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Luxembourg, 22 September 2020: The Agri-Business Capital Fund (ABC Fund) has provided loans worth € 1.2 million to Anatrans, a cashew nut processor based in Burkina Faso and Maphlix Trust Ghana Limited (Maphlix), a producer and processor of tubers and vegetables.

The loan provided to Anatrans will help the business facilitate market access for six farmer groups with over 1,200 members. It will secure revenue for these farmers at the time of the raw cashew nut purchase, while also providing additional revenue at the end of the harvesting period. The loan will enable the farmers to receive premiums under the Organic and Fairtrade certifications.

The loan will generate employment opportunities for up to 1,500 people during the 2020/21 season in the region of Bobo Dioulasso in Burkina Faso. The proceeds will also be used to selectively fund community projects to benefit the lives of over 7,000 residents in the region, with community projects such as the construction of schools and a borehole.

The loan provided to Maphlix will help the company expand sweet potato production, resulting in a significant increase in farmer revenues. ABC Fund's financing will act as a catalyst for Maphlix to secure more supplier contracts in order to further increase its network of smallholder farmers.

Using the loan, the company will be able to increase the size of its out-grower scheme by tripling the number of smallholder farmers. This will create nearly 600 jobs and ensure that nearly 1,100 laborers receive an improved daily income.

The investments by the ABC Fund come at a time when many developing countries are grappling with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, thereby placing even greater importance on ensuring business continuity and financial support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in a strategic sector. It follows the Fund's € 800,000 loan to Dragon Farming, a Ghana-based soya milling and aggregation company in June.

H.E. Mr. Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti, Secretary-General of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), congratulated the two newest beneficiaries of the Fund on their ability to source the necessary finance to fund their growth and improve their competitive advantages, at a time when many producers are finding it difficult just to keep their operations going: "During this undoubtedly difficult period, it is encouraging to see companies pursue growth that redounds to the benefit of these SME's and the communities within which they operate". The Secretary-General also commended the investment companies for the management of the Fund.

Initiated by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Fund is financed through the 11th European Development Funds (EDF), managed jointly by the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) and the European Union (EU). Additional project financing is also provided by the Government of Luxembourg and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA).

The ABC Fund is a blended-finance impact fund, managed by Bamboo Capital Partners (Bamboo) in partnership with Injaro Investments, which provides catalytic financing to underserved yet profitable segments of agribusiness value chains in developing countries. It deploys loans and equity investments in farmer organizations, rural SMEs and financial institutions. They have potential for high growth and job creation and can also drive social development for their own communities and countries, but they often lack the capital they need to grow their businesses.

During meetings held in May 2020, the OACPS Programme Steering Committee called for the Fund to be expanded to the Caribbean and Pacific Regions of the OACPS, which are not yet served by the Fund.

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