



# Civil Society for Poverty Reduction

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## PRESS STATEMENT *For Immediate Release*

### CSPR READY TO PARTNER WITH GOVERNMENT ON REVIEW OF FERTILISER SUPPORT PROGRAMME

CSPR is encouraged with the announcement by the Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Brian Chituwo, also echoed by the President, that Government will be conducting a review of the Fertiliser Support Programme (FSP). This Programme has been of great concern to civil society because it deals directly with livelihoods of the vulnerable people, especially in the rural areas.

As CSPR, we have noted in our monitoring work the discrepancies in the Programme ranging from late deliveries, wrong people benefiting and beneficiaries not graduating from the Programme as intended. We have stated that while the Programme is very relevant to national development, it has failed to yield the desired results. This has been the case in all our focus areas in which CSPR operates, that is, Eastern, Western, North-Western, Luapula and Southern Provinces.

We call upon Government to make the FSP Review Process highly consultative and involve all relevant stakeholders. This is more so when it comes to identification of the beneficiaries and devising the monitoring mechanism. In addition, the graduation guidelines must be well devised to avoid the current situation of misallocating resources and to curb the over-dependence on FSP without graduating. As a significant measure, Government should also ensure that it creates an effective and efficient channel that will expedite the process of delivering the inputs to the beneficiary households. Overall, the review should strengthen those strategies in the FNDP which raise the efficiency of small-scale farmers. Because of the significant part agriculture plays in the reduction of poverty and food security in Zambia, CSPR will be willing to partner with Government during the FSP Review Process.

To consolidate this exhibited Government commitment, CSPR will expect the 2009 National Budget to reflect allocation of relevant funds to implement the Review Process and effectively implement the newly enhanced Programme for the 2009/2010 farming season. In addition to this, we still expect government to pay more attention to other areas in the agriculture sector such as Crop Diversification, Livestock and Fisheries Production, women in irrigation, water management, out grower schemes and public infrastructure development. These areas are highly viable and will improve the food security situation in the country, especially in the light of the global recess and increased costs of food.

Based on the aforementioned, CSPR would be willing to collaborate with Government by coordinating civil society's input into the FSP Review Process as well as community consultations. It is only through people's involvement in such important Programmes' designs that pro-poor national development can be achieved.

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