



United Nations Development Programme

PRESS RELEASE

UNDP Provides US\$ 50,000 for Seeds for Flood Affected Mountainous Areas

Tbilisi, June 9, 2005: The recent floods and landslides that caused the devastation of dozens of villages and towns in Georgia have highlighted the urgent aid need. Among the priorities identified were the need to increase food availability, support existing health services, increase seed availability, and to promote longer-term recovery and rehabilitation efforts.

The main agricultural concern was that many households lost spring crops and last year's harvest savings, and their farmlands have been washed away. Most families in these regions support themselves through subsistence farming. These families only grow enough food to support themselves until the next harvest.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has provided \$50,000 for emergency provision of agricultural seeds (primarily potato, maize, and bean seeds) to the population of Upper and Lower Svaneti, and Racha-Lechkhumi regions for the main 2005 planting season, which ranges from March to May, depending on the region. The purchase, transport, and distribution of these seeds has now been carried out by the NGO Accion contra el Hambre (ACH). Local authorities in each district receiving this relief aid made available warehouses for short-term storage. As a result over 108 tones of food crop seeds have been distributed among the most vulnerable population of Upper and Lower Svaneti, and Racha-Lechkhumi regions.

Additional assistance was also provided from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) through UNDP to ACH to distribute 150 tones of potato seeds to most vulnerable population. Without these aid efforts, these affected people would have faced harsh winter of increased food insecurity with decreased food availability.

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