EU policy framework to assist developing countries in addressing food security challenges

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The Commission presents its first biennial report on the Implementation Plan for Food and Nutrition Security. The report looks at how the disbursements and specific interventions made in 2012 aligned with the six policy priorities in the Plan and how the EU and its Member States adhered to the principles of coherence, complementarity and coordination in addressing these priorities.

The main findings of the report may be summarised as follows :

Overall figures: EU donors invested almost EUR 3.4 billion in food and nutrition security in 2012, corresponding to approximately 8% of their total official development assistance (ODA). Interventions were split among 2500 programmes and covered more than 115 countries. The majority of interventions (approximately 65%) operated at country level. Geographically, Africa was the largest recipient of funds in 2012, receiving 43% of total contributions. In Africa, Member States focused their support on specific countries, while the EU had a broader geographical spread.

Distribution of disbursements: more than half of all the funds disbursed in 2012 (EUR 2 billion, approximately 60% of the total) were allocated to Priority 1, demonstrating that improving smallholder resilience and rural livelihoods was an important objective of combined EU assistance. Some 1560 programmes in more than 100 countries were funded. Priority 1 was followed by Priority 5 (Enhance nutrition) which received 14%, and Priority 2 (Support effective governance) at 12%.

Coordination, complementarity and coherence (3Cs):

- With 44 countries supported by more than five EU donors, **coordination plays an important rol**e in ensuring EU aid effectiveness at country level, with the EU aligning with the food and nutrition security strategies and agricultural investment plans of partner countries. Existing structures, such as sector working groups (which are often not limited to only EU donors), are regarded as key mechanisms.

- The EU's **joint programming contributes significantly to EU and its Member States' complementarity and synergies**. Since 2011, joint programming processes have been started in approximately 20 partner countries, although in each country the process is at a different stage. An example of joint programming by the EU and its Member States is the development of an EU+ Road Map for nutrition in Ethiopia.

- Actions falling under the six priorities have been reported to be **consistent** with partner countries' strategies. **Coordination within the EIARD platform** fosters joint policies and strategies in Europe and also helps build coherence, coordination and complementarity. These formal and informal arrangements also serve to coordinate EU donors' participation in international fora and initiatives. This includes the UN General Assembly, Human Rights Council, CFS, the SUN Movement, the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), G8 and G20.

The report notes the **following findings**:

- **There may be opportunities for EU donors to operate more efficiently**: 68 partner countries received less than EUR 3 million on average per donor. Average payment size is EUR 1.34

million. This is most striking in Central America, where four countries are supported by four or more donors with an average amount per donor of less than EUR 2.2 million. EU donors need to continue to improve their division of labour, under partner countries' leadership of course.

- **Demand-led research, extension and innovation needs more attention**, both in terms of increased investments in accordance with 2010 commitments and, in particular, to ensure the translation of results into action on the ground so as to maximise impact.

- **EU donors' coordination at country level should move beyond information sharing**. Coordination mechanisms have been particularly successful at global, continental and regional levels, as shown by the EIARD experience and in West Africa by the ECOWAP coordination mechanism for development partners. However, at country level there is scope for improvement by taking coordination beyond information sharing for greater coherence, complementarity and lesson sharing.

- In partner countries, there is a **potential for more dialogue with farmers' organisations, local and international NGOs and the private sector**, especially regarding national programme formulation and implementation. This should be pursued in all our partner countries. A case study carried out in Ethiopia demonstrated that the joint European contribution to addressing food and nutrition security was very relevant in terms of policy development and investments.

- **Joint programming in relation to food and nutrition security needs to be strengthened**. This can also lead to more joint result-based frameworks, monitoring and evaluation, including at community level.

Lastly, the Commission stresses that the methodology used to develop this report will be improved. The next report will deal with selected topics and policy priorities, and put more emphasis on results/impacts. It will also be illustrated by case studies undertaken with partners and with Member States.