FROM SUBSISTENCE TO ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Strategic policy note
‘Agriculture and Food Security’
for the Belgian Development Cooperation
**SUMMARY**

The Belgian development cooperation aims to stimulate sustainable entrepreneurship throughout the entire agri-food chain and therefore improve food security in order to help achieve SDG 2. The strategy of the Belgian development cooperation is based on two policy priorities, specifically sustainable and inclusive economic growth, and a human rights-based approach. Farmers are crucial in their role as entrepreneurs within society, and their capabilities should be reinforced.

This is addressed in three fields of action, namely
- fostering the participation of farmers in markets and value chains,
- contributing to good governance and
- supporting research and innovation.

The three cross-cutting themes which will form the central thread are
- nutrition,
- gender equality and women’s empowerment and
- sustainable agriculture.

* With the support of the Flemish Interuniversity Council, University Development Co-operation (VLIR-UOS).
** With thanks to Carol Durieux and Patrick Hollebosch for specific input regarding nutrition and the results frameworks respectively. Many thanks also to colleagues from DGD, DGE and the Posts for their valuable input.
In September 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted by the UN General Assembly with the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development (Agenda 2030). Over the next 15 years, 17 SDGs, linked to 169 targets, must form an action plan to end all forms of poverty and put the planet on the path to sustainability. These goals, which are one and indivisible, reflect the three dimensions of sustainable development, namely economic, social and ecological sustainability.

Sustainable agriculture and food security are central themes in Agenda 2030. SDG 2 ‘zero hunger’ is the most obvious objective around which this note has been elaborated. In addition, sustainable agriculture and food security are vital in order to achieve SDG 1 ‘no poverty’, SDG 3 ‘good health and well-being’, SDG 5 ‘gender equality’, SDG 8 ‘decent work and economic growth’, SDG 10 ‘reduced inequalities’, SDG 11 ‘sustainable cities and communities’, SDG 12 ‘responsible consumption and production’, SDG 13 ‘climate action’, SDG 14 ‘life below water’, SDG 15 ‘life on land’ and SDG 16 ‘peace, justice and strong institutions’. A strategic targeting of agriculture and food security is therefore a catalyst for achieving the various SDGs. Moreover, this strategy also promotes SDG 17 ‘partnership for the goals’.

The 12 partner countries of the Belgian international cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) together account for 325 million inhabitants (2016). By 2030, it is expected that there will be an additional 125 million people in these countries, and by 2050, the figure will even rise to 470 million additional people. It is expected that 64% of the African population will live in cities by 2050. At the same time, more than 1 in 3 children under the age of 5 in our partner countries receive too little food, or food with too little variety. This results in irreparable physical and mental damage among these children. Finally, we need to take climate change into account, which will result in less rainfall, more droughts and flooding, and a decrease in biodiversity.

Finding a solution to the challenges outlined above is no easy task. In any event, it is evident that the agricultural model which is primarily focused on the production of food for individual families, without them being able to sell products within their community or beyond, will not provide a solution to the challenges outlined above. That is why a transition is necessary from a model of subsistence farming to one of entrepreneurial farming. This takes account of the fact that agriculture is an economic sector unlike any other, it is a sector which has a direct impact on the stability of a country, public health, climate, gender equality and poverty reduction.

The strategy of the Belgian development cooperation is based on two policy priorities, specifically sustainable and inclusive economic growth and a human rights-based approach. Applied to the new agricultural strategy, this means that farmers will be crucial in their role as entrepreneurs within society, and their capabilities should be reinforced. The focus here is on:

- Promoting farmers’ participation in local, regional and international markets and value chains;
- Contributing to good governance;
- Supporting research and innovation which must result in increased resilience among rural entrepreneurs.

In this respect, special focus will be placed on the role of women in the rural economy. It has been proven that reducing gender inequality is one of the best methods to promote food security and reduce rural poverty. Finally, the use of digital technology offers an enormous opportunity in the pursuit of rural development and food security. In line with the D4D strategic policy note, the Belgian development cooperation will integrate digital applications in agricultural and food security interventions.

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1 Benn, Burkina Faso, Benin, DR Congo, Guinea, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Uganda, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania (Decision of the Federal Council of Ministers of 21 May 2015).
3 This damage includes stunting.
5 Special attention will be given to women in remote rural areas. Research suggests that female agricultural entrepreneurs who incorporate new technologies often earn more money, and consequently become financially independent. It has also been shown that women will use these additional resources strategically for food security and quality food, education and health of the children. Source: OECD (2012). Poverty Reduction and Pro-Poor Growth: The Role of Empowerment.
be funded by bilateral, multilateral and non-governmental intervention channels (more information in annex). Consequently, this note serves as a guide to Belgium’s positioning with respect to the strategic choices of these organisations. Finally, the note can be consulted as a source of information for our partner countries regarding the spheres in which the Belgian cooperation can provide special expertise. This note is based on broad consultation with the parties involved in this field.

Between 2012 and 2016, five programmes were set up and conducted within the now defunct Belgian Fund for Food Security. Within these programmes, diverse expertise was bundled in one integrated programme approach. The dissolution of the Belgian Fund for Food Security on 1 January 2017 was an opportunity to incorporate the Belgian international cooperation for agriculture and food security into the broader framework of our programmes. During the drafting and implementation of future interventions in the area of agriculture and food security, the lessons learned in the past, including the importance of an integrated and multi-disciplinary policy, will be capitalised on and incorporated.

### Table 1: Contribution of Belgian ODA to agriculture and food security

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<tr>
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<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount spent in € million on agriculture and food security</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage spent on agriculture and food security*</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
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*Calculated as a percentage of the total ODA

### FIELDS OF ACTION

#### FIELD OF ACTION 1

**Fostering the participation of farmers in local, regional and international markets and value chains**

Agriculture accounts for 60% of total employment in the least developed countries on average, and 25% of the added value. Growth in the agricultural sector contributes 2 to 4 times more to poverty reduction than in other sectors. No poverty (SDG1) and Zero hunger (SDG2) are therefore inextricably linked.

Fostering the participation of farmers in value chains is only possible when the prerequisites are met, for example an inclusive and entrepreneur-friendly climate (see Field of action 2). At the same time, farmers need to be productive and resilient to be able to sustainably participate in the market mechanism.

However, when it comes to agricultural productivity, SSA continues to lag behind. Improving productivity is therefore vitally important in reducing poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa. A sustainable improvement in productivity can be achieved by raising land, capital and/or labour productivity, a more efficient use of the means of production and seeds and/or the application of new technologies and innovation (see also Field of action 3). Productivity improvements are therefore only meaningful if the farmer is able to sell his or her products.

**DIFFERENTIATED APPROACH**

No one size fits all plan is applicable to all agricultural and food systems. The development of the agricultural sector requires a differentiated approach which is adapted to the (1) various categories of farmers, (2) diverse geographical and agroclimatic zones and types of value chains. A group of agricultural experts has developed a conceptual model which is based on acclaimed scientific research and is applicable in the agricultural sector in the lowest income countries. The model is briefly discussed below.

(1) Figure 1 shows an average scale of agricultural companies in low income countries. Only a small proportion (15%) of the agricultural companies have been developed into viable businesses. This group of small and large-scale businesses is responsible for the lion’s share of food production, and they participate in international value chains. However the majority of farmers are situated in the third and fourth category. Approximately 30% to 40% of the (often family) agricultural businesses have the potential to be commercial, but have to contend with a number of barriers which could possibly be overcome by intervention. The fourth category of farmers (30%-50%) is primarily engaged in subsistence farming and have less potential to develop into viable agricultural businesses. With the right support, some of these farmers could make the transition to a sustainable participation in local, regional or international value chains. Like the last category of landless farmers, some of these farmers will receive a salary as wage-earners in local agricultural companies, or will be employed outside the agricultural sector.

#### Source


7 Emmanuelle Béguin (DfID Advisor on Agriculture and Food Security), Chris Penrose Buckley (DfID), Cornelius Chikwana (DfID with input from Derek Headley (IFPRI), Shengnan Fan (IFPRI), Steve Wiggins (ODI) based on research by Paul Callar (University of Oxford), Stefan Decon (University of Oxford), Christopher Barrett (Cornell University), Thomas Reardon (Michigan State University) et al.


9 Barriers include, for example, a lack of well developed input markets, a poor road network, a shortage of storage space, a lack of agricultural business knowledge and expertise.


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Large-scale commercial farms (2) - which often have limited access to private investment, remote areas can be the least favourably situated, with substantial distances to markets, a lack of infrastructure and often low productivity. Remote areas are the areas with strong potential, but, hitherto, low international value chains. Dynamic zones are primarily situated around large, rapidly expanding cities with strong links between the rural, economic activities outside the agricultural sector and the capital-intensive involvement in agricultural development. The intermediary zones are the ‘missing middle’, with strong agroclimatic potential but, hitherto, low agricultural transformation due to the greater distances to the (larger) cities. Remote areas are the least favourably situated, with substantial distances to markets, a lack of infrastructure and often low productivity. Agricultural transformation will primarily take place in the dynamic and intermediary areas.

Figure 1: Average scale of agricultural companies in low income countries (DFID, 2015)¹¹

The transformation of food systems will only take place if the development of the value chain is fostered as an effective response to market demand, and if small-scale farmers can take part in this process in a sustainable and viable manner. Belgian interventions intended to stimulate value chain development primarily need to pay attention to linking potentially commercial agricultural businesses in intermediary areas to local, regional or international value chains. Indeed, these are the areas with strong potential, but limited access to private investment.

The following aspects need to be taken into account:

- the Belgian international cooperation needs to strategically focus on value chains which help small-scale and poor farmers with commercial potential¹²;
- the economic, social and ecological sustainability of the value chains needs to be assessed;
- there is no optimal size in order for an agricultural company to be profitable.¹³ Moreover, the majority of small-scale farmers are family farmers at the present time.

HOW CAN THE BELGIAN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION CONTRIBUTE?

- The Belgian development cooperation will focus on fostering the participation of farmers - in particular women and young people - in sustainable value chain development by specifically targeting (A) improved agricultural productivity and (B) the participation of farmers in other activities in the chain such as processing, storage, marketing and distribution.

- In particular, focus will be given to strengthening: (1) innovative value chain financing; (2) adequate information flow within the chain; (3) robust partnerships and contracts; (4) technical training with regards to agricultural-technical aspects, but also with regards to company management and marketing and (5) raising the quality of agricultural products.

12 Various institutional arrangements are possible in this respect: (a) vertical coordination whereby actors at different levels of the value chains cooperate and/or (b) horizontal coordination whereby farmers coordinate their efforts in terms of production or supply at the same level within the value chain.

13 Scientific literature suggests that various factors play a role in the pursuit of business viability, specifically ownership of moveable goods, distance to the market, organisational capacity, the type of value chain and the agroclimatic potential. The existence of very small (<0.5 ha) profitable agricultural businesses in China demonstrates that the size of an agricultural company is not an indicator of its commercial potential. Source: Reardon (2013). Asia Agrifood System’s 5 Linked Transformations: Implications for Agricultural Research and Development Strategies.

- The processing industry is an important part of the value chain. Belgium will focus on this area via external support, for example via BIO. This approach will work towards increased purchases of local produce and more jobs, which is necessary to offer employment opportunities to the numerous young people in rural areas.

- The Belgian development cooperation will actively contribute towards policy discussions regarding this field of action and will consequently work together with BTC¹⁴, BIO, UN agencies, CGIAR, knowledge institutions, civil society and the private sector at the local, regional and international level. Existing international initiatives and guidelines will be incorporated, including the ‘OECD FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains’ (2016).

- Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development will be actively pursued. Regional trade will be fostered, inter alia, by providing European market access through European Partnership Agreements (EPA), with consideration for the asymmetrical character of these agreements. The Belgian development cooperation will also continue to monitor the effects of the EU Common Agricultural Policy and changes in the policy of the World Trade Organisation with regards to low income countries.


¹² The presence of BTC staff in the Belgian posts will make a positive contribution in this respect.
FIELD OF ACTION 2
Contributing to good governance

Developing the agricultural sector is one of the most efficient methods of combating food insecurity and poverty. Nonetheless, good governance is a prerequisite for achieving the necessary inclusive and sustainable growth. Unfortunately, agriculture-based societies are often characterised by a poor record in the area of good governance (minimal control of corruption, minimal legal security, limited political stability, etc.). Moreover, agricultural institutions in these areas are often weaker in comparison with institutions in other sectors.15 Building state capacity, supporting civil society and cooperating with the private sector are therefore extremely important aspects in many of our partner countries.

Taking into account the human rights-based approach, the challenges primarily include insufficiently inclusive governance, and a lack of social cohesion. The human rights-based approach implies that underdevelopment is acknowledged as being a problem of unbalanced power relations, in a context of right holders and duty bearers. In this sense, the Belgian development cooperation will focus on strengthening the capacity of duty bearers and fostering the (empowerment) of right holders.

HOW CAN THE BELGIAN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION CONTRIBUTE?

Through support for the central and local governments:

Every government has a facilitating, coordinating and regulatory role to play in developing an optimised agricultural and investment policy which meets the expectations and specific needs of the various groups of beneficiaries, and of the private sector.16 The government is also presumed to adequately monitor the implementation of policy measures, and adjust them where necessary. A government can also play an active role in strengthening the mechanisms for consultation and coordination between the various actors of the value chain.

- The Belgian cooperation will urge governments bilaterally and via specific multilateral forums, to (1) Create and sustain a national and local policy environment which fosters (sustainable) entrepreneurship throughout the entire agro-food chain and (2) protect rights, which will result in sustainable increases in productivity. Specific focus must be given to:
  1. Supporting legislation regarding the use of pesticides, food safety, etc.;
  2. Assisting governments to facilitate value chain development and - where possible - certification procedures;
  3. Investing in agriculture’s position in the education system, and especially in the quality of agricultural training,

in which not only agricultural aspects must be covered, but also economic, social and ecological dimensions.17

- Land rights, sound land management and certainty of land use remain important challenges - in particular for women - throughout the entire African continent. Only 10% of the agrarian land in Africa is registered. Most African countries only have basic legislation regarding land tenure, which in any case is patchy and difficult to enforce legally, deterring private investors. Aspects of the land rights issue (SDG 1.4) are tackled by the CFS (Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security).

- The Belgian cooperation will advocate for the integration of cross-cutting issues such as good nutrition, gender equality and sustainable agriculture in the national and regional agricultural and food security policy of the partner countries, and provide capacity development in these fields.

Through support for civil society:

- Belgium has valuable expertise in supporting the capacity building of agricultural organisations18 (with special focus on women and young people) in order to improve the economic position of farmers and strengthen their knowledge of and influence on national and international policy in the area of agriculture and food security. The support needs to result in more effective service provision for the members and the active and effective participation of these organisations in determining and implementing policy measures.

- More focus needs to be placed on professionalising and expanding entrepreneurship. Agricultural organisations need to provide technical and commercial services to their members democratically and efficiently, in accordance with market demand, whilst also functioning as reliable business partners. As such, specific focus needs to placed on organisational development and market intermediation, technical innovation and the cooperation of these organisations with other actors (such as NGAs, governments, knowledge institutions and/or multilateral institutions).

Through cooperation with the private sector:

- Belgium will facilitate and encourage cooperation between the private sector in the North and the South, as well as with civil society and the public sector in order to jointly propagate and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- The Belgian cooperation will support the private sector and raise awareness regarding responsible agricultural investments: The RAI principles (Responsible Agricultural Investments) were developed by UNCTAD, FAO, IFAD and the WB and were adopted by the CFS in 2014. Implementation began in 2016. The principles could represent an important reference point in discussions regarding


16 At Maputo in 2003, African leaders agreed to spend 10% of their annual budgets on agriculture and rural development. Source: African Union (2003); Maputo declaration on Agriculture and Food Security

17 Source: Coalitie Tegen de Honger (Coalition Against Hunger) (2015). De Rol van Boerenorganisaties in het Bereiken van Voedselzekerheid en de Ondersteuning van deze Organisaties door de Belgische NGO’s (The role of Farmers’ organisations in achieving food security and the support of these organisation by Belgian NGOs). (http://www.coalitietaegendehonger.be/publicaties/de_rol_van_boerenorganisaties_in_het_bereiken_van_voedselzekerheid_en_de_ondersteuning_van_deze_organisaties_door_de_belgische_ngos/)

18 For example, associations, NGOs, syndicates and cooperatives.
private involvement in agricultural development and food security, as well as in developing policy with regards to socially responsible entrepreneurship which respect to rights, livelihoods and natural resources.

**FIELD OF ACTION 3 Supporting research and innovation**

Investments in agricultural research contribute more proportionally to productivity increases and growth in the agricultural sector than other strategic investments such as, for example, irrigation, etc. Agricultural research shows substantial return on investment. For every 1 Euro which is invested in this field every year, the return is at least 17 Euros.\(^19\)

Population growth drives up the demand for food, with the result that more fertile land and water resources are used up. If the technology for food production and integrated programmes are non-existent, this will not be organised efficiently.

Belgian expertise in research and innovation in the area of agriculture and food security is world-class and as well as with the multilateral institution knowledge institutions. Significant focus is also placed on **symbiosis between expertise from the South and the North** through partnerships with local knowledge institutions.

The challenge consists of further developing agricultural research and innovation, with the aim of enabling farmers, in particular women, to provide their families with better nutrition, and increase the **productivity and resilience of agricultural systems**, so that they can contribute to and participate in economic growth, and manage natural resources in the light of climate change and other challenges.

**HOW CAN THE BELGIAN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION CONTRIBUTE?**

- Belgium will invest in **scientific, technological and institutional research and innovation** within the 2 previous fields of action, and will support the overarching themes in this strategic policy note. These investments can be organised via bilateral or multilateral channels, via university cooperation or via delegated cooperation. At the international level, research and innovation is supported via funding from multilateral institutions and the EU. The establishment of **regional and local research and innovation partnerships** will receive substantial support, with a view to strengthening capacity.

- Belgium exchanges **knowledge and hands-on experience** in the area of agriculture and food security via the Agriculture and Food Security Platform (PLVZ), the Entrepreneurship for Development Platform (POVO) and the advisory bodies Gender and Development and Policy Coherence.

- There are various kinds of research and innovation. The Belgian international cooperation will ensure that the most appropriate and cost-effective form is applied, including an **effective distribution of and equal access to** these innovations, knowledge and technology. **The use of digital technology** is strongly encouraged.

- The Belgian development cooperation currently focuses on **policy-supporting research**, via VLIR-UOS and ARES-CCD, in the area of sustainable agriculture and food security via KLIMOS and in the area of innovative funding via Financing for Development. Establishing policy-supporting expertise platforms (in cooperation with multilateral partners) in **value chain development** as well as the way in which partner countries deal with the integration of agriculture and nutrition will be further investigated. A **sustainable transition to development assistance** and the elimination of both cyclical and structural aspects of food insecurity remain a priority for the Belgian development cooperation, and further research is also recommended in this area.\(^23\)

- As a member of the EU, Belgium contributes to the funding of (and Belgian knowledge centres can receive funding from) the EU Horizon 2020 research programmes whereby, among other things, a number of appeals are launched in the area of agro-ecology, organic agriculture, and conservation agriculture.\(^24\) The Belgian cooperation will urge investors to obtain funds via the EU for research and innovation\(^25\) which can be used for rural transformation.
OVERARCHING THEMES

Three overarching themes form the central thread of the Belgian development policy for agriculture and food security. Every Belgian intervention needs to make a positive contribution within at least one of these 3 themes, and cannot under any circumstances represent a step backwards within the themes.

THEME 1 Nutrition

An adequate and balanced diet, combined with regular physical activity, form the basis of good health. Insufficient nutrition leads to vulnerability to illness, reduced physical and mental development, and reduced productivity.

The so-called triple burden of malnutrition affects the following elements, namely energy deficiency (hunger), a lack of micro-nutrients (latent hunger) and excessive net energy intake and unhealthy diet (overweight/obesity). Malnutrition and diet-related illnesses have significant human, economic, fiscal and social costs for individuals, families, communities and nations.

The most vulnerable groups are children younger than 2 years old and pregnant women. Small-scale farmers, and predominantly female farmers, belong to the population groups where malnutrition is most prevalent. Chronic malnutrition, leading to growth retardation in children, is one of the main challenges for development cooperation: it decreases the cognitive development of individuals and undermines countries’ competitiveness.

A more integrated and cross-cutting approach is necessary in the areas of education, healthcare and agricultural policy. The importance of quality nutrition must be reflected inter alia in the choice of crops (based on the quality and diversity of crops), soil quality, and conservation and processing procedures. As such, it is not enough to only increase agricultural production and the availability of agricultural products, multi-sectoral, nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions are also necessary, including interventions in food systems, social protection, health systems, water, and sanitary facilities. Specific social and cultural aspects also need to be taken into account.

The Belgian development cooperation is consequently working towards the following concrete actions:

• Fostering and supporting value chains and businesses which improve the quality of nutrition for vulnerable groups. Where possible, Belgian companies and organisations are involved. Economic viability will need to be demonstrated in the medium to long term;
• Building local capacity and practical expertise with regards to nutrition and the necessary multi-disciplinary functioning, both at the level of local governments and organisations, and at the level of small-scale farmers;
• Fostering innovation and research which helps improve food and diet quality on the ground.

THEME 2 Gender equality and women’s empowerment

Women play a key role in the pursuit of food security, quality nutrition and the increased well-being of families. Indeed, higher incomes among women have a positive effect on the nutrition, health and education of children. Research shows that the education and position of women contributes up to 28% on average to the optimal use of quality nutrition in LDCs.26

In line with SDG 5 ‘Gender equality’, the Belgian development cooperation works towards the empowerment of women, both individually and collectively, to strengthen their socio-economic position. As such, special attention needs to be given to enabling their access to resources and means of production, as well as decision-making ability at all levels (for example, in producer organisations or other decision-making bodies) as specified in SDG 5.5 and 5.a. The Belgian efforts are focused on enabling women, on an equal footing with men, to participate in agricultural development and the accompanying profits. In this way, women can make a worthy contribution to food security and inclusive economic growth.

Attention will also be given to equality in the area of social relations and power relations, both within and outside the family. As such, women often spend a considerable amount of their time engaged in unpaid household activities, leading to an increase in their daily work hours in comparison with men. The workload of female agricultural entrepreneurs therefore exceeds that of men. Households in which the man and the woman plan together are generally the most successful households in terms of food security, quality nutrition and well-being. Moreover, interventions such as improving access to clean water and sanitary facilities, can make a significant contribution towards improving the position and well-being of women and girls in rural areas. An increase in economic activity and expressiveness among women will also have a positive influence on family planning.

In light of the opportunities presented by digital technology, the Belgian development cooperation will give special attention to SDG 5.b: ‘Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women’.27

THEME 3 Sustainable agriculture

Sustainable development is development which answers to the needs of the current generations without hereby endangering the potential for future generations to provide for their needs. In order to be sustainable, development needs to reconcile three important elements: social justice, environmental protection and economic efficiency.

Various sustainable development goals place the focus on sustainable agriculture. In particular, reference can be made to SDG 2.4: By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural


27 More information can be found in the strategic policy note Digital for Development (D4D) of the DGD. (http://diplomatie.belgium.be/sites/default/files/downloads/strate-gienota_d4d.pdf)
practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.

- Worldwide, agriculture is confronted with climate change, degradation of ecosystems with the loss of functional biodiversity, and the depletion of freshwater sources. Guaranteeing food security in Sub-Saharan Africa, in the context of increasing overpopulation, already constitutes a significant challenge, but additional efforts are required to cushion the acute vulnerability of the region to climate change and other environmental problems. The Belgian international cooperation encourages sustainable soil and water management, the fostering of biodiversity and preservation of natural resources and finally climate-smart agriculture, which is focused on transforming agricultural systems, in order to ensure sustainable food security in a changing climate.

- Striving for the ideal balance between environmental, economic and social concerns. Fostering value chains which are ecologically, socially and economically sustainable;

- If the bio-physical circumstances allow, focusing on including climate-smart and/or agro-ecological applications. The economic and social sustainability of these applications must be the priority.

- Active Belgian diplomacy in international forums to ensure that climate funding is deployed efficiently and goes to the countries most in need, specifically the Least Developed Countries who will suffer the most from climate change.

- Supporting an integral landscape approach in which a balance between ecosystems and production systems, and the role of various actors, is taken into account.

MONITORING & EVALUATION

To date, there has not been any substantiated evaluation of the previous strategy for agriculture and food security (2010). It is therefore extremely difficult to draw overarching conclusions from the past. Figure 2 shows the results framework for this new strategy, in accordance with the Agenda for Sustainable Development. An extensive matrix with references to the SDGs will be part of a separate policy note. The Belgian development cooperation will also work towards the development of a monitoring and evaluation plan in which, for each field of action, the relevant results indicators will be further developed in detail and monitored. Focus also needs to be given to the further development of the logical frameworks and theories of change. Finally, the Belgian development cooperation also intends to produce a comprehensive and cross-cutting qualitative and quantitative evaluation of this strategy and its applications in the medium and long term.

Figure 2: Contribution of the fields of action and cross-cutting themes to the Agenda on Sustainable Development

For example, temporal diversification (e.g. crop rotation), spatial spreading (e.g. intercropping, mixed agriculture), diversification applied to various levels including land, farm and landscape, conservation agriculture, integrated crop protection, integrated production types (e.g. mixed systems such as crop-livestock-tree and landscapes). Monocropping must be avoided as much as possible.

30 For example, temporal diversification (e.g. crop rotation), spatial spreading (e.g. intercropping, mixed agriculture), diversification applied to various levels including land, farm and landscape, conservation agriculture, integrated crop protection, integrated production types (e.g. mixed systems such as crop-livestock-tree and landscapes). Monocropping must be avoided as much as possible. Source: FAO (2017). From Uniformity to Diversity. A paradigm shift from industrial agriculture to diversified agro-ecological systems. [http://www.fao.org/climate-smart-agriculture/en/]

31 The main objective of a programme/project should ideally be divided into a number of stages: (1) preparatory stage, in which investments, studies and training is tied in (2) an intensifying stage with attention for ecosystems and socio-economic aspects, and (3) an adaptation stage – after the mid-term evaluation – in which adjustments can be made.
FOOD SECURITY
Since the World Food Summit of 1996, food security has been defined as follows: “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”

On the basis of this definition, the FAO focuses food security around these four pillars:

- **Food availability**: The availability of sufficient quantities of food of appropriate quality, supplied through domestic production or imports (including food aid).
- **Food access**: Access by individuals to adequate entitlements for acquiring appropriate foods for a nutritious diet. Entitlements are defined as the set of all commodity bundles over which a person can establish command given the legal, political, economic and social arrangements of the community in which he or she lives (including certain traditional rights such as access to common resources).
- **Utilisation**: Utilisation of food through adequate diet, clean water, sanitation and healthcare to reach a state of nutritional well-being where all physiological needs are met. This highlights the importance of non-food parameters in food security.
- **Stability**: To be food secure, a population, household or individual must have access to adequate food at all times. He or she should not risk losing access to food as a consequence of sudden shocks (e.g., an economic or climatic crisis) or cyclical events (e.g., seasonal food insecurity). The concept of stability can therefore refer to both the availability and access dimensions of food security.

EMPOWERMENT
The Commission on Women and Development defines empowerment as follows: “The empowerment approach as developed by movements from the South is based on a plural approach to power. Empowerment can therefore be considered as the process to acquire ‘power’ individually and collectively. Among individuals or a community, it designates first and foremost the ability to act autonomously, but also the means needed and the process to achieve this capacity to act and make one’s own decisions regarding life and society. Empowerment is thus seen as a process, a dynamic two-pronged construction of identity, both individual and collective.”

INTERVENTION CHANNELS

**BILATERAL COOPERATION**
The Belgian bilateral development cooperation is mainly implemented by the Belgian Technical Cooperation agency (BTC). On 1 January 2018, the reformed Belgian Cooperation agency will be renamed as ‘Enabel’. In the partner countries, BTC mostly works with the technical ministries (Livestock Farming, Agriculture, Fisheries).

The most important areas of intervention concern agricultural development, adding value to agricultural production, and strengthening of capacities of public actors in the implementation of policies regarding agriculture and food security.

**MULTILATERAL COOPERATION**
The main international organizations active in agriculture and food security receiving financial support from Belgium are the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Global Agricultural Research Partnership (CGIAR). As it is the case for the other international organizations supported by the Belgian cooperation, the Belgian voluntary contributions to these organizations are not earmarked, in an effort to increase the effectiveness of aid. Belgium contributes to the definition of the strategic orientations of these organizations.

**NON-GOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION**
Non-governmental organizations and agricultural trade unions have accumulated multiple and varied expertise, particularly as regards the strengthening of the capacities of farmer organizations in the South in a context of sustainable agricultural development, the strengthening of microfinance institutions and also the setting up of inclusive value chains.

Moreover, the universities and the different scientific institutes, some of which are financed through the University Cooperation for Development (CUD) and the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR), have internationally renowned agricultural expertise. The Belgian development cooperation turns to them frequently in the orientation of political and strategic choices as well as for the training of qualified researchers from the partner countries of the Belgian development cooperation.

**ADDITIONAL SOURCE DOCUMENTS**

- Recommendation from the Advisory Council with regards to Policy coherence in fostering Development, dated 14 November 2016.
- General Policy Note International Development dated 6 November 2015 – DOC 54 1428/005

• CGIAR (2014). The push-pull effects of urbanization on agriculture.


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