

EU Intervention in Agriculture

The EU has been instrumental in rehabilitating about 80,000 hectares of irrigable areas in the Lower Shebelle region. This region is the breadbasket of Somalia being the major producer of maize, sesame, fruits and vegetables. Banana production still predominates. EU-funded projects have rehabilitated canals and barrages and promoted improved crop husbandry and marketing. Interventions have been instrumental in improving income and food security of about 50,000 households.

Some pictures depicting Buffow – Cesare Maria Canal Rehabilitation Activities (courtesy FAO)



Rehabilitation of one side of first section of Cesare Maria Canal



Rehabilitation of one side of Buffow Canal



Rehabilitation of one side of Buffow Canal



Off-take of Cesare Maria Canal from River Shabelle (before rehabilitation)



Cutting of embankment before canal excavation



Buffow canal off-take from Cesare Maria Canal (before rehabilitation)

Banana had been a major foreign exchange earner in Somalia only second to livestock until 1990s, when the export market collapsed due to civil war. Only about 1,200 hectares are under banana cultivation compared to about 12,000 before the breakup of the war. Although banana exports are not feasible with the present security conditions, banana remains the most promising agricultural export from Somalia should peace and stability return. For this reason, the European Union has financed the introduction and testing of improved tissue culture varieties. They will in the short run improve the production of bananas for the domestic market and allow Somalia to restart exports once peace and stability return.



Banana trials in the Lower Shebelle. Courtesy of FAO