



THE GAMBIA

August 2006

NOTE ON OPERATIONS AGAINST THE DESERT LOCUST

1. Funding and state of execution of the ECLO programme

- Two national and six regional Desert Locust control projects provided assistance to The Gambia. These projects were funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Spain and FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP). All projects were completed except one IFAD funded project, that will come to an end at the end of 2006..
- The total budget allocation for these projects amounted to US\$568 388. As of August 2006, an assistance worth US\$561 560 has been received by The Gambia (99 percent of the total amount).

2. Assistance provided by FAO since 2004

- **Technical assistance:** An FAO international locust consultant, based at the Emergency Coordination Unit in Dakar, visited The Gambia from 13 to 27 December 2004 to assist in the planning of possible locust control operations. Another international consultant undertook a mission from 26 January to 9 February 2005 to assess the locust situation and assist in the management of locust operations. Both international consultants were assisted by a national consultant (the national coordinator), recruited by FAO from September 2004 to February 2005, and by three other national consultants, hired one month each as logistician counterparts during the time of aerial spraying. Another international consultant visited the country from 21 to 27 May 2005 to follow up on the national training session on Desert Locust management. Lastly, an international consultant undertook a mission from 26 March to 2 April 2006 to provide assistance in the use of communication equipment. The funds spent and committed for human resources in The Gambia are US\$59 020.

The Gambia will need technical assistance to develop an inventory system for the locust equipment and material received, to assist in the repair of spray equipment, and to train warehouse managers and others in the calibration of spray equipment.

- **Aircraft:** A Turbo Thrush aircraft carried out spraying operations from 17 December 2004 to mid-February 2005. A total amount of US\$186 048 was spent on flying hours in The Gambia.
- **Equipment:** Five vehicles and ten motorcycles were provided to The Gambia (for a value of US\$126 500) as well as communication and positioning equipment (US\$65 540) and protective clothing (US\$6 703).

In accordance with the action plan for the 2005 campaign, reviewed at the Contingency Planning Meeting in Bamako, Mali, additional equipment has been procured, including one maintenance kit for vehicles (16 000 USD), six entomological kits (4 883 USD), six camping kits (5 589 USD), oil sensitive paper and one radio (2 639 USD). Other equipment for the QUEST teams worth 15 300 USD have been procured as well.

- **Training:** in early 2005, FAO initiated a three-stage (regional and national) training-of-trainers programme on Desert Locust management for ten Sahelian countries and Djibouti. Following the regional session held in Niger from 14 March to 5 April 2005, the national trainee from The Gambia organized three national training workshops for a total of 30 participants, from 23 May to 10 June 2005. The knowledge of the newly trained staff was later assessed during a specific session.
- **Protection of human health and the environment:** In accordance with the environmental and health monitoring programme set up by FAO, a formation was organized for the national QUEST team (Quality and Environment Survey) from 27 February to 3 March 2006. It included an introduction to the bio-ecology of the Desert Locust, information on the risks associated with control operations (in particular regarding sensitive non-target fauna, toxicity, and pesticide management), training in the use of GPS and other field exercises.

In addition, representative of The Gambia participated in a regional workshop on the management of empty pesticide containers and remaining pesticide stocks, which was organized by FAO in Mauritania, from 2 to 5 August 2005, to the benefit of 14 countries. Information was exchanged on the impact of pesticides on human health and the environment and the dangers of domestic use of empty pesticide containers. A demonstration was made on the use of a drum-crusher for washing and crushing empty pesticide containers to allow recycling of drums. Participants established a regional strategy for better management of pesticide stocks and empty pesticide containers.

In addition, a representative from The Gambia attended the Regional Workshop for the Development of a Strategy to Avoid the Creation of Obsolete Pesticides Stocks held in Bamako on 15-18 May 2006.