

PERFORMANCE REPORT
Project Monitoring Sheet: OSRO/GEO/802/USA
Tbilisi, 15th July 2009

Region/Country:	Caucasus / Georgia
Project title:	“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”
Grant Agreement No:	114-G-00-09-00010-00
FAO Project Code:	OSRO/GEO/802//USA
Grantee:	FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO)
Author (s):	C. Mandrà / FAO Emergency Coordinator in Georgia
Budget:	US\$5,500 000 ¹
Effective starting date:	15 October 2008
Planned end date:	14 October 2009
Reporting period:	15 April-15 July 2009 (3 rd Quarter)
Context:	<p>The escalation of armed conflict between Russian and Georgian forces in August 2008 led to the displacement of approximately 128 000 persons in Georgia. The majority of families living in the conflict zone depended on agriculture for their livelihoods. This population suffered significant losses resulting from displacement, looting and destruction. The outbreak of the conflict coincided with the summer harvest, which resulted in many farming families losing almost their entire summer crop as they fled to safety.</p> <p>While active engagement of armed forces has ended, the general humanitarian situation remains critical in some areas. An estimated 30 000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) continue to live in collective centres, new settlements constructed for IDPs and private accommodation in Tbilisi, Gori, Rustavi, Kutaisi and other cities and towns in Georgia. At the same time thousands of IDPs have returned to the areas adjacent to conflict zone and are facing problems associated with the aftermath of the conflict, including disruption of livelihoods, poverty and food insecurity.</p>

¹ NB: The Financial Report (SF-269) shall be provided separately by FAO Headquarters in Rome, Italy. Financial Reports shall be in compliance with Standard Provision "Audit and Records".

Summary:

Operation of FAO Emergency Rehabilitation and Coordination Unit (ERCU)

Since January 2009 the Emergency Rehabilitation Coordination Unit (ERCU) of the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has provided assistance through humanitarian actors, government line departments and local communities in order to restore the affected population's resilience by increasing food production and access to food.

The operation of FAO ERCU significantly contributes to in-country humanitarian coordination agreements, specifically the Food Security Cluster, which FAO co-chairs with the World Food Programme (WFP). Coordination of agricultural activities through the cluster approach remains important during the transition from emergency to rehabilitation phases, ensuring that the recovery of rural livelihoods and food security are properly addressed.

In this period, the FAO also completed gathering information for the 'who what where' (3w) donor & business interventions in agriculture sector database for Georgia.

Procurement

The procurement of project inputs has been undertaken in full compliance with FAO procurement rules and regulations. Local suppliers for the installation of 35 water troughs in 17 villages in the area of the operation were selected in accordance with FAO procurement rules. A contract was signed with local research company ACT to conduct the second beneficiary results assessment (BRA) on the animal feed distribution project, this time including the survey on the results achieved with water troughs. The results of the BRA will be available in the next report.

Letters of Agreement

Selected Implementing Partners (Care International (CARE), World Vision International (WVI), International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) and Save the Children (SC)) have worked with FAO under Letters of Agreement to implement activities including: (i) beneficiary identification, (ii) distribution of animal feed according to agreed plans, (iii) endoparasitic treatment of cattle belonging to most vulnerable farmer households, and (iv) emergency water trough construction to secure adequate water supply for livestock.

Selection of Beneficiaries

The four Implementing Partners (Care International, World Vision International, Save The Children and International Orthodox Christian Charities) were tasked with identifying beneficiaries in close collaboration with local authorities and FAO for all target areas, as well as cross checking all household lists.

Cattle Treatment

The first round of cattle de-worming in the conflict affected area was completed on 30 April and the second round was finalized on 14 May 2009 with a total of 46 905 head of cattle treated. The records of all beneficiary lists are held at FAO ERCU office, Tbilisi, Georgia, and are available for inspection upon request. The installation of 35 water troughs in 17 conflict

affected villages in Shida Kartli region was also completed by 31 May 2009.

Objectives²:

2.1. Overall Objective (Long Term Goal)

The project's overall objective is to protect livelihoods of vulnerable livestock holders in conflict-affected areas and provide technical assistance and coordination support to ensure that the affected population accrues greater benefits from all related rural household food security interventions.

2.2. Immediate Objective

The immediate objectives of the project are in two folds:

- A. To ensure the survival of up to 12 000 livestock by distributing concentrated animal feed to the most vulnerable small-scale farmers affected by the conflict. This will complement existing limited resources in order to prevent further de-stocking of cattle, re-establish livestock's productive capacity and enhance livestock reproduction chances in the spring. In order to achieve this objective the project will focus on massive distribution of concentrated animal feed to most vulnerable households.
- B. To ensure that a coherent and technically sound agricultural assistance programme for the region is implemented through coordination of NGOs and UN agencies involved in emergency agricultural relief operations in Georgia. In order to achieve this objective, the project will establish an Emergency Rehabilitation and Coordination Unit (ERCU) which 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, avoid gaps and overlap, and provide technical advice when requested.

Expected Outputs and Activities:

The project will deliver two independently verifiable outputs as a result of the activities undertaken by the project:

Output 1 consisting of the emergency provision of livestock feed and related supplies

Output 2 consisting of support to agriculture sector and food security cluster coordination.

² These objectives represent a synthesis of the main Grant Objectives as contained in the Grant Agreement. They have been presented in summarized form in compliance with the Quarterly Update format. More detailed reporting on objectives and activities will be included in the Final Narrative Report upon project completion.

Planned activities as per work schedule:

- A second survey to assess the use and performance of the animal feed and de-worming drugs distributed, and water troughs installed, is foreseen for August 2009;
- Completion and circulation of Agriculture Sector intervention database.

Actual Progress on Activities implemented during the reporting period (15 April-15 July 2009):**Output 1****De-worming**

The entire cattle population in the conflict affected region (46 905 head of cattle) has been dosed with endoparasitic treatment. All treatments were carried out by licensed veterinarians employed in the target areas.

The final round of de-worming took place during April and May 2009 with the close cooperation of the Veterinary Services of the MoA and selected implementing partners. For the second de-worming round, the drug *Fenbendazole* was selected to improve the efficacy of feed provision, and to generally improve animal health.

After completion of de-worming process, the project implementing partner World Vision carried out helminthes research of the de-wormed cows in 34 villages in Shida Kartli Region. 112 samples were collected and delivered to the special veterinary laboratory of the Ministry of Agriculture. The laboratory results found that helminthes, helminthes eggs and larvae were not present in the cattle faeces samples.

Water troughs

The assigned implementing partner, CARE in cooperation with IOCC, WVI and SC identified the locations and constructed 35 water troughs in 17 villages. The installation works were completed in May 2009. The FAO field officer in Gori conducted monitoring of the newly installed water troughs in the area of operations. Based on the findings, the construction met requirements.

Success stories and any press coverage as an attachment

1. Success story
2. FAO fact sheet including details of USAID funded project
3. Water trough installation location map
4. 3w agriculture sector database

Output 2**a) Establishment of a fully fledged FAO Emergency and Rehabilitation Coordination Unit (ERCU)**

The FAO ERCU office in Tbilisi, has been functional since January 2009 meeting all prescribed United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) standards. The

project vehicle fleet is also complete with two M.O.S.S. (minimum operational security standards) compliant 4WD vehicles used for field monitoring and project implementation. A formal no-cost arrangement has been reached with UNHCR in Gori allowing FAO to access security phase 3 high risk zones in the Area Bordering South Ossetia (ABSO) where armoured vehicles are required for UN personnel.

b) Support to Agriculture Sector and Food Security Cluster Coordination

Together with the World Food Programme (WFP), FAO continues to co-chair the Food Security Cluster (FSC) providing a coordination platform with regular meetings for a large numbers of organizations (including UN Agencies, NGOs, ICRC, OSCE, CNFA, Donors, Ministry of Agriculture and others). The cluster meetings continue to provide an open forum to share information and coordinate operations. There is a unanimous consensus among FSC members that this coordination platform should continue to provide a mechanism for operational as well as strategic planning purposes.

Thematic sessions with operationally relevant topics and updates such as briefs or presentations from gender balance experts, de-mining specialists, hydro-geologists and irrigation engineers, and other guest speakers allow the cluster members to be well informed and up to date with the latest developments that affect them either directly or indirectly.

The FSC has also been used to ensure standards and norms are being applied by the different humanitarian actors to avoid conflict among beneficiary communities. This forum also allowed for technical issues to be raised and resolved such as building consensus for criteria on selection of water trough locations for most vulnerable villages lacking access to drinking water for livestock.

The irrigation sub-group has been dissolved after being tasked with brainstorming on appropriate solutions for improved access to water to farmers in areas affected by the conflict and IDPs in new settlements. This topic has now been brought forward as a major outstanding issue. This is being addressed through project proposals seeking alternative solutions for accessing and harvesting rain and groundwater, and FAO advocates strongly for more attention to be given to this issue. The FSC is also monitoring developments on the Government's irrigation related intervention looking at repairing and upgrading the primary canals of the irrigation system in Shida Kartli region. These works are delayed and rehabilitation of the secondary and tertiary canal system remain outstanding. Nevertheless, projects are pooling community based resources to start with clean up works of the canals through livelihoods projects to be supported by international efforts.

A review of the cluster coordination mechanisms took place during June 2009 with recommendations made by the Cluster Leads to the UN Country Team (UNCT) for the cluster coordination system to be kept. Some of the existing clusters may be kept in their present format, whilst others can be gradually rolled-over into emerging government initiatives (such as the Steering Committee chaired by the MRA) and some can be ceased or linked to those that remain.

c) Other activities

In June 2009, a hydro-geological study was completed by two FAO international consultants to evaluate the current status of irrigation in the Shida Kartli Region and to propose adequate mitigation measures. The experts' main proposals were aimed at:

- Finding alternatives for lack of water supply to the most affected land with no irrigation (e.g. those farmers affected by the cut-off of the Vanati water source) ;
- Provision of solutions to internally displaced people (IDPs) in new settlements for irrigation of backyard kitchen gardens;
- Maintenance and repair of existing 'traditional' irrigation systems using surface water;
- Expanding access to irrigation water through sustainable use of groundwater (e.g. drilling of tube wells);
- Introduction of modern irrigation systems using low-cost water saving technologies and providing associated training.

The findings were presented to the Ministry of Agriculture at the end of the mission, and a summary of the findings will be made available to interested parties by end of July 2009. In summary, the water situation is worst in the northern part of Gori District where cutting off the Vanati water source has left some 2,000 ha of orchards and crops dependent solely on rain water. Whereas several deep wells were drilled to mitigate the drinking water shortage, no action has yet been taken to solve the problem of irrigation water. The provision of emergency water to at least a portion of this land or close to it is thus a critical task.

As well as targeted emergency priorities, the experts generally recommend modernization of the irrigation system and applied techniques, and their findings provide an up-to-date picture of the water management issues identified in conflict affected farming area of Shida Kartli Region. Little if no action has thus far been taken address these agricultural related water management and irrigation issues. Nevertheless, recommendations and project ideas have been developed and could quickly be implemented. It is posited that simple interventions before the end of 2009 would reduce the probability of protracted food insecurity amongst these populations.

Planned activities for July to October 2009

- FAO submitted a plan to USAID for approval to use savings under Grant Agreement 114-G-00-09-00010-00 to provide additional inputs to most vulnerable cattle owning farmers in specific conflict-affected areas of Shida Kartli Region. The proposal for a no-cost 3 month extension includes a focus on the production of silage at the household/farmer level to improve the sustainability of feed provision for livestock, especially with the 2009/2010 winter period just a few months away, as well . Training through demonstration plots and use of television and radio information programmes are proposed to ensure as wide a coverage as possible.
- A third deworming round is strongly recommended to ensure that the impact of this intervention is sustainable, and would be included in the above no-cost extension.
- Existing arrangements with implementing partners including CARE International continue to provide a veterinary advisory hotline for farmers to learn about improved cattle feeding, the correct application of de-worming drugs and other related animal health questions.
- Farmers will also receive continued training on livestock management (including access to water, appropriate feeding, shed space and mobility, biosecurity risks, de-worming, etc.).
- A second survey to assess the use and performance of the animal feed, de-worming drugs

distributed, and water troughs installed is planned for August 2009.

- FAO ERCU will continue to co-chair the FSC for the rest of 2009.
- FAO is planning to host one of the quarterly Agriculture sector donor meeting during September 2009 to complement the Agriculture sector coordination meeting.
- FAO ERCU continues to update the who what where (3w) agriculture sector database for ongoing and future interventions and plans in Georgia. The first prototype was shared and will now be regularly available to FSC members and other interested stakeholders.
- FAO has produced various visibility materials that can be found on the FAO country website www.fao.org/emergencies/country_information/list/europe/georgia/en/ including a Fact Sheet, a regular Newsletter and other material reporting on FAO's project activities in Georgia.
- FAO, in collaboration with the Georgian MOA is producing an Agriculture Sector Bulletin that seeks to inform international as well as local stakeholders on major trends, facts and figures relating to the sector.

In close cooperation with the Government of Georgia and FAO's sub-regional office for Central and Eastern Europe (SEU), FAO in Georgia has taken a lead in coordinating and developing a National Medium-Term Priority Framework (NMTPF)³, to identify priority areas for FAO assistance to Georgia over the next five years. This will allow FAO and the Government of Georgia to achieve a strategic vision for FAO assistance in the short and medium-term, with the advantages of (i) increasing the effectiveness of assistance; (ii) improving performance through the inclusion of a result based approach; (iii) improved alignment with other development partners and, (iv) heightened transparency and accountability.

³ NMTPFs are Government-FAO agreed programmes for FAO assistance and support in a country, introduced in 2005. NMTPFs constitute FAO's input to the UN Common Country Programming Process (UNDAF).

Main challenges encountered and response provided:

- The market search to identify appropriate water trough materials according to required technical specifications was more difficult than anticipated as most suppliers did not meet requirements. Nonetheless, relevant suppliers that met all specifications in terms of costs, delivery, material and quality were contracted. However, all selected suppliers refused to release the goods before payment and insisted on 100% cash advances. Under the circumstances and so as not to impede project delivery, FAO agreed to pay for materials in cash.

Results and lessons learned as well as recommendations for future similar kind of efforts

- One of the main lessons learned is the importance of timely deworming prior to distribution of animal feed, with follow up deworming after distribution. This ensures cattle are parasite free during feeding to ensure good nutritional intake as well as when they return to pasture and mingle with other cattle. By increasing the number of cattle dewormed in the region, the risk of reinfection was significantly decreased as shown by laboratory results undertaken by partner organizations.
- According to feedback received from farmers as well as partners, there are solid indications that the return on investment in improving feed and water access to cows is increased milk yields, with more dairy products for consumption and income generation. However, the understanding of the benefits of these practices still needs to be more widespread, and will therefore require close follow up and further training to change the way farmers manage their livestock and feeding practices.
- Indicators show that the project is meeting specific goals. The number of cattle treated for deworming exceeded the original target fourfold, and the second round indicates that the impact has been sustained and remains visible as the cattle have been retested for endoparasites, showing that they remain uninfected.
- Project interventions improved the cooperation and coordination among animal health services personnel (private and public veterinarians in the target areas who worked with FAO) and allowed support to the existing national veterinary service at the local level to take stock of the disease situation in target areas.
- **Success at accomplishing intermediate results, including a comparison of actual vs. planned accomplishments and an explanation any shortfalls if they occurred**
 - The health status of new born cattle has significantly improved allowing for early vaccination by veterinarians hired for deworming activities.
 - Installation of the 35 water troughs in 17 villages ensured sufficient water access and availability for all targeted cattle. The project identified 17 villages of the original 127 target villages that had insufficient water supply for their cattle through a participatory community based needs assessment.
 - No shortfalls against planned accomplishments to be reported. Project objectives are being reached and the project progress is on target.
 - To further understand actual vs. planned project accomplishments Beneficiary Results Assessment results will be analyzed and reported in the final project narrative report.