

## **UNDP Kenya- Agri-business Project and Kenya's 2007 post election Crisis.**

Agribusiness project is one of the flagship projects within the Poverty Reduction Unit. The project aims to address some of the contributory variables to current low agricultural performance, amongst smallholder farmers, in Kenya. The project is funded by Italian Development Corporation office and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through the Ministry of Agriculture with Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) as the implementing partner. ADC is a government parastatal that manages government owned farms in different parts of the country. With additional machinery, ADC has proven that it can extend services to neighbouring small holder farms that year after year suffer from food insecurity due their inability to access farm preparation equipment and inputs.

The programme seeks to raise productivity of agricultural land, mainly among small-scale farmers, through provision of tractor and machinery hire services at affordable costs, and enhancing timeliness in farm operations. The intervention contributes to the current efforts to reduce food insecurity while at the same time contributing to the first goal of the MDGs. To this end, the project has provided 98 tractors and assorted farm implements to ADC and the same has been distributed to their outposts in Rift Valley, North Eastern and Coastal provinces.

The disputed elections in Kenya on December 27<sup>th</sup> 2007 were the prelude to significant violence between Kenyan communities that resulted in significant loss of life, burning and looting of businesses and internal displacement. The violence significantly affected business operations (more so farming activities) in the country especially in the Rift Valley, Nyanza and Western Provinces. It became apparent that farmers in Rift Valley were ill prepared for the planting season in 2008 that usually starts in April.

As part of an early recovery process, UNDP had to re-orient its programme activities under the Agri-business programme in order to respond to business challenges emanating from the said post election violence. Consequently, small holders' farmers, in crisis areas Rift Valley and western Provinces, were supported through mechanized land preparation services, to resume their farming activities.

In a nutshell 6,680 families directly benefited from this programme in the two provinces and the total land acreage prepared and planted were 20,040 hectares. It is reassuring that 80% of the beneficiaries were women who were adversely affected by the skirmishes.