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Swiss Cooperation Office
South Caucasus

Rural Development in Samtskhe-Javakheti

(Market Alliances against Poverty)



Project title

**Rural Development in Samtskhe-Javakheti
(Market Alliances against Poverty)**

General information

Region: Samtskhe-Javakheti (Georgia)
Duration: October 2008-September 2011
Budget: CHF 2'730'000

Project partners

- Implementing partner: Mercy Corps International and local sub-contracting partners
- Institutional partner: Ministry of Agriculture and the office of the President's Representative in Samtskhe-Javakheti

Project objectives

The value chain for dairy and meat products in Samtskhe-Javakheti are strengthened. The quality of milk and meat is improved, with production increased by 20 percent. Small livestock producers have improved access to markets, information, services and technologies and increase their incomes by 30 percent. The interaction between the farmer households, their communities and local self-government is enhanced and contributes to transparent decision-making with a participation of all stakeholders.

Background

The region of Samtskhe-Javakheti is one of the least developed regions of Georgia. Some 60 percent of the population fall below the poverty line, and some 80 percent are unemployed or are subsistence farmers. The majority of residents own cattle; households own in average 1.5 ha of land. The region produces a large share of Georgia's livestock, but access to markets is restricted as a result of small production quantities and unreliable qualities, as well as poor transport connection with the key con-

sumption and processing markets. The region is also prone to landslides, floods, and erosion due to tectonic movements and seismic activities, which is aggravated by often unsustainable agricultural practise.

Project activities

The project targets the municipalities of Adigeni, Akhaltsikhe and Aspindze and focuses on the dairy and meat value chains. The most important issues addressed are cattle breeding and feeding, access to markets, food safety and hygiene, and disaster risk management. Farmers, service providers, village authorities and other stakeholders benefit from training, capacity building and targeted small-scale capital investment in the following areas:

- Fodder base, breed quality and hygiene standards of livestock production
- Quality and efficiency of milk production, collection and processing
- Quality and efficiency of meat production and processing as well as animal trade and transportation
- Access to finance and investments.

Activities in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction ensure that negative effects of the project are prevented and support the resilience of the intervention.

Expected results

A total of 4000 farmer households (out of some 19'000 in the target area) benefit from advisory services or enjoy improved access to veterinary services and agricultural inputs. Participating farmers are expected to increase their incomes by 10-30 percent.

A minimum of 50 matching grants, especially in support of service providers such as veterinary and agricultural input shops as well as entrepreneurs in the fields of dairy production and meat processing, help to stimulate the market dynamics in the livestock value chains.

30 communities develop disaster risk and pasture management plans and benefit from improved small-scale infrastructure.



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