



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the United  
Nations

## Office of Evaluation

### **EC/FAO Programme on Information Systems to Improve Food Security Decision-Making within the Framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) – East Area – GCP /GLO/275/EC**

*Management response to the mid-term evaluation report*

## Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

### Office of Evaluation (OED)

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**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**

**Management Response (ESA April 2012)**

**A. Overall response to the evaluation:**

Overall, the Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE) captures well the achievements, successes and weaknesses of the Programme. The evaluation provides useful recommendations on actions required in general and for each country in particular to increase the impacts and outcomes of the Programme.

The main shortcoming of the MTE is the very limited information provided on the interest of stakeholders, in particular national institutions, in receiving further support within the existing components of the Programme or within new components in the context of a follow-up initiative. Interest has been expressed in several occasions to Programme staff but it would have been useful to have an external perspective. As highlighted in the MTE, the Programme has been very successful in adopting a demand-driven approach, ensuring national ownership and responding to decision-makers’ priorities, which has already produced results in terms of increased quality of information and trust between institutions. A lot has already been achieved with Programme support and more will be achieved by the end of the Programme but much more could be done within the theme “better information to support food security decision-making processes”, taking advantage of the highly appropriate set up which has been established by the Programme in each country.

**B. Response by recommendation:**

Management response to the Mid Term Evaluation of GCP/GLO/275/EC Programme					Date: 20 April 2012
Evaluation Recommendation	Management response	Management plan			
		Action to be taken	Responsible unit	Timeframe	Further funding required (Y or N)
<b>General Recommendations</b>					
<b>Rec. 1.1.</b> 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).	Accepted  The no-cost extension is needed to finalize the implementation of the Country Workplans	1. Prepare a budget revision, allocating additional resources to the posts of Programme Coordinator, Country Coordinators and Administrative Support Staff  2. Revise Country Workplans (budget and planning of activities)	1. ESA – Programme Coordinator (PC)  2. ESA – PC and CC	1. By end of April 2012  2. By end of April 2012	1. No  2. No
<b>Rec. 1.2.</b> 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.	Accepted  The preparation of a formal exit strategy will contribute to the sustainability of the activities after the end of the Programme	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. ESA – PC and CC	1. All of them sent by end of May 2013	1. No
<b>Rec.1.3.</b> The Logical Frameworks (Global and country level) should be revised and harmonized (in particular the indicators for outcome); country level baselines should be established if possible.	Accepted  The outcome indicators will be harmonized between the global logical framework and the country logical frameworks	1. Review the logical frameworks and harmonize the outcome indicators  2. To the extent feasible, establish baselines using the reviews of the capacity of targeted institutions which have been carried out for selected components	1. ESA – PC  2. ESA -PC	1. By end of May 2012  2. By end of May 2012	1. No  2. No

<p><b>Rec. 1.4.</b> 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.</p>	<p>Accepted</p> <p>There is room for simplifying the reporting/monitoring system and providing a more straightforward comparison between plans and actual implementation</p>	<p>1. Review the existing three reporting/monitoring systems and identify areas for simplification/harmonization</p> <p>2. Implement improvements</p>	<p>1. ESA – PC</p> <p>2. ESA- PC and CC</p>	<p>1. By end of May 2012</p> <p>By end of June 2012</p>	<p>1. No</p> <p>2. No</p>
<p><b>Rec. 1.5.</b> 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.</p>	<p>Accepted</p> <p>Efforts which are being made to strengthen the capacity of both producers and users of information in understanding food security concepts and relevant food security policies and programmes and in improving data presentation and analysis will be pursued. Specifically, the programme will continue to sponsor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exchange visits to neighboring countries to learn from their experiences in specific areas;</li> <li>- Participation in FAO international and regional events which are relevant to the scope of the programme</li> <li>- Participation in the four month food security online training course (20 participants enrolled so far)</li> </ul>	<p>1. Continue to sponsor the participation of national institutions in relevant events/training, including events organized in the other countries covered by the Programme</p> <p>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)</p>	<p>1. ESA</p> <p>2. ESA – PC and CC</p>	<p>1. Until the end of the Programme</p> <p>2. Until the end of the Programme</p>	<p>1. No</p> <p>2. No</p>
<p><b>Rec. 1.6.</b> Training in gender and other vulnerability disaggregation and targeting aspects should be integrated into other trainings in preference to a standalone ‘gender-mainstreaming training’.</p>	<p>Accepted</p> <p>It is recognized that, as stated in para. 80 of the MTE, gender has only be partially mainstreamed into Programme activities. Action will be taken to systematically take gender into consideration when relevant in the different components of the Programme</p>	<p>1. Identify the components of the Programme where gender has not been mainstreamed (and 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</p>	<p>1. ESA – PC and CC</p>	<p>1. By the end of June 2012</p>	<p>1. No</p>

<p><b>Rec.1.7.</b> 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.</p>	<p>Accepted</p> <p>Sharing of relevant learning to colleagues is already being encouraged and taking place but not in a systematic way</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>ESA - CC</p>	<p>Until the end of the Programme</p>	<p>1. No</p>
<p><b>Rec. 1.8.</b> 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 ear-marked EC-allocation.</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p> <p>The interest in the Food Security and Agriculture Highlights has repeatedly been expressed by stakeholders. The Highlights is however an information product that has been designed to provide an overview of the situation in a country in the context of the Programme (also providing some visibility), not to serve decision-making processes (not based on a user need assessment). During the Country Coordinator’s meeting in July 2012, it was decided to focus on the production and dissemination of the country-specific information products which are being developed under the Programme (Ref: Follow up actions Document) (see also management response to Rec. 1.5., Point 2., above)</p>	<p>1. Focus on the production and dissemination of country-specific information products, which are user-tailored products to support decision-making processes.</p>	<p>1. ESA</p>	<p>The SC Meeting is tentatively planned to take place mid-June</p>	<p>1. No</p>
<p><b>Rec. 1.9.</b> 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</p>	<p>Accepted</p> <p>Dialogue between agencies is already taking place within each country but with different level of intensity. More efforts will be made to involve development partners in relevant events organized by the Programme in particular in Armenia and Azerbaijan and in disseminating information to a wider audience</p>	<p>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</p> <p>2. Invite more development partners in workshops and other capacity development events, offering them an opportunity to present their relevant activities</p>	<p>1. ESA - CC</p>	<p>Until the end of the Programme</p>	<p>1. No</p>

external stakeholders).					
<b>Rec. 1.10.</b> Georgia small farm survey format and/or the farm 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.).	Partially accepted  The small farm survey format (questionnaire in fact) will be shared with concerned national institutions, attracting their interest on carrying out such a survey but no resources are available to carry out such a survey in the context of this Programme. The method used to build a typology of small farms in Azerbaijan has already been shared with representatives from MoA of Georgia and Moldova during the Policy Seminar in Baku on 29 March 2012. A note summarizing the process will be posted on the website page of the Programme	1. Share farm survey questionnaire with national 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	1. ESA – CC  2. ESA – CC Azerbaijan	1. By end of June 2012  2. By end of June 2012	1. No  2. No
<b>Rec. 1.11.</b> A translator (in Russian) should be employed during Steering Committee meetings to allow full participation of the CCs from Armenia and Azerbaijan.	Accepted	1. Recruit a translator for the next fully-fledged SC meetings (with participation of representatives from national institutions)	ESA - PC	Mid June 2012	1. No
<b>Recommendations for Armenia</b>					
<b>Rec. 2.1.</b> 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.	Partially accepted  This new component will be carefully reconsidered, taking into account the risk that it becomes a promotional tool for the Ministry of agriculture and the time left before the end of the Programme (Ref para. 39) but also the potential benefits in terms of communicating food security and agriculture policies to a large audience	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	ESA – PC and CC	June 2012	1. No
<b>Recommendations for Georgia</b>					
<b>Rec. 3.1.</b> Renewed advocacy for the implementation of the small farm survey in the remaining programme period; possibly in	Rejected  The MoA has clearly indicated that they do not support anymore the conduct of the small farm survey				

collaboration with the EC.	and they have not changed position in spite of PC insistence. We agreed with the EU Delegation that there was no point in conducting a survey in these conditions. The work was therefore interrupted. The Country Coordination Team has now decided to allocate the resources (originally allocated to the small farmer survey) to the Agricultural Survey				
<b>Rec. 3.2.</b> Recommend to FAO-Georgia that international food security (not just agriculture) expertise is provided to advice on the development of the Agriculture Strategy Action Plan	Rejected  The recommendation is relevant but concerns FAO in general, not the Programme. A request has been made to FAO (not the Programme) to provide assistance for the development of the Action Plan. Follow up actions will therefore have to be taken by FAO				
<b>Recommendations for Azerbaijan</b>					
<b>Rec. 4.1.</b> Food Balance Sheet: The planned training (users/producers) by end 2012 should include higher-level staff MoA/SSC (deputy level) in order to increase the ownership of the FBS.	Accepted  We have already planned to invite high level staff from the two main institutions involved in FBS (MoA and State Statistical Committee) to participate in a final workshop where the countries will present the results achieved and their plans after the Programme phases out. The main objective is to strengthen ownership and sustainability.	1. Invite high level staff from MoA and SSC to participate in the FBS final workshop	1. ESA – PC and CC	By the end of 2012	1. No
<b>Rec. 4.2.</b> Further training of users (MoA and Ministry of Economic Development) in the adoption of the improved Food Balance Sheet (FBS), including the new inter-active website.	Partially accepted  A several day training for FBS users is already planned in countries to strengthen capacity to use FBS to support policies and programmes in countries. The new inter-active website is expected to be user-friendly and not to require any training. The Programme will widely advertize the website (in particular the section on FBS) once it is released	1. Conduct training of FBS users as planned	1. ESA – PC and CC	By the end of 2012	1. No
<b>Rec. 4.3.</b> The Farm Data Monitoring System should include gender-disaggregation	Accepted	1. Include gender disaggregated indicators for farm managers and hired labour	1. ESA - CC	By end of June 2012	1. No



with regard to farm manager and hired labour.					
<b>Rec. 4.4.</b> 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.	Accepted  The need for an additional mission is acknowledged but depends on the availability of resources	1. Organize an additional mission to process 2012 survey data in March 2013 if resources are sufficient	1. ESA - CC	By end of March 2013	1. No
<b>Rec. 4.5.</b> EC and FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia should consider funding further technical support to the Farm Data Monitoring System succeeding the phase out of the programme.	Accepted  The Programme is already trying to identify another source of funding to provide further technical support after the phasing out of the Programme	1. Identify other possible sources of funding to ensure further technical support	1. ESA – PC and CC	Until the end of the Programme	1. No
<b>Rec. 4.6.</b> MoA should as soon as possible investigate the possibility of allocating an office for the CC.	Accepted  The allocation of an office for the CC in the MoA central building has already been unsuccessful requested. A new request will be made	1. Ask MoA to allocate an office to the CC in MoA central building	1. ESA – PC and CC	By end of May 2012	1. No
<b>Rec. 4.7.</b> Training and capacity development in SSC should also target the younger staff.	Accepted	1. Raise the issue with SSC management when the requests are made to designate participants in CD events	1. ESA - CC	Until the end of the Programme	1. No
<b>Recommendations to Moldova</b>					
<b>Rec. 5.1.</b> FAO and EC should assist government in getting additional technical and financial	Accepted  Programme staff is already actively supporting	1. Take all relevant opportunities to advocate for more technical and financial support to the SITA	1. ESA – PC and CC	Until the end of the Programme	1. No

support to implement SITA (System for Identification and Traceability of Animals) so that it can fulfill its considerable potential.	government's efforts to mobilize additional technical and financial resources				
<b>Rec. 5.2.</b> Increase attempts to find funding to implement the agro met component.	Accepted  Potential partners have already been contacted but unsuccessfully. More efforts will be made	1. Systematically contact partners to discuss the proposal prepared by the international consultant to support Moldovan agro met component	1. ESA - CC	Until the end of the Programme	1. No
<b>Rec. 5.3.</b> Renewed advocacy for the achievement of the analysis of the agriculture survey in the remaining programme period.	Rejected  The delay in processing survey data are due to technical problems met by the National Bureau of Statistics. There is no rational for advocacy				
<b>Rec. 5.4.</b> Any change in emphasis from an agriculture survey to a 'community census' should only be taken if it is evident that this is a high priority from a food security perspective.	Accepted  The benefits of financing the conduct and analysis of the community census (instead of the agricultural census which is now going to be financed through another sources of funding) will be carefully analyzed	1. Analyze the benefits which would be derived from supporting the Community Survey in terms of food security and take a decision on the allocation of the resources	1. ESA – PC and CC	By end of June 2012	1. No
<b>Rec. 5.5.</b> The new CC to be employed should have a technical background, and preferably prior knowledge of the Programme.	Accepted  A new CC has already been recruited taking this recommendation into account.				1. No