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“Competition for Resources in a Changing World:  
New Drive for Rural Development”

## Adaptation of African Agriculture to Climate Change - BMZ- Research Priority has Started!

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### Abstract

Particularly Africa is affected by climate change. Extreme weather events such as droughts and floods are already occurring more frequently and with greater severity than in the past. The consequences are lower – or even total loss of – crops and livestock. Enhancing the capacity of the most vulnerable poor to adapt to climate change is going to be one of the main issues technical development cooperation is facing in the near future.

However, the changes differ locally and depend on natural conditions such as species and variety of crops and cropping systems, but also on political and socio-cultural factors. A precise understanding of these factors as well as their local and regional impact is essential to manage against climate change.

To develop measures of adaptation to climate change, the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) assigned the Advisory Service on Agricultural Research for Development (BEAF) with the design of the research priority area “Adaptation of African Agriculture to Climate Change”. In summer 2007 the call for proposals led to the submission of 18 project suggestions. Eight of these were selected after close examination and expert appraisal:

Five international agricultural research institutes (CIP, ICRISAT, IFPRI, ILRI, IWMI), two German universities (Göttingen, Hohenheim) and one of the Leibniz centres (ZALF) have received research funding totalling € 9 million for the programme, which is scheduled to run for three years.

The research priority is designed interdisciplinary and multi-institutional. There is a manifold network between the participating institutes and universities. Professional tasks range from climatology over classical agricultural disciplines – cropping systems, plant breeding, grazing management and agroforestry – to water management and policy research. Regional focuses are the Sahel belt countries in West Africa as well as Eastern Africa.

One of the main issues of the research priority is to involve local stakeholders to enhance their capacity as well as to feed their knowledge into the research approach. At least 3 either non-governmental organisations, farmer associations or National Agricultural Research Centers are participating in each project to assure an appropriate connection to the persons concerned.

**Keywords:** Africa, agriculture, agroforestry, climate change, climatology, cropping system, farmer association, food policy, grazing management, national agricultural research centre, non-governmental organisation, plant breeding, research, water management