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JOINT ECA/FAO AGRICULTURE DIVISION

REPORT ON AN ADVISORY MISSION TO  
EQUATORIAL GUINEA ON MEASURES  
FOR STRENGTHENING NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY

ADDIS ABABA

JUNE 1990

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## PURPOSE OF THE MISSION

Following the receipt by ECA of a request from the Government of Equitorial Guinea for advisory service on measures for strengthenen food security in the country, the Joint ECA/FAO Agriculture Division's Regional Adviser in Food and Agricultural Planning undertook a mission to Equitorial Guinea from 9 to 17 April 1990. The purpose of the mission was to assess the nature of the food security problem in the country and propose measures for strengthening the national food security/system.

The request received and the services provided are in conformity with Programme Element 2.1 (i) (b) of the approved United Nations Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (Section 24) for the 1990 - 1991 Biennium which calls for advisory service to member countries on measures for attaining food security.

## MISSION ACTIVITIES

The mission which was coordinated by the Resident Office of the United Nations Development Programme and by the Office of the Secretary General of Agricultural, Livestock, Fisheries and Forestry in Malabo, started by consulting background documentation made available by both offices. Arrangements were then made for the mission to hold discussions with a number of people including: Officials of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Forestry; Officials of the National Committee on Food Security; Project Officers of the several agriculturally related projects in the country; and officials of the international donor and aid community. A list of the people with whom substantial discussions were held is attached to this report as an annex.

## MISSION FINDINGS

Equitorial Guinea is a small country with a total land area of 28,051 km<sup>2</sup> comprising two Islands (Bioko and Annobon) with land areas of 2,017 km<sup>2</sup> and 17 m<sup>2</sup> respectively and a mainland, Rio Muni, with a total land area of 26,017 km<sup>2</sup>. The country has a total population of about 370,000 (294,000 in Rio Muni, 74,000 in Bioko, and 2000 in Annobon.

The present government assumed power in 1979, inheriting an economy which was in a state of near colapse. Today, however, the economy is showing signs of recovery following government's efforts at stabilizing and restructuring the economy. However, while the country has the potential to be self-sufficient in almost all of its food needs, it is now incapable of doing so due to an increasing tendency for dependence on food imports. In order to pay for these increasing levels of food imports, the country is being forced to forego other more essential imports and to cut back on investments including those designed to reduce long run food supply deficits or expand export earnings. The government is quite concerned about the consequences of this situation with regards the economic development and the food security needs of the country.

The productivity of the food and agricultural sector of the country is generally low due largely to its subsistence structure. The marketing sector is also generally subsistence oriented and incapable of supporting a dynamized and modernized agricultural sector.

The main thrust of current government action with regards the transformation of the agricultural sector involves the implementation of a number of agriculturally based development projects. The effectiveness of these projects is however constrained by a number of factors including the following:

1. Lack of effective agricultural marketing chains and channels capable of servicing a dynamized agricultural sector;
2. Non-availability of improved agricultural technologies which are superior to what the majority of the farmers are currently using;
3. Poor infrastructures; and
4. Inadequate agricultural institutions.

These constraints have important implications not only for the successful fulfillment of the government's agricultural development objectives, but also and more importantly for the maintenance of food security. The mission has, therefore made a number of recommendations on how the most vexing of these constraints could be best addressed with donor assistance.

#### MISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

The mission identified three key constraints which must be addressed to strengthen the national food security system in the country. These have to do with improvements in marketing arrangements, agricultural research, and the data base on the food economy.

##### Marketing

The marketing channel and chains along which agricultural products pass from their raw to their finished forms and which represent the succession of points where agricultural products are exchanged, are still operating at a very undeveloped level. Consequently the physical functions of marketing such as assembling or bulking, grading, packaging, transportation, storage and processing and the facilitating functions of marketing such as standardization, financing, risk bearing and the provision of market information, are either not being performed at all or being performed very poorly. The mission therefore recommends that the government improves this situation by encouraging the evolution of a cadre of Equatorial Guinea traders who would be capable of performing, the physical, facilitating, and exchange functions of agricultural marketing effectively and efficiently. An action plan and a proposal to accomplish this task is being submitted to the government.

### Agricultural Research

The transition of agricultural markets in the country from their current subsistence and unorganized form into a new status involving commercialization, monetization, and market development would need to be also accompanied by another transition of the country's farmers from cultivating purely for home consumption to cultivating for income purposes in a new environment characterized by efficient input and product markets. For this to happen, the country's peasant farmers would have to move to improved levels of agricultural technologies. The mission therefore recommends the creation of a national agricultural research process in the country consistent with its human and financial resource position. An action plan including a proposal for the development of a national on-farm adaptive research programme is being submitted to the government.

### Agricultural Data Base

Lack of useable information about the food economy at all levels makes it difficult to assess the nature and causes of food insecurity in the country and to plan for food security and for increased access to basic food supplies by the population. There is also a lack of monitoring and evaluation data on the impact of the various food security related projects in the country on the national food security situation. These information are essential for establishing the nature and the causes of food insecurity in the country and for planning for its reduction. The mission therefore recommends that additional efforts to improve the data base on the food economy should be directed at securing higher priority for food security related questions and issues, which would otherwise be ignored or only marginally addressed, in on-going and/or proposed agricultural surveys and statistics projects in the country. An action plan including a proposal for improving the data base on the food economy is being submitted to the government.

ANNEX I

AN ACTION PLAN FOR  
STRENGTHENING NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY  
IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA

ADDIS ABABA

JUNE 1990

A POLICY AND ACTION PLAN FOR  
STRENGTHENING NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY  
IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA

I. INTRODUCTION

Background

Equatorial Guinea comprises a mainland territory, Rio Muni, bordered to the north by the Republic of Cameroon and to the east and south by the Republic of Gabon, as well as the islands of Bioko and Annobon in the Gulf of Guinea. The total land area of the country is 28,051 km<sup>2</sup> made up by an area of 26,017 km<sup>2</sup> for Rio Muni, 2,017 km<sup>2</sup> for Bioko, and 17 km<sup>2</sup> for Annobon.

The total population of the country was estimated in 1987 to be about 370,000 with 294,000 in Rio Muni, 74,000 in Bioko, and 2000 in Annobon. The annual population growth rate was estimated at 2.8 percent in 1983 - 1986.

Following the assumption of power by the present regime in 1979, the country's economy was in a state of almost total collapse. It was not until after almost a decade later that the economy began to show signs of recovery following government's efforts at stabilizing and restructuring the economy supported by donor assistance. Today, even though the conditions of life in the country are still difficult, government policies have succeeded in reestablishing most of the basic functions of the economy and in improving the conditions of living of the population to a certain degree. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the country at market price was estimated at 33 billion CFA francs in 1986.

While the country is in a position to be self-sufficient in almost all of its food requirements, there has been a tendency during the last few years for rapid increases in the importation of food into the country. The World Food Programme estimates that Equatorial Guinea now has a food deficit of about 5000 tonnes which has to be met by food imports. In 1986, the principal import item into the country was food totalling \$15 million dollars and representing almost 30 per cent of the value of all imports into country. This significantly high levels of food imports are occurring during a period when the prices of the traditional cash crops of cocoa and coffee have continued to decline in the world market. The outlook for timber prices, the other principal export item of the country is also not as good as it has been in the past although output has been increasing. In 1987, the total value of exports from the country, which comprised mostly timber and cocoa, was estimated at \$37 million dollars. When compared to a food import bill of \$15 million, the pressure now being put on foreign exchange supplies to finance food imports is quite enormous. In order to pay for these high food import bills, it is obvious that the country must forego

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other needed imports or cut back on investments including those designed to reduce long run food supply deficits or expand export earnings. In the face of an already high level of total long-term debt disbursed and outstanding of \$175 million (1987) which results in a total long-term debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services of over 23 %, the Government of Equitorial Guinea is obviously very concerned about the implications of this trend on the future food security situation in the country.

It is in this context that the Government of Equitorial Guinea requested The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) for assistance in assessing the food situation in the country and in formulating an action plan for strengthening national food security in the country. In resposn to this request, the Joint ECA/FAO Agriculture Division of ECA fielded a mission to Equitorial Guinea from 9 to 17 April 1990.

#### Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of the mission were as follows:

1. Assess the dimensions of the food security problem in Equitorial Guinea.
2. Assess the systems of food production, marketing, handling, storage, and distribution in the country with a view to identifying the existing bottlemecks.
3. Propose measures to strengthen national food security in the country.

#### The Activities of the Mission

The activities of the mission included the following:

1. Consult officials of the relevant government ministries and agencies, donor community, and bilateral agencies on the food situation in the country;
2. Review the operation of food security related projects in the country;



3. After mission assessment, meet with senior government officials to report highlights of the mission findings and obtain guidance on the feasibility of ideas to be developed for recommendation to the government; and
4. Prepare mission report and project proposals to be submitted to the Government who would, in turn, brief prospective donors on the findings and recommendations of the mission and seek for donor support.

### Acknowledgement

The mission would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr. Juan Ndong Baye, the Secretary General in the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, and Forestry for assisting with the preparation of the work programme the mission. The assistance of the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Malabo, Ms. Elizabeth Fong and that of her National Programme Officer, Mr. Angel Mokara Moleila, in ensuring the successful implementation of the programme of work of the mission is also greatly acknowledged. The thanks and appreciation of the mission also go to the several government officials and members of the international community who made themselves readily available for discussions which provided valuable information and insights required for the preparation of this report.

## II. THE FOOD SITUATION IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA

### Background

The FAO estimates that in 1987 the total land area of the country under arable and permanent crops was about 230,000 hectares, with 57 per cent considered as arable land under annual crops, temporary fallow or lying idle and 43 per cent under permanent crops. The total area under permanent pasture was 104,000 hectares while some 1,295 km<sup>2</sup> was under forests and woodlands.

Agriculture is the mainstem of the economy of Equitorial Guinea. The statistics presented below in Table 1 show the trend in the structure of GDP at current factor prices between 1985 and 1989. The important role that agriculture plays and will continue to play in the economy of the country is obvious from the table.

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Table 1. GDP by Industrial Origin at Current Factor costs  
(CFA franc million)

	1985	1986	1987	1988*	1989**
Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries	20,847	20,623	21,142	21,353	21,566
Extractive industries	1,930	2,688	3,301	4,027	4,913
Manufacturing industries	563	671	776	897	1,031
Water and electricity	456	815	669	687	705
Housing and public Works	2,071	3,255	3,024	3,061	3,100
Commerce	2,648	3,521	3,637	3,757	3,776
Transport and communication	656	669	744	827	919
Administration	5,362	5,205	5,445	5,696	5,958
Other services	1,162	1,228	1,298	1,372	1,450
Total GDP	36,695	38,675	40,036	41,677	43,418

\* Provisionary

\*\* Estimates.

Source: Direction des Statistiques a Malabo

important role of agriculture is further confirmed by the fact that the percentage of the economically active population in agriculture has been estimated by the FAO to have been approximately 60 per cent through out the period between 1985 and 1988.

The country has a total of 1,326 km of roads. Out of this, 508 km are paved and 818 km are laterite roads. There is also an additional 1,356 km of dirt roads in the forestry areas of Rio Muni. Most of these roads, are however in a state of disrepair due to lack of maintenance. Port facilities exist at Malabo, Luba, and Riaba in Bioko and at Bata, Acalayong and Mbini in Rio Muni. The functioning ones, i.e. Malabo, Luba, and Bata are all mostly involved in the export of the countries principal export crops, timber and cocoa. All the ports, however, need improvements to render them functional for both external and internal trading activities.

### Agricultural Production

Most agricultural production in the country involves food crops, the most important of which are cassava, sweet, potatoes, bananas, plantains, coconuts, palm oil and palm results. A considerable amount of fruits and vegetables are also produced. Although other crops such as rice, maize, and groundnuts are not popular items in the diet of Equatorial Guineans, the country has the potential to produce adequate quantities of them to satisfy any foreseeable demand.

The principal export crops are cocoa, timber and coffee. Colonial cocoa production was carried out mostly on large plantations owned by the Spaniards. Today most of the cocoa production in the country takes place on smallholdings on a share-cropping basis. The dramatic drop in the production of both cocoa and coffee during the term of office of the previous government is now being gradually reversed although the process has been very slow and is being negatively affected by falling world cocoa and coffee prices.

Food Crops: The FAO estimates that in 1988 Equatorial Guinea produced 56,000 tonnes of cassava, 37,000 tonnes of sweet potatoes, 20,000 tonnes of bananas (including plantations), 8,000 tonnes of coconut, 5,000 tonnes of palm oil and 3,000 tonnes of palm kernels.

Production and consumption patterns differ somewhat between the island and the mainland. For example very little cassava is grown in the island while only a limited amount of cocoyam is grown in the mainland. However, with an arable land per capital ratio of 0.316 hectare, there exist adequate land for the farming population to expand production of any of the country's staple food although the yield of all the food crops are currently very low.

Livestock: A national agricultural survey carried out in 1988 estimates that the country had about 44,000 goats, 127,000 pigs, 14,000 sheep, 5,000 herd of cattle, and 230,000 chickens. The country is said to have considerable untapped livestock potential, although, as of now a significant proportion of the meat products consumed in the country is imported.

### Production Performance and Prospects

Less than 10 per cent of the total land area of the country is cropped each year. Virtually all the agricultural production takes place on small scale holdings. Even cocoa production with a history of plantation farm organization is currently grown on small holdings averaging 2 to 3 hectares.

Food crop production is essentially subsistence oriented with the use of simple hand tools. The slash and burn system is still the dominant mode of land cultivation. The use of improved seeds, fertilizer, and other improved agricultural inputs is minimal. As currently practiced, the cropping system is incapable of raising output much above the increase in area cultivated corresponding to increased farm population.

Inspite of the fact that Equitorial Guinea has the potential to be self-sufficient in almost all of its food and agricultural requirements, the food and argicultural sector currently makes a relatively small contribution to the economy. For example, the value added in agriculture in 1987 in Equitorial Guinea has been estimated by the ECA to have been only 17 million dollars.

The productivity of the food and agricultural sector of the country is generally low due largely to its subsistence structure. Furthermore the market structure remains largely undeveloped and incapable of supporting a dynamized agricultural sector.

The main thrust of current government argricultural policy is to reverse this trend by providing support to the country's small scale farmers and by promoting private agricultural enterprises. This strategy is currently being pursued in the country through the implementation of nine agriculturally related projects. These projects usually involve the provision of new agricultural knowledge, improved inputs and in a number cases, credit. The effectiveness and efficiency of almost all of these projects are bing adversely affected by a number of constraints operating in the country. These constraints include :

1. Lack of effective marketing arrangements capable of supporting a dynamized agricultural sector;
2. Non-availability of the needed agricultural information to attain and sustain a viable agricultural production system;
3. Poor infrastructures; and
4. Inadequate agricultural institutions

### III. THE DIMENSIONS OF THE FOOD SECURITY PROBLEM

The food problem of any country has important food security dimensions to the extent that it relates to the ability of the country's production, marketing, trade and other institutional systems to provide adequate food for all its people at all times. It is however important to distinguish between permanent and temporary food insecurity. Temporary food insecurity results from short-term fluctuations in households incomes, food consumption, and in the availabilty of food or access to food at the national level. Temporary food insecurity is thus a manifestation of temporary lack of access to sufficient food and can therefore be eliminated or drastically reduced by corrective stocking policies. The problem of temporary food insecurity in the Equitorial Guineaian context must therefore be seen as reflecting the ease with which the country receives food aid and/or the ability of the country to buy food from the international market. The important variables here are the magnitude of instability in international food prices and the average levels of incomes prevailing in the economy.

Permanent food insecurity, on the other hand represents a state of continuous inadequate access to food by the citizens of a country due to a long-term structural deficiency in the country's production, marketing, institutional and infrastructural systems as well as chronic inadequacy of purchasing power.

Equatorial Guinea, has a national food security programme being implemented by a national committee on food security (Comite Nacional de Seguridad Alimenticia - COMASA) which was created in 1979. Until recently, however, COMASA has addressed itself only to the problem of temporary food insecurity in the country.

COMASA was set following the demise of the previous government and the resultant surge in food aid into the country to help alleviate the attendant food deficits. Its creation was prompted by the desire of the government to help reduce the high level of wastage, spoilage, and other forms of losses that were associated with the distribution of the food aid being received. The main objective of COMASA was, therefore, to coordinate the distribution of all the food aid being received and to channel the acquired food to the most vulnerable groups, such as the infirmed and school children. Whatever food was left over was then sold at highly concessionary prices to the general public and the proceeds used to develop projects in the social sector, such as the maintenance of schools, hospitals, and dispensaries.

COMASA now recognizes the need to now focus attention not only on the elimination of temporary food insecurity but also on the elimination of permanent or structural food insecurity. The future policy of COMASA, therefore, is to ensure the production of food in abundance in the country so as to guarantee the food security of the population. This new policy thrust of the government which is still in its organizational phase is bound to run into considerable implementation difficulties unless some of the critical obstacles which hamper the production and distribution of food in the country are removed. The proposals included in this report are intended to eliminate some of these obstacles.

It is however obvious that not all these constraints can be tackled at the same time. It should, however, be noted that some of the constraints such as those relating to poor road conditions, transportation difficulties, inadequate storage facilities, etc. are already being addressed or are seriously being reviewed with a view to alleviating them. The proposals in this report are therefore centered around the most vexing of these obstacles which are not currently being addressed but which would need donor assistance to overcome them. These include:

1. Improvements in the marketing system;
2. Improvements in agricultural research; and
3. Improvements in the agricultural data base.

### Improvements in the Marketing System

Because Equitorial Guinea's principal resources are primarily agricultural, a functioning agricultural marketing system is required to play the dual role of simultaneously acting as resource allocator and resource extractor required to produce and sustain adequate levels of food and agricultural products. An efficient marketing system, on the one hand, provides channels along which money commercializes the subsistence peasant society sensitizing it to an awareness of relative prices and expectations about how these affect the income needed to buy non-farm goods thus identifying what crops to specialize in so as to increase production, income and welfare. On the other hand, since the non-agricultural sector of the economy must also develop, resources have to be extracted from the agricultural sector in the form of physical resources to guarantee not only adequate supplies of food but also of raw materials for the country's agro-industries and to provide financial resources for reinvestment in both the agricultural and non-agricultural sectors.

Agricultural marketing in Equitorial Guinea is still operating at an extremely low level. Marketing arrangements are mostly rudimentary and, in most part of the country, either dysfunctional or non-existent. Most farmers are subsistence farmers who market their production pattern closely with their consumption requirements. Whenever marketable surplus is produced, it is usually marketed directly by the farmers themselves with very little understanding and/or consideration of the nature of primary differentials at the farmgate, wholesale, and retail levels not to talk of an appreciation of the implications of the spread between the farmgate and export prices of the crops. For example, there is a valuable export market for Equitorial Guinea's food products in neighbouring Gabon and Cameroon and the legal and administrative machinery for the exploitation of this market is theoretically in place.

The marketing channels along which agricultural products pass from their raw to their finished forms are rarely identifiable and the marketing chains representing the succession of markets where agricultural produce are exchanged are non-existent. Consequently, the physical functions of marketing such as assembling or bulking, grading, packaging transportation, storage and processing and facilitating functions such as standardization financing, risk bearing and the provision of market information, which are essential for the free flow of goods and services from the point of initial production until they are in the hands of the ultimate consumer, are hardly performed or being performed inadequately. The government is now quite concerned that these deficiencies in the marketing of food products in the country is adversely affecting access by Equitorial Guineans to enough food for health, activity and growth.

There are two options open to the government for solving the problem. It can either pursue the improvement of the marketing of food products in the country through the direct approach which involves active participation and involvement by the government. In the agricultural market as a buyer and seller of food products or through the indirect approach by promoting

The direct approach ususally involves attempts to reduce crop price fluctuations through various stablilization schemes and to reduce increases in consumer prices through price controls. For this approach to be successful in attaining food security, there must be good market information on prices throughout the country, well-timed and comprehensive interventions in the market, and establishment of confidence among the traders, producers, and consumers in the reliability of government intervention. The agency charged with the responsibility of the scheme must also have access to unlimited credit for the scheme to achieve its objectives. All of these will require high levels of government expenditures, result in general demands for trained and skilled manpower, and demand the construction of well developed storage, transport, and communations infrasturcture. These conditions do not presently obtain in Equitorial Guinea and it is very unlikely that the government will be able to meet these requirements in the foreseeable future.

The indirect appraoch would be more suited to the conditions that currently obtain in Equitorial Guinea. This appraoch would require the government to try to develop effective agricultural marketing in the country by encouraging the development of a cadre of Equitorial Guineaian traders who would be capable of performing the physical, facilitatng, and exchange functions of marketing effectively. This should, however, be supported by measures that increase the competitiveness of the markets and marketing opportunities for the traders involving the development of infrasturctures such as markets, roads, and storage facilities to improve the functioning of the markets and encourage risk sharing over a broader base.

It should, however, be recognized that the period of transition of markets in the country into a new state of commercialization and monetization, would be accompanied by an erosion in the traditional forms of social security and of cultural and agricultural practices that had hitherto served to mitigate food insecurity stress. There would, therefore, also be need for direct government interventions to assist farmers and others to cope with the dislocations and other factors that are likely to imperil many Equitorial Guineaians during the period of transition. Options here would include food for work programmes, generating incomes for farmers through productive work, and moderating the prices faced by consumers.

#### Improvements in Agronomic Research

The transition of agricultural markets in the country from their current traditional and unorganized form into a new form involving commercialization, monetization and market development would need to also be accompanied by another transition of farmers from cultivating for home consumption to earning cash in a new environment characterized by efficient input and product markets. For this to happen, the majority of farmers in the country would need to move to higher levels of agricultural technology. Technological change promoted by improvements in agricultural research and facilitated by economic incentives and efficient extension services is an important tool for improving the food security status of the country.

There is really no formal agricultural research system in the country. Whatever agricultural research that takes place is carried out in some of the agricultural development projects. Because these agricultural development projects operate independently from one another, the little research results that comes out of them are usually confined to the project area of the concerned project and are seldom disseminated throughout the country. To remedy this situation, the Ministry of Agriculture has now requested agricultural project managers to meet at regular intervals to discuss their research results. While this is a welcome step, it is very unlikely that it would address the key problem of agricultural research in the country which is the absence of a coordinated and focused system for generating, adapting, and disseminating improved agricultural technologies.

Agricultural research can be simply defined as an organized investigation undertaken to discover new and improved methods of production which result in increased productivity and efficiency. Agricultural research can be grouped basically into two types: basic and applied. Basic agricultural research seeks to develop new and fundamental agricultural knowledge that can be applied to solve real farm problems while applied research focuses on how best to utilize the new technologies on offer to solve practical farm problems while adapting them to various conditions and circumstances.

As of now, because of its size, Equitorial Guinea is unable to support or afford the fully fledged research programme that would be needed to generate and adapt agricultural technologies that are required for the fulfilment of its food security strategy. The fact is that there is a required minimum amount of financial and human resources to guarantee the operation of a national agricultural research system required for the fulfilment of a country's agricultural development strategy. Equitorial Guinea is unlikely to be able to put together the required number of core scientists and technicians and the needed financial resources to cater for the range of crops grown in the country.

The country must therefore evolve an agricultural research system which borrows agricultural technologies from areas where similar crops are produced under similar agro-ecological and socio-economic conditions and apply and adapt these technologies to conditions and situations found in Equitorial Guinea. What is, therefore, needed is a national agricultural testing and transfer system based on farmers needs and circumstances in the country, serviced by an extension system that respond quickly to farmers' reactions and responses which, in turn, are promptly taken into consideration in further testing and evaluation of available technologies.

This will of course require a national research plan based on national priorities and operationalized by a modest research team with applied research capability. Donor assistance will be needed to initiate such a programme and to sustain it for the first few years of its existence, although the government would be expected to take over its funding as soon as it has become institutionalized.



### Improvements in the Agricultural Data Base

Another major constraint working against the evolution of a viable national food security system in the country is the lack of information on the food economy at all levels to assess the status of food insecurity in the country and to support future planning for food security and for increased access to basic food supplies by the population. There is also lack of monitoring and evaluation information particularly of the performance of the several agricultural projects that are being implemented in the country.

Very little information exists regarding food availability and usage at the household level. Information concerning household usage of crop production is virtually non-existent while estimates of expenditures on retailed food supplies are impossible to derive. Relatively little information exists about the exact composition of diets, their nutritional value, or about variations between different population groups or areas of the country. These information are essential for establishing the nature and causes of variation in the food security situation of the rural people. For example, information concerning variation in quantity of food produced, wage rate, food availability, the prices of food, etc. are very important because they reveal the nature and causes of food insecurity in rural areas and make it easy for government to take action on measures for reducing the causes of any observed food insecurity or to implement actions that will help farmers to adopt food security strategies by themselves.

There is therefore urgent need for improvements of the agricultural data base on the food economy of the country at all levels to support future planning for food security either by reducing the causes of anticipated food insecurity or making it easier for households to adopt security strategies.

It is understood that a study which started out as an agricultural survey of the country and was later expanded into a fully fledged socio-economic survey, is currently in progress and that there are plans to follow this up with a surveys/statistics project. Given this background, additional efforts to improve the agricultural data base on the food economy should be directed at securing higher priority for food security related questions and issues, which would otherwise be ignored or only marginally addressed, within the on-going or proposed surveys and statistics projects. This is a vexing situation that highlights the need for donor assistance to ensure that adequate priority is given to these food security related questions.

#### IV. PROPOSED ACTION PLAN TO STRENGTHEN NATIONAL FOOD SECURITY IN EQUITORIAL GUINEA

The preceding review of the food situation in Equitorial Guinea and the analysis of the dimensions of the food security problem in the country confirm the need to draw up plans that will strengthen national food

There is little question that agricultural growth and market development hold considerable potential for ensuring food security in Equitorial Guinea. The government is now fully committed to the objective of improving the functioning of agricultural markets in the country by creating an economic and social climate that encourages private-sector initiatives. Technological change promoted by an intelligent application of advances in agricultural research and facilitated by economic incentives and efficient extension services is also a vital component of any set of government policies designed to strengthen national food security. Improvements of the data base on the food economy at all levels and the strengthening of monitoring and evaluation of food production programmes are also major areas for strengthening national food security.

Equitorial Guinea's action plan for strengthening national food security should be based on objectives that operate at two levels?

1. The immediate objective is to ensure supply of sufficient food for the sustenance of all the population of Equitorial Guinea at all times irrespective of shortfalls in production due to variations in quantity of work, prices, incomes, etc. and
2. The long term objective which is an integral part of the the overall development effort of making food available in sufficient quantity and quality so that an adequate diet can be provided for all the population at all times.

Attainment of these objectives will require the pursuit of national priorities in resource allocation and the establishment of the necessary institutional arrangements for the implementation of projects and programmes in three broad areas:

1. Agricultural marketing:- The encouragement of the commercialization, monetization and development of agricultural markets capable of adequately performing the physical, facilitating and exchange functions of agricultural marketing.
2. Technological changes:- The establishment of an effective national agricultural research system capable of intelligently adapting relevant improved technologies on offer, to the agro-ecological and socio-economic conditions which obtain in Equitorial Guinea.
3. National food economy data base:- The creation of a national data base on the food economy at all levels that would permit informed planning for food security and increased access to basic food supplies throughout the country.

While the programmes in the above areas would of necessity be all embracing and would require coordinated and inter - related action on a continuing basis, it should nonetheless be remembered that all the interventions that would be needed would have both costs and benefits and that some of these interventions would be more cost-effective than others. Below are three proposals which are considered to be the most cost effective

Deficiencies in these areas can be attributed to the absence of effective marketing channels along which agricultural products can flow

efficiently from the farm gate to the final consumer and the absence of properly functioning marketing chains representing a succession of markets where agricultural products are exchanged. There are very few or no food traders or middlemen in the country although the volume of petit trading taking place in the major urban centres would suggest that there is abundance of the competitive enterprise spirit capable of performing the physical (assembling, grading, packaging, transportation, storage and processing) functions, the exchange (buying and selling) functions and the facilitating (standardization, financing, risk bearing and market information) functions necessary for the effective marketing of agricultural products.

There is therefore need for a project that would assist in the development of a cadre of Equatorial Guineans who would be capable of understanding and adequately performing these physical, exchange, and facilitating marketing functions.

### Objectives of the Project

#### Development Objectives

The development objectives of the project are as follows:

1. To achieve higher levels of food production in both the island and the mainland and to attain higher levels of food security at the national level.
2. To achieve, improved levels of farmers' incomes resulting from the production of food products for both the local market and for exportation to neighbouring countries.
- e. To attain increased levels of food availability, nutritional status, and standard of living for the population of the country.

#### Immediate Objectives

The immediate objectives of the project are:

1. Identify a cadre of Equatorial Guineans capable of adequately performing the key physical, exchange, and facilitating marketing functions.
2. Provide training to this group of individuals on the effective performance of these functions.
3. Encourage the creation of an economic and social climate that encourages and supports the initiatives of the prospective traders and middlemen of food products.

### Results Expected

The project will assist in the creation of a structure that promotes small-scale agri-business involving the marketing of the principal food crops of Equitorial Guinea both internally and externally. The project would also result in increased levels of commercialization, monetization, and agricultural markets development that would enhance and strengthen national food security.

### Major Activities

The major activities of the project will include the following:

1. The establishment of small but effective offices in both Malabo and Bata.
2. The conduct of training workshops for prospective traders and middlemen.
3. The provision of assistance in the drawing up of simple feasibility studies for relevant agri-business projects.
4. The creation of the enabling environment that would permit the government, the banking system, and other institutions to support the development of the small-scale agri-business community.

### Estimated Costs

	<u>US \$</u>
- Personnel	
* One Commercial Officer	75,000
* Two Commercial Assistants	30,000
* Consultant	30,000
- Duty Travel	10,000.00
- Operating Expenses	100,000.00
- Materials and Equipment	80,000.00
- Training	100,000.00
- Miscellaneous	30,000.00
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Total	500,000.00

PROJECT PROPOSAL NO. 2

Assistance to the Government of  
Equitorial Guinea

Title: On-farm adaptive research project

Government  
Cooperating  
Agencies

1. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, and Forestry.
2. National Committee on Food Security

Project Cost US \$ 500,000.00

Duration 36 months

Background and Justification

Most agricultural production in Equitorial Guinea involves food crops, the most important of which include cassava, sweet potatoes, bananas, plantains, coconuts, palm oil and palm kernel. Significant quantities of fruits and vegetables are also produced. Although other crops such as rice, maize, and groundnuts are not currently popular items in the diet of the population, the country has the potential to produce adequate quantities of them to meet any foreseeable demand.

The country could be self-sufficient in all these crops and has the capacity to produce additional outputs for external markets. Equitorial Guinean farmers, however, still produce largely for subsistence purposes. They continue to adopt agricultural practices which their forefathers have used for generations. Use of improved inputs such as high yielding varieties, fertilizers, protection chemicals etc, is minimal and investments in agriculture is restricted to simple tools.

If the country is to be self-sufficient in its principal food crops and produce a surplus for exportation to neighbouring markets, the peasant farmers in the country must be encouraged to move from their present tendency of producing mostly for subsistence purpose to producing for cash in a new environment characterized by efficient input and product markets. For this to happen, the majority of these farmers must move to higher levels of technological use and this would require the conduct of appropriate agricultural research.

The problem, however, is that there is as of now no formal agricultural research system in the country. In any case, because of its size and resource base, the country is not in a position to afford the fully fledged research programme that would be needed to generate and transfer the improved agricultural technologies that would be required to move the peasant farmers to higher levels of agricultural technologies.

The country must therefore evolve an agricultural research programme which borrows agricultural technologies from areas where similar crops are produced under the same agro-ecological, and socio-economic conditions as those found in Equitorial Guinea and adapts them to these conditions.

This project is designed to develop a national agricultural technology and transfer system based on the needs and circumstances of farmers in Equitorial Guinea.

### Objectives of the Project

#### Development Objectives

The development objectives of the project include:

1. To achieve higher levels of food production in both the island and mainland and to obtain higher levels of food security at the national level.
2. To achieve improved levels of farmers' incomes resulting from the production of food crops for both the local market and for exportation to neighbouring countries.
3. To attain increased levels of food availability, nutritional status, and standard of living for the population of the country.

#### Immediate Objectives

The immediate objectives of the project are as follows:

1. To establish an on-farm adaptive research team capable of intelligently identifying, selecting, testing, and adapting improved agricultural technologies for the principal crops and, in the different zones of the country.
2. To draw up an on-farm adaptive research plan based on national food security priorities and available resources.

3. To conduct a series of on-farm adaptive research trials involving improved agricultural technologies available for the principal food crops of the country with a view to arriving at recommendations on the varieties, levels of inputs, and cultural practices most suitable and relevant for different parts of the country.

#### Expected Results

The project will create an intelligent on-farm adaptive research planning and testing capacity within the available resources in the country and make available to agricultural development projects and extension officials improved agricultural technologies for the principal food crops that are suitable and appropriate for different conditions and situations in Equatorial Guinea.

#### Major Activities

The major activities of the project will include the following:

1. The establishment of research contacts with agricultural research systems in neighbouring countries where similar crops are produced under similar agro-ecological and socio-economic conditions.
2. Establishment of research contacts with the national collaboration and outreach programmes of international agricultural research centres whose mandates cover Equatorial Guinea such as: the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA); the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT); the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMIT); the International Livestock Centre for Africa (ILCA); etc.
3. The conduct of on-farm adaptive research through out the country.
4. The processing and analysis of research data and the distribution of the research results to agricultural development projects and extension agencies.



Estimated Costs

US \$

- Personnel

* Two Agronomist	150,000.00
* One Agricultural Economist	75,000.00
Consultant	30,000.00
- Duty Travel	70,000.00
- Operating Expenses	75,000.00
- Materials and Equipment	80,000.00
- Miscellaneous	20,000.00
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Total	500,000.00

PROJECT PROPOSAL NO. 3

Assistance to the Government of  
Equitorial Guinea

<u>Title</u>	Improvements in the Data Base on the Food Economy
<u>Government Cooperating Agencies</u>	1. The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, and Forestry  2. National Committee on Food Security
<u>Project cost:</u>	US \$ 500,000.00
<u>Duration:</u>	36 months

Background and Justification

The state of social and economic collapse which the present government inherited in 1979 was accompanied by the virtual disappearance of all the records that had been compiled since 1968, the date of independence of the country from Spain and that formed the basis of the statistical system of country.

To rectify this situation, at least with respect to the agricultural sector, the government in 1985 requested assistance from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in elaborating a national system for agricultural data collection and analysis. In this context, a study that started as an agricultural survey but which later became a fully fledged socio-economic survey has been completed in the mainland and would soon be started in the mainland. This is expected to be followed by a major statistics/survey project to be funded by the World Bank, UNDP, and a number of other donors.

The indications are that these efforts at improving the agricultural data situation in the country are quite broad based and are do give adequate attention or importance to the need to improve the data situation on the food economy of the country. Adequate information on the food economy of the country at all levels is needed to assess the status of food insecurity among the various groups in the population and to support future planning for increased food security and increased access to basic food supplies by the totality of the population.

Very little information exists in the country with regards food availability and usage at the household level. Information concerning household usage of crop production is also virtually non-existent, while estimates of expenditures on retailed food supplies are impossible to derive. Nor is there information about the exact composition of national diets, their nutritional value or about variations between and among the avarious population groups.

These information are essential for establishing the nature and causes of food insecurity in the country and for planning for increased food security in the future.

This project is designed to ensure that adequate priority is given to food security related questions and issues, which would otherwise be ignored on only marginally addressed, in on-going or proposed agricultural surveys/statistics projects in the country.

### Objectives of the Project

#### Development Objectives

The development objectives of the project are:

1. To encourage higher levels of food production in both the island and the mainland and to attain higher levels of food security at the national level.
2. To encourage the attainment of improved levels of farmers' incomes from the production of food products for both the local markets and for exportation to neighbouring countries.
3. To attain increased levels of food availability, nutritional satus, and standard of living for the population of the country.

### Immediate Objectives

The immediate objectives of the project are:

1. To establish, in collaboration with existing or proposed agricultural data collection projects in the country, a national system for the collection of food security related information needed to support future planning for food security in the country.
2. To organize and establish an efficient system for the regular collection and handling of data on the food economy of the country.
3. To train the people required to operate the system at the national level.

### Results Expected

The project will establish a viable national system of data collection and analysis on the food economy in collaboration with existing or proposed agricultural surveys/statistics projects. In this context, food security related questions and issues would be accorded an adequate level of priority in these projects resulting in an improved set of data base capable of supporting future planning for the attainment of food security in the country. The project will also result in the training of the technical personnel required at the national and regional levels to institutionalize a national food security data collection system.

### Major Activities

The major activities of the project will include the following:

1. Reviewing on-going and proposed agricultural surveys/statistics projects with a view to identifying deficiencies with regards the needed data on the food economy.
2. Identification of the relevant food security questions to be answered, the food security issues to be raised and the variables to be measured.
3. Preparation of data collection forms, agreement on data collection procedures, and design and testing of data collection methodologies.
4. Training of technical personnel.
5. Data collection, processing and analysis.
6. Publication of national reports on food security.

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Estimated Costs

	<u>US \$</u>
- Personnel	
* One project leader	75,000.00
* Two coordinators	40,000.00
* Three Technical Assistants	45,000.00
* Six Enumerators	54,000.00
* Consultant	30,000.00
- Duty Travel	50,000.00
- Operating Expenses	75,000.00
- Materials and Equipment	100,000.00
- Training	10,000.00
- Miscellaneous	<u>21,000.00</u>
	500,000.00

ANNEX II

LIST OF PERSONS MET

## ANNEX II

### LIST OF PERSONS MET

1. Mr. Juan Ndong Baye'  
Secretario General  
Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganaderia  
Pesca Y Forestal
2. Mr. Jose Bicoro Eko Ada  
Director General de Aguas Pesca  
Ministerio de Agricultura, Ganaderia,  
Pesca Y Forestal
3. Mr. Alejandro Ndjoli Mediko  
Jefe Nacional  
Departamento de Estadisticas  
Agropecuarias
4. Christopher Knee  
Director  
Proyecto de Rehabilitacion  
de Cacao
5. Julia Noble  
Consultant  
CLUSA Project  
Apartado 852
6. Mr. Angel Mokara Moleila  
National Programme Officer  
UNFPA/UNDP
7. Brian Noble  
Director  
CLUSA Project  
Apartado 852
8. Bitu Rope Laesa  
Gerente/Capacitador  
Centro de Servicios Cooperativos  
Apdo, 852
9. Dr. Doris Knoechel  
Project Manager  
German Agricultural Development Preproject  
German Cooperation  
Apdo 306

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10. Mr. Ange Lawrent Lilali  
Charge de la Commercialisation  
CLUSA, Bata
11. Mr. Robert Makillo  
Charge de la Production Agricole  
Evinayong  
Rio Muni
12. Mr. Arturo Posada Piedrahita  
Director de Operaciones  
Programa Mundial de Alimentos
13. Fortunato Njambi Machinde  
Section de Planificación  
Seguimiento de Proyectos
14. Mr. Ignatio Milam Tang  
Director General de Control Financiero  
Director Ejecutivo de CONASA
15. Senora Rosa Mba  
Representacion FAO
16. Angel San Millam  
Administrateur  
Cooperation Espanol
17. Elizabeth Fong  
Resident Representative  
UNDP