

# Investing in South-South Cooperation for better food security, nutrition and rural transformation

## The role and contributions of China and the United Nations Rome-based agencies

20 March 2019

6.00-8.00 pm

Estación Federal, Belisario Roldán 4415 (Bosques de Palermo)

### Background

The Government of the People's Republic of China and the three United Nations Rome-based agencies (RBAs), i.e. FAO, IFAD and WFP, share a common development goal – to alleviate rural poverty and hunger and build the capacities of poor rural people by investing in smallholder agriculture, food security and nutrition. One way they work together to reach that common goal is through South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC), the scale of which has increased greatly over the last few years. SSTC features high in the development agendas of both China and the RBAs.

The People's Republic of China is a strong advocate of South-South technical exchanges and knowledge sharing initiatives. South-South Cooperation is seen by China as a measure that unites developing nations for self-improvement, based on mutual trust and benefit, solidarity and mutual assistance. In China's vision, SSTC can help developing countries pave a new way for development and prosperity. Recently, in 2016, China furthered its efforts towards South-South cooperation when President Xi Jinping made two unprecedented financial pledges totaling US\$5.1 billion, to assist developing countries. The first pledge of US\$3.1 billion was to establish the China South-South Climate Cooperation Fund, to help developing countries tackle climate change; and the second was to set up a US\$3 billion fund to support developing countries in their implementation of the post-2015 Development Agenda.

Over the years, the Rome-based Agencies have established SSTC as a privileged implementation modality, by mainstreaming it within their operations and approving corporate policies and strategies specific to SSTC. The highlights of the main strategies and policies on SSTC in the RBAs are the following:

- **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations:** FAO's SSTC was officially initiated in 1996, and a specific unit dedicated to SSTC was set up in 2012, which has helped boost FAO's SSTC activities. FAO has effectively mobilized over US\$370 million from more than 30 resource partners, and close to 200 MoUs and project agreements have been signed. SSTC projects have been implemented in over 90 countries, and currently 37 SSTC projects are ongoing. The major modalities of FAO's SSTC include: deploying experts to target countries; organizing study tours, training courses and workshops, technologies demonstration to promote capacity development, technology exchanges and policy dialogues.
- **International Fund for Agricultural Development:** During IFAD's Executive Board held in December 2016, IFAD presented its first strategy on SSTC. Since the document was presented, several Member States have expressed their support in furthering SSTC activities in countries where IFAD implements projects. The Fund has also established three sub-Regional SSTC and Knowledge Centres - one in Addis Ababa, one in Beijing and one in Brasilia - to support the operationalization of the main provisions of IFAD's



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SSTC Strategy; and help strengthen the linkages between IFAD's country, regional and global knowledge activities.

- **United Nations World Food Programme:** WFP promotes SSTC through a diversified approach in humanitarian and development contexts. This includes WFP's network of Centres of Excellence in partnership with Brazil and China, expert deployments, intra-regional collaboration, demonstration sites, peer coaching networks, policy dialogue, technology transfer, academic partnerships or options for joint emergency response. To date, 74 per cent of WFP Country Offices are engaged in brokering and supporting host governments on South-South initiatives.

China and the RBAs have worked extensively on joint South-South Cooperation initiatives:

- **China and FAO:** In 2008, China contributed US\$30 million to FAO, creating a trust fund to establish the FAO-China South-South Programme to support SSC. The technical and financial assistance provided under the Programme has allowed for knowledge and experience sharing and exchanges between China and other countries in the Global South. Chinese experts have shared their knowledge in various technical areas, including aquaculture, crop production, irrigation, livestock, agroforestry, pest control, value addition, rural energy, etc. Building on Programme achievements, in June 2015 China provided a new US\$50 million contribution to support the FAO-China SSC Programme. In November 2018, FAO and China jointly organized a Ministerial Level Forum on Global SSC in Agriculture, which was attended by over 200 representatives from 29 developing countries, 12 international organizations and the heads of the RBAs. The outcome of the Forum was the Changsha Declaration, which defined clear ways to include SSC principles into national policies and programmes, especially the ones targeting the elimination of hunger and malnutrition. By the end of 2018, China had dispatched more than 1000 experts to 37 countries in the South.
- **China and IFAD:** In February 2018, the China-IFAD SSTC Facility was established with an initial contribution of US\$10 million, the overarching goal of which is to exchange and mobilize knowledge, expertise and resources from the Global South to accelerate rural poverty alleviation, enhance rural productivity, advance rural transformation and promote investments between developing countries. The Facility is devoted exclusively to smallholder agriculture and rural development, with specific attention to poverty reduction, fighting malnutrition and promoting rural youth employment in developing countries.
- **China and WFP:** Established in 2016, the WFP Centre of Excellence in China aims to leverage China's successful experience in reducing poverty and hunger. Before 2015, China met its Millennium Development Goal of halving hunger, and in so doing it reduced the number of hungry people globally by two thirds. The aim of WFP's Centre of Excellence in China is to promote South-South Cooperation, so that other countries can learn from China's experiences. The Centre facilitates policy dialogue, technical training, expert deployment, policy research, capacity strengthening and other activities pursuant not only to SDG 2, but also SDG 17 on partnerships.



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## Objectives

The main objective of the side-event is to share lessons and good practices from China and the RBAs in leveraging SSTC for rural transformation, food security and nutrition. In particular, the side-event will provide an opportunity to share lessons and selected case studies in implementing the Facilities in FAO and IFAD, and the work of the WFP China Centre of Excellence; and, more importantly; to draw lessons aimed at showcasing the enormous potential for SSTC in agriculture, food production and rural development.

The side-event will be structured around four main areas:

- a) Introduction and sharing of success stories and case studies coming from the SSTC facilities in FAO and IFAD, financed by China, and the WFP China Centre of Excellence;
- b) Sharing of RBAs' and China's vision on SSTC;
- c) Discussing how to improve the effectiveness of SSTC, in particular in agriculture and rural development; and
- d) Explore concrete opportunities for engagement at the country level on SSTC enabled by China.

## Speakers

- **Hong Tianyun**, Vice Minister, State Council Leading Group of Poverty Alleviation and Development (LGOP), People's Republic of China
- **Qu Dongyu**, Vice Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, People's Republic of China
- **Ashwani K. Muthoo**, Director Global Engagement and Multilateral Relations Division, IFAD
- **Roberto Ridolfi**, Assistant Director General of Programme Support and Technical Cooperation Department, FAO
- **Stanlake Samkange**, Senior Director Strategic Coordination and Support, WFP

## Programme

- 06:00 – 06:05 PM Opening by the moderator
- 06:05 – 06:15 PM Statement by Hong Tianyun, Vice Minister, State Council Leading Group of Poverty Alleviation and Development (LGOP), People's Republic of China
- 06:15 – 06:55 PM Panel session
- 06:55 – 07:25 PM Open discussion and questions from the audience
- 07:25 – 07:30 PM Closing remarks by the moderator
- 07:30 – 08:00 PM Cocktail reception

