

## Burundi Agriculture

### An agricultural fair to draw the attention of Burundi political decision-makers

*Bujumbura, October 20, 2010* – Civil society organizations supervising the agricultural sector and agricultural producers organized an advocacy campaign for agricultural production in Burundi from 19 to 20 October 2010. A press conference and an agricultural fair were held at the Public Garden, in Rohero I, in Bujumbura.

During the October 19 press conference, the leaders of the civil society (working in the agricultural domain) called upon the Government of the Republic of Burundi to respect the commitments of the Maputo Agreement that they signed and to allot a minimum of 10 percent of the national budget to the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Husbandry (MINAGRIE).

According to Ernest Niyonzima, Agronomist, in charge of the promotion of development at the Organization for the Support to auto-Promotion (OAP), once 10 percent of the national budget is allotted to MINAGRIE, it could be distributed as follows: 60 percent directly invested in the agricultural sector for the purchase of agri-inputs and research on improved seeds; 30 percent to run MINAGRIE and to restructure the Ministry in order to resolve issues such as salary arrears of the agricultural supervisors; and 10 percent to supply the strategic stock of agricultural products in order to address the problems of recurring famines in some regions of Burundi.



Further, these civil organizations have written advocacy documents that they submitted to the Government, the National Parliament and the International Organizations working in the agricultural sector in order to obtain help for Burundian producers' organizations, which continue to work hard despite not receiving any support from the Government.

It is within this framework that a two-day agricultural fair was organized to show the Government that the agricultural producers do not surrender to discouragement but rather work assiduously to influence national and international opinion about Burundi's agricultural potential. The fair organized producers by natural agricultural region with their agricultural products which are specific to each region. As an illustration, the Imbo region displayed products processed from the oil palm, cassava, rice and cotton while the Mugamba region displayed vegetables and potatoes, and Buyenzi region displayed bananas, potatoes and honey.



Several organizations attended the fair, including the Confederation of Producers' Associations (CAPAD), a partner of CATALIST), OAP,

the association of cotton producers, etc,

Nearly 90 percent of Burundi's population is dependent on agriculture, while the amount allotted to the agricultural sector in the government budget has averaged about three percent for several years.

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IFDC Contact:

Rémy Christian Ntirurikure

[ntirurikure@ifdc.org](mailto:ntirurikure@ifdc.org)

+257 22 25 78 75