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What does the future hold for family farming in ACP countries?

Philip Mikos, Head of Unit B4, DG Development

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Over 60% of Africa's population works in agriculture, farming, and specifically family farming. However, family farming which is a key sector in the ACP context is going through a difficult period. Against the backdrop of economic liberalisation, agricultural productivity and competitiveness must constantly increase. However, price and investment levels and lack of support from public authorities and international backers do not bode well for the sector.

The West African Network of Peasant Organisations and Producers (ROPPA), the ACP secretariat, the European Commission, the Tech-

nic Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA) and the Special Committee on Agriculture (SCA) organised a workshop in Brussels on 2nd to 5th May 2006. The aim was to raise awareness amongst decision makers of the importance of agriculture for ACP countries and the role played by producers' organisations (PO) in sustaining family farming. The discussions produced the following findings and proposals.

It is vital to recognise the key role played by family farming – which has shown a remarkable ability to adapt in unfavorable circumstances, although increased competitiveness and sectoral modernisation remain essential. The importance

Continued on page 2 >>

Editorial

Culture: a growing focus of EC Development Cooperation

By Denis Baresch, EC Policy Officer Human and Social Development

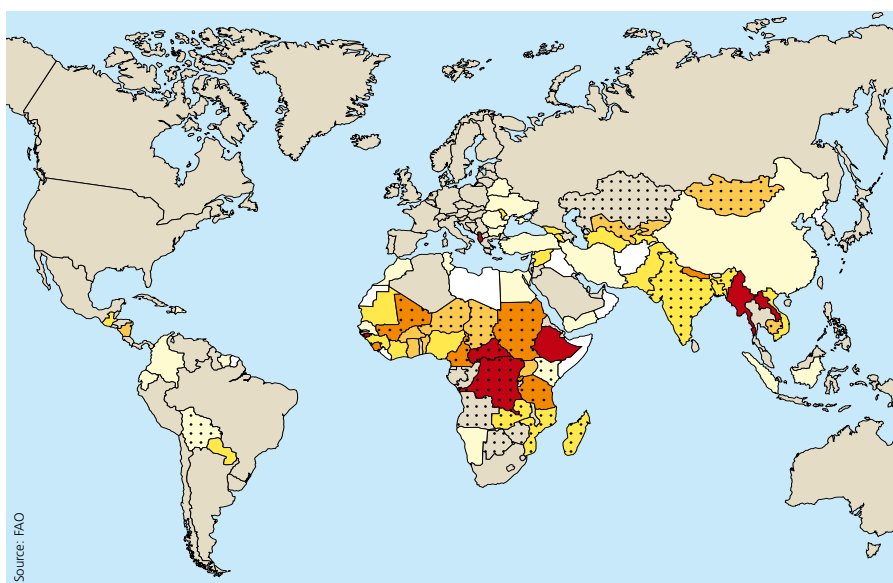
Culture is rapidly emerging as a new frontier of European Union (EU) development cooperation. This is the result of a changing political context. At international level, there is growing recognition from both developing countries and donors of the necessity to integrate culture in development cooperation as a key element of its success. At EU level, the European Consensus on Development and the EU Africa Strategy clearly identify culture as being part of the human development policy framework.

In response to this new context, the Commission has undertaken to publish a Communication on Culture in Development Policy towards the end of 2006. This document will send a strong message to partner countries that culture is an important component of the EU's development policy. The main orientations of the new policy will be twofold. First, due attention will be paid to culture in all EU aid operations, as their efficiency and impact will be maximised by proper integration into the cultural context of recipient countries. Beyond its horizontal nature, culture is an issue in its own right calling for culture-specific actions.

Culture is not a new topic for the EU, though it has so far received only limited attention. As far as Africa, Caribbean and

Continued on page 3 >>

Monthly Graph > Agricultural GDP and undernourished people in the world



Source: FAO
■ 20% or more undernourished; Agricultural GDP % of total GDP: □ 0>10 □ 10>20 □ 20>30 □ 30>40 □ 40>50 □ 50>60 □ > □ No data for one or both variables



Development through Cooperation

John Whitehead, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)

Sustainable international development requires a blend of theory and practice, driven by cutting-edge research and carried out in partnership with developing countries. A European Union-sponsored initiative, led by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), employs such an approach to help reduce poverty and improve food and nutrition security throughout the developing world.

Based in Washington, D.C., IFPRI is part of a global alliance of international agricultural research centers supported by the European Union and its member states. Launched in 2004, IFPRI's Country and Regional Strategy Support Programs are intensive, long-term programs of research and capacity building undertaken in both individual countries and regions of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Program teams work in close collaboration with local researchers and policymakers to alleviate poverty and hunger while preserving the natural environment. These initiatives also generate useful lessons for developing coun-

tries in other regions or parts of the world.

IFPRI currently conducts country-specific programs in Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda and China, as well as regional support programs for Central America and East and Central Africa.

The program in Ethiopia – the largest and one of IFPRI's first strategy support programs – brings together stakeholders from research institutions, government ministries, universities, and farmers'

Continued on page 3 >>



A Chinese farmer works the land; IFPRI has an on-going program to support Chinese agriculture.

What does the future hold for family farming in ACP countries?

Continued from page 1 >>

of family farming lies in its multi-faceted nature, as demonstrated by its contribution to social cohesion in rural areas and to rural/urban interaction, as well as its role in stemming migration, creating jobs, providing food and managing natural resources.

Agriculture must be a priority for international and ACP-EU agendas. – Better information on the family farming situation in ACP countries is necessary to ensure more appropriate policy

decisions. Fostering alliances and collaboration between development organisations is a priority.

Technical and financial support for family farming must increase. – ACP governments must make agriculture a development priority, particularly in the National and Regional Indicative Programmes. The POs would like the EU to allocate resources to agriculture and PO structures within the framework of the 10th EDF.

Other organisations such as the CTA, the

Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) should lend their support in areas such as information provision and strengthening of capacities.

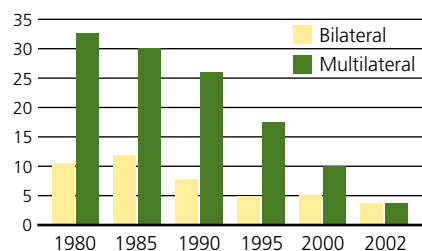
PO participation in agricultural policy and dialogue must be institutionalised. – POs must be acknowledged as important interlocutors in rural and agricultural sectoral initiatives and involved in formulating national and regional policies. A mechanism for consultation between the EU and regional PO platforms as well as meetings with EC delegations in ACP countries will promote mutual awareness.

The structure and capacities of POs need to be strengthened. – POs should be made more representative and their ability to analyse agricultural policy improved. Representation and participation levels of women and young people within POs should increase. It is useful to promote expertise exchange amongst POs of different ACP countries and regions and between these POs and their counterparts in the global north through the appropriate modern and conventional media. ■

The state of food insecurity

Share of aid to agriculture in total Official Development Assistance

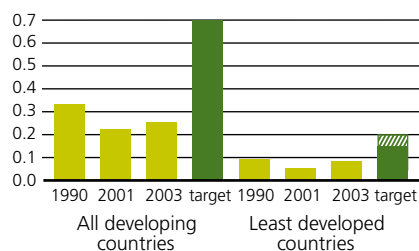
Assistance to agriculture in total ODA (%)



Source: OECD

Aid to developing and least developed countries, 1990–2003 and targets

Share of donors' gross national income (%)



Source: UN Statistics Division



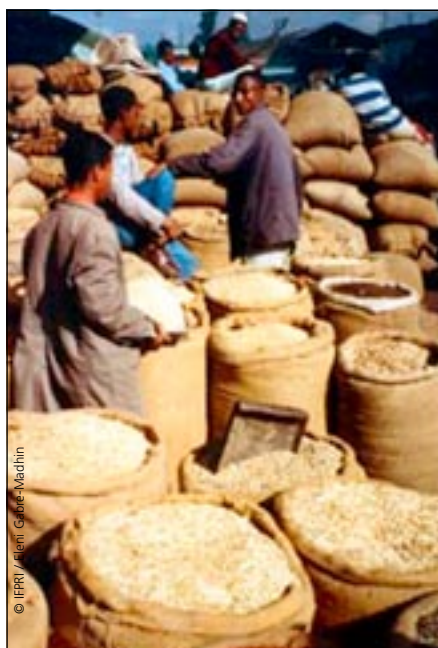
associations to help strengthen the country's policy analysis and improve dialogue on agricultural and rural development issues.

Only two years after its inception, this Ethiopia-driven and Ethiopia-owned program has contributed to strengthening the country's capacity for designing, implementing, and monitoring its rural development strategy. Moreover, these accomplishments could also serve as models and inspiration for other developing countries.

In China, IFPRI researchers focus on economic, agricultural, and environmental issues that carry implications for public policy and the livelihoods of the poor. Researchers are currently studying how small farmers in the rural western region of the country – home to over 60 percent of China's poor – are faring as a result of the country's entrance into the World Trade Organization (WTO). IFPRI is also developing learning programs in agricultural economics and teaching methodologies that will equip Chinese researchers with tools to conduct future analyses and the ability to coach others in these methods.

"Through this program, IFPRI researchers and developing-country partners are addressing critical poverty and food security challenges in a truly cooperative and hands-on way," says Shenggen Fan, director of IFPRI's Development Strategy and Governance Division. *"As international public goods, the knowledge generated from these programs extends beyond specific countries and regions to inform decisionmakers throughout the developing world."* ■

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Traders doing business in Addis Ababa's central grain market; IFPRI and Ethiopia are collaborating to promote the country's agricultural development.

Editorial

Culture: a growing focus of EC Development Cooperation



Lalibela churches, Ethiopia.

Continued from page 1 >>

Pacific (ACP) countries are concerned, the EU has a strong mandate under Article 27 of the Cotonou Agreement. It provides a comprehensive framework for cultural cooperation ranging from the integration of culture across the range of development activities (mainstreaming) to the promotion of intercultural dialogue, the preservation of cultural heritage, support to cultural industries and improved access to European markets for ACP cultural goods and services.

Since 1985, the Commission has financed a broad range of cultural programmes, projects and events in ACP countries. Overall, the Commission has supported about 140 actions worth around €140 million. Under the 9th European Development Fund (EDF), support to culture is estimated to be worth about €40 million.

The Commission supports national projects aimed at the conservation and exploitation of the cultural heritage, for instance the restoration of the Lalibela churches in Ethiopia and the restoration of the St. Peter and St. Paul cathedral in Surinam. These projects contribute to the preservation of the national heritage, and thus the cultural identity of partner countries, while also contributing to develop the potential of their tourism industry.

The Commission plays an important role in providing regular support to African arts events and festivals with a regional and

international dimension. This includes the FESPACO film festival in Ouagadougou, the DAK'ART contemporary arts fair in Dakar, the African Photography Encounters in Bamako, the African Dance Festival in Antananarivo, etc. This is an important contribution to the visibility of African arts and to promoting encounters and exchanges between African artists.

The Commission finances Programmes of support to cultural initiatives, which primarily aim at strengthening the innovation and organisation capacity of cultural actors – typically artists, private operators, museums, local authorities, etc. Such programmes contribute to a lively and creative cultural sector and its longer-term development.

Over a third of the EU's financial support to culture in ACP countries comes from two programmes open to participants from the whole ACP region. The first is the Cinema and Audiovisual Support Programme, which co-finances the production and diffusion of audiovisual works from ACP countries. Its funding-level is €8 million under the 9th EDF. This focus reflects the economic importance of the cinema and audiovisual sector as well as its major role as a vector of culture. The second is the Cultural Industries Support Programme, which will provide support to cultural actors. Its funding-level is over €6 million under the 9th EDF. ■

Food insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa: the quest for durable solutions

by Sarah Karinge, Vrije Universiteit Brussel

Frequent cases of famine in many parts of sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) have prompted various stakeholders to place food and nutrition security at the helm of the African development agenda. But solving food insecurity requires multiple, integrated and holistic approaches, political will and concerted efforts by national governments and their development partners.

In the year 2000, world leaders made a commitment to address global poverty and pledged to work in unison to ensure the accomplishment of eight development targets, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 (UNDP 2000)¹. The hunger and malnutrition concern is reflected in the first MDG whose objective is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger and to halve the proportion of people living on less than a dollar per day. Data from the World Health Organization (WHO) suggest that diseases associated with hunger and malnutrition have claimed more lives than natural disasters and communicable killer diseases such as HIV/ Aids, malaria and tuberculosis (WHO 2002², 2003³). Despite an overall global expansion in food production and food security, 86 countries in the world (43 of them in Africa) fall under the category of low income and food-deficient nations. The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that approximately 186 million people in Africa suffer from hunger and that 15 to 45 percent of African children are stunted (FAO 2003)⁴. Therefore, ensuring food security is one of the greatest challenges in SSA.

Although famine is usually associated with natural

causes such as drought, crop failure, and pestilence, experiences in Africa indicate that human error, conflict and insecurity have exacerbated the food shortage situation. Poverty has also been a leading cause of food inaccessibility. For example, food insecurity is most severe where poverty is rampant especially in rural areas where almost 90% of the people derive their livelihoods from farming activities.

On average, agriculture in SSA accounts for 70% percent of employment, 40% of exports, and 33% of the gross domestic product (FAO 2003)⁴. Therefore, the quest for long-term solutions to food security involves approaches that enhance food production, guarantee the supply of adequate and nutritious food and augment incomes. The basic components of such strategies include:

1. Guided policies and strong institutions supported by competent human resources to direct the process of reversing the poor performance in agricultural and rural development sectors;
2. Interventions to enrich and conserve soils and government interventions to make fertilizers more affordable to farmers;
3. Land irrigation projects that can provide regular water supply for farming and consumption by both people and animals;
4. Capacity building efforts to enable farmers to maximize yields by producing more food on less land space;
5. Increased investment in agricultural research to address problems of pre and post harvest pests, diseases, parasites, fungi, and viruses that affect crops;
6. Investments in technology that can facilitate the development of food crops that can resist drought, grow faster, and produce high yields of nutritious value;

7. Post harvest initiatives: good storage methods; value addition to prolong the shelf life of products and to make food distribution versatile;

8. Education; extension services; healthcare; livestock restocking; and provision of seeds;

9. Adoption of traditional farming approaches such as intercropping in order to minimize risk in case of total crop failure, and to control soil erosion and weeds;

10. Security enhancing initiatives through democratic and conflict resolving processes: – “*No famine has ever taken place in the history of the world in a functioning democracy*” (Sen 1999)⁵. Though based on India's experiences, Sen's arguments in relation to Africa apply. Along with Sen, Nobel laureate Prof Wangaari Maathai asserts that conflict is normally caused by fights over resources.

The proposed interventions should involve a communication dimension to support the strategies and to reinforce impact. ■

This article represents the author's free point of view. Its publication does not imply neither direct nor indirect agreement, approval or support from the European Commission.

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2. WHO (2002). World Health Report 2002: Reducing Risks to Health, Promoting Healthy Life. Geneva: WHO.
3. WHO (2003). World Health Report 2003: Shaping the Future. Geneva: WHO.
4. FAO (2003). The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2003: monitoring progress towards the World Food Summit and Millennium Development Goals. Rome: FAO.
5. Sen, Amartya (1999). Development as Freedom. Oxford: OUP.

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Picture of the month

It is impossible to imagine stable development in a country, split by the roots and the traditions of its people. And a dust sunny road is as good a venue as any to dance and perform, during a break from work and still in working clothes. Culture is in the DNA of all peoples and it cannot be changed, even in the era of globalization. Indeed, this could be the right moment to spotlight cultural roots.

That's why European support to culture is becoming, more and more, an important aspect of development policy. Not only focused on supporting universities and schools, not just related to folkloric traditions, but mainly aimed at sustaining the growth of the creative industry: cinema, television, arts, fashion, software invention, literature and so on.

This is the new frontier of development policy.



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