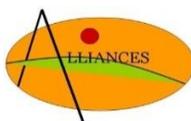




Farmers Feedback on the Agricultural Voucher Governmental Scheme (Dmanisi, Tetrtskaro and Tsalka Municipalities)

March 11-13th, 2013



ALLIANCES KK



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Mercy Corps Alliances KK www.allianceskk.ge is a SDC funded market development programme that works in Dmanisi Tetrtskaro and Tsalka, the programme is in the position to offer a field level view of farmers 'responses and undertook a small survey to ascertain farmers' feedback on the preliminary stages of the Governments Agricultural voucher scheme¹ from March 11-13th. The programme spoke to a total of 26 farmers. The questionnaire and methodology are in Annex 1. The main points of feedback are summarized below.

Main Findings

Overview of the Scheme

- Overall the interviewed farmers were happy with the scheme and want to use the vouchers for ploughing of lands that have not been ploughed for many years. Farmers are going to sow Lucerne, esparcet, barley and oats for use as animal feed or for sale. Additionally, they stated that the ploughing of these lands using old tractors is impossible however the Government Programme offers the new tractors appropriate for the aforementioned land which is good. There are many aspects however that could improve the outreach and efficiency of the scheme for more farmers which are detailed below.

Problems

- Many households were not included in the list of the scheme.

Lack of Information:

- Farmers from villages located closer to municipal centers are a lot more informed.
- However the most Georgian farmers have information basically from secondary sources that is often either unverified or interpreted.
- Georgian farmers know that if they are not included in the list of the scheme they can address to a village representative to ask to put them in the list however Azeri and Armenian farmers do not know that they can do this.
- The only source of information for Azeri and Armenian farmers is village representatives however the village representatives did not get enough instructions from the government. They received only a few hours of instructions.
- Information brochures were distributed in Georgian and Russian languages and not in Azeri and Armenian languages. Due to these fact Azeri and Armenian farmers who do not know Russian is not informed concerning the rules of usage of these vouchers.

¹ According to the decision of the government of Georgia those farmers, who possess up to 5 ha of land were eligible to receive agricultural vouchers under the project 'facilitating farmers owing small size plots during their spring works'. There are two types' of vouchers: one for ploughing and cultivation and another for input supplies and agrochemicals.

- Under the scheme it is possible to exchange one kind of voucher into another but Azeri and Armenian farmers do not know how and where to exchange them.
- Farmers are going to sow improved grass/legume mixes for hay however they have a lack of information concerning timely cutting, gathering and storing of hay.

Farmers Opinion:

- Those farmers who have not yet used the vouchers think that ploughing works will not be performed well due to a busy work schedule and uncaring attitude of machinery service providers.
- All farmers know that they can call a hotline in case if a machinery service provider performs work poorly however none of them is willing to do so as they believe that it is not their business to do so.
- Farmers stated that they did not receive a support proportional to sizes of their lands; they only received support for 1ha land. Also, those families that own 0, 25ha of agricultural lands did not receive any support.

Farmer Preference:

- Farmers would rather use village machinery service providers because they trust them and they believe that ploughing performed by them will be of better quality however according to their information only mechanization centers are to provide them with this service. Even if they have a choice they often do not know about it.
- Farmers would rather use the vouchers in input supply shops of their choice in order to purchase necessary materials or equipment, instead of going only into designated shops. Even if they have a choice they often do not know about it.
- Farmers would prefer to have somebody whom they could contact for information.
- Farmers would prefer to receive any detailed plans concerning the agricultural season i.e. what works have to be performed and when.

Questions asked by farmers in regard of the programme:

- Do farmers need to wait for mechanization centers or do they need to contact them by themselves?
- When is their turn?
- Who will perform ploughing works, village machinery service providers or mechanization centers?
- If a farmer has usage of the land of a person who is out of the country (i.e. Greek land in Tsalka), can he/she use that person's voucher?
- Are seeds included in the input supplies list?
- What is included in the agricultural input supplies list?

Annex 1: Questionnaire and Methodology

Questionnaire:

1. Did you receive the vouchers in time?
2. Were you informed in time about the rules of usage of the agricultural voucher?
3. Who spread the information in your area?
4. Was the information printed in the language which is understandable for you?
5. Who distributed the vouchers?
6. Do you know who performs the works of ploughing of the land?
7. Did you receive the support which is relevant to the size of your plot?
8. Did you receive a detailed plan about what works to be fulfilled and when?
9. What do you think, how can you benefit from this program?
10. What would it be possible to plan/do better?

Methodology

The Survey concerning the agricultural voucher was conducted in Tsalka, Dmanisi and Tetrtskaro Municipalities – the Alliances KK Programme Area. Basically grass roots services providers such as bull owners and vets, also some farmers with whom the programme works and some local journalists, were interviewed.

Table 1 Showing the Composition of the Key Informants According to Municipality

<i>Key Informants</i>	<i>Tsalka</i>		<i>Dmanisi</i>		<i>Tetrtskaro</i>		<i>Total Interviewed</i>	<i>Total Interviewed Women According to Ethnicity</i>	<i>Total Interviewed Men According to Ethnicity</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>			
<i>Key informants</i>	4	5	5	4	3	3	24	12 (2 Armenian, 1 Azeri, 9 Georgian)	12 (2 Azeri, 1 Armenian, 9 Georgian)
<i>Local journalists</i>		1		1			2	2	
<i>Total</i>	4	6	5	5	3	3	26	14	12