



THE GAMBIA

21 March 2005

COUNTRY BRIEF

Funding

- There is one national and seven regional Desert Locust control projects in The Gambia. These projects are financed by FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, Greece and Spain.
- The total budget allocation for these projects in US\$588 888. So far, FAO has mobilized US\$517 520.
- The remaining funds will be mobilized for survey and control operations planned for the 2005 Desert Locust campaign.

FAO assistance

- **Human resources:** An FAO locust consultant, based at the Regional Emergency Coordination Unit in Dakar, visited The Gambia on 13 - 27 December 2004 to help plan possible locust control operations. Another consultant visited The Gambia from 26 January to 5 February 2005 to assess the locust situation and assist in the management of locust operations. The budget allocation for human resources in The Gambia is US\$40 430.
- **Aircraft:** A Turbo Thrush started spraying operations on 17 December 2004. The contract was extended until mid-February 2005. The total value of flying hours in The Gambia is US\$267 120.
- **Pesticides:** The budget allocation for pesticides in The Gambia is US\$14 851. So far, FAO has not committed funds for pesticides in The Gambia.
- **Equipment:** FAO has committed US\$107 000 for vehicles, US\$51 906 for communications equipment and US\$4 249 for protective clothing

Training programme

1. National and regional training in Desert Locust management

FAO's Desert Locust Control Committee approved a two-stage (regional and national) training programme during its Extraordinary Session in Rome (29 November – 2 December 2004). Ten countries will take part – the so-called frontline countries (Mauritania, Mali, Niger and Chad), neighbouring countries (Burkina Faso, Cape Verde and Senegal) and the Southern Circuit countries (The Gambia, Guinea and Guinea Bissau).

Stage one – Training of trainers (regional)

The regional training started in mid-March and lasts for three weeks and a half. It is hosted by the ICRISAT (*International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics*) Centre in Niamey, Niger. It is being conducted in French and led by international and regional experts. Twenty-one trainees are taking part – three from each of Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal and one from each of Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Djibouti).

The main themes of the regional training are:

- The bio-ecology of Desert Locust and its population dynamics;
- Survey and information management;
- Desert Locust control : pesticides and spraying equipment;
- Eco-toxicity and mitigation of risks to human health and the environment;
- Managing control campaigns as well as the best way to transfer Desert Locust knowledge.

At the end of the training, each participant will have to present a plan of action to implement in its own country.

Stage two – national training

Having returned in The Gambia, the trainee, become trainer, will be responsible for organizing three national training workshops for a total of 30 participants. These thematic training sessions must be completed before the start of the 2005 campaign, i.e. July 2005. The newly trained national trainer will be assisted by international consultants with expertise in the thematic areas covered during the regional training.

2. Environment

A regional training session on reducing the risk of control operations to human health and the environment will take place in Mauritania (13-23 April 2005). This workshop will be hosted in Akjoujt, at the training and research centre of the Desert Locust Unit. This training session is aimed at trainee doctors and nurses, environmental workers and technicians working in locust control operations in West Africa. They will use the knowledge gained in their own countries.

The organisations involved in this training session include the Dakar-based Fondation CERES-Locustox (specialized in the effects of pesticides on human health and the environment), le Centre de lutte antiacridienne (CLAA) in Mauritania and FAO's Emergency Centre for Locust Operations.