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ONE welcomes EU €760m for world's poorest farmers

Member States urged not to take funds from bilateral aid

- €1 billion of funding approved, €760m of which is additional at EU level
- Commission and Parliament break Council deadlock in negotiations
- Key tests remain on additionality and how the money will be spent

After difficult negotiations, Finance Ministers, MEPs and the Commission finally came to agreement on €1 billion for farmers in the developing world, of which €760m is additional. Over 923 million people are going hungry around the world today, and this Facility should help provide the inputs farmers need to help guard against future crises.

Oliver Buston, European Director of ONE said:

"We welcome this deal and applaud all those that have been championing the cause for the world's poorest farmers. We are pleased that Member States have topped up the Emergency Aid Reserve and committed so much additional money. However we know that the real test on additionality is yet to come – when national treasuries write the cheque they must not take this funding from their bilateral aid programmes. We will be looking for a strong political commitment from Member States over the coming weeks to ensure that this additionality will be guaranteed. We will also be following the process to make sure the money is spent in the most effective way possible as the EU institutions decide on implementation of the funds."

He added:

"The vision and leadership of President Barroso, the tenacity of Louis Michel and the work of key European Parliamentarians in pushing for additionality have been crucial in getting the funding for this Facility through. We also salute Member States who gave the green light for additional funds. This result shows what the EU can do when its institutions pull together. The EU has shown that it has not forgotten the people in its partner countries even during difficult economic times – a crucial signal to other donors just before Doha."

Notes to editors

- The EU's €1 billion for developing country farmers will be financed from the following sources: 420m from the Flexibility instrument; 100m from the existing Emergency Aid Reserve; 240m top-up into Emergency Aid Reserve and 240m from redeployed funds (mainly from the Instrument for Stability)

- MEP Gay Mitchell is the European Parliament's rapporteur on the Food Facility and was present in the negotiations on the Food Facility.

- Agricultural growth has two to four times the poverty reduction impact on the poorest people than non-agricultural growth. (World Development Report 2008)

About ONE

ONE is a global advocacy and campaigning organization backed by more than two million people around the world dedicated to fighting extreme poverty and preventable disease, particularly in Africa. For more information, please visit ONE.org.