



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION ABUJA

PRESS RELEASE

Australia provides a further \$50 million for food security in Africa: The Gambia a major beneficiary

6 July 2012 – Australia will commit a further \$50 million to the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) to address hunger and poverty, with The Gambia destined to be a major beneficiary of GAFSP, receiving \$28 million.

Australia's contribution to GAFSP aims to increase agricultural productivity, nutrition and income generation of more than 7.5 million people, most of whom are concentrated in Africa.

In the latest round of GAFSP grants, six countries – five of them in Africa – will receive funding totalling \$177 million. The new grants awarded to The Gambia, Senegal, Burundi, Kyrgyz Republic, Malawi and Tanzania will help each country increase food security, raise rural incomes and reduce poverty.

The Gambia will receive a grant of \$28 million to target three highly food-insecure regions through an integrated area development program that includes land and water management, horticultural gardens, aquaculture farming, and small ruminant and poultry farming.

“Australia is committed to working with our partners to achieve sustainable, lasting solutions to hunger and poverty. This grant will allow the scaling up and expansion of proven initiatives and best practices to boost household food security and nutritional levels, increase levels of sustainable production and productivity, and strengthen smallholder agricultural competitiveness”, said the Australian High Commissioner to The Gambia HE Ian McConville.

“The program has already achieved significant results in West Africa, with existing programs in Niger, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Togo.”

Nominated as the new Chair of the GAFSP Steering Committee, Australia will work to improve the responsiveness of the fund, encourage quality proposals and attract more donors. Australia has previously contributed \$50 million to the GAFSP, making Australia the fifth largest donor to the program. Launched in April 2010, GAFSP represents a global effort to aid vulnerable populations afflicted by hunger and poverty. It follows and builds on emergency and recovery assistance, targeting transformative and lasting change in agriculture and food security.

To date a total of \$1.1 billion has been pledged to GAFSP by Australia, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and other country donors. Funding is allocated to countries that have innovative and credible plans already in place to improve agricultural productivity and food security.

The program complements Australia's broader food security support across West Africa, including a four-year \$15 million partnership with the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF\WECARD), and capacity building support through Australia Awards (scholarships) and study tours in Australia.

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