms and foresight on food security problems and controlling them through sufficiently diverse and sustainable farming systems are also part of risk management.

During humanitarian crises caused by conflicts and natural disasters, food aid is often the only means of safeguarding an adequate food supply for people. Aid also reduces the need of households to resort to harmful strategies for coping, such as selling production equipment and livestock. Emergency supplies of food are purchased as far as possible locally or regionally. The distortion of local production and markets are avoided in aid implementation. Finland applies a so-called continuum approach, which means the mutually supportive coordination of humanitarian aid, reconstruction and development cooperation. Humanitarian food aid is not the right instrument for managing chronic food insecurity. In some instances it is justified to provide food aid as development aid, for example in school feeding programmes, food aid intended for HIV/AIDS patients as well as mother and child health interventions.

#### Finland improves access to food:

- by developing the rural economy in a diverse way and the entire countryside in cooperation with the government and other donors, for example through sector support programmes.
- by supporting the humanitarian food aid reform process, the key elements of which are needs assessments, improving coordination and purchasing local and regional emergency supplies of food.
- by incorporating disaster preparedness in rural development plans and improving early warning mechanisms.

### 3.1.4 Smallholder farmers and women

Making agricultural production more effective plays a key role in promoting food security. To attain this requires an improvement in agricultural structures in developing countries. Most food production in developing countries is still undertaken by smallholder farmers; therefore Finland will in the future allocate its aid primarily towards helping them. Particular attention will be focused on women farmers and improving their status, since women are often responsible for the family's food production and mostly lack the necessary investments needed for production and the development of their agricultural practices.

The professional and economic organisation of smallholder farmers strengthens their standing and bargaining power in relation to trade and processing. Furthermore, it provides them with an opportunity to participate and be consulted in agricultural policy. Cooperation offers opportunities to adopt cost-effective measures at various stages of the production chain. Farming and local development organisations play a key role in transitioning from subsistence farming to market-oriented farming. A key strategy of empowering smallholder farmers is to facilitate their access to market and price information. New communications technology has an important role to play in this.

#### Finland promotes:

- the professional and economic organisation of farmers by channelling support towards the development of producer organisations and cooperatives and cooperation organised by them.
- gender equality and especially better opportunities for women in the agriculture and food security sectors.
- the use of information and communications technology in developing and introducing systems that support agriculture and food security.

### 3.1.5 Ecologically sustainable food production

Environmental issues are an essential part of agricultural and food security development cooperation supported by Finland. The future of food production depends on the state of the environment and at the same time production has an impact on environmental changes. Climate change mitigation and adaptation, maintaining biodiversity and managing water resources are challenges which can be met through sustainable agricultural production.

Agriculture and animal husbandry produce greenhouse gases, but managed properly crop farming sequesters carbon in the soil. There are emissions from livestock rearing, which can and should be reduced. By improving agricultural productivity and including trees as a productive part of the farming system, deforestation can be reduced and the conservation of biodiversity improved.

Access to energy and energy efficiency play an important role in improving productivity in food production, storage and distribution. The increasing use of renewable energy and especially bioenergy and biofuels can create new opportunities for rural areas in developing countries if they are not in competition with food production for the same land, labour force, water and other production resources. The production of bioenergy and biofuels must be done on an environmentally sustainable basis.

#### Finland supports:

- climate change mitigation and adaptation, agricultural water management, agroforestry and the introduction of good agricultural practices
- the preparation of national climate change mitigation and adaptation plans and especially the incorporation of gender equality issues and the role of women in them.
- the production of small-scale biofuels for the needs of local markets in areas in which it will not reduce or jeopardise food production, and the use of agricultural residues in the production of energy.



#### 3.2 Partner countries and organisations

Finland's most important partner countries in the agricultural and food security sectors are also Finland's long-term partners in development cooperation: Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Zambia, Tanzania and Vietnam. Regional cooperation is also directed towards other areas, such as countries and regions recovering from conflict. The most important channels for multilateral cooperation in the agricultural and food security sectors are the FAO, IFAD, WFP and CGIAR -research institutes as well as international financing institutions.

In agricultural and food security issues relating to the EU's development cooperation, Finland emphasises policy coherence and the coordination of actions by the member states. At the country level, harmonisation and coordination between donors is vital to lighten the administrative burden of the partner country and to improve the effectiveness of the cooperation. The Transatlantic Partnership for Sustainable Development is creating opportunities for closer cooperation between the world's largest donors, the EU and the USA, in food security issues. At country level Finland participates in drawing up comprehensive development plans on agriculture and food security within the framework of the partnership. At the global level, Finland actively participates in developing international cooperation and coordination.

The agricultural development programme of the African Union CAADP (Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme) issues important guidelines on cooperation carried out with African countries. International environmental agreements, such as the conventions on biodiversity and desertification, set out their own guidelines on work relating to food security.

Part of the funds granted to the World Bank and the Asian, African and Latin American development banks are allocated to developing agriculture and food security either directly or through numerous thematic and sector-specific initiatives (e.g. climate change, energy, aid for trade, the information society, equality and social protection). Furthermore, issues relating to food security and development cooperation in general are receiving greater emphasis in the agricultural policy work by the OECD.

*In its multilateral cooperation, Finland:* 

- at the political level supports placing the development of agriculture and food security at the heart of the work of international organisations, while at the implementation level stresses the importance of every organisation to focus on areas of action in which they can provide added value in accordance with their mandate.
- supports the implementation of environmental agreements relating to rural development (climate, biodiversity and desertification) and places emphasis on synergies between the objectives of the agreements in planning and implementing actions.
- supports research and project activities through strategic partnerships, especially in relation to climate change, land administration and agricultural productivity.
- supports countries' own development programmes and especially the African agriculture development programme CAADP (Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme)

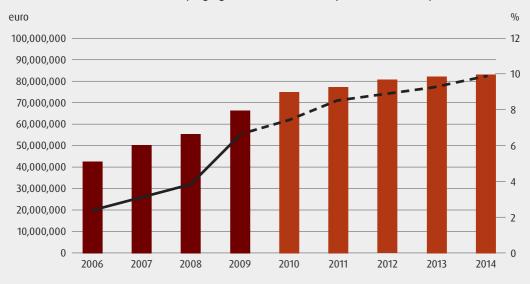
#### Appendix 1

Current multilateral cooperation in the agricultural sector. The table lists the key forms of cooperation underway.

FAO	Support for incorporating agriculture as part of controlling climate change  Support for developing and piloting land register software
IFAD	Support for the partnership programme
WFP	Core assistance for the World Food Programme
Asian Development Bank Group	Support for the Cambodian Poverty Reduction and Smallholder Development Project Support for a sustainable development and poverty reduction project in Cambodia
African Development Bank Group	Support for developing small-scale irrigation systems in Zambia
CGIAR network of research centres	Support for CGIAR research centres: ICRAF, IFPRI, ILRI, CIFOR
WB, EU, reconstruction funds, budget support, several UN organizations	Part of the general assistance provided via multilateral organisations is channelled into developing agriculture and food security in accordance with the priorities of the organisations

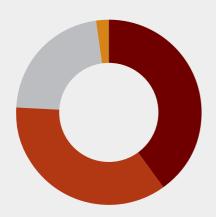
#### Action plan for development cooperation in the fields of agriculture, food security and rural development 2010–2014\*

Estimate of bilateral aid for developing agriculture, food security and rural development 2006-2014\*



Share of agriculture, fisheries and rural development of bilateral aid, % (estimate from 2010) Total ODA for agriculture, fisheries and rural development (EUR)

#### Division of the action plan (2010–2014) between different instruments



Multilateral cooperation	40%°
Bilateral project and programme cooperation	36%
Sectoral support	22%
NGOs	2%

\*Includes projects of organisations and general assistance for the FAO, IFAD and WFP.

<sup>\*</sup>The figures do not include general assistance given via multilateral organisations (development financing institutions, the EU, reconstruction funds, budget support), which is allocated to developing agriculture and food security in accordance with their own priorities.

#### Regions and themes in the agricultural sector



- Development of small-scale irrigation systems (AfDB cooperation)
- Support for the farmers' union

#### Kenya

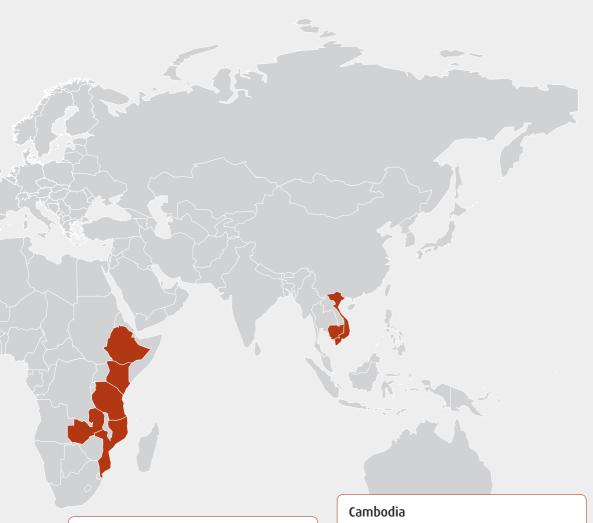
· Rural development programme in Western Kenya is starting

#### Tanzania

Rural development project

#### Mozambique

- Rural development sector programme
- Rural development project



#### Ethiopia

 A new rural development project is being planned

#### Vietnam

 Poverty reduction sector programme, which funds projects aimed at improving the productivity of farming and other livelihoods at municipality level

- Poverty reduction and smallholder development (ADB cooperation)
- Sustainable development and poverty reduction as well as piloting the use of technology (ADB cooperation)
- The development of a modern, multipurpose land register

Regional food security project in East and West Africa

#### **Abbreviations**

CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
ICRAF	World Agroforestry Centre
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
ICI	Institutional Cooperation Instrument
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
UN	United Nations



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