

Sustainable Farm Management

The Government of The Gambia's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP), the National Medium-Term Investment Programme (NMTIP 2005), the Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy (ANRP) and the Gambia National Agricultural Investment Programme (GNAIP) provides the basis for the development of national and regional programmes to overcome the challenges that constrain the development of agriculture in The Gambia. The challenges are clearly interdependent and require a concerted action. The GNAIP combines policy, institutional, infrastructure and technology related measures to address the multiplicity of supply-side constraints to enhance the growth potential of The Gambia's agriculture. The GNAIP would integrate on-going programmes and projects into this framework and take on the role of a national programme for food security. The overall objective of the GNAIP is to increase the agriculture sector's contribution to the national economy by increasing productivity through commercialization and active private sector participation predicated on a sound national macroeconomic framework aimed at enhanced growth and poverty reduction. The programme will facilitate and strengthen the productive capacities of small and medium scale farmers to create enabling environment to promote large scale farming and development of agribusiness, and facilitate access to markets and value addition for a selected range of commodities such as rice, livestock, groundnuts, millet, sesame, cashew, fish and horticulture. A key performance indicator is an increase in agriculture sector growth from its current estimated 26% to 60% per annum by 2015 to enhance the incomes and food security status of the producers.

The GNAIP focuses on the following key programmes:

1. Improvement of water management
2. Improved management of other shared resources
3. Development of agricultural chains and market promotion
4. Prevention and management of food crises and other natural disasters
- 5. Sustainable farm management**
6. Institutional capacity building for programme implementation

Outcomes and Objectives

The overall objective of the Sustainable Farm Management program is to improve productivity of farms, especially that of small holders through enhanced soil fertility maintenance, appropriate farming and cropping practices and a reliable and controlled water management system. Particular attention will be paid to facilitation of smallholder farmers, especially the most vulnerable group (female) farmers through credit schemes and cash for investment, extension information and services, farmers' capacity in terms of knowledge and organization to manage and maintain soil fertility, land tenure security and improved infrastructure.

Estimated cost

The total cost of the program is estimated at US\$ 22, 230, 000.

SUB-PROGRAMMES

I. INTEGRATED SOIL FERTILITY MANAGEMENT

Objective: To increase the land area under improved soil fertility management by making available management options appropriate to the different farm situation.

Activities:

- i) Multiple tree pure stand and farm boundary planting;
- ii) Crop residue and compost management;
- iii) Faidherbia (Acacia) albida parkland technology for soil fertility improvement;
- iv) Native tree and shrub biomass management for soil fertility improvement;
- v) Integrated watershed management;
- vi) Liming and use of Phosphogypsum;
- vii) Judicious use of inorganic fertilizers.

2. CAPACITY BUILDING OF REGIONAL FARMER SUPPORT SERVICES

Objective: Creating transparent, democratic and self-manageable community based organizations, with emphasis on the poor and women. Building the capacities of community based farmers groups and organizations to plan, implement and monitor the program on their own and developing self-confidence among farmers in improving the quality of their farms improvement action. The focus on capacity building at all levels, participation of the communities in their own farm development, and the firm resolve to work with households, farmer organizations, government and NGOs should form the cornerstones of this approach.

Activities:

- i) Institution building (for sustainable farm development);
- ii) Natural resource management;
- iii) Farm productivity enhancement;
- iv) Enterprise promotion;
- v) Gender equity;
- vi) Monitoring and evaluation;
- vii) Research and documentation.

Table 1 – Indicative budget for programme 5: Sustainable Farm Management

SUB-PROGRAMMES	TOTAL US\$	Estimated Government Contribution	Current Estimated Gap
1. Sustainable farm development	11,330,000	1,133,000	10,197,000
2. Land resources survey	5,000,000	500,000	4,500,000
3. Development of soil use and management policy	400,000	40,000	360,000
4. Strengthening the institutions and departments involved in agricultural data collection and management	1,500,000	150,000	1,350,000
5. Research and development in soil and water management	2,500,000	250,000	2,250,000
6. Biological innovation	1,500,000	150,000	1,350,000
Programme Total	22,230,000	2,223,000	20,007,000