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South-South and Triangular Cooperation in FAO

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS TO ACHIEVE
THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



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South-South and Triangular Cooperation in FAO

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FOREWORD

South-South Cooperation (SSC) has grown in scope, diversity and influence over the past 40 years, following the first High-level United Nations Conference on SSC, which produced the landmark Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) for technical cooperation among developing countries. SSC is now widely accepted as a viable pathway for sustainable development in the Global South. In the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) is a means of enhancing access to science, technology and innovation, knowledge sharing as well as capacity building.

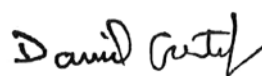
Despite the progress witnessed during the past four decades, developing countries still face enormous development challenges that cut across the social, economic and environmental spheres—challenges that are complex and often difficult to overcome singlehandedly. The good news is that solutions to these challenges do exist within the Global South—solutions that are home-grown, sustainable, replicable and scalable. As a broader framework for collaboration, SSC enables countries to pool resources, adopt and adapt tested and proven solutions in a manner that is consistent with their socio-economic needs and political and cultural circumstances. Through SSTC, countries are able to map their capacity needs and knowledge gaps and find sustainable, cost-effective, long-lasting and economically viable solutions. SSTC approaches could also ensure the realization of social impacts by enhancing sustainability aspects of private sector investments.

The report *South-South and Triangular Cooperation in FAO: strengthening partnerships to achieve Sustainable Development Goals*, aims to provide a deeper understanding of how SSTC can be leveraged to increase agricultural productivity and improve food security and nutrition in the developing world

and do so in a sustainable way. The report is an outcome of the strategic review of more than 100 SSTC initiatives implemented in FAO during the past two decades. Policymakers and development practitioners, from the North and the South alike, seeking to gain in-depth understanding on how SSTC contributes to agricultural development, food security and nutrition, will find ample answers in this report. The report offers practical lessons on how SSTC could be further strengthened and scaled-up in achieving the ambitious 2030 Agenda with the support of the United Nations system, multilateral organizations and other development partners.

Achieving the set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires a new level of global cooperation, beyond Official Development Assistance, in order for countries to follow transformative pathways towards sustainable and resilient societies. Given its core mandate on agriculture and food systems that cuts across all the SDGs, FAO has a major role to play in their implementation, especially on poverty (SDG1) and hunger (SDG2), among others.

As the international community gathers in Buenos Aires on 20-22 March 2019 to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the BAPA Conference and chart a new vision for SSTC, I am very pleased to present this FAO report. I hope the practical lessons learned in FAO contained in this report will contribute to shaping the future SSTC work of the United Nations, multilateral organizations and global development community in the years leading to 2030 and beyond.



Daniel Gustafson

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABC	Brazilian Cooperation Agency	CIALCA	Consortium for Improved Agriculture-based Livelihoods in Central Africa
ABRAPA	Brazilian Association of Cotton Producers	CILSS	Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel
ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States	COMIFAC	Central African Forest Commission
ASDF	Africa Solidarity Trust Fund	CONAB	Brazilian National Supply Company
ASARECA	Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa	CPLP	Community of Portuguese Language Speaking Countries
ASBRAER	Brazilian Association of State Entities for Technical Assistance and Rural Extension	ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	EMBRAPA	Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation
BAPA	Buenos Aires Plan of Action	FFF	Forest and Farm Facility
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme	FFS	Farmer Field Schools
CAC	Central American Agricultural Council	FGDP	Farmer Group Development Plan
CACFish	Central Asian and Caucasus Regional Fisheries and Aquaculture Commission	FSN	Food security and nutrition
CARD	Coalition for Africa Rice Development	IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
CELAC	Community of Latin America and Caribbean States	IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
		IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
		INPE	Brazilian National Institute for Space Research

IRRI	International Rice Research Institute	SPFS	Special Programme for Food Security
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency	SSC	South-South cooperation
JIU	Joint Inspection Unit	SSTC	South-South and triangular cooperation
LIFDCs	low-income food deficit countries	TADs	Transboundary animal diseases
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals	TCDC/TCCT	Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries and Countries in Transition
NPFS	National Programmes for Food Security	TCP	Technical Cooperation Programme
PFH	Parliamentary Front against Hunger	TF	Trust Fund
RBA s	Rome-based agencies	TPA	Tripartite Agreement
RF	Revolving Fund	TrC	Triangular cooperation
RPFS	Regional Programmes for Food Security	UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South cooperation
SADC	Southern African Development Community	UTF	Unilateral Trust Fund
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals	VBOs	Village Based Organization
SOCiLA	Support Organic Cotton in Latin America	WFP	World Food Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Importance of SSTC to FAO

FAO has over 40 years of experience as a leading promotor and facilitator of SSTC in agriculture, food security and nutrition. The adoption of SSC in FAO's work began in 1979 with the establishment of a focal point to promote, coordinate and integrate Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries (TCDC) in all activities of the Organization. During the two decades that followed, SSC in FAO largely took the form of technical exchanges, in the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) programme in the early 1990s and later in the Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries and Countries in Transition (TCDC/TCCP) programme. The latter provided a framework and formalized approach for SSC, focused on the mobilization of experts from developing countries, for deployment on a short-term basis in other Southern countries to serve as technical consultants, trainers and organizers of workshops and seminars.

SSTC became more formalized and institutionalized in FAO with the launch of the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS) in 1994. The programme was implemented mainly for the support of low-income food-deficit countries (LIFDCs) to improve their national food security through increased productivity and sustainable food production. As an important scheme within the SPFS, SSC enabled countries to benefit from the experience and expertise of other developing countries, largely through the deployment of experts from provider countries to work directly with farmers in rural communities of recipient countries. SSC was a key factor for success of the SPFS. Projects implemented under the programme demonstrated the

intensified use of diverse technologies to increase the yield of major staple crops sustainably.

FAO continued to promote SSC in the National Programme for Food Security (NPFS) as the main modality for the exchange of knowledge and experience on good agricultural practices and the transfer of technologies among developing countries. The large-scale and multi-component nature of these programmes, including the provision of secure funding from partners and national governments, expanded the scope of South-South exchanges into many sectors and activities that have more objectives besides achieving food security. As an integral component of the Regional Programme for Food Security (RPFS) SSC was cost-effective and efficacious in addressing shortages of technical capacity at the national level.

In 2012, FAO established a SSC Unit as part of its reform agenda and efforts to ensure stronger institutional support for SSTC. To bolster FAO's institutional support to SSTC and to enhance visibility of its work in this area, the SSC Unit became a full-fledged Office of South-South and Triangular Cooperation in 2019. Such a move demonstrated FAO's leadership and commitment to the furtherance of SSTC within the Organization in direct response to BAPA, the Nairobi outcome document and the recommendations of the 2011 Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) that called for the establishment of dedicated units and identifiable structures for SSTC within the organizations of United Nations system.

To respond to the growing demand for SSTC and to mainstream this area of work across the Organization, FAO developed its first SSC corporate strategy in

2013. The document has expanded the scope and strategic engagements of FAO in SSTC well beyond its initial endeavors that were limited to facilitating knowledge exchanges on good agricultural practices and technologies on the ground. Three features of FAO's recent approaches to SSTC include: 1) upstream policy engagements and the facilitation of policy dialogues and policy exchanges related to agriculture, food security and nutrition, 2) active engagement in SSTC with non-state actors including parliamentarians, local governments, private sector, academia, NGOs, cooperatives, and farmer associations, and 3) a decentralized approach to involve local actors, municipalities and cities in SSTC.

FAO has adopted an innovative approach to resource mobilization (both financial and technical) to implement SSTC initiatives. Middle-income Southern countries, have played a key role in financing SSTC initiatives implemented and/or facilitated by FAO during the past two decades. While Brazil and China have traditionally been major players in the financing of SSC projects in FAO through trust funds, other Southern countries and TrC partners, including Japan, Mexico, Morocco, the Republic of Korea, Turkey and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) have become important providers of technical and financial support for SSTC. Southern governments, including those of Nigeria and Angola have also contributed financially to the cost of implementing SSTC in their respective countries by establishing unilateral trust funds (UTFs). In addition, other innovative funding mechanisms, such as the Africa Solidarity Trust Fund (ASTF), established to support *Africa-to-Africa* development initiatives, provide more flexible resources in support of intraregional SSC.

FAO actively pursues collaboration on SSTC with other United Nations agencies and multilateral organizations. In particular, FAO and the other Rome-based agencies (RBAs), namely the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) collaborate on SSTC to deliver on their individual and shared mandate to improve access to and adequate supply of nutritious food. Some of the SSTC activities that are jointly undertaken by the RBAs include convening of the annual UN Day for SSC, organization of thematic sessions/forums at the Global South-South Development Expo (GSSD-Expo), organization of training, workshops, seminars, and expert panels; preparation of annual reports highlighting RBA's SSTC activities at country, regional and global levels, preparation of SSTC tools and instruments such as the Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit. Beyond the RBAs, FAO also partners with other sister organizations such as the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) in a number of SSTC activities such as the organization of the GSSD-Expo. FAO is also a member of the SSTC Task Team of the United Nations Sustainable Development Groups that is co-chaired by UNOSSC.

SSTC in the implementation of FAO's Strategic Objectives and the SDGs

The Strategic Framework of FAO provides the overarching strategic direction for the Organization. It identifies a set of seven core functions to be performed by FAO to achieve results and articulates five Strategic Objectives that represent the main

areas of work on which the Organization concentrates its efforts to achieve its vision and global goals. These are: 1) Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition; 2) Increase and improve the provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner; 3) Reduce rural poverty; 4) Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems, and 5) Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises.

Eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition

The eradication of extreme hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition requires many actions, inter alia, a strong political commitment, inclusive governance mechanisms, and stakeholder coordination, a coherent framework of policies, programmes and investments, and evidence-based policymaking.

The SSTC initiatives in FAO have raised the profile of food security and nutrition (FSN) high on national and regional political agendas, building on the Organization's extensive country presence, regional undertakings and frameworks. Through SSTC initiatives, FAO has facilitated policy dialogue and learning events to promote the development of FSN policies, investments and legislation. SSTC initiatives have also fostered multi-stakeholder platforms, including parliamentary forums and city networks, which have directly contributed to the improvement of FSN governance in various contexts. Furthermore, the exchange of technical expertise at regional level has enhanced the institutional

capacities of countries to make evidence-based decisions, inform relevant FSN plans and support their effective implementation.

Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable

FAO's strategic objective on sustainable agriculture aims to transform agricultural production systems in addressing the challenges posed by climate change and environmental degradation, through changes in policies and practices in various sectors that support implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in an integrated manner. Hence, FAO employs SSTC approaches as an effective delivery mechanism to highlight best practices, share knowledge, experience and technology, while leveraging resources to promote more access to nutritious food and sustainable agricultural production. Results from its interventions in this area run the gamut from enhanced national and regional capacities in the formulation of sectoral and cross-sectoral policies to the adoption of field-level, hands-on practical solutions on sustainable practices in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries.

Reduce rural poverty

The rural poor face many complex challenges that prevent them from escaping poverty sustainably. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-sector and context-specific approach that combines FSN with measures that enhance agricultural productivity, access to employment opportunities

(especially for the rural youth and women), gender empowerment in rural areas, as well as adequate access to social protection schemes. As such, FAO policies, strategies and programmes target the rural poor, including rural producer organizations and family farmers, who depend on agriculture and natural resources for their livelihoods. FAO supports the development of capacities at national, sub-national and community level to promote productive employment and decent work opportunities and to expand social protection coverage to the rural poor, including youth and women.

Consequently, FAO's support to countries through SSTC has contributed to the formulation of policies and actions that empower the rural poor, including through capacity development activities that enabled rural communities to gain better access to knowledge, finance, technologies, and markets. SSTC projects and initiatives also contributed to enhanced capacities of Southern countries in the formulation of social protection schemes, income and employment generating activities that improve the well-being and economic empowerment of rural communities.

Inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems

Inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems are crucial for the sustainability, availability, affordability, quality, and safety of food agricultural products. To realize this objective, FAO provides assistance and capacity development to countries to access international markets, and meet international

standards for food safety, plant and animal health. Support is also provided to countries to design and implement effective policies, regulatory frameworks and institutional arrangements that are conducive for the development of inclusive and efficient agri-food systems. FAO also assists countries to improve public and private sector investments in agricultural and food systems, and to strengthen the managerial and technical capacity of the various stakeholders along food and agriculture value chains, including through mechanisms that enhance their access to financial services and risk management tools.

In supporting these activities, FAO leverages SSTC focused on capacity development through technical knowledge exchanges. SSTC projects in FAO have contributed to the design and implementation of policies, regulatory frameworks and institutional arrangements that support more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems. SSTC projects also enhanced the technical and managerial capacity of actors in food and agriculture value chains, including smallholder farmers and small-scale producers and agribusinesses. In addition, SSTC projects are catalytic in spurring food-related public investments and trade.

Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises

Beyond the triple challenges of ensuring FSN, providing productive and decent jobs and sustainable use of natural resources, developing countries continuously face disasters and crises that threaten their livelihood and long-term

development. The SDG objectives to attain zero hunger, sustainable agriculture, poverty reduction, and inclusive and efficient agricultural systems cannot be achieved without resilient agriculture. To that end, in reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience of livelihoods to threats, FAO works closely with developing countries to ensure that their hard-won development gains are not lost due to crises and disasters, especially those related to climate change, food chain crises and conflicts.

FAO effectively leverages SSTC approaches in its resilience work. On the one hand, FAO facilitates mutual learning through knowledge exchanges in areas such as disaster risk reduction and crisis management. On the other, through regional programmes, FAO fosters collective action against transboundary threats (animal diseases, natural disasters, and food value chain crisis) that individual countries cannot tackle single-handedly.

Lessons learned

- **“Tripartite model” in brokering South-South knowledge and experience.** Clearly defined frameworks, rules and guidelines for SSTC are indispensable for brokering knowledge and sharing experience among countries. In this regard, the tripartite model pioneered by FAO in its SSC projects, involving a host (recipient) country, a cooperating (provider) country and FAO, has proved effective in achieving this objective. This approach has enabled recipient countries to identify their own needs, including technical, institutional and financial challenges that are then effectively matched with

solutions in other countries with FAO’s catalytic support. FAO’s comparative advantage, including its neutrality, global reach, country presence and technical expertise, has been a key factor in instilling trust between partners, enabling the Organization to catalyze and broker knowledge exchanges between many recipient and provider countries.

- **National leadership and ownership in South-South exchanges.** One of the prerequisites for a successful and systematic transfer and exchange of knowledge, experience and technologies is a thorough needs assessment that should precede any SSTC project implementation to identify capacity gaps and needs that can be best addressed through SSC. In many of the SSTC projects and initiatives analyzed in the present report, national governments of host countries have demonstrated their national ownership and leadership in SSTC projects, conducting needs assessments to identify their capacity gaps, define priorities and needs that were addressed by provider countries with FAO’s catalytic support.

- **Flexibility in SSTC modalities within and across countries.** Another key driver of success in FAO’s SSTC project portfolio is the flexibility in the use of SSTC modalities consistent with regional priorities and needs. For instance, in Africa, where the majority of SSTC projects have focused on sustainable agricultural production, the deployment of experts into the field for a longer term of at least 2 years, covering two agricultural production seasons, was required to ensure the diffusion and uptake of know-how and technology in the host country. In LAC, where most of SSTC projects largely involve policy dialogue, technical missions, and study tours,

most FAO interventions required the fielding of experts and technicians from cooperating countries for a medium term of close to 6 months.

- **Building institutional capacities for uptake of Southern knowledge, experience and technologies.** The FFS approach involving on-site demonstrations and on-the-job training proved effective in supporting the diffusion and uptake of new production methods, farming techniques and technologies by farmers and extension workers in recipient countries. This approach has been effective in strengthening the capacities of farmers, extension workers to adopt and adapt new farming practices and technologies. However, scaling-up and the wider application of new technologies were at times limited or slowed by national regulations and laws that require prior testing and approval of new or improved technologies and practices by the official research institutions which often lack the human and technical resources to quickly test and approve these technologies before they become part of the legitimate agricultural extension services. Despite this challenge, SSTC projects have had a lasting impact on local institutional capacities in the hosting countries as they target research and other authoritative supporting institutions rather than working directly with extension service providers in the field.

- **A regional approach to SSC with national and sub-national focus.** SSTC projects have contributed to regional efforts in rallying support for and galvanizing political commitment, for instance, to reduce hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. Regional commitments, in turn,

reinforce political will at the national level. SSTC projects have also proved effective in spurring collective action against transboundary challenges that affect agriculture, including plant and animal diseases and other man-made and natural disasters, crises and shocks. Moreover, a decentralized approach to SSTC involving non-state actors including city-to-city and farmer-to-farmer alliances have proved effective to achieve more direct and beneficial impact at grassroots levels by paying special attention to vulnerable groups, including rural women, indigenous groups and the youth.

- **Strategic engagement with diverse group of actors.** Leveraging the comparative advantages, capacities and resources of diverse groups of actors has fostered the mobilization of adequate financial and technical resources to implement SSTC projects and initiatives focused on various aspects of FAO's mandate. Strategic engagement with Brazil, for instance, powered the implementation of SSTC projects in Latin America and Africa, largely focused on food security and nutrition. Effective partnerships with China, and the creation of the China-FAO SSC trust fund, helped to finance SSTC projects on sustainable agriculture largely in Africa and Asia. The present review also has shown that SSTC projects, supported by these partners, could be catalytic in mobilizing more resources, including through unilateral trust funds and other funding arrangements from host countries. For instance, Angola has financed the use of Brazil's expertise from its own national budget. Nigeria has done the same to acquire expertise from China.

FAO's SSTC vision, opportunities and the way forward

• **Enhancing awareness about the concepts and definitions of SSTC.** Effective mainstreaming of SSTC across Strategic Programmes, Regional Initiatives and Country Programming Frameworks and other planning instruments requires a clear understanding of the concepts and definitions of SSTC. To this end, it is imperative to raise awareness of the unique principles, advantages, values and benefits of SSTC internally and among external partners through the preparation and dissemination of case studies, practical operational frameworks, guidelines, and “how to” manuals. This needs to be pursued in tandem with regular training, workshops, e-learning and other tools that foster learning and the diffusion of SSTC approaches in all areas of FAO's work. FAO's corporate strategy on SSC should be revised to provide a robust definition to SSTC to enable its optimal application in Strategic Programmes, Regional Initiatives and Country Programming Frameworks.

• **Broadening the partnership base.** The demand for SSTC outstrips the supply. There is a critical need for FAO to expand its partnerships base to include other potential providers of support for SSTC in order to meet the ever increasing demand for SSTC. In particular, strategic partnerships need to be forged with middle-income countries that are increasingly contributing to the global development agenda; they have much to offer, in both financial and technical terms, building on their development successes in the recent past. A clear strategy for partnerships with middle-income countries on SSTC

needs to be developed through effective dialogue and proactive engagements pursued with a view to securing more financial and technical resources as well as good development practices and policy options from such partners. Northern countries remain key partners in the financing of SSC projects and in the provision of expertise, technology and many other resources. The strategy to engage more triangular partners in SSC projects needs to be developed. Furthermore, engagement with non-state actors in civil society, academia and the private sector needs to be further strengthened especially as such partners are better positioned to apply science, technology and innovation to improve access to adequate nutritious food during the evolving fourth industrial revolution.

• **Measurement of SSTC.** In-kind contributions play an important role in the facilitation of SSTC projects at FAO. The Tripartite Agreement (TPA) agreement signed between the host-country, provider country and FAO does include an indication of in-kind contributions from the host country, including provision of counterpart experts, lodging and accommodation costs, and local travel expenses, amongst others. These costs, when factored into the project budget, provide a more accurate cost of the project and a fairer picture of the contribution from the receiving Southern partners. However, there is no system in place to measure such contributions from the host-countries. It is recommended that a technical note to provide a harmonized understanding and approach to measuring in-kind contributions to SSTC projects be developed.

- **Improving reporting and monitoring on SSTC.** Monitoring and reporting are critical to measure the effectiveness and impact of FAO's current and future SSTC work. As part of a corporate requirement, mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure regular reporting on SSTC activities across Strategic Programmes, Technical units, Regional and Decentralized Offices. For this purpose, a practical set of performance indicators, together with tools for quality assurance needs to be developed for accountability through more effective monitoring and reporting. Furthermore, surveys need to be conducted on a more regular basis to monitor the extent to which SSTC has been effectively mainstreamed across Strategic Programmes, Regional Initiatives and Country Programming Frameworks and other planning instruments. There is a need to build awareness on the entry points for SSTC projects in FAO's broader project cycle and for a related monitoring mechanism to track SSTC at activity/initiative level under regular programming arrangements across the Organization.

- **Develop a robust knowledge exchange platform.** The mapping, documentation and dissemination of good practices on SSTC is central to scaling up the positive impact of SSTC during the implementation of the 2030 agenda. Knowledge exchange platforms play an important role to facilitate the sharing of expertise, knowledge and agricultural development solutions. To meet the increasing demand by Members for development solutions in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, FAO's SSC Gateway needs to be revamped

into a more dynamic hub to serve as a one-stop-shop for development solutions on agriculture, food security and nutrition. Beyond networking, new features should be added to transform the platform into a dynamic knowledge brokering tool enabling concrete exchanges of solutions, expertise and technologies among Southern countries.

- **Foster interagency collaboration.** RBAs collaboration needs to be further strengthened, including in areas that have been emphasized in global frameworks for SSTC, including BAPA and the Nairobi outcome document. Some of the areas that require further collaboration include: policy dialogue and coordination, mainstreaming SSTC in policies and operational activities, research, capacity development, monitoring and reporting.

Beyond the RBAs, collaboration with other sister organizations, including the United Nations Office for South-South cooperation (UNOSSC) needs be further strengthened.

- **A new SSTC vision and strategy.** The greater emphasis placed on SSTC in the context of the 2030 agenda and the SDGs call for a renewed vision and a strategy for SSTC in FAO. The strategy should articulate how FAO should further leverage SSTC to meet the ever increasing demand for the approach in the implementation of the ambitious Agenda. It should elaborate a clear direction on more innovative partnerships, private sector engagement and funding mechanisms for SSTC including through blended finance and other financing instruments. ■

INTRODUCTION

Background

South-South cooperation (SSC) is an integral part of international cooperation for development. Grounded on its unique principles and flexible approaches, SSC, as a complement to North-South cooperation, provides developing countries a broader framework to engage in mutually-beneficial cooperation in pursuit of their individual and collective development goals. In recent years, South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) has gained momentum and emphasis in the global development discourse being recognized as an effective mechanism in the implementation of the 2030 development agenda. In this context, particular emphasis has been placed on SSTC in the areas of science, technology, innovation and capacity development.

As early as 1979, FAO had already established a focal point for SSC to promote, coordinate and integrate SSC in all the activities of the Organization. In the 1990s, SSC was an integral component of FAO's flagship programmes (namely the Special Programme for Food Security and National Programme for Food Security), enabling the transfer and exchange of good practices and technologies in agriculture and contributing to food security and nutrition in many developing countries. In recent years, FAO's strategic engagement with key Southern countries has given impetus to its SSTC work, enabling the proliferation of large-scale SSTC programmes that have contributed to improved agricultural development, food security and nutrition in a large number of developing countries.

As the development cooperation agenda transitioned from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, FAO, as the custodian of 21+4 SDG targets has a bigger role to play in supporting its Members achieve their national development goals and the SDGs. The emphasis put on SSTC in the context of this Agenda coupled with the growing demands from its Members for SSTC called for a new vision and strategy for SSTC in FAO. Against that backdrop, FAO conducted a strategic review of its SSTC initiatives implemented during the past two decades with the view to draw lessons that will inform the development of a new SSTC strategy.

This publication, an outcome of the strategic review, comes at a very timely moment as the international community gathers in March 2019 in Buenos Aires to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the United Nations High-level conference on SSC, take stock of the progress made by the United Nation system in promoting SSTC and explore opportunities to advance SSTC in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. By highlighting FAO's rich experience and impactful work in SSTC spanning 1996–2017, the report provides concrete evidence on the role of SSTC to agriculture development, food security and nutrition and will contribute to a better understanding of the contribution of SSTC to the implementation of the SDGs¹.

¹ Even though most of the SSTC projects selected for this review were outside the SDG time frame, the core issues they addressed could be linked with the SDGs.

Objective

The Strategic Review is based on a thorough analysis of the SSTC initiatives implemented by FAO from 1996 to 2017. It seeks to provide a comprehensive picture of the evolution of FAO's SSTC portfolio, the key lessons learned through implementation of its SSTC initiatives and sets the basis for formulation of a new strategy that will guide FAO's future SSTC work. Specifically, the review aims to achieve the following objectives:

- Identify and document good practices on SSTC in agricultural development, food security and nutrition with potential for replication and scaling-up.
- Contribute to a better understanding of the role of SSTC to agricultural development, food security and nutrition.

- Identify key lessons to improve the quality and impact of FAO's future SSTC work.
- Facilitate future reporting on specific topics and themes related to SSTC.

Structure

The report is structured as follows. Chapter 2 discusses SSTC in agriculture, food security and nutrition in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Chapter 3 provides an overview of SSTC in FAO. The contribution of SSTC to the realization of FAO's Strategic Objectives and SDGs is discussed in Chapter 4. Lessons learned, challenges, opportunities and FAO's SSTC renewed vision are presented in Chapter 5. ■

SSTC IN AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE 2030 AGENDA

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development called for partnerships, including SSTC, as important means of implementation. In this context of the Agenda, particular emphasis has been placed on SSTC in the areas of science, technology, innovation and capacity development. Other global processes, including the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change also emphasized the important role of SSTC.

The debates around the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also underscored the need to pursue more effective and inclusive partnerships in financing development. The agenda called for an intensified effort to mobilize resources beyond ODA towards achieving SDGs. Building on Monterrey Consensus, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda also stressed on a need for a wider range of areas for financing development post-2015, including domestic public resources, domestic and international private businesses and finance, international trade, debt

sustainability, science, technology, innovation and capacity building. The agenda also recognized the role of ODA in complementing domestic efforts to mobilize resources, recognized the importance of SSC and that of development banks and multi-stakeholder partnerships, and called for more countries to implement innovative mechanisms, instruments and modalities for additional financing.

The need for enhanced cooperation among developing countries is taking on new meaning in the global development landscape. The rapid development of indigenous technological solutions by many emerging economies and other developing countries has changed the global development landscape and created unprecedented opportunities for SSTC. Under such circumstances, focusing on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, affirming the role of FAO as a strategic platform, and realizing all-round, multi-level and wide-ranging agricultural cooperation among the Southern countries will become the key development trend of SSTC in agriculture in the years ahead. Such trend in SSTC in agriculture can be summarized as follows:

- **First, SSTC in agriculture will focus more on achieving the overarching goal of sustainable development by 2030.** The objective is to eliminate all forms of poverty worldwide, eradicate hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition and promote the sustainable agricultural development. In the next decade, the model for global agricultural development will be guided by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the sustainable development goals.
- **Secondly, incorporate SSTC in agriculture into the mainstream of strategic thinking, and continue to expand the geographical breadth or scope of agricultural cooperation.** During the 40th anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, there is need to place SSTC in agriculture into the mainstream of strategic thinking (rather than a supporting role) to take fully advantage and exploit the benefit of SSTC. There is also a need to enhance full participation of emerging economies or middle-income countries in SSTC in agriculture, expand the scope or areas covered by agricultural cooperation, and achieve multi-dimensional cooperation within and between countries and regions through more flexible and diversified approaches to SSTC.
- **Third, continue to affirm the role of multilateral international development organizations such as FAO as a platform/mechanism and coordinator,** and use the existing tripartite interactive cooperation model to improve the effectiveness and benefits of agricultural cooperation.
- **Fourth, pay attention to the value and contribution of emerging countries and the private sector,** provide new cooperative partners with ways and means for effective SSTC in agriculture and tripartite agricultural cooperation, and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of management.
- **Fifth, expand Knowledge Exchange platforms for knowledge and experience sharing.** It's essential to establish a large data platform using advanced communications technologies and to build a database recording the history, methods and experiences of SSTC in agriculture and related projects in detail, to thus lay a foundation for the effective sharing of experience and knowledge, and to provide data for making SSTC in agriculture the mainstream strategy. ■

SSTC – A KEY DELIVERY MECHANISM TO ACHIEVE FAO’S MANDATE

Evolution of FAO’s SSTC²

This section discusses how SSTC has evolved in FAO—beginning with the early years when SSC had a marginal role (in the FFS and TCDC/TCCT programmes) in the early 1990s— to the period when it became an integral component of FAO’s SPFS in 1996, and later the NPFS and RPFS. The section also examines in great detail the recent trends since SSTC became more formalized and institutionalized in FAO with the creation of a dedicated SSC team in 2012 and a full-fledged office for SSTC in 2019 (Box 1).

The initial phase of SSTC in FAO

The adoption of SSC approaches in FAO’s work dates back to the 1970s. In response to BAPA, as early as 1979, FAO had already established a focal point for TCDC to promote, coordinate and integrate TCDC into all activities of the Organization. Even before the ‘deployment of experts’ was officially adopted in FAO as one of the modalities for SSTC, technical exchanges used to be facilitated through the FFS programme in the early 1990s. One of the first FFS projects in Africa, for example, used training of

² The discussion in this section largely draws from the report produced in 2012 by the SSC Unit based on the “Review of 15 years of South-South cooperation in FAO” (unpublished material).

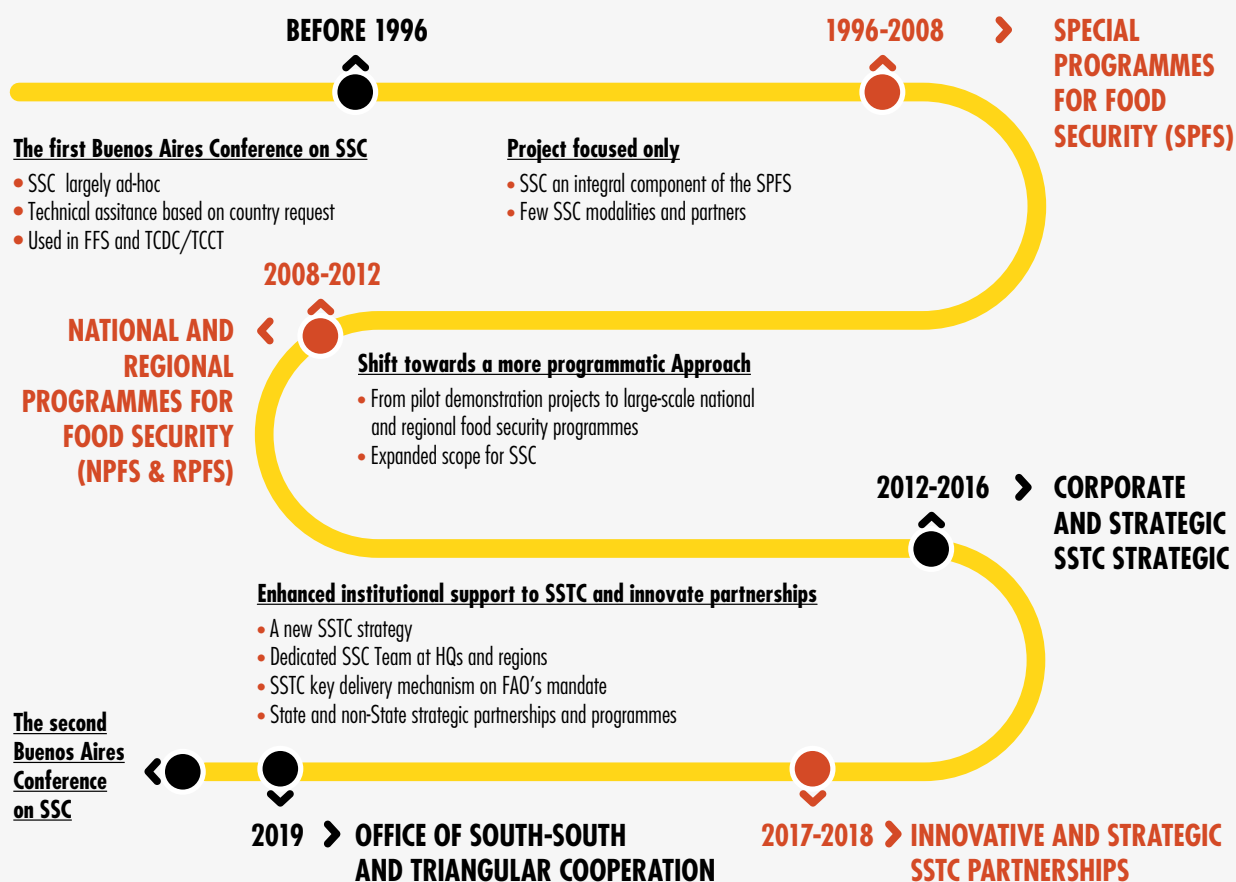
trainers approach and had an interregional dimension involving Asian and African countries (see Box 2).

SSTC began to be more institutionalized in FAO with the launch of the TCDC/TCCT experts programme in 1994 under FAO’s Partnership Programmes³. Recognizing the wealth of knowledge and technical expertise on rural development issues in developing countries and those in transition, the programme provided a framework for mobilizing experts from one country for deployment in others. The experts were deployed on a short-term basis in activities such as technical consultations and missions, training, workshops, and seminars and were funded through departmental allotments, the Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) or extra-budgetary sources. The governing principles of the former FAO’s Partnership Programme, including the use of TCDC/TCCT Experts, were addressed in the framework Agreement signed between FAO and the individual government.

Overall, the technical exchanges facilitated either through the FFS or the TCDC/TCCT programmes

³ In 1994, FAO launched the Partnership Programmes with the aim of strengthening its partnership with Member Nations, enhancing the cost-effectiveness and relevance of the Organization’s work, and promoting the national and collective self-reliance of the developing countries through the pooling of their institutional and human resources. For more information: <http://www.fao.org/FOCUS/E/TCDC/intro2-e.htm>

BOX 1
SSC EVOLUTION IN FAO



BOX 2
FFS AND SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

The first FFS training in Africa took place in Ghana in 1995, with participants from Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso and facilitated by Master Trainers from the Philippines. As African countries began to be involved in FAO's FFS projects, it was necessary to bring experienced FFS Master Trainers from other

Southern nations, in order to enhance local capacity on the ground.

Sharing experiences of the programme and lessons learned through SSC was effective to support countries facing similar problems and to ensure both quality and sustainability of emerging FFS programmes. The rapid scale up of the FFS approach can be related to the efforts made in sharing this approach through SSC⁴.

⁴ FAO, FFS Global Platform. Text extracted from <http://www.fao.org/farmer-field-schools/regional-activities/en/>

were ad hoc before they became an integral component of FAO's Programme on Food Security.

FAO's SSTC in the context of the Food Security Programmes

SSTC began to be more formalized and institutionalized in FAO with the launch of the SPFS in 1994⁵. Pursuant to the World Food Summit Declaration on World Food Security and Plan of Action, the Programme sought to support mainly LIFDCs improve their national food security through increased productivity and sustainable food production. The goal was to reduce hunger and malnutrition principally by helping small farmers increase yields of staple food crops and diversify their farming systems.

SSC was an important scheme within the framework of the SPFS as it was designed to enable countries to benefit from the experience and expertise of other developing countries. This was mainly done by providing experts for two or three years to work in the implementation of the SPFS in the recipient countries. The experts worked directly with farmers in rural communities involved in the SPFS⁶. Between 1996 and 2008, thirty-nine SSC agreements had been signed and 13 cooperating countries had provided over 1 400 experts and technicians that were deployed to 34 countries and two subregions to support implementation of the SPFS. Furthermore, almost all countries that initiated pilot SPFS activities had requested and received support for, at least one extension of their Phase I SPFS projects. In many instances, extension projects attracted donor funding, making it possible to enlarge and enrich the scope of activities to be implemented and respond more comprehensively to local needs.

⁵ FAO's SPFS website: http://www.fao.org/english/newsroom/action/facts_spfs_water.htm

⁶ For more information: CFS. 2007. *Status And Lessons Learned From Special, National And Regional Programmes For Food Security And Other Relevant FAO Food Security Programmes*. Page 4. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/tempref/docrep/fao/meeting/011/J9454e.pdf>

Regarding the impact of the programme, the projects from Phase I SPFS have demonstrated intensification and diversification of technologies aimed at obtaining sustainable increases in yields⁷, and that the methodology used for the technology transfer, which involved SSC, had proven to be a key factor for success⁸ (Box 3).

The NPFS and RPFS were launched in FAO, along with other objectives, to address some of the challenges encountered in the SPFS (such as language barriers, difficult working conditions for cooperants, limited scaling up support) and transition away from pilot demonstration projects in SPFS to a large scale projects with catalytic support of FAO⁹. With the launch of the NPFS, national governments began to be actively engaged in the identification of the SSC support needed which in turn enabled FAO to assist national governments in formulation of a large-scale and multi-component NPFSs and RPFSs.

The modalities for financing and implementation for NPFS were significantly different from those employed during SPFS projects. First, as these were national programmes, there was an effort for them to be mainstreamed into national development plans and budgets. Second, in addition to support provided by funding partners through traditional programmes and projects or budgetary support, governments had also committed to these programmes through allocation of national resources (See Box 4.) Third, NPFS were closely linked to larger national processes of strategic planning, policy formulation

⁷ Particularly on major staple crops (wheat, rice, maize, sorghum, and cassava) there was a demonstrated increase in yield, which ranged from 25 to 135 percent.

⁸ Ibid. Page 3.

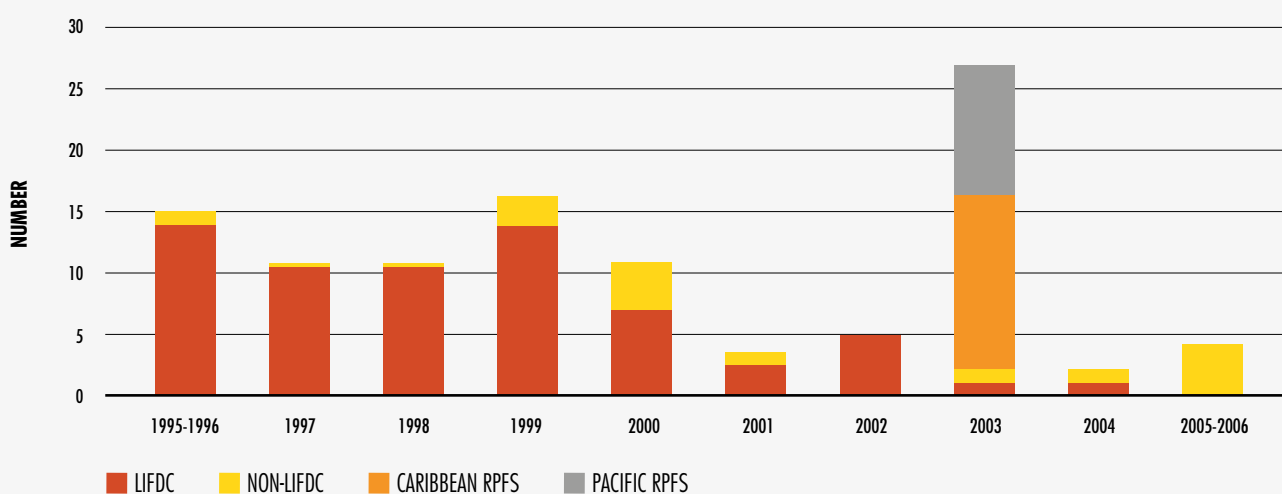
⁹ FAO. Council Hundred and twenty-third Session. Report of the Eighty-seventh Session of the Programme Committee. *Item 4.a Programme Evaluation -The External Evaluation of the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS)*. Rome, 28 October-2 November 2002. Retrieved from: http://www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/005/Y6741e.htm#P186_13737

BOX 3**HIGHLIGHTS, FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT FAO'S SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR FOOD SECURITY (SPFS)¹⁰**

- **Launching, host countries and budget:**

The SPFS was launched in 1994 with pilot demonstration projects in 15 countries, and an initial budget of USD 3.5 million, entirely subscribed by FAO. By the end of 2005, 105 countries had implemented Phase I SPFS activities, and more than USD 775 million had been mobilized, of which over USD 300 million came from the participating countries themselves¹¹.

NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WHERE PHASE I SPFS ACTIVITIES WERE LAUNCHED, 1995-2005



- **Introduced new/improved technologies:**

The introduction of new /improved technologies was one of the main objectives of the SPFS. As highlighted by several SPFS reports, the SSC cooperants provided technical assistance and introduced many new improved technologies, practices and skills to recipient countries. Although the technologies introduced were not always new to the country (at the national level), as reported by Nigeria, in most cases they were new for the counterpart staff and targeted small farmer communities in the area.

- **Capacity development provided for targeted beneficiaries and hosting organizations:**

The 34 SPFS implemented with SSC support reached more than 200 000 direct beneficiaries. Many of the technical reviews, end-of-project evaluations and impact assessments of these SPFSs reported a significant increase in production achieved by direct beneficiaries of the projects. The SSC cooperants were concentrated in providing training of trainers. Furthermore, the SPFS projects that had received SSC support reported on average a 43 percent higher number of direct beneficiary households than those that had not received SSC support. Several reports mentioned that the SSC cooperants filled local human capacity gaps in the hosting organization.

In some cases the SSC cooperants, working in the context of a project, had managed to mobilize funds to conduct demonstration sessions and training jointly with the hosting institutions thereby strengthening the agricultural extension work of the hosting institutes. In this way, the projects, through SSC, managed to improve the human and, sometimes, the financial capacity of the hosting countries/institutions.

¹⁰ Extracted from SSC Unit's internal report on "Review of 15 years of South-South cooperation in FAO". Item 6.

¹¹ CFS. 2007. *Status And Lessons Learned From Special, National And Regional Programmes For Food Security And Other Relevant FAO Food Security Programmes*. Page 4. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/tempref/docrep/fao/meeting/011/J9454e.pdf>

BOX 4**HIGHLIGHTS, FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT FAO'S NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR FOOD SECURITY (NPFS)**

- **Nigeria's Unilateral Trust Fund (UTF) for SSC:**

In 2003, the SSC programme involving FAO, the governments of the People's Republic of China and the Federal Republic of Nigeria was launched. The objective of the programme was to support Nigeria's Agriculture Transformation Agenda (ATA), contributing effectively to the national agenda of

increasing agricultural productivity levels, food security, generating incomes and creating agricultural and off-farm employment for young people.

The SSC programme was funded by the government of Nigeria through a unilateral trust fund (UTF) and received in-kind support from China. Within the framework of the programme, a total of 578 experts and technicians were deployed to work in the field for maximum period of two years¹².

The SSC experts living in the rural communities shared their knowledge and experiences, and have helped introduce, demonstrate and adapt more than 200 Chinese-developed scalable technologies and innovations. One of the key contributions of the NPFS was the establishment of institutional synergies in Nigeria¹³.

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¹² More information is available at http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/FAO-countries/Nigeria/ToR/SSC_In_Agriculture_Benefiting_farmers.pdf

¹³ Mid-Term technical review of the NPFS Nigeria, page 35-36, May 2011

and investment programming for sectors and actions that have other objectives besides achieving food security¹⁴.

The transition from the SPFS to NPFS had changed FAO's role substantially, from implementer of SPFS projects to becoming a catalyst and facilitator of NPFSs through advocacy, technical support, monitoring, reporting and promotion of partnerships for the mobilization of resources (Box 5).

The RPFS had a complementary role and were implemented to ensure the sustainability of the SPFS and NPFS. To a large extent, RPFS sought to promote harmonization of policies, coordination of actions, and strengthening of common institutional structures at the regional and sub-regional levels, contributing to regional integration efforts. Upon request, FAO provided support to Regional Economic Integration Organizations (REIOs) in the formulation and implementation of numerous RPFS¹⁵. As an integral component of these regional

¹⁴ CFS. 2007. *Status And Lessons Learned From Special, National And Regional Programmes For Food Security And Other Relevant FAO Food Security Programmes*. Page 5-6. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/tempref/docrep/fao/meeting/011/j9454e.pdf>

¹⁵ FAO; 2009. *Pathways to success stories in agricultural production and food security*. Page 28. Available at: http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/newsroom/docs/pathways.pdf

BOX 5**THE STRATEGIC ALLIANCE WITH CHINA IN THE NPFS¹⁶**

To meet the growing demand for NPFSs, China signed a **Letter of Intent** with FAO in **May 2006**, to provide up to 3 000 Chinese experts and technicians to developing countries. Following the signature, under a Strategic Alliance, China and FAO signed on March 24, 2009, a general agreement for the creation of a trust fund for USD 30 million over a period of three years.

The Trust Fund (TF) Agreement prioritized projects that were focused on the former UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to improve the agricultural productivity of the developing countries within the framework of NPFS. Through this Trust Fund, China committed to send agricultural experts and technicians to the recipient countries, and a small quantity of agricultural equipment for demonstration purposes.

¹⁶ Extracted from the Draft report review 15 years of SSC.

The programme's objective was also to provide practical support to the national agricultural extension or other services in addition to technical training and exchange programmes.



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programmes, SSC has been effective in addressing regional capacity needs and delivering concrete results. For instance, an independent evaluation of the RPFS in the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) in 2008 had found that SSC was a low-cost approach and effective in addressing shortages of technical capacity at the national-level¹⁷.

Triangular Partnerships

In recent years FAO has begun to engage with Northern partners to implement TrC projects, including through trust fund arrangements. For instance, a TrC project¹⁸ on sustainable rice value

¹⁷ 15 years review report of FAO's SSC. Page 54.

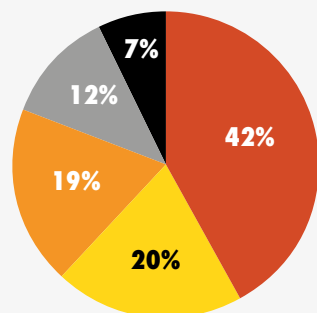
¹⁸ GCP/RAF/497/ROK.

chain development was launched in 2014 in collaboration the Republic of Korea to strengthen the business and entrepreneurial capacities of rice producer organizations and small-scale enterprises in selected countries in West Africa. Another TrC project¹⁹ was launched in 2016 in partnership with Japan to promote sustainable agriculture, rural development, food security, and trade and poverty alleviation in Africa. The project aimed to support the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP)—the regional framework for agricultural transformation, wealth creation, food security and nutrition, economic growth and prosperity.

¹⁹ GCP/RAF/411/JPN, later amended as GCP/INT/JPN.

BOX 6 A RECAP OF SPFS, NPSF AND RPFS IN NUMBERS

FAO'S SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION IN SUPPORT OF
NPFS/RPFS/SPFS (1996-2012)



- FAO regular budget (including TCPs)
- Host country UTF/counterpart funds
- China Trust Fund Phase I
- Other SSC Resource Partners' commitment
- Triangular Partners' Commitment

A stronger institutional arrangement for SSTC in FAO

In the context of FAO's reform agenda and to ensure a strong institutional support for SSTC, a SSC Unit was created in FAO in 2012²⁰. The move was a clear demonstration of FAO's leadership and commitment for the furtherance of SSTC within the Organization and a direct response to BAPA, the Nairobi outcome document and the recommendations of the 2011 Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) that had requested the establishment of such a dedicated unit for SSTC within the UN system organizations²¹.

²⁰ The SSC Team (formerly TCSS) was one of the two core teams of the former South-South and Resource Mobilization Division (TCS) in FAO.

²¹ In its report entitled "South-South and TrC in the United Nations system, JIU/REP/2011/3", the JIU recommended that UN specialized agencies, programmes and funds establish an 'identifiable, and dedicated structures, mechanisms and focal points' to ensure better coordination of SSTC within the organizations.

To bolster FAO's institutional support to SSTC and enhance visibility of its work in this area, the SSC Unit became a full-fledged office of South-South and triangular cooperation and was placed under the Programme Support and Technical Cooperation Department in 2019.

The new SSTC Office is tasked with the main responsibility of promoting SSTC across the Organization and undertakes the following tasks:

- Coordinates and facilitates the mainstreaming of SSTC as key delivery mechanism across Strategic Programmes, Regional Initiatives and Country Programming Frameworks.
- Assists Strategic Programmes, Technical units, Regional and Decentralized Offices in the identification of potential SSTC partners and funding opportunities at global, regional and country levels.
- Provides technical support to the staff in FAO headquarters and Decentralized Offices through development and provision of trainings, tools and guidance materials with the aim to enhance understanding and knowledge of SSTC and the implementation modalities.
- Undertakes outreach and advocacy campaigns to ensure that the visibility of SSTC is effectively promoted to reach targeted audiences, including member countries and other partners.

Mainstreaming of SSTC in FAO

To respond to the growing demand for SSTC and further intensify its support, including through mainstreaming SSTC in its area of work, FAO developed its first SSC corporate strategy in 2013. The strategy was developed to enable FAO to: 1) expand and diversify the ranges of modalities to facilitate exchange of Southern development solutions (including the short- to long-term deployment of experts, study tours, technology exchanges to support a broad set of technical

issues); 2) connect SSTC providers with seekers; 3) promote SSTC policy-level dialogues; and 4) create an enabling environment to mobilize broader partnerships and resources, as well as raise the visibility of SSTC²².

A. A cooperation instrument: The Tripartite Agreements (TPAs)

TPAs are subscribed jointly clearly stating the responsibilities of the recipient countries (in hosting the experts and technicians), provider countries (providing experts and technicians), and FAO (in facilitating the travel, payment of subsistence allowance and providing technical supervision). Based on SSTC support needed, FAO (jointly with the provider country) will determine the composition and number of experts and technician teams, terms of reference and logistical, administrative and financial arrangements.

Through the tripartite model, FAO catalyzes knowledge exchange by formulating and implementing SSTC projects in a step-by-step fashion. After receiving the official request from a recipient country (host country) and agreement of a potential provider country, FAO initiates a joint FAO/provider country formulation mission to work with the host country's experts to draw up the SSTC Agreement. The tasks of this tripartite mission include the identification of specific programme/project(s), regions covered and selected sites, capacity gaps, training needs and activities which will be addressed/supported by the SSTC initiative.

After the signature of the TPA by the representatives of the provider, recipient countries and FAO, the provider country directly starts with the selection of experts and technicians. The approved experts and

technicians are offered a Personal Service Agreement (PSAs) and will fall under the technical supervision of the FAO but will retain their contractual relationship with their employer and will remain throughout their mission under the responsibility of their government.

In recent years, FAO's internal rules, regulations and procedures have changed to enhance further mainstreaming of SSTC in FAO's operational activities and improve the quality of its support to SSTC at the country level. A new mechanism put in place in 2017 enables close monitoring, quality assurance and technical support to SSTC throughout FAO's project cycle. The inclusion of quality marker about SSTC in FAO's project cycle provides information about new proposals that consider SSTC as a modality of implementation and will enable Headquarter teams and Regional SSC officers to actively engage and provide the required quality assurance and technical support throughout the project cycle.

B. Expanded scope and diversified actors in FAO's SSTC

The SSC strategy has expanded the scope and modalities of FAO's SSTC well beyond its initial endeavors that were limited to facilitating knowledge exchanges on good agricultural practices and technologies on the ground. Three features of FAO's recent approaches to SSTC are noteworthy in this regard i.e. 1) upstream policy engagement and facilitation of policy dialogues and policy exchanges related to agriculture development, food security and nutrition, 2) active engagement in SSTC with non-state actors including Parliamentarians, local governments, private sector, academia, NGOs, cooperatives, and farmers associations, and 3) decentralized approach involving local actors, municipalities and cities in SSTC. A few examples of FAO's recent SSTC initiatives related to these are presented below.

i) Parliamentarian-to-Parliamentarian exchanges.

The Parliamentary Front against Hunger (PFH), established in 2009 within the framework of the Hunger Free Latin America and the Caribbean

²² FAO, 2016. FAO's SSTC Strategy in Action: Fostering partnerships among the Global South. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6249e.pdf>

BOX 7**GLOBAL PARLIAMENTARY SUMMIT AGAINST HUNGER AND MALNUTRITION²³**

The Global Parliamentary Summit against Hunger and Malnutrition is a joint initiative of the Spanish Parliament, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), FAO and the Latin America and the Caribbean Parliamentary Front against Hunger. The Summit builds on the work carried out by AECID and FAO since 2006, with the support of the Latin America and the Caribbean Parliamentary Front against Hunger, within the Hunger-Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative, incorporating the legislative powers in the fight against hunger and malnutrition.

Building on the successful work carried out in the Latin America and Caribbean Region since 2006, the first Global Parliamentary Summit was organized in Madrid in 2018 with the participation of 200 parliamentarians from 80 countries. At the summit, participants agreed, among others, on the creation of a network of Parliamentarians; using replicable case studies and best practice examples related to laws, programme and policies to fight hunger and malnutrition; and fostering new or improved parliamentary partnerships with key stakeholders that can facilitate future action towards the achievement of SDG2.

²³ For more information: <http://www.fao.org/about/meetings/global-parliamentary-summit/en/>

Initiative, has played a key role in the fight against hunger and malnutrition in the region including through supporting the creation of legal frameworks and institutional arrangements to ensure access to adequate food and nutrition as fundamental human right. Since its creation, the PFH has directly or indirectly supported the approval of more than twenty laws related to the rights to food, contributing towards efforts to achieve FSN in the region. Building on this experience, FAO facilitated the replication of this model to other regions, resulting in the creation of the Pan-African Parliamentary Alliance and the European Union Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition. At the national level, drawing a similar experience in countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, FAO facilitated the launching of several national parliamentary alliances in countries such as Madagascar, Haiti, and the Republic of Congo.

A notable outcome of FAO's engagement with parliamentarians in SSTC is the creation of a global

coalition of parliamentarians in the fight against hunger and malnutrition (Box 7)²⁴.

ii) Producer organizations and Parliamentarians. FAO utilizes an innovative and flexible approach to bring together parliamentarians and producer organizations under the SSTC umbrella with the aim of replicating good practices in the fight against hunger and malnutrition. FAO brings these two actors together because of their complementary roles: producers have technical skills while parliamentarians enact legislation and are key to institutionalizing government

²⁴ FAO lauds the establishment of a Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition in Madagascar. Available here: <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/parliamentary-alliances/news/news-article/en/c/472629/> FAO, 2017. Haiti takes a decisive step by creating its Parliamentary Front against Hunger. Available here: <http://www.fao.org/americas/noticias/ver/en/c/904227/> FAO, 2018. Food and Nutrition Security: The Congolese Parliament launches an Alliance to fight against hunger and malnutrition. Available here: <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/parliamentary-alliances/news/news-article/en/c/1128281/>

policies that support producer organizations. The initiative aims at scaling up collaboration among parliamentarians as well as producer organizations to promote and disseminate local solutions, support the strengthening and development of laws, foster policy dialogues, enhance parliamentarians' knowledge, strengthen producers' skill and develop capacities as a whole. All of these are demand-driven and in line with existing governmental plans and processes²⁵.

iii) City-to-City collaboration. One example of a decentralized approach to SSTC adopted in FAO is City-to-City collaboration. The City-to-City

²⁵ More information about the initiative can be accessed from http://intranet.fao.org/fao_communications/news/detail/c/46292/

Initiative promotes the potential of mutual support between local governments to make their cities and interconnected regions more food secure. The initiative is built on the understanding that cities in developing countries face similar socio-economic challenges and through collaboration and sharing of good practices, they can support each other in their endeavors to achieve urban food security and transition towards more sustainable food systems. Projects implemented under this initiative are participatory and use a range of SSC modalities such as demonstrations at field level, training of trainers, study tours, exchange of experts and policy dialogues.

iv) Farmer-to-Farmer exchanges. Farmer-to-farmer exchanges is another decentralized approach to SSTC through which FAO facilitates

BOX 8

FAO AS A PIONEER OF THE FARMER-TO-FARMER SSC APPROACH: THE INDONESIAN FARMERS ASSOCIATION FUND²⁶

“Three decades ago, FAO was associated with one of the pioneering SSC partnerships that saw four million Indonesian farmers come together to sell 100 000 tons of paddy rice and raise money to help their fellow farmers in Africa.

That was in 1985, Africa's Sahel region was experiencing one of the worst drought spells and images of acutely malnourished children were beamed across the world. That same year was a turning point for Indonesia's agriculture sector as the country went from being one of the world's largest rice importers to becoming a self-sufficient rice exporter.

That year, when President Suharto of Indonesia received an award at FAO headquarters to celebrate the country's achievements, he proudly announced that the

Indonesian farmers had voluntarily raised money in response to the crisis in Africa and donated the money to FAO to set up the “Indonesian Farmers Fund”. The fund helped create two vocational training centres in the Gambia and Tanzania, supported more than 80 development projects across the Africa continent, and offered agriculture apprenticeship programmes for African farmers in Indonesia.”



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²⁶ Extracted from Laurent Thomas Article, 2015. Available here: <https://impakter.com/south-south-cooperation-partnership/>

BOX 9**SSTC MOUS AS OF MARCH 2019****1) Total amount of SSTC MoUs: 18****With countries: 13**

From **RAF**: 1 (**Uganda**)
 From **RAP**: 3 (**China, Mongolia, Singapore**)
 From **RLC**: 6 (**Cuba, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, Uruguay**)
 From **RNE**: 3 (**Egypt, Iran, Israel**)

With institutions: 5

From **multi-regions**: 1 (The African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (**ACP**))
 From **RAP**: 2 (Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (**CAAS**), Indian Council of Agricultural Research (**ICAR**))
 From **RLC**: 2 Brazilian National Supply Company (**CONAB**), Central American Integration System (**SISCA**)

knowledge exchanges and experience sharing among farmers and producer organizations at the local and grassroots level. While the approach gained more traction in recent years, it has been applied by FAO as part of the FFS as early as the 1990s even before SSTC is institutionalized in FAO (Box 8). By focusing exchanges at the grassroots level, the approach has been effective in meeting the capacity needs of local actors, marginalized and vulnerable groups including rural women, indigenous groups and the youth.

Fostering SSTC partnerships and strategic alliances

A. Partnerships with FAO Member Countries

FAO fosters innovative and inclusive SSTC partnerships, including with Southern and Northern countries, capitalizing on their respective comparative advantage to implement SSTC initiatives. During 1996-2017, nearly 200 TPAs and other agreements have been signed and more than 30 countries have provided development solutions in more than 90

Southern countries through FAO's catalytic support. As of March 2019, FAO has signed 13 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with 13 countries and 5 institutions (See Box 9).

FAO has adopted innovative approach to resource mobilization (both financial and technical) to implement SSTC initiatives. Middle-income Southern countries, have played a key role in financing SSTC initiatives implemented and/or facilitated by FAO during the past two decades. While Brazil and China have traditionally been major players in financing of SSC projects in FAO through Trust Funds, other Southern countries and TrC partners, including Japan, Mexico, Morocco, the Republic of Korea, Turkey and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) have become important technical and financial providers for SSTC. Southern governments (such as Nigeria and Angola) have also contributed financially to the cost of implementing SSTC in their country by establishing Unilateral Trust Funds (UTFs). In addition, other innovative funding mechanisms, such as the ASTF established to support *Africa-to-Africa* development initiatives provide more flexible resources in support of intraregional SSC.

BOX 10

OVERVIEW OF FAO'S SSTC (1996-2017) – RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Overview of FAO SSTC	HQs	DOs	Total	%
Financial Commitment	138 987 379	231 808 061	370 795 440	
FAO regular budget (including TCPs)	15 296 485	3 409 170	18 705 655	5%
Host country UTF/counterpart funds	17 705 155	-	17 705 155	5%
China Trust Funds*	80 000 000	-	80 000 000	22%
Other SSC Resource Partners* commitment	10 509 537	118 193 516	128 703 053	35%
Triangular Partners' Commitment	15 476 202	110 205 375	125 681 577	34%

*Actually allocated from China Trust Fund Phase I and Phase II: USD 47 502 839 in total; From 1996-2011: USD 15 344 531; From 2012-2017: USD 32 158 308.

B. Collaboration with United Nations entities

FAO actively pursues collaboration on SSTC with United Nations agencies and other multilateral organizations in responding to Member States' calls for improved United Nations system-wide coordination on SSTC in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In particular, FAO and the other RBAs agencies namely the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP) collaborate on SSTC to deliver on their individual and shared mandate to improve access to and adequate supply of nutritious food. In a MoU signed in 2018, the agencies reiterated their commitment to strengthen collaboration and coordination at global, regional and country levels in order to provide enhanced support to Member Countries²⁷.

²⁷ FAO, 2018. *UN Food Agencies commit to deeper collaboration to achieve Zero Hunger*. Available at: <http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/1137679/icode/>

Among others, SSTC activities jointly undertaken by the RBAs include: convening of the annual UN SSC Day; organization of thematic sessions/forums at the Global South-South Development Expo (GSSD-Expo); organization of trainings, workshops, seminars, and expert panels; preparation of annual reports highlights on RBA SSTC activities at global, regional and country levels, preparation of SSTC tools and instruments such as the Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit.

Beyond the RBAs, FAO also partners with other sister organizations such as the United Nations Office for South-South cooperation (UNOSSC) in a number of SSTC activities such as the organization of the GSSD-Expo and preparation of the annual report of the Secretary-General on the state of SSC. Furthermore, as member of the SSTC Task Team of the United Nations Sustainable Development Groups, FAO actively supports the implementation of joint activities by the Task Team. ■

BOX 11**THE UN'S ROME-BASED AGENCIES (RBAS) MOU**

Signed on June 2018, the new MoU aims to enhance collaboration, coordination and synergies among the RBAs at global, regional and county levels in order to play a more strategic role in supporting Member States in the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, specifically SDG 2. The MoU is consistent with the UN Secretary-General's call for UN system-wide collaboration and work towards collective outcomes based on comparative advantages.

The MoU provides a wider framework for cooperation among the RBAS and support new and innovative ways to work together, including on SSTC, to maximize their contributions to implementation of the 2030 Agenda²⁸.

²⁸ Full text of the MoU available here: http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/newsroom/docs/RBAMoU2018Signed.pdf



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FAO's SSTC IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

FAO's Strategic Framework and the SDGs

The Strategic Framework of FAO²⁹ provides the overarching strategic direction for the Organization. It identifies a set of seven core functions to be employed by FAO to achieve results and articulates five Strategic Objectives that represent the main areas of work on which the organization will concentrate its efforts to achieve its vision and global goals:

- 1) Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.
- 2) Increase and improve the provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner.
- 3) Reduce rural poverty.
- 4) Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems.

²⁹ Reviewed Strategic Framework of FAO, Rome, 15-22 June 2013 (C 2013/7).

- 5) Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises.

The Strategic Framework also identifies a six objective, Technical quality, statistics and cross-cutting themes (climate change, gender, governance, and nutrition) to ensure technical leadership and integration of statistics and cross-cutting issues in the delivery of the Strategic Objective programmes.

FAO contributes to the attainment of the SDGs through implementation of its Strategic Objectives. In this regard, the Strategic Objectives results and programmes are aligned to the SDG framework (see Box 12) and FAO's work will contribute to 40 SDG targets measured through 53 unique SDG indicators³⁰.

The section that follows provides a comprehensive picture of FAO's South-South and triangular

³⁰ Mid Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19.

BOX 12
FAO'S SOs AND THE SDGs³¹

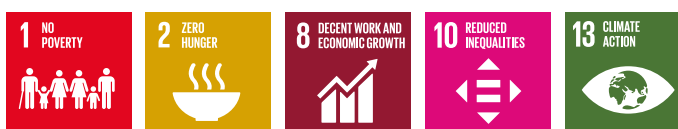
Strategic Objective 1: Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition



Strategic Objective 2: Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable



Strategic Objective 3: Reduce rural poverty



Strategic Objective 4: Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural food systems



Strategic Objective 5: Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises



³¹ FAO, Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21, C. 2019/3. Access at <http://www.fao.org/3/my734en/my734en.pdf>

cooperation (SSTC) portfolio and describes how SSTC initiatives are contributing to the realization of the FAO's Strategic Objectives in support of the 2030 Development Agenda.

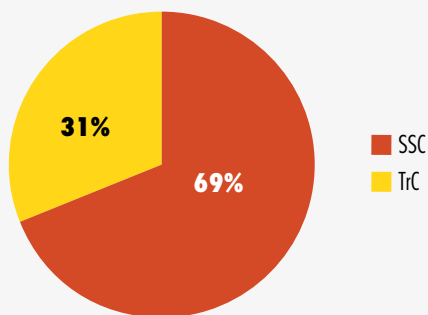
Statistical overview of FAO's SSTC portfolio

This section provides highlights of over 100 SSTC projects implemented in FAO during 1996-2017.

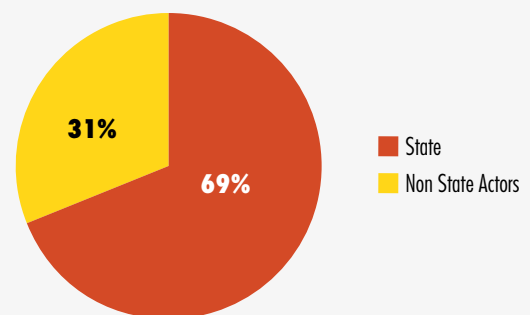
Characteristics of FAO's SSTC initiatives

FAO facilitates sub-regional, regional and interregional linkages for knowledge exchange and experience sharing through its SSTC initiatives. A large majority of the initiatives under review were SSC, largely supported by Brazil, China, Mexico, Morocco, Turkey, the Republic of Korea and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). TrC accounts for nearly one-third of the initiatives under review

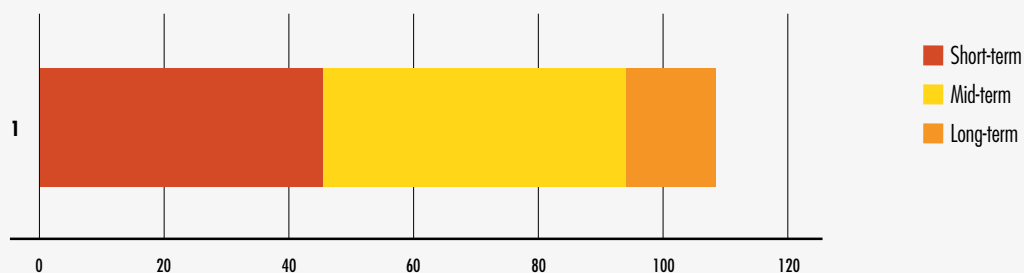
BOX 13
SSC VS TrC



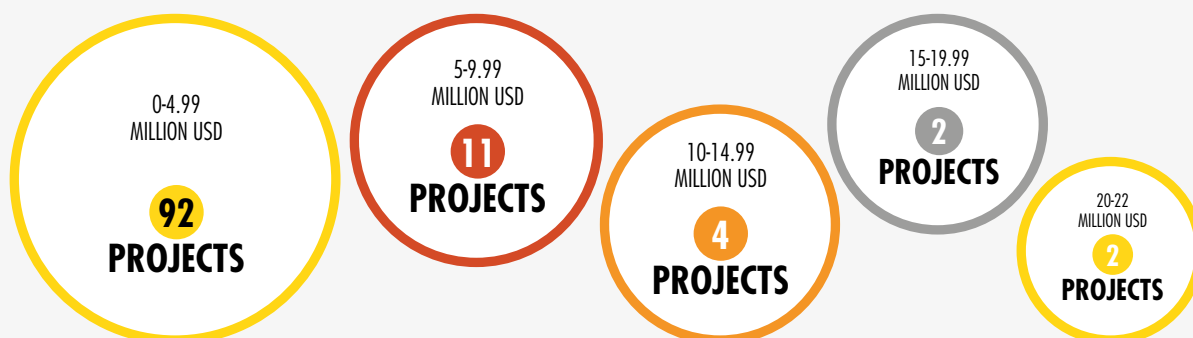
BOX 14
ACTORS IN SSTC INITIATIVES



BOX 15
SSTC PROJECTS BY DURATION



BOX 16 SSTC PROJECTS BY SIZE



(Box 13), largely financed by countries such as Belgium, Japan and Spain, regional entities (such as the European Union/European Commission) and regional development banks (such as the African Development Bank and Inter America Development Bank).

While State actors, including government Ministries, Technical and Development Cooperation Agencies, and National Research Organizations play a lead role in FAO's SSTC initiatives, non-State actors comprising parliamentary groups, civil society organizations, cooperatives, the academia and the private sector also played an active role in SSTC. The review has revealed that more than two-thirds of the players in SSTC initiatives under consideration were State actors while the remaining 31 percent were non-State actors (Box 14).

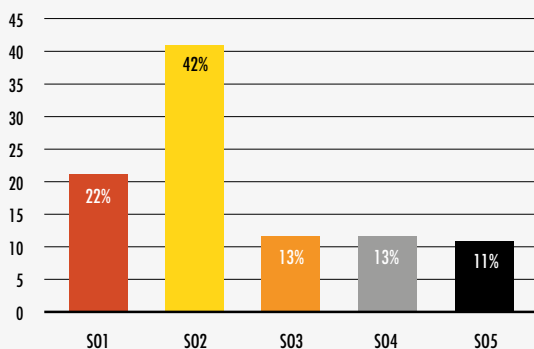
Most of the SSTC initiatives under review are small-scale (less than 5 million USD), implemented over a short-to-medium time-frame of less than 6 years (Box 15 and 16). The small-scale and largely pilot nature of these projects implies new tools and approaches could be tested

on a smaller scale over a short time period with the aim of replicating and scaling them up for greater development impact based on the lessons learned from their implementation. Very few (4 projects) are large-scale projects with a total budget of over 15 million USD over the project cycle.

SSTC initiatives under review were largely financed through Trust Funds, including Unilateral Trust Funds. Few SSTC projects were financed through other sources of funding.

Concerning their focus, a large majority of SSTC initiatives are directed towards productive and sustainable agriculture (SO2) and food security and nutrition (SO1) which together account for about two-thirds of the SSTC initiatives under review (Box 17). The large emphasis on these two Strategic Objectives is a reflection of the comparative advantages and areas of strategic engagement with FAO by its two major providers of SSC—China on productive and sustainable agriculture and Brazil on food and nutrition security. The other Strategic Objectives, including Eradication of poverty (SO3), inclusive and efficient agriculture and food systems

BOX 17 SSTC PROJECTS BY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

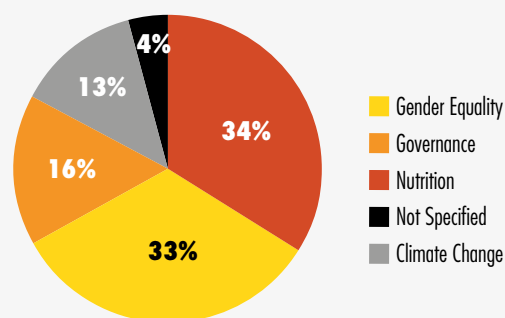


(SO4) and increasing resilience to threats and crises (SO5) receive equal emphasis in FAO's SSTC portfolio.

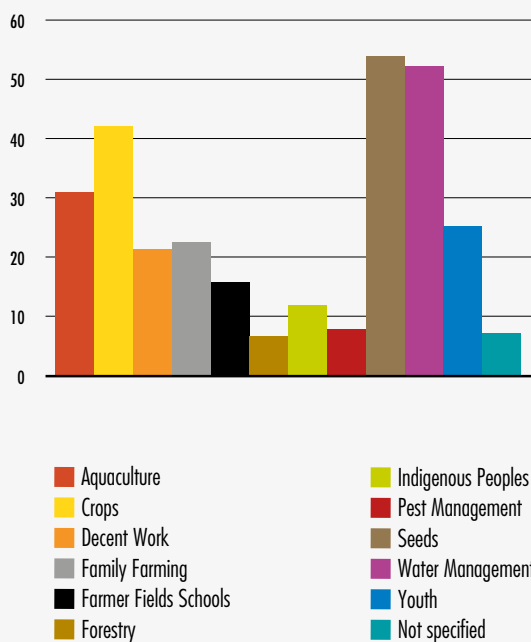
Given their importance to FAO's work and the achievement of the Strategic Objectives, cross-cutting themes, including climate change, gender equality, governance and nutrition are mainstreamed in SSTC projects. Nutrition issues was the focus of the majority of the SSTC initiatives under review reflecting FAO's mandate and special emphasis on this area. Gender equality issues also received equal emphasis followed by governance and climate change (Box 18).

In addition to cross-cutting themes, SSTC initiatives covered a wide-range of sectors and traditional areas of work in FAO such as crops production, seed development, water management, and aquaculture development. Other areas that are receiving priority in FAO's work including family farming, decent work, youth, and indigenous people were also the focus of SSTC initiatives under review (See Box 19).

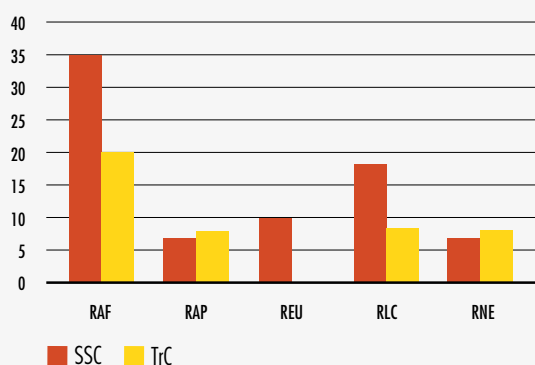
BOX 18 SSTC PROJECTS BY CROSS-CUTTING THEMES



BOX 19 SSTC PROJECTS BY MAJOR THEMES



BOX 20 SSTC PROJECTS ACROSS REGIONS



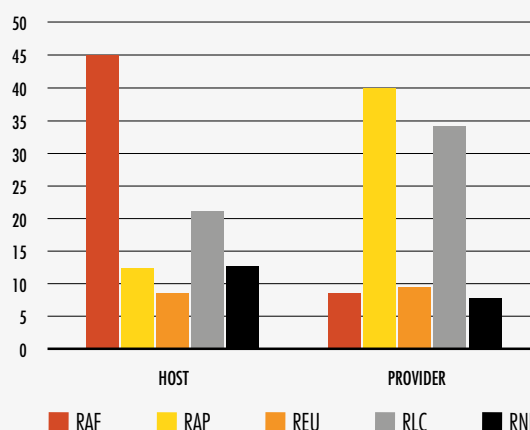
SSTC projects and activities by regions

The emphasis on SSC over TrC in FAO SSTC portfolio varies across regions. SSC was the focus of the majority of SSTC initiatives under review in Africa and Latin America regions. TrC projects and programmes were more common than SSC in Asia Pacific and Near East and North Africa regions (Box 20).

Regions are both hosts and providers of SSTC. The Africa region is a home to the lion's share of SSTC projects followed by Latin America and the Caribbean. Asia Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean are the main provider regions reflecting the key role of China and Brazil in SSC in the two respective regions (Box 21).

Overall, nutrition and gender equality issues received more emphasis than the other cross-cutting themes across all regions. It is especially worth noting that gender equality received more focus than nutrition issues in SSTC initiatives in the East Europe and Central Asia and Near East and North Africa regions. In the latter region, governance was also more important than the other cross-cutting themes (see Box 22).

BOX 21 SSTC PROJECTS BY HOST AND PROVIDER



SSTC activities in FAO³²

In addition to projects and programmes, other SSTC activities are also supported by Strategic Programme and Technical units, Regional and Decentralized offices in FAO³³.

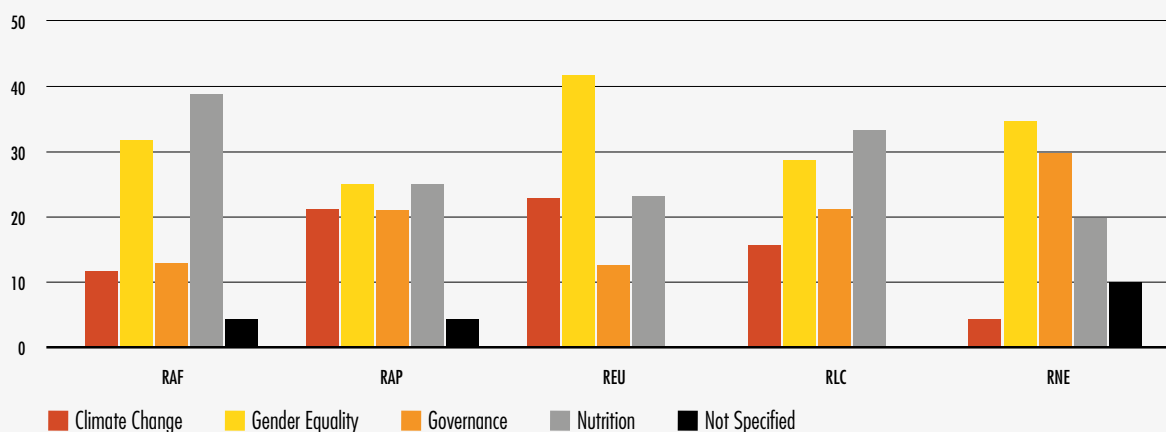
During the period the survey was conducted, more than half of the respondents had indicated that they have between 1 to 3 SSTC activities that were either active or in the pipeline (Box 23). While various SSTC modalities have been employed in SSTC activities, study tours and short-term exchanges were the most common followed by policy dialogues.

In supporting the mainstreaming of SSTC in FAO's operational activities, Strategic Programmes and technical units, Regional and Decentralized offices received various kinds of support from the SSC headquarter unit in FAO (see Box 24).

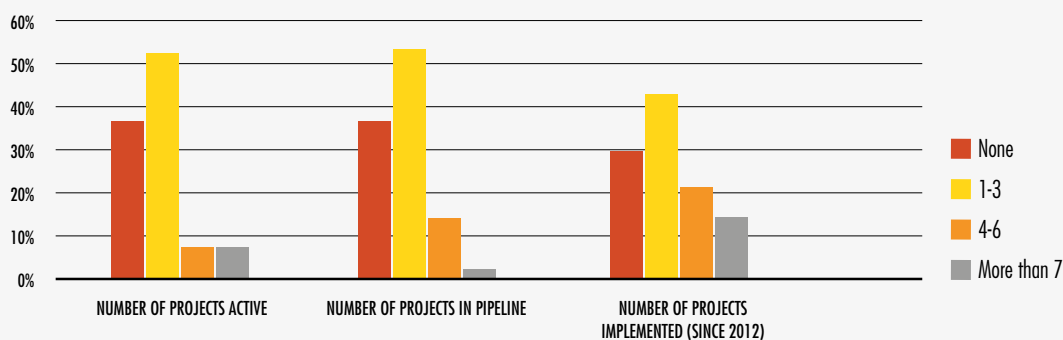
³² Activities here include study tours, learning events, workshops, and related others—that are not necessarily project-based—organized by Headquarters, Regional and Decentralized Offices with the aim of facilitating policy dialogue and knowledge exchanges.

³³ Based on a response obtained from 77 colleagues from Strategic Programmes, Technical units, Regional and Decentralized Offices.

BOX 22 CROSS-CUTTING THEMES BY REGIONS



BOX 23 NUMBER OF SSTC ACTIVITIES



SSTC in the implementation of the FAO's Strategic Objectives

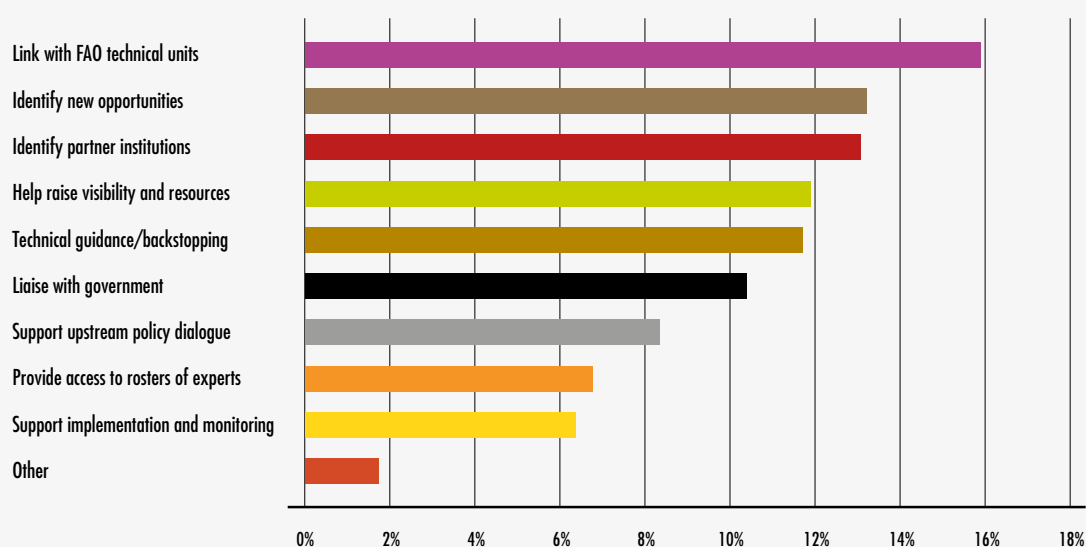
Eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition

Eradicating extreme hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition require a number of actions, inter alia,

a strong political commitment, inclusive governance mechanisms, and stakeholder coordination, a coherent framework of policies, programmes and investments, and evidence-based policymaking³⁴.

³⁴ Midterm Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19, FAO

BOX 24 SUPPORT FROM HQ SSC UNIT



SSTC is effectively leveraged in FAO to deliver concrete results in these areas (see Box 24).

Building on FAO's extensive country presence, regional initiatives and frameworks, SSTC initiatives in FAO have contributed to raise the profile of FSN high in national and regional political agendas. Through SSTC initiatives, FAO facilitated policy dialogue and learning exchanges to promote the development of FSN policies, investments and legislations. SSTC initiatives also fostered multi-stakeholder platforms, including parliamentary forums and city networks, which have directly contributed to the improvement of FSN governance in various contexts. Furthermore, the exchange of technical expertise at regional level enhanced the institutional capacities of countries to make evidence-based decisions, inform relevant FSN plans and support their effective implementation.

Leveraging SSTC for exchanges on policies and programmes on food security and nutrition

Regional communities such as the community of Latin America and Caribbean States (CELAC), the African Union (AU) and other regional bodies are important venues for policy dialogue, agenda-setting, policy coordination and collaboration among countries of the South. In this regard, various regional mechanisms, frameworks and initiatives have been put in place to foster collaboration among Southern countries in the areas of FSN. Numerous SSTC initiatives in FAO support the implementation of these regional frameworks and initiatives.

The Mesoamerica without Hunger³⁵ and Strengthening School Feeding Programmes in

³⁵ GCP/SIM/001/MEX. An ongoing programme being implemented in Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

*Latin America and the Caribbean*³⁶ are two SSC projects that are implemented in support of the Hunger-free Latin America and the Caribbean initiative—the regional framework to eradicate hunger and malnutrition by 2025. The experience from implementation of these projects illustrate how the capacities of the two key regional players (Mexico in the former and Brazil in the latter) could be leveraged to strengthen the regional, national and local policy and institutional framework for FSN. Under this regional framework, the Government of Spain has also been supporting the implementation of policies and programmes for FSN, prevention, control and eradication of transboundary diseases and capacity building training under triangular cooperation arrangements (eg. *Support to Zero Hunger Initiative*³⁷). This long-term investment has contributed to raising the issues of hunger, food security and nutrition high in policy agendas in the region and incorporation of the right to food in the legislation of several countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Numerous SSTC initiatives implemented in support of the regional initiative have contributed to enhanced capacities of national governments and stakeholders in the formulation and implementation a legal and institutional framework to ensure access to adequate food and nutrition as fundamental human right.

The SSC project on *Strengthening School Feeding Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean* is an excellent example where Brazil's experience on policies, programmes, legal and institutional arrangements in the fight against hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition is shared with other 13 countries in Latin America. Through a wide range of modalities (training courses, provision of technical advice, technical visits, capacity needs assessment and national studies on FSN), the project strengthened the capacities of participating countries to tailor and adapt

Brazil's success to their national contexts. Key results achieved through this project include: development and adoption of national laws for school feeding programmes in the context of FSN, establishment of sustainable school feeding programmes and dedication of adequate financial resources, strengthening of the capacities of stakeholders (NGOs, associations, cooperatives and parliament groups) to engage in policy dialogue and policy development. Similarly, through the *Mesoamerica without Hunger Programme*, national institutions involved in FSN in Mexico and other 9 Latin America countries were brought together to exchange experiences on governance mechanisms, legal and institutional framework and inter-sectoral policies (eg. family farm, seed policies and water management) to promote FSN. One of the key factors for results of these SSTC projects is the active engagement of national governments (that ensured national ownership and sustainability) and institutions involved on FSN, including development cooperation agencies (especially ABC in Brazil and AMEXID in Mexico).

Moving from regional to interregional dimensions, over the years FAO has implemented SSTC initiatives where good practices, knowledge, and experiences of countries are shared with/among countries in other regions. A good example is found in Brazil-funded SSC project on *Strengthening School Feeding Programs in Africa*³⁸ that sought to strengthen national framework and laws on school feeding in selected countries in Africa, drawing on the success of Brazil in National School Feeding Programme (PNAE). One major component of the project was the implementation of two tailor-made pilot projects in Malawi and São Tomé and Príncipe. In that regard, the project supported the revision of the national strategic plan and implementation guidelines on nutrition in Malawi and development of a strategic plan and revision of the national legal framework (related to school feeding and nutrition) in São Tomé and Príncipe. Another component of

³⁶ GCP/RLA/180/BRA. Programme implemented in Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Jamaica, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Peru.

³⁷ GCP/RLA/160/SPA.

³⁸ GCP/RAF/483/BRA.

BOX 25

EXAMPLES OF SSTC INITIATIVES SUPPORTING FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION

Project Title	Project objectives in brief	Participating countries	Key results achieved
Mesoamerica Without Hunger Programme: More efficient institutional frameworks for improving family farming, food security and nutrition	Improve food security and nutrition through strengthening governance legal and institutional framework for eradicating hunger, reducing poverty and improving social protection in rural areas	Mexico (provider). Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama (recipients)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FSN issues accorded high priority at country and regional level. - Governance on FSN strengthened through multi-stakeholder engagement. - Capacities strengthened to design/implement policies, legal framework and programmes and analyze public spending on FSN.
Strengthening School Feeding Programmes in the framework of the Initiative for Latin American and the Caribbean without Hunger 2025	Improve the nutritional needs of students at schools and economic status of family farmers	Brazil (provider), Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Paraguay and Peru (recipients)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legal frameworks developed and adopted to facilitate the implementation of national school feeding programmes, including public procurement to family farming - Sustainable school feeding programmes developed
Support national and Sub- regional strategies for food security and nutrition and Poverty Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean	Contribute to food security and nutrition and poverty reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean	Brazil (provider), Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Peru (recipients)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Governance on FSN strengthened through multi-stakeholder engagement
Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Regional Coordination Centre for Food Security (ECO-RCC)	Contribute to food security in the ECO region through improved coordination, management and facilitating policy dialogue	Turkey (provider), Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan (recipient)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional capacity enhanced for coordination and policy-making on FSN
Strengthening of school feeding programme in Africa	Strengthen school feeding programme in selected African countries sustainably	Brazil (provider), Malawi and Sao TOME (recipients)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity of national government enhanced to develop framework and strategy on FSN
Strengthening Agricultural Statistics and Food Security Information in members countries in CARD	Improve capacity of CARD countries for timely collection and provision of reliable statistics on rice production and yield	Japan (triangular partner) ASEAN countries (provider) CARD member countries (recipients)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity enhanced for accurate and timely collection of data

the project was a regional workshop for knowledge exchange comprising of FAO, Brazil and 9 African countries (including these pilot countries). The workshop fostered experience sharing on national school feeding and nutrition programs and enabled a better understanding of ongoing national efforts in this area while identifying key technical areas of potential collaboration and technical support. SSC proved effective in responding to the needs of the African countries ensuring greater coordination and synergies among key international and national actors supporting national programmes on food security.

The initiatives discussed above demonstrate FAO's multifaceted approaches in supporting national endeavors on FSN through SSTC. FAO not only engages with national governments in SSTC but also works closely with local authorities to foster knowledge exchanges on FSN. The City-to-City initiative (see Box 26) is one good example of FAO's active engagement with local governments on FSN.

Leveraging SSTC for improved governance on food security and nutrition

Ridding the world of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition requires action at all levels of society, from consumers to producers, from governments, civil society organizations to the private sector. In this regard, FAO has implemented SSTC initiatives to facilitate stakeholders' engagement, broaden and deepen their partnerships for a more consistent, focused and coordinated action towards ending hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

Support through SSTC initiatives in this area can take different forms. In some initiatives, such as *Food and Nutrition Security in Community of Portuguese Language Speaking Countries (CPLP)*³⁹

³⁹ GCP/GLO/475/BRA. Member countries of the CPLP are Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe and East Timor.

*and the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Regional Coordination Centre for food security (RCC)*⁴⁰, SSTC activities focused on strengthening existing regional coordination mechanisms on food security and nutrition. In the former initiative, activities centered on South-South knowledge exchanges, including production and dissemination of advocacy materials, training, and capacity development workshops, contributed to improved capacity of the regional coordination mechanism for civil society engagement. As a result of the project, the capacity of civil society and other stakeholders was enhanced to engage in policy dialogues related to FSN. In the ECO region, similar activities contributed to improving the capacity of the RCC, the regional mechanism established to foster cooperation, knowledge sharing and information exchange on FSN among countries in the region.

Support for improved governance and coordination on FSN took other forms in FAO's SSTC portfolio. Drawing on Brazil's success, for instance, numerous SSTC programmes focused on enhancing governance and coordination through policy dialogues and South-South policy exchanges. A SSC project on *strengthening dialogue among FAO, Governments and Civil Society*⁴¹ aimed to foster coordination and multi-stakeholder engagement in policy dialogues and debates on FSN in Latin America and the Caribbean regions. The project produced concrete results through two focused activities: *National and Regional Dialogues and Leadership training* for organizations of rural civil society. As part of the dialogue, for instance, the project fostered the development of inclusive public policies on food security, nutrition and family farming through support to and active participation of the civil society and parliamentary groups (such as Parliamentary Front Against Hunger) in public dialogues on food security, nutrition, and family farming.

⁴⁰ GCP/RER/044/TUR. Member countries of the ECO are Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

⁴¹ GCP/RIA/173/BRA.

BOX 26

CITY-TO-CITY INITIATIVE: EMPOWERING LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO MAKE THEIR CITIES AND INTERCONNECTED REGIONS MORE FOOD SECURE

The City-to-City Initiative in FAO supports local governments develop sustainable food systems and healthy diets in cities and connected rural areas through city-to-city collaboration. The initiative is built on the premise that one Southern city's context more readily relates to another—often facing similar agricultural and socio-economic challenges— and through collaboration and sharing of good practices, cities can support each other in the transition towards more sustainable food systems. The main beneficiaries include actors in the food chain, such as consumers, producers, processors, traders, and retailers who acquire new skills and opportunities through the innovative exchanges and projects that result from city-to-city collaboration.

Through this initiative, support is provided to local actors by undertaking activities that foster city-to-city policy dialogue and experience-sharing on sustainable urban food systems. To reach out to as many local governments as possible, FAO partners other with specialized food and urbanization agencies and local government networks such as C40 Cities, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, United

Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), United Regions Organization (OruFogar), the RUA Foundation, and the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, along with various governmental agencies. In partnership with these institutions, FAO launched the *Urban Food Actions platform*⁴² in 2017 to facilitate experience sharing on sustainable urban food systems. The platform provides access to comprehensive database of FAO and non-FAO resources related to urban food policies and programmes in a wide range of areas such as governance and planning, sustainable diets and nutrition, social and economic equity, food production and ecosystem management, food supply and distribution, food loss and wastes.

Other activities supported through this initiative include: a City-to-City exchanges on micro gardens involving Dakar (Senegal), Douala (Cameroon) and Praia (Cabo Verde) and organization of forums for experience sharing such as the City-to-City Food System Forum for Eastern and Southern Africa in Durban and the *Forum des Maires de l'Afrique francophone signataires du MUFPP in Brazzaville in 2018*.

42 <http://www.fao.org/urban-food-actions/en/>

In a similar vein, it is also worth highlighting the successful multi-stakeholder engagement in FSN policy dialogues in 9 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean supported by another Brazil-funded SSC project *National and Sub-regional strategies for FSN and Poverty Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean*⁴³. The project targeted the most vulnerable populations of countries in the regions and facilitated the active participation of local actors, civil society and parliamentary groups in

43 GCP/RLA/193/BRA.

regional and national policy dialogue and debates. A key contribution of the project was the preparation of a knowledge product on *Governance of food and nutrition security Factors for viability and sustainability: Case studies from seven Latin American countries*⁴⁴.

Parliamentarians play a pivotal role in the fight against hunger and all forms of malnutrition by promoting an enabling legislative environment and

44 Report can be accessed at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7529e.pdf>

forging alliances and partnerships on FSN. In this regard, FAO has been actively supporting intra and inter-parliamentary dialogues on FSN and national and international networks such as the Parliamentary Front against Hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean (PFH LAC) and the Latin American Parliament (PARLATINO). The outcome of FAO's work in Latin America has been the creation of a strong collaboration among parliamentary groups and linkages with other development actors. For instance, the SSC project on *Strengthening Parliaments for the Development of Legislation, Institutions and Public policies*⁴⁵ supported the forging of strong alliance among diverse stakeholders comprising 1) the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament; 2) the Parliamentary Fronts against Hunger; 3) international cooperation agencies (Brazil, Spain and Mexico), 4) the Right to Food Observatory of Latin America and the Caribbean and 5) consumer organizations, and networks of local producers and others. Through the project, the capacities of legislators and advisers of the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament and national congresses and assemblies have been enhanced in policymaking in the areas of FSN, malnutrition and family agriculture.

While most of the projects discussed above have a regional focus, other SSTC initiatives related to governance of food security and nutrition in FAO have an inter-regional dimension. One good example in this area is found in Kenya-Asia and Kenya-Latin America South-South learning exchange on governance organized under the umbrella of the FAO-European Union (EU) initiative on "Food and Nutrition Security, Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation (FIRST)"⁴⁶. The learning exchanges aimed to facilitate experience sharing on good governance on FSN through a more structured

⁴⁵ TCP/RLA/3503.

⁴⁶ The Programme represents a strategic partnership between FAO and the EU, whereby the EU has committed an investment of nearly €8 billion during the 2014–2020 period to improve food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture in more than 60 countries in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Near East regions.

and focused study tours (Box 27). Under the same initiative, another learning exchange tour was organized in 2017 for high-level government officials and members of the Afghanistan Food Security and Nutrition Agenda (AFSeN-A) to learn from Bangladesh experience on a multi-sector coordination mechanisms and inclusive approach on FSN⁴⁷.

Strengthening capacities for evidence-based analysis and decision making on FSN policies and programmes

Availability of accurate and timely data is indispensable for decision making on FSN policies and programmes. In this regard, FAO assists countries to generate credible data and statistics, strengthen the analytical capacities of relevant institutions, and supports the dissemination and uptake of information and analysis by decision makers. Support in this areas aims at ensuring the formulation of policies, investment and action plans are based on the analysis of evidence generated through well-functioning FSN information systems.

FAO leverages the technical know-how and experience of Southern countries on good agricultural statistics to foster knowledge and experience sharing with other countries.

One good example of such effort is found in the Japan-funded TrC project on *Strengthening Agricultural Statistics and Food Security Information in Coalition for Africa Rice Development (CARD) countries*⁴⁸. This innovative project aims to improve the capacity of CARD member countries in timely collection and provision

⁴⁷ <http://www.fao.org/partnerships/south-south-cooperation/news/news-article/en/c/1146467/>

⁴⁸ GCP/INT/161/JPN. Member countries are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia.

BOX 27

COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION TO IMPLEMENT FOOD & NUTRITION SECURITY (FNS) POLICY IN A DEVOLVED GOVERNANCE SYSTEM: LESSONS FOR KENYA FROM SOUTH-SOUTH EXPERIENCE

In 2010 Kenya enacted a new constitution that sought to decentralize the system of government to improve service delivery and governance on FSN. Agriculture is one of the devolved functions whose delivery was transferred from the National government to 47 County governments. To achieve Kenya's ambitious growth targets stipulated in the Agricultural Sector Development Strategy (ASDS) and Vision 2030, it is recognized that national and county governments need to work seamlessly and in a complementary manner in the decentralized system of governance. Under the new system, although Kenya took some measures to improve the governance on FSN, the process suffered from a myriad of challenges such as weak communication, poor coordination and conflicting schemes of service between the two levels of government.

Recognizing these challenges, the Government of Kenya understood the need for a South-South learning exchange with other countries that have successfully managed the transformation of agriculture and FSN under a decentralized system of governance. To achieve the desired outcome, an emphasis was placed on a well-structured study tour with a clear terms of reference, a well-defined approach, methodology and outputs. With support of FAO's Regional Office, a team comprising of senior government officials from the Ministry of Agriculture,

Livestock and Fisheries (key in decision making on agriculture at national and county levels), representatives from the private sector and farmers' federation participated in a study tour to Asia (Indonesia and Malaysia) and Latin American (Ecuador and Peru) in 2017.

In the case of Indonesia tour, the Kenyan delegation learned about the strong inter-sectoral and inter-ministerial coordination mechanisms and how the different levels of Government (National, Province and District) managed to deliver their services harmoniously. Among others, the study tour to Ecuador and Peru focused on understanding 1) the constitutional mandates of the three-levels of government (state, local and federal) related to public services in the food and agricultural sector; 2) inter-governmental coordination in food and agriculture policy/strategy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation; 3) inter-sectoral coordination of FSN programmes (FSN councils, national planning council or inter-ministerial coordination offices).

The lessons learned from the study (compiled in an analytical report containing key recommendations) are expected to inform Kenya's ongoing reform towards a decentralized system of governance in agriculture thereby contributing to enhanced governance in FSN— a key pillar of the ASDS and vision 2030.

of reliable statistics on rice production drawing from the experience of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Africa Rice Centre, AfricaRice. Building on Japan's technical cooperation agency (JICA) in supporting statistical development in ASEAN countries, the expertise developed in the region is leveraged to foster the development of agricultural statistics in CARD member countries. Although the project is ongoing, it has already produced tangible results: appropriate statistical methods implemented in ASEAN countries that have relevance to CARD member countries were

documented and pre-tested in selected countries; capacities of government entities are enhanced to implement selected methods through workshops and training and pilot field surveys were conducted and the results analyzed and disseminated.

Through SSTC projects and initiatives, FAO supports capacity development to analyze food insecurity as well as monitor and evaluate policies and programmes and legislation relevant to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. For instance, in the case of *Mesoamerica without Hunger programme*,

a methodology for the analysis of public spending on food security and nutrition was developed by the Central American Institute of Fiscal Studies and Special programme for food security, Centroamérica (PESA) while the *Strengthening School Feeding Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean* supported monitoring and evaluation of projects on school feeding, food security, and nutrition.

Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable

Through its Strategic Programme in this area FAO supports national, regional and global endeavors towards productive and sustainable agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. At the policy level, FAO assists countries in the formulation of policies, strategies and investment programmes on sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries, climate change and environmental degradation. Activities are directed towards enhancing the capacity of governments and stakeholders to engage in cross-sectoral policy dialogue and formulation of integrated strategies. FAO also engages in the generation of knowledge products and activities that enhance institutional capacity in the collection, analysis, and reporting of data with the aim to foster evidence-based decision making in the management of production systems and natural resources. At a practical level, FAO focuses on strengthening capacities for the adoption of cross-sectoral practices to increase production sustainably, address climate change and environmental degradation⁴⁹.

FAO's strategic objective on sustainable agriculture aims at transforming agricultural production systems in view of climate change and environmental degradation, through changes in policies and practices in different sectors that

support implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in an integrated manner. In this, FAO employs SSTC approaches to facilitate knowledge exchange and experience sharing on good policies and practices on sustainable food and agriculture production. Results from its intervention in this area run the gamut from enhanced national and regional capacities in the formulation of sectoral and cross-sectoral policies to the adoption of field-level hands-on practical solutions on sustainable practices in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries⁵⁰.

Support for development of policy framework, strategies, and programmes on sustainable agriculture, forestry, and fisheries through SSTC

At the policy level, FAO aims to enhance the capacity of experts, technicians, and policymakers through facilitating South-South knowledge exchanges on good policies and strategies on sustainable practices in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. A few examples illustrate how SSTC initiatives in FAO support policy and strategy development on wide-range of sectors (such as crops, seeds, forestry, livestock, and aquaculture) through policy workshops, study tours, and tailor-made training.

A SSC project on *Strengthening the Research and Innovation Capacity of the agricultural and veterinary research institutes of Angola*⁵¹ supported the formulation of a national strategy for agriculture innovation in Angola drawing on Brazil's experience in the area. The project provides an excellent example of institutional collaboration (between Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA) and national institutions in Angola) as well as a unique funding

⁴⁹ Midterm Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19, FAO.

⁵⁰ Although many SSTC projects implemented prior to 2009 had FSN as their overarching goal, their focus was improving productivity in agriculture, fisheries, and forestry sustainably.

⁵¹ UTF/ANG/048/ANG.

arrangement (Angola provided USD 2.2 million while Brazil provided expertise of EMBRAPA amounting to USD 875 000) to support veterinary and agricultural research and innovation in Angola. Through technical trainings and exchanges, the project contributed to capacity building of 60 researchers from the Agricultural Research Institute and 45 from the Veterinary Research Institute of Angola.

Another SSC project on *Seed Sector Development in ECO Region*⁵² sought to support the formulation of a policy framework on national seed systems in 9 countries in the ECO⁵³. The project contributed to enhanced capacity of experts, specialists, and policymakers through technical training and workshops organized to facilitate knowledge exchanges and experience sharing. Key results of the project include the formulation of a national seed policy and the establishment of national budget and plan for the development of the seed sector in the participating countries. In Sub-Saharan Africa, a TrC project on *Africa-ASEAN technical exchange in sustainable agriculture and rural development*⁵⁴ facilitated the dissemination of technical know-how and good practices on sustainable rice and aquaculture production (accumulated through JICA's past operation in ASEAN and Africa) to key stakeholders including national and local governments, farmers and extension workers. The project contributed to the formulation of National Rice and Aquaculture development strategies in a number of countries in Africa through various technical workshops and training organized for knowledge exchanges. Another SSC project on *Sustainable Rice System Development in Sub-Saharan Africa*⁵⁵ also contributed to the revision of

National rice strategy document in a number of participating countries in Africa.

Beyond knowledge exchanges and experience sharing, SSC has proved effective in other areas such as policy coordination and regional integration. SSTC projects and initiatives in FAO support regional policy coordination in areas such as ecosystem management that confer benefits to a number of countries. An excellent example in this area is found in a regional programme for *fisheries and aquaculture development in Central Asia*⁵⁶ supported by Turkey, that sought to enhance the sustainable development of the aquaculture sector in 7 countries in the region⁵⁷. The programme contributed to the creation of a Regional Fish Management Organization (CACFish) — a regional mechanism for policy coordination and information exchange and mutual support in the management and development of the aquaculture sector. Numerous regional workshops, study tours, and technical training enhanced national capacities of policymakers in the development of policy, legal and institutional frameworks for sustainable production and use of fisheries. In Latin America, a similar SSC project on *Consolidation of the aquaculture network of the Americas*⁵⁸ contributed to the creation of a regional network of Council of Ministers and a virtual regional observatory for dissemination of good aquaculture practices.

Support for regional policy coordination through SSTC is also visible in other sectors such as crops. Drawing on the experience of Turkey, the *Seed Sector Development in ECO Region* project supported the formulation of a regional seed agreement and the development of a Regional Seed Strategy that contributed to the

52 GCP/INT/123/MUL.

53 Participating countries are Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

54 GCP/INT/053/JPN.

55 GCP/RAF/489/VEN.

56 GCP/RER/031/TUR.

57 Participating countries are Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

58 GCP/RIA/190/BRA.

harmonization of seed policy among participating countries. In the Central America Region, a TrC project on *reinforcement of the production policies on basic grains in Central American Agricultural Council (CAC)*⁵⁹ funded by Spain aimed to improve the sustainable production and marketing of basic grains in 7 countries in the region⁶⁰. Among others, the project supported the harmonization of good agricultural practices in seeds (maize and beans), including the development of policy frameworks and institutional mechanisms for the supply of good quality seeds in CAC region.

Through SSTC projects and initiatives, FAO supports countries to make an evidence-based decision on sustainable practices on agriculture, forestry, and fishery. Support in this area includes capacity development on statistics and geospatial information to underpin the extent, quality, use and productive capacity of land, water, forests, oceans, and inland waters. For instance, a Brazil-financed SSC project on *Satellite Forest Monitoring in member states of the Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC)*⁶¹ aims to enhance the satellite land monitoring system (SLMS) of 10 member countries⁶² of the COMIFAC to effectively monitor, measure, report and verify for REDD+ and improve land-use management. Drawing on the technical capacity of the Brazilian National Institute for Space Research (INPE), the project contributes to the use of satellite data in forest monitoring thereby enabling COMIFAC member countries to comply to international commitments related to climate change and REDD+ and also improve national planning and sustainable management

⁵⁹ GCP/RLA/182/SPA.

⁶⁰ Countries include Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama.

⁶¹ GCP/GLO/732/BRA.

⁶² Central African Republic, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and Sao Tomé & Principe.

of valuable forest resources for the benefit of the countries⁶³. In Central Asia and the Caucasus, a SSC project on *capacity development for sustainable management of mountain watersheds*⁶⁴ was implemented to enhance the knowledge and the capacity of decision-makers in the sustainable management of mountain watersheds. South-South learning events, regional workshops and training contributed to enhanced capacity of high-level decision-makers in the department of forestry and related agencies on the development of methodologies for planning and implementing an integrated and multidisciplinary rehabilitation and sustainable management of mountain watersheds.

Leveraging Southern capacities and solutions for sustainable productivity in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries

By leveraging Southern knowledge, experience, and technologies, FAO fosters exchanges on sustainable practices in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries through SSTC initiatives. Key features of the SSTC projects and initiatives are summarized below.

- pilot projects with demonstrable results and potential for replication and scaling-up
- focus on local producers (farmers, pastoralists, fisherfolks and forest users)
- involvement of countries that share similar agroecology, soil, climatic and other geographical characteristics
- adoption of innovative, high-impact sectoral and cross-sectoral practices (eg. rice-fish culture)
- deployment of experts and technicians (from provider countries) to the field (in recipient countries)

⁶³ The project which is started in 2016 is expected to continue until 2020.

⁶⁴ GCP/SEC/002/TUR.

- special focus on raising productivity sustainably
- focus on local capacity development
- practical approaches involving on-site training, learning-by-doing, demonstration sessions, and short-term internships/study tours
- FFS approaches to enhance the capacity of farmer groups and farmer organizations
- Transfer and adaptation of low-cost, flexible and relevant technologies suited to local needs
- Built-in multiplier effect: i.e. the training of experts and farmers who in turn pass on the knowledge to others
- An effective collaborative arrangement at local/field level comprising technicians, local producers, cooperatives, extension works, local governments, and others.

FAO partners with Southern countries with the requisite technical capacity to facilitate knowledge transfer on sustainable agricultural practices to countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. One approach that has been effectively employed in FAO is the deployment of technicians from provider countries to the field in recipient countries (often involving the participation of government entities, extension workers, cooperatives and farmers). Although this model has been the modus operandi for knowledge exchanges at the field level for many years in the past, other innovative approaches such as farmer-to-farmer cooperation (See Box 28) support policy dialogue and peer-to-peer exchanges on local, cost-effective and proven solutions on sustainable agriculture, forestry and fishery.

While the majority of SSTC projects and initiatives on sustainable agriculture are supported by the FAO-China Trust Fund, TrC and UTF are other important funding mechanism for SSTC. Results of SSTC projects at the field level are more visible in agriculture (largely higher yield in crop and animal production) and fisheries (aquaculture). However, SSTC approaches are effectively employed in other

programmes and initiatives in FAO that aim to promote sustainable production of forests⁶⁵.

Adoption of practices to increase productivity sustainably: Focus on integrated multi-sectoral activities

The *China-Namibia SSC project*⁶⁶ aimed to enhance sustainable agricultural production in Namibia drawing on China's experience in rice production, soil and pest management, and foxtail millet and horticulture production. The project facilitated the uptake of low-cost innovative technologies (eg. plastic film mulch, solar energy insect killing lighter) in Namibia. Practical hands-on field training by Chinese experts enabled Namibia to increase rice yields significantly (by more than ten percent) largely as a result of the new rice production techniques (eg. seed treatment, field preparation and mechanical transplantation of seedlings). Similarly, under the *Nigeria-China SSC project*⁶⁷, Chinese experts were deployed in various states in Nigeria to share their experience in rice production, aquaculture and others. Introduction of new technologies and practices including the establishment of regular rice nurseries and plant seedlings, application of fertilizer and pest and disease control resulted in threefold yield increase in some states⁶⁸.

TrC arrangements involving FAO, provider countries (with capacities and experience in sustainable agricultural practices) and recipient

⁶⁵ For instance, the Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) programme supports farm producer organizations to build their organizational and productive capacities, increase their bargaining power and make their voices heard in policy processes. South-South exchange is a key tool within the FFF which allows forest and farmers producer organizations from different countries and regions involved in the programme to share knowledge, experience and good practices on agriculture and sustainable management of natural resources.

⁶⁶ GCP/NAM/017/CPR.

⁶⁷ UTF/NIR/048/NIR.

⁶⁸ Transforming rural households: How South-South cooperation with China is improving lives in Nigeria.

BOX 28**FARMER-TO-FARMER COOPERATION ON SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES IN AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, AND FISHERY**

FAO supported the organization of a farmer-to-farmer fair that was held in September 2017 in University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) in Dharwad, India. The learning event was organized in collaboration with Cornell University with the aim to facilitate knowledge exchanges among farmers from countries in the South Asia region. Participation of 12 progressive farmers from Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, as well as from Self Employed Women Association (SEWA)- India-based NGO- was facilitated to promote experience sharing on sustainable and innovative agricultural practices. The learning event introduced farmers to recent advances

in farming system and technology with particular emphasis on crop production, seed processing, seed village, heavy machinery and use of information technology. The seed village model of Dharwad was introduced to the farmers and training provided on good farming practices for seed production for chickpea, wheat and pulses. At the fair, farmers groups shared knowledge about sustainable agricultural practices including agro-ecology crop and livestock production. The peer-to-peer learning session enabled farmers to exchange experience on crop rotation, reducing agricultural inputs, enhancing biodiversity and effective water management.

countries also produced visible results. For instance, under the *Special Programme for Food Security in Bangladesh*⁶⁹, a TrC project financed by Japan aimed to increase food production and productivity in rice and other staple crops in rural villages in Bangladesh drawing on the successful experience of China in this area. Chinese experts and technicians were deployed to rural villages to help marginalized communities acquire sustainable practices in rice and maize cultivation, water-saving techniques for homestead vegetable cultivation, soil fertility management and orchard establishment techniques, among others. Notable results of the project include the adoption of new rice cultivation techniques (that resulted in 10 percent yield increase), hybrid rice variety (brought more than 30 percent yield increase compared with local varieties) and increase the survival rate of mango from 70 to 98 percent.

Under the *Special Programme for Food Security in Lao DPR*⁷⁰, another TrC project funded by Japan sought to increase crop and food production in rural communities in Lao DPR drawing on the experience of Vietnam. The project supported the successful transfer of Vietnamese know-how on sustainable practices (such as micro-irrigation, water, and soil management) to rural farmer communities in Lao DPR resulting in increased paddy production (through irrigation systems), crop diversification (cash crops, vegetables and fruits) and intensification and diversification of livestock. Another Spain-funded TrC project, implemented under the *Special Food Security Programme in Mauritania*⁷¹, focused on water management and micro-irrigation schemes to improve agricultural productivity in rural villages in Mauritania. The project enhanced the capacities of farmer cooperatives to adopt new productions practices resulting in improved production in rice and horticulture production, among others.

69 GCSP/BGD/O33/JPN.

70 GCSP/LAO/O11/JPN.

71 GCPS/MAU/O26/SPA I believe this is the project.

One notable feature of these TrC projects in FAO is their focus on capacity development in rural communities, especially women and marginalized communities, by introducing them to new farming methods and technologies thereby enhancing a strong sense of ownership and self-reliance in rural communities. In Bangladesh, the TrC project enhanced capacities by targeting Village Based Organization (VBOs) and fostering effective development planning in rural communities⁷². In Lao PDR, the TrC project supported the creation of Farmer Organizations/ Farmer Groups as self-reliant units with their own rules and management arrangements.

The *China-Mongolia SSC project*⁷³ sought to enhance agricultural production through the deployment of Chinese technicians and experts in animal husbandry, crop production, food safety, and trade. Through the project, local farmers, farmers' cooperatives and extension workers received a hands-on practical capacity development training on artificial insemination, animal feed production, irrigated agriculture, food storage, and trade and extension services, among others. Key results of the project include the introduction of new varieties of animal fodder and early-maturing corn crops (which is accepted as part of the government of Mongolia's strategy for building the resilience of national herders), increase in poultry and egg production and establishment of Mongolia's first poultry farm veterinary laboratory.

The *China-Ethiopia SSC project*⁷⁴ was implemented to enhance agricultural production and productivity in Ethiopia through the improvement of small-scale irrigation schemes using Farmer Training Centres as a strategic entry point for the delivery of effective and efficient

agricultural extension services. The project was implemented through Ethiopia's government extension system, with the technical support (training and demonstration of Chinese technologies and practices) in local villages. Notable results of the project include increased survival rate of chickens (by more than 85 percent) and improved prevention of livestock epidemic and feed management. Furthermore, artificial insemination technology was introduced to promote local livestock breeding improvement and expected to accelerate the breeding cycle of ewes⁷⁵.

Similarly, *China-Malawi SSC project*⁷⁶ sought to enhance sustainable practices in agricultural production, livestock and fisheries drawing on the experience of China in these areas. The project supported the deployment of Chinese experts and technicians to Malawi with the aim of transferring proven technologies in areas such as dairy production, cattle management, fisheries, and others. The SSC project successfully introduced 106 new agricultural techniques, 60 new plant varieties and six pieces of agricultural equipment and tools. In livestock, the project supported the uptake of technologies in pig farming, dairy production, and animal husbandry. New technology in the use of a concentrated formula for lactating cows, for instance, resulted in an increase in milk yield of over 20 percent.

SSTC projects and initiatives also supported knowledge exchanges in innovative fish farming practices that improved productivity and rural livelihood in many countries in Africa. For instance, the *South-South cooperation Technical Assistance Programme*⁷⁷ funded by Spain sought to introduce better aquaculture management practices in Namibia drawing on the experience of Vietnam.

⁷² The project enhanced capacities of rural communities to plan and implement small-scale actions through Farmer Group Development Plans (FGDPs) and Revolving Fund (RF).

⁷³ GCP/MON/004/CPR I believe this is the project.

⁷⁴ GCP/ETH/080/CPR.

⁷⁵ FAO-China South-South Cooperation Programme: <http://www.fao.org/3/ai4700e.pdf>

⁷⁶ GCP/MLW/020/CPR.

⁷⁷ GCP/NAM/014/SPA.

The project enabled the deployment of Vietnamese experts to provide on the job training to Namibian staff from Inland Aquaculture Centres who, in turn, provided technical support to numerous rural farmers engaged in aquaculture production. Low-cost technologies and sustainable practices (fish collection, fish and shrimp acclimatization, genetic selection, tilapia sex reversal, and development) resulted in significant increase in fish production (especially in tilapia) in Namibia⁷⁸.

Other SSTC projects supported by FAO-China trust fund also demonstrated visible results. For instance, through the *China-Uganda SSC project*⁷⁹ Chinese experts were deployed to Uganda to support farmers, extension officers and government officials adopt a wide-range of aquaculture techniques (eg. nets application, fish feed preparation, water quality control and prevention of fish diseases). The transfer of these practical technologies to Uganda has brought visible results such as improvement in fish feed formulas (adapted to different fish growth stages) and a rise in the survival rate of catfish from 80 to 98 percent.

SSTC projects and initiatives in FAO also supported innovative cross-sectoral practices that combine aquaculture and farming. An integrated rice-fish system is one such practice (anciently employed by farmers in Asia) that has been piloted in few countries in Africa with demonstrable results. For instance, through a *FAO-Nigeria SSC project*, this system was introduced in eight states in the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which helped almost double rice and tilapia production in a few locations where the system was piloted. Building on this success, the rice-culture was expanded to 10 000 hectares benefiting hundreds of smallholder farmers and their families⁸⁰.

⁷⁸ See <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4699e.pdf>

⁷⁹ GCP/UGA/040/CPR.

⁸⁰ <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4289e.pdf>

Reduce rural poverty

The rural poor face complex challenges preventing them from moving out of poverty sustainably. Addressing these challenges require a multi-sector and context-specific approach that promotes FSN with measures that enhance smallholder farmer's income, access to employment opportunities (especially for the rural youth and women), women empowerment as well as adequate access to social protection policies and schemes. Policies, strategies and programmes should target the rural poor, who depend on agriculture and natural resources for their livelihoods. FAO supports the development of capacities at national, sub-national and community levels (specially targeting rural producer organizations and family farmers), and promotes productive employment, decent work opportunities and social protection schemes to the rural poor, including youth and women.

As examples from SSTC projects and initiatives below illustrate, FAO's support to countries has contributed to the formulation of policies and actions that empower the rural poor, including through capacity development activities that enabled rural communities to gain access to knowledge, inputs, finance, technologies, and markets. SSTC projects and initiatives also contributed to enhanced capacities of Southern countries in the formulation of social protection schemes, income and employment generative activities that contributed to the wellbeing and economic empowerment of rural communities.

Fostering social protection schemes, productive employment, and decent work through SSTC

FAO fosters South-South exchanges on social protection schemes, productive employment, and decent work through various approaches. At the policy level, SSTC projects and initiatives in FAO support policy dialogue and knowledge exchanges among Southern countries on effective policies

and strategies that contribute to poverty reduction, including through social protection schemes and employment opportunities. The Knowledge Exchange Platforms on rural poverty reduction (KEPs) is one of such initiatives established to facilitate policy dialogue and knowledge exchange on poverty-related policies, strategies, and programmes among developing countries (Box 29). FAO also partners with other organizations to promote policy dialogue and knowledge exchanges on social protection policies and programmes. For instance, under the Transfer Project⁸¹, FAO works with UNICEF and other partners to facilitate dialogue with policymakers at regional and global levels and promote learning among countries on cash transfer and social protection policies and programmes.

SSTC projects supported the development, strengthening and scaling up of innovative programmes that proved effective in reducing rural poverty through employment generation, decent work and social protection. In the case of the *Strengthening School Feeding Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean*, drawing on Brazil's experience of its National School Feeding Programme (PNAE)⁸², the capacities of participating countries were enhanced to establish and strengthen their national school feeding programme. The *School Feeding Programme in Africa* also supported the piloting of school feeding programme in three African countries namely Ethiopia, Malawi and São Tomé and Príncipe. The *Purchase from African for Africa (PAA)* programme also supported the establishment of school feeding programmes in Ethiopia, Niger, Malawi, and Mozambique. The programme contributed to improved school attendance and nutrition in the participating countries. A total of 135 schools received food purchased through PAA and new food items were introduced in

schools meals such as legumes in Ethiopia and the Niger, and fruits and vegetables in Malawi and Mozambique, thereby contributing to the dietary diversification of students.

Other SSTC projects and initiatives (especially those implemented under national food security programmes) also contributed to poverty reduction through improving farm and non-farm income and employment in rural communities. For instance, TrC project implemented under the *Special Programme for Food Security in Bangladesh* has significantly contributed to improved employment in the target groups (marginalized communities with very limited agricultural land) both on-farm (such as fruits and vegetables) and non-farm activities (parboil rice processing, puff rice making, chutney making, tailor and rickshaw pulling). Considerable progress has been made by groups targeted by the project in terms of food security and poverty reduction where the majority of VBO members have experienced significant increases in their incomes (average of 35 percent) contributing to improvements in their livelihoods. Similarly, the income of the target groups (Farmer Organizations and Farmer Groups) in the TrC project implemented under the *Special Programme for Food Security in Lao PDR* increased by two-to-three-fold in five of the six Farmer Organizations to some USD 1 600 (USD 330 per capita), with an increasing number of members having better access to key public services (health clinics, primary education, clean water supply, etc).

Supporting policy development, strategies and programmes to empower rural poor and organizations through SSTC

Numerous SSTC projects and initiatives in FAO supported policies and actions that enhanced the capacities of farmers (especially family farmers) and farmer organizations to access productive assets, finance, knowledge and technologies, markets and natural resources thereby contributing to their wellbeing and economic empowerment. FAO's

⁸¹ <https://transfer.cpc.unc.edu/the-transfer-project>

⁸² It is a highly praised social programme that has contributed to reduced in malnutrition, improved access to healthy food, improved school attendance and higher income for farm families in Brazil.

BOX 29

THE KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE PLATFORMS (KEPS)

Ending rural poverty is critical for countries to achieve sustainable development goals by 2030, in particular, SDG 1 (no poverty) and SDG 2 (zero hunger). Many countries have developed effective policies, strategies, and programmes that helped to lift a significant number of their population out of poverty which can be shared with other countries in similar development circumstances. SSC enables the exchange of good practices and lessons on poverty reduction among countries of the global South with the catalytic support of FAO.

The Knowledge Exchange Platforms on rural poverty reduction (KEPs) is an example of a systematic approach employed in FAO to facilitate knowledge exchange on poverty-related policies, strategies, and programmes among Southern countries. Created by the Strategic Programme to Reduce Rural Poverty and the South-South Cooperation Unit in FAO, the platforms aim to foster knowledge exchanges on good practices in areas such as food security and nutrition, social protection, access to resources and advisory services, decent rural employment (including for the youth), rural organizations and women's empowerment. The KEPs support the mapping of existing good practices on poverty reduction at the national level with the aim to facilitate exchanges among countries by

organizing regular workshops and training sessions. The approach is innovative as it puts developing countries at the center of the exchanges, benefiting recipient countries while enabling the provider countries to solidify their experience through the exchanges. The KEPs are currently active in China, Ghana, Kenya, and Senegal, whose policies and strategies have seen some progress in lifting the population out of poverty and hunger. This innovative approach is also enabling participating countries to organize regular events for knowledge exchange, including study tours, workshops, regional and international forums.

Numerous South-South learning events have been organized through KEPS since its inception. In 2017, a regional workshop under the theme “SSC for rural poverty reduction: Learning from the FFF and the KEPs” was organized in Kenya collaboration with the FFF. Other events were also organized under various themes in 2018, including “SSC Policy Dialogue and Workshop focusing on rural poverty reduction programmes in Ghana”; “China-Africa cooperation for poverty reduction” in China, and “Reinforcing coherence between agriculture and social protection for resilience and rural poverty reduction” in Senegal.

support in this area through SSTC projects takes various forms. In some, projects support public policies, strategies, and actions that enhance the collective voice and capacity of family farmers to increase their agricultural production and participate in markets through, for instance, public food procurement systems and other institutional support mechanisms. Other SSTC projects provide direct support to rural farmers and marginalized communities (eg. training, provision of inputs, credit etc.) to enhance their capacities to access productive assets, technology, and markets.

One example of institutionalized support to family farming is found in the *Purchase from African for*

*Africa (PAA)*⁸³ programme. Building on the Brazilian Food Purchase Programme, the programme sought to promote FSN, community resilience and income-generation for farmers and vulnerable communities in five African countries⁸⁴ by strengthening the productive capacities of family farmers and improving education access for students. The programme fostered South-South learning through numerous regional and national workshops that brought together participating countries to exchange

⁸³ OSRO/RAF/202/BRA.

⁸⁴ Programme implemented in Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, Niger and Senegal in collaboration with WFP.

knowledge and develop policies on institutional public procurement that benefit a significant number of rural farmers and farming communities⁸⁵. The programme also enabled countries to implement, pilot and scale up a comprehensive school feeding programme with locally sourced food, fostering local agricultural production while improving livelihoods, nutrition and education access for students.

Similar programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean implemented in the context of school feeding provided more institutionalized support to family farming as a means to promote FSN in public schools. For instance, family farming was an integral component of the *Mesoamerica without hunger* programme implemented in 9 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. The programme fostered inclusive policy dialogue (comprising governments, parliamentary groups, and the civil society and other stakeholders) and experience sharing on public policies and institutional support mechanisms that promote family farming as an important element in school feeding and food and nutritional security in participating countries. Drawing on successful experience in the region, the programme supported the formulation of public procurement policies in school feeding that guarantee market for family farmers thereby contributing to their economic and social wellbeing. In El Salvador, for instance, the programme strengthened the national extension system to increase coverage and provide technical services tailored to the needs of family farmers. The Programme also supported collaboration among 18 local governments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups that contributed to the bolstering of the agriculture sector and family farming, including through the

⁸⁵ The programme supported the formulation of the National Food Procurement Strategy from Smallholder Farmers in the Niger and the National Institutional Procurement Programme in Senegal. In Niger and Senegal, the PAA Africa approach has been included in national policy frameworks. The programme also supported the development of a National School Feeding Strategy in Ethiopia.

provision of innovative technologies, generation of new seed varieties, marketing processes and others. Similarly, through supporting institutionalized public procurement schemes, the programme enhanced the capacity of family farmers in Costa Rica to supply their produce to school feeding programmes and be integrated in the regional wholesale market.

Strengthening School Feeding Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean also sought to improve food security and nutrition in public schools through promoting family farmers who contribute a significant share of the domestic food supply in some countries in the region. The programme not only promoted the formulation of public procurement policies that guaranteed market for the produce of family farmers but also promoted institutional arrangements and other mechanisms that strengthened the collective voice and productive capacities of family farmers.

SSTC projects in FAO also seek to strengthen the capacity of family farmers and local producers engaged in other non-food high-value agricultural crops. Through a SSC project on *Strengthening the Cotton Sector*⁸⁶, FAO, in collaboration with Brazil and its cooperation agency (ABC), supports the sustainable development and strengthening of cotton in 7 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean⁸⁷, drawing on the experience of Brazilian institutions engaged in the sector⁸⁸. The project is built around four components: sustainable production of cotton; promotion of policy dialogue, policy development and strategic alliances, including public-private

⁸⁶ GCP /RLA/199/BRA.

⁸⁷ Project implemented in Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Haiti.

⁸⁸ Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA), Brazilian Association of Cotton Producers (ABRAPA), Technical Assistance and Rural Extension Agency (EMATER), National Secretariat of Solidarity Economy (SENAES), and Brazilian Association of Technical Assistance and Rural Extension Company (ASBRAER) are collaborating with FAO in the implementation of the project in the seven countries.

partnerships; enhancing the competitiveness of the sector and actors involved in the sector including women, youth and indigenous people; and promotion of markets and sustainable development of the cotton value-chain. Among others, the project contributed to local empowerment in participating countries through public investment, procurement and other institutionalized support mechanisms that enhanced the capacities of local producers' access to inputs and markets. For instance, through support of the projects, a total of 2 million USD was invested by the government of Paraguay to promote farmers' access to agricultural inputs. The same amount was spent by the Government of Peru to incentivize producers to engage in good practices in cotton production. Similarly, the project triggered public investment of 1.9 million USD in Colombia to enhance farmer's access to seeds and agricultural inputs and guarantee cotton prices, among other objectives.

Beyond institutionalized support as in the few examples above, other SSTC projects provide targeted capacity-building support to rural farmers and farming organizations on the ground enabling them to gain access to productive assets including agricultural inputs, finance, technology, and other resources. In particular, SSTC projects and initiatives in FAO related to sustainable agricultural practices have proved effective in bolstering the capacities of rural organizations, institutions, and communities, especially disadvantaged and marginalized groups including women. Through targeted support to marginalized groups and communities that enabled them access to finance, technologies and new farming practices, SSTC projects fostered collective self-reliance and empowerment resulting in the establishment and/or strengthening of rural organizations.

A good example in this area is found in the *Special Programme for Food Security in Bangladesh* project that targeted marginalized rural farming communities in Bangladesh. The Project fostered collective action in rural Bangladesh by enhancing the capacity of marginalized small farmers and

landless villagers to gain access to income generative activities, new farming practices, finance and markets through technical support of Chinese agricultural experts and technicians. One of the main focus of the project included the empowerment of poor marginalized farmers through VBOs and capacity development of these organizations in planning and implementing small-scale actions through Farmer Group Development Plans (FGDPs– planning tool for production activities implemented by VBOs) and Revolving Fund (RF–mechanism for building resources for shared use based on paying back for inputs provided by the project). The project enhanced the capacity of 21 VBOs to become self-reliant organizations marked by a strong sense of ownership and empowerment among the members, accompanied by institutional growth with their own rules and management arrangements.

A similar project implemented under the *Special Programme for Food Security in Lao PDR* also contributed to the capacity development of Farmer Organizations and Farmer Groups for self-reliant development and increased their productivity by implementing activities through FGDPs and RFs⁸⁹.

In addition to projects, through other initiatives, FAO supports SSTC activities that promote the collective voice and bargaining of rural communities, especially rural farmers and farming organizations whose mainstay is forests. The Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) programme in FAO employs SSTC approaches to support forest and farm producer organizations' build their organizational and productive capacities and bolster their collective voice to engage in policies (See Box 30).

⁸⁹ Project supported the establishment of eight village Farmer Organizations with a total of 1 008 households as functional self-reliant units with their own rules and management arrangements. The members have developed a strong sense of ownership of their Farmer Organizations and have learned how to plan and implement production activities through the use of FGDPs and the RFs resource.

BOX 30**SOUTH-SOUTH KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGES AMONG SMALL-SCALE FOREST PRODUCER ORGANIZATIONS**

Forest and farm producers (smallholders, communities, indigenous peoples and women's group) are the primary producers of food, forest products and ecosystem services and play an important role in reducing rural poverty, delivering food security and social protection, among others. Despite their important role, forest and farm producers face many challenges such as lack of business skills, lack of finance and technical support, the lack of marketing power that comes from scale, and the lack of an influential voice to ensure that government policies provide fair reward for effort.

FFF programme helps forest and farm producer organizations build their organizational and productive capacities, increase their bargaining power and make their

voice be heard in policy process. The programme also helps governments reinforce coordination across sectors and implement more integrated and comprehensive solutions with forest and farm producer organizations.

SSC is a key tool within the facility to enable forest and farmer producer organizations from different countries and regions involved in the programmes share knowledge, successful experience and good practices on agriculture and sustainable management of natural resources. Since 2014, several exchanges in-country and between countries have been supported, involving more than 300 participants, including representatives from producer organizations, governments, national institutions and key stakeholders⁹⁰.

90 <http://www.fao.org/reduce-rural-poverty/news/detail-events/en/c/1109843/>

Inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems

Inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems are crucial for the sustainability, availability, affordability, quality, and safety of food and agriculture products. To realize this objective, FAO provides assistance and capacity development to countries to access international markets, and meet international standards for food safety, plant health and animal health. Support is also provided to countries to design and implement effective policies, regulatory framework and institutional arrangements that are conducive for the development of inclusive and efficient agrifood systems. FAO also assists countries to improve public and private sector investments in agricultural and food systems, and strengthen the managerial and technical capacity of the various stakeholders along food and agriculture value chains, including

through mechanisms that enhance their access to financial services and risk management tools⁹¹.

In supporting these activities, FAO leverages SSTC focused on capacity development through technical knowledge exchanges. SSTC projects in FAO contributed to the design and implementation of policies, regulatory frameworks and institutional arrangements that support more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems. SSTC projects also enhanced the technical and managerial capacity of actors in food and agriculture value chains, including small farmers and small-scale producers and agribusinesses. In addition, SSTC projects were catalytic in spurring public investment and trade.

91 Midterm Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19, FAO.

Leveraging SSTC for capacity development in the design and implementation of policies, strategies and operational arrangements supportive of inclusive and efficient agrifood systems

SSTC modalities were employed to promote inclusive and efficient agrifood systems through i) formulation and implementation of policies and strategies that improve agrifood processing and reduce post-harvest losses; ii) design and implementation of improved operational arrangements (eg. contract farming, institutional public procurement, and warehouse systems) that improve market access for small-scale actors; iii) promotion of multi-stakeholder governance mechanisms (eg. government, producers, retailers, experts, civil society groups, and others).

In the area of agrifood processing and post-harvest management, the *Partnership for Sustainable Rice System Development in Sub-Saharan Africa*⁹² project illustrates how FAO leverages regional capacity, knowledge, and experiences to promote efficient and sustainable rice systems in 10 rice producing countries in Africa through South-South knowledge exchanges. By mobilizing partners with extensive experience on rice systems and drawing on existing knowledge in the region, the project sought to foster inclusive and efficient rice systems (policies and institutions for efficient markets, agro-processing, value chains, post-harvest management, and others), while promoting good practices that contribute to sustainable rice production in the 10 participating countries. Through the project, capacity needs assessments were conducted in participating countries with the aim to identify priorities and constraints to the development of sustainable rice systems which enabled countries to seek relevant solutions and

exchange experiences with their peers, including through several workshops organized for the purpose (See Box 31). The project contributed to the harmonization of the rice sector, formulation of national rice processing strategy, adoption of new rice processing and conservation, and improvement in grain quality and reduction in post-harvest losses (eg. procurement procedures for post-harvest management tools were adopted and processing machines were procured).

Other examples from FAO's SSTC portfolio illustrate how FAO draws on the vast technical and institutional capacities in the South to assist other countries in the design and implementation of improved operational arrangements that enhance market participation of small-scale producers. Contract farming and public procurement are two such operational arrangements that have been adopted by countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean with FAO's support drawing on the extensive experience and success of Brazil in these areas (see Box 32 on contract farming).

School Feeding and National Food Purchase programmes built on Brazil's model have effectively demonstrated how linking local food production to institutional markets through public procurement fosters smallholders' market integration while improving school enrollment, food security and nutrition, rural income and local economic development. In the *Purchase from African for Africa (PAA)* programme, for instance, public procurement for school feeding programmes fostered sustainable and secure markets for local producers in the participating countries, while promoting a regular access to diverse and fresh food at schools. As a result of the programme, the capacities of farmer organizations was enhanced to participate in the local food markets through tailored trainings on post-harvest practices, food procurement and marketing (in Malawi, Mozambique, the Niger, and Senegal) and fresh vegetable conservation (in Mozambique).

92 GCP/RAF/489/VEN.

BOX 31**KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE ON THE PROMOTION OF EFFICIENT RICE FARMING PRACTICES AND VALUE CHAINS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA THROUGH SSC**

As part of the regional project *Partnership for Sustainable Rice System Development in Sub-Saharan Africa*, a regional workshop on 'knowledge exchange on the promotion of efficient rice farming practices and value chains in Sub-Saharan Africa' was organized in Elmina, Ghana on 7-11 August 2017. The event brought together more than 40 participants from the 10 beneficiary countries and technical partner organizations in the project such as AfricaRice, Coalition for Africa Rice Development (CARD), the Rural Development Administration (RDA) of Korea, International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), and FAO.

The workshop fostered knowledge exchanges on sustainable rice production, intensification and rice

value chain. A number of proposals were also put forward at the workshop for study tours to facilitate exchanges on good practices on rice value chain development, including in the areas of seed systems, irrigation, post-harvest losses, and mechanization. The Study tours will be organized in collaboration with Africa Rice and IRRI and FAO. It is envisaged that the knowledge exchange will catalyze the dissemination of good practices in Africa along the rice value chains through the practical adoption of innovative tools and approaches to boost productivity and enhance the competitiveness of African rice farmers, processors and traders⁹³.

⁹³ The publication of the workshop report can be accessed from <http://www.fao.org/3/ca0567en/CA0567EN.pdf>

School Feeding Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean built on Brazil's model also demonstrated how institutional procurement for school feeding bolstered the market participation of local farmers and producer organizations, boosting local food production, rural income, and local economic development. For instance, School Feeding law enacted in Brazil in 2009 stipulates that at least 30 percent of the food provided to the school feeding programme should come directly from local family farmers. Building on Brazil's experience in this area, the *Strengthening School Feeding Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean* supported participating countries in Latin America and the Caribbean to adopt laws and place institutional arrangements that guarantee a market for local farmers and producer organizations.

A multi-stakeholder governance structure is another area where FAO employs SSTC approaches in support of inclusive and efficient agrifood systems. The project on *Strengthening the Cotton Sector through South-South cooperation*⁹⁴ offers a good example of how FAO promotes a multi-stakeholder governance mechanism that is crucial for the sustainable development of the cotton value chain. Through numerous training and capacity development workshops, the project facilitated policy dialogue and knowledge exchange among key stakeholders in the cotton value chain in Latin America comprising the government, producer organizations, family farmers, cooperatives, experts and research institutions. The project contributed to the enhanced capacity of

⁹⁴ GCP /RLA/199/BRA.

BOX 32**SOUTH-SOUTH EXCHANGE ON CONTRACT FARMING BETWEEN PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF LAOS AND BRAZIL**

The Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) has been implementing a 6-year project titled "Strategic Support for Food Security and Nutrition (SSFSNP) in support of its National Nutrition Strategy to 2025 and Plan of Action 2016-2020 (NNSPA) and the Agricultural Development Strategy (ADS). The project aimed at fostering sustainable and inclusive market-driven partnerships in Lao PDR among other two objectives. In pursuing these objectives, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF), as the lead agency in the implementation of the SSFSNP, approached FAO for its technical assistance on sustainable market-driven partnership and strengthened public services. Assistance was particularly sought on contract farming and a Unilateral Trust Fund (financed by Lao PDR) was then created to support this and other areas (forage development and strategic planning) prioritized by MAF.

Drawing on its comparative advantage, global reach, and resources of its SSC programme, FAO identified Brazil as a partner with the requisite knowledge to share experience on contract farming with Lao PDR. The country has a long-standing experience in contract farming and has a major agrifood chain coordination mechanism in numerous highly competitive agrifood chains. A large number of medium and small-sized farmers are linked to these chains and have contracts with agro-processing firms. The country also enacted a contract farming law in May 2016 that regulates contract farming transactions in all agrifood chains coordinated under this governance mechanism. Given its

extensive technical knowledge on contract farming, Federal University of Viçosa (UFV) in Brazil was identified as the lead technical partner for coordinating this SSC exchange.

With FAO's support, a two-week study tour on contract farming was organized in Brazil for two representatives from Lao PDR to gain first-hand experience on the policy and practice of contract farming. Practical field-level learning coupled with formal interactions with key stakeholders enabled participants to gain a first-hand knowledge on the different contract farming models and a comprehensive understanding of the key actors and processes involved in developing a legal and regulatory framework on contract farming. Following the study tour, a three-and-half-day technical training workshop, including experts from the University of Viçosa, sensitized government officials, extension workers, and producers on approaches to participate gainfully in contract farming arrangements. The lessons learned from the study tour and technical workshop strengthened capacities on the operational, regulatory and legal framework for effective contract farming in Lao PDR.

The SSC exchange and the UTF technical support is expected to lead to a review of the legal and regulatory framework for contract farming in Lao PDR, with the aim of introducing a national Contract Farming Law, drawing on Global experience and particularly that of Brazil.

stakeholders' participation in the sustainable development of the cotton value chain. Regional workshops served as a vehicle for dissemination of information and sensitize stakeholders, including small producers, how they can gainfully participate in local, regional and international cotton markets (See Box 33).

Leveraging SSTC to enhance public and private sector capacities and investments for inclusive agro-enterprises and value chains development through SSTC

FAO leverages SSTC to facilitate knowledge exchanges on strategies and actions that

BOX 33

COTTON: WEAVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

In the framework of the regional project on ***Strengthening the Cotton Sector through South-South cooperation***, FAO, in collaboration with the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) and participating countries in the project, organized an international seminar on 'Cotton: weaving opportunities for Latin America and the Caribbean' on 12-14 December 2016 in **Asunción**, Paraguay. More than 100 participants from Argentina, Colombia, Bolivia, Peru, Paraguay, Ecuador, Haiti, Benin, United States, and Brazil attended the international seminar. The event also brought together key actors in the cotton sector including the association of producers, representatives of governments, civil society organizations, traders, retailer, and international agencies. Technical support was provided by key institutions in the cotton sector including the Brazilian Association of Cotton Producers (ABRAPA), the International Labor Organization (ILO), the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA), the

Brazilian Association of State Entities for Technical Assistance and Rural Extension (ASBRAER), the National Secretariat of Solidarity Economy of Brazil (SENAES), and the Textile Exchange and Support Organic Cotton in Latin America (SOCiLA).

The event facilitated experience sharing on diverse topics such as labor markets in the cotton value chain, strategies for market access in differentiated markets, certification seals, trade, opportunities and challenges for cotton fiber markets, among others. Discussions also focused on the importance of cotton family farming and the need to strengthen the capacity of small producers and small enterprises to participate in differentiated international markets. In this regard, participants underscored the importance of public policies that support cotton family farming, cotton value chain, and research programmes that foster improved varieties of cotton adapted to each country where they are grown.

strengthen the technical and managerial capacities of stakeholders along the agrifood value chains. In this regard, SSTC projects target important value-chain actors such as family farmers, small-scale producers, agribusiness, enterprises, and others engaged in commercial agriculture with the view to upgrade their technical and manage capabilities through South-South exchanges. For instance, building on the experience of ASEAN countries, a SSC project on ***capacity development and experience sharing for sustainable rice value chain development in Africa***⁹⁵, funded by the Republic of Korea, sought to strengthen the business and entrepreneurial capacities of rice producer organizations and

small-scale enterprises in Nigeria, Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire. Numerous activities have been supported through the project, including extensive training programmes that strengthened the agribusiness entrepreneurial skills of rice producers, processors, and sellers in the participating countries. Furthermore, in collaboration with the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), the Africa Rice Center and the Rural Development Administration (RDA) of Korea, training and activities have been implemented to develop the rice value chain and strengthen public-private partnerships in the three countries.

95 GCP/RAF/497/ROK.

Other SSTC projects also contributed to enhanced technical and managerial capacities of actors in the agrifood value chain. In the case of the *Strengthening the Cotton Sector* project, the capacities of value chain actors has been strengthened through numerous trainings (3 500 to farmers and 1 200 to technicians), field visits, national and international workshops and other activities. The project also contributed to the capacity development of value chain actors by disseminating relevant information and fostering their knowledge on the sector, including through knowledge products, tools, and publications. Two publications are worth mentioning, including “*The State of the Art of Cotton in Countries of Mercosur and Associates*”⁹⁶ and “*Study of the cotton niche market*”⁹⁷ which contributed to enhanced knowledge and capacity development of all actors in the cotton value chain.

Other SSTC projects in FAO played a catalytic role in spurring trade and investment in agro-enterprise and value chain development. Building on the successes of Phase I, Phase II of the *China-Uganda SSC*⁹⁸ project was implemented with the aim to promote agribusiness trade and investment in agriculture value chain, in addition to increasing productivity in selected areas. Through the project, over 3 000 farmers were trained in Chinese technologies in the areas of horticulture, cereals, aquaculture, livestock and at least 800 (20 percent) have already started applying these technologies. Furthermore, 36 demonstrations were conducted for horticulture, cereals, aquaculture, livestock and cross-cutting issues (agribusiness, value addition and value-chain development and agro machinery). In the area of trade and investment, activities were undertaken that promoted investment and trade between

Uganda and China. A noteworthy contribution of the project was the launch of a 220 million USD China-Uganda Agricultural Cooperation Industrial Park that is expected to boost animal and crop production and processing in Uganda in meeting the burgeoning domestic and regional demands for processed agricultural products.

Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises

Beyond the triple challenges of ensuring FSN, providing productive and decent jobs and sustainable use of natural resources, developing countries continuously face disasters and crises that threaten their livelihood and long-term development. The objectives of zero hunger, sustainable agriculture, poverty reduction, and inclusive and efficient agricultural systems cannot be achieved without a resilient agriculture. To that end, in reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience of livelihoods to threats, FAO works closely with developing countries to ensure that their hard-won development gains are not lost due to crises and disasters, especially those related to climate change, food chain crises and conflicts.

FAO effectively leverages SSTC approaches in its resilience work. On one hand, FAO facilitates mutual learning through knowledge exchanges in areas such as disaster risk reduction and crisis management. On the other, through regional programmes, FAO fosters collective action against transboundary threats (animal diseases, natural disasters, and food value chain crisis) that individual countries cannot tackle single-handedly. Few examples below will illustrate how FAO leverages SSTC to deliver results related to its resilience work.

⁹⁶ Publication accessed at <http://www.fao.org/3/b-i7314s.pdf>

⁹⁷ <http://www.fao.org/3/i8813es/i8813es.pdf>

⁹⁸ GCP /UGA/046/CPR.

Strengthening national capacities in the formulation of disaster risk reduction and crisis management policies, strategies and programmes through SSTC

Appropriate policies, strategies, institutional mechanisms and financing for disaster risk reduction and crisis management should be in place to reduce the increasing levels of threats and shocks, including climate change and natural disasters that affect the agricultural sector and food security. In supporting national capacities in this area, FAO employs SSTC to facilitate knowledge exchanges on effective policies, strategies and programmes that proved effective in disaster risk reduction and crisis management. SSTC projects support collective action at sub-regional and regional levels to tackle cross-border threats related to climate change and natural disasters.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, under the framework of the Regional Initiative sustainable use of natural resource, adaptation to climate change and disaster risk management, SSTC projects support the formulation of agro-environmental policies, institutional frameworks, and mechanism on disaster risk reduction, crisis management and adaptation to climate change. For instance, a SSC project on *Strengthening the technical and institutional capacities for the sustainable use of natural resources, adaptation to climate change and risk management*⁹⁹ sought to enhance the capacities of countries in the region to implement good practices on sustainable management of natural resources that contribute to disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate change. Numerous SSC activities were supported through the project, including regional workshops for policy dialogue, knowledge exchange and coordination of policies and actions. A notable outcome of the project includes the formulation a Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Management in the Agriculture Sector and Food and Nutrition Security

⁹⁹ TCP/RLA/3606.

in Latin America and the Caribbean (2018-2030)¹⁰⁰ that aims to foster collaboration and coordination among the countries in the mainstreaming of disaster risk management and climate change adaptation in the agriculture sector. The strategy will also promote coherence of policies and actions in the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, with emphasis on sub-regional and regional approaches to address cross-border challenges as well as jointly manage shared resources (such as ecosystems, watersheds, etc.).

Another SSC project on *strengthening national risk management systems that affect food security in member countries of the Southern Agricultural Council (CAS)*¹⁰¹ was implemented with the aim of strengthening the national systems for integrated disaster risk management of member countries through knowledge and experience sharing on policies, strategies, technologies and good practices on the area. Through the project, a capacity needs assessment was undertaken in each member country to identify opportunities and gaps that could be best addressed through South-South exchanges. The outcome of the assessment includes six publications on the “*Comprehensive disaster risk management in the agriculture and food security in the CAS countries: analysis of the technical and institutional capacities*” which will contribute to enhanced knowledge and capacity in the formulation of policies and strategies on disaster risk management in member countries. Another publication on “*Comprehensive disaster risk management in the agriculture and food security in the CAS countries: opportunities for South-South cooperation*” contributed to the identification of priority areas for collaboration, preparation, and implementation of a sub-regional Action Plan on SSC in disaster risk management in agriculture and food security¹⁰².

¹⁰⁰ The strategy can be assessed at <http://www.fao.org/3/i8919en/i8919EN.pdf>

¹⁰¹ TCP/RLA/3505. Member countries of the CAS are Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay

¹⁰² The publications can be assessed at <http://www.fao.org/index.php?id=88885>

Similarly, in the African region, SSTC projects are implemented under the regional initiative *building resilience in Africa's drylands* with the aim of promoting resilience and enhance capacities in disaster risk management through knowledge exchanges on good policies and practices among the countries in the region. In this regard, a SSC project on *Support to the Regional Initiative on Resilience in the Sahel and Horn of Africa*¹⁰³ was implemented with the aim of strengthening FSN by enhancing national capacities and building the resilience of countries in the Sahel and Horn of Africa regions. The project supported the mapping and documentation of existing knowledge, experience and good practices in resilience building and facilitated their dissemination through workshops, training, and forums organized for the purpose. The project fostered synergies between the regional institutions—Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) in the Sahel and the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) in the Horn of Africa—by establishing a knowledge exchange platform for cross-fertilization of experiences between the two regions and enhancing their capacity to scale up good practices on disaster risk management and resilience.

As the example above demonstrates, sub-regions and regions are unique in that they offer relevant knowledge and experience that could be replicated and scaled-up with FAO's catalytic support. However, FAO's support to capacity development through knowledge exchange on resilience and disaster risk management is not just limited to sub-regions/ region. Drawing on its technical expertise and global reach, FAO also fosters interregional exchanges benefiting many African countries. A notable effort in this area is the partnership between FAO and the Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation (MASHAV) that seeks to foster knowledge

exchange on resilience, sustainable agriculture, green growth and related areas between African countries and Israel (see Box 34).

Leveraging SSTC to enhance national capacities in identifying, monitoring, assessing risks and delivering integrated and timely early warning

Many threats and shocks are transboundary and often too difficult for countries to tackle them singlehandedly. Climatic and natural disasters cut across regions and national boundaries destroying terrestrial and aquatic eco-systems shared across countries. Plant diseases (such as cassava mosaic and banana wilt), animal diseases (such as avian influenza and foot-and-mouth or peste des petit ruminants) or food safety events like radioactive food contamination have repercussions beyond national borders. Furthermore, crisis and conflicts have a widespread impact that spill over national borders threatening neighboring countries, even regions. Given the nature of these threats and shocks, nowhere is SSC more relevant and important than in agriculture, and FAO has effectively leveraged that in its regional projects enabling countries to jointly identify, monitor, assesses and respond to the common challenges they face. The examples below illustrate FAO's success in this area.

Banana-based production systems are key to the livelihood and economies of countries in the Great Lakes Region¹⁰⁴. They are one of the staple foods, an important source of income and significantly contribute to food security and nutrition to millions of people in the region. Banana Xanthomonas Wilt (BXW) and Banana Bunchy Top Virus (BBTV) are the two most critical diseases threatening banana-based livelihoods in the region. With support from the Government of Belgium, a project on

¹⁰³ TCP/RAF/3507.

¹⁰⁴ Countries include Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

BOX 34

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION IN ARID ZONES AND GREEN GROWTH FAO – MASHAV STUDY TOUR

Climate-related crises and disasters pose unprecedented challenges in Africa where majority of people depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Beyond short-term immediate effects, crisis and disasters also undermine long-term development endeavors of African countries by wiping out any development gains that have taken years to build. As the magnitude and impact of these crisis and disasters increase—aggravated by climate change and over-exploitation of natural resources—more households and communities are becoming less able to absorb, recover and adapt, rendering them more vulnerable to future shocks. Efforts directed towards building national capacities in disaster risk management and climate change adaptation will go a long way in increasing the resilience of livelihoods while ensuring sustainable use of agriculture and natural resources for development. In this regard, SSTC offers enormous opportunity in building capacities through knowledge exchanges and mutual learning on good practices that have proved effective in building a resilient, risk sensitive and productive agriculture.

Drawing on its global reach and expertise in this area, FAO partnered with Israel— a country known for its success in agriculture and livestock production, environmental conservation and green growth under arid conditions— to organize a learning tour to Israel for government officials working in the Ministries of Agriculture and Environment in 15 African countries. Representatives from Uganda, Niger, Chad, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Zimbabwe, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Rwanda, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Nigeria and Mali participated in a 5-day learning tour organized from 4 to 9 March 2017 at the MATC- MASHAV international Agricultural Training Centre in Israel (the oldest training centre in

the country) with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the Israel Export Institute. The main purpose the learning tour was to facilitate experience sharing and learning, drawing on Israel's successful experience on resilience, sustainable agriculture and green growth under arid conditions.

The study tour combined classroom training (on topics such as agriculture adaptation to climate change, green growth, and sustainable agriculture and forestry practices) with field demonstrations of Israel's innovations and technologies related to resilience and sustainable agriculture including efficient water management systems, rainwater harvesting, drip irrigation, wastewater treatment, modern livestock production, pest and disease control, soil nutrients mapping, post-harvest handling, among others. The study tour also provided an opportunity for government officials to learn about Israel's world-class research on agriculture under arid conditions, climate change adaptation, soil conservation, risk management, and post-harvest techniques.

As a follow-up to the study tour, a three-weeks (24 June to 13 July 2018) capacity development course on *sustainable livestock feed development and breeding techniques in resource-constrained situation* was also organized for fifteen participants from nine Francophone countries. Capacity of livestock extension workers, research officers and producers was enhanced through a hands-on training on key topics such as sustainable water management and feed production, improved herd management and breeding techniques in water and heat-constrained situations.

*Banana diseases in the Great Lakes Region*¹⁰⁵ was implemented with the aim to prevent and mitigate

the effect of banana-based diseases, through regional coordination, enhancing national institutional capacity and promoting good farming and agricultural practices at the local level. The project contributed

105 OSRO/RAF/117/BEL.

to the strengthening of national institutions dealing with cross-border issues¹⁰⁶. Regional planning workshops also facilitated the formulation of national coordination plans, the identification of relevant national stakeholders and the formulation of country-specific action plans. Through the project, more than 1.8 million male and female farmers benefitted from awareness-raising campaigns on disease prevention and control. Capacities were enhanced in the application of smartphone technology to develop an early warning and monitoring system, enabling a real-time mapping and information on the prevalence, magnitude, and impact of the disease. Regional coordination was strengthened and effective partnerships forged, including with key research organizations with a regional mandate¹⁰⁷.

Cassava is another staple crop and an important source of livelihood to millions of people across Eastern and Central Africa. Cassava Brown Streak Disease (CBSD) and Cassava Mosaic Disease (CMD) are two diseases that affect this crop, posing a major threat to the food security millions of people in Central and Eastern Africa who depend on it. These diseases are transboundary, initially confined to East Africa which then started to spread towards Central and West Africa across time, requiring a regional approach to tackle them. In responding to the threat, the *Regional Cassava initiative*¹⁰⁸, supported by the European Commission, was implemented with the aim of restoring cassava production in the region by enhancing the capacities of the most food insecure, vulnerable and subsistence farmers to prevent, mitigate and respond to this threat. Through the project, more than 883 500 thousand farmers in the seven participating countries were trained on cassava multiplication and disease identification

¹⁰⁶ For example, the project supported the creation and strengthening of national coordination and planning platforms (NCPPs).

¹⁰⁷ Partners include the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), Biodiversity International, International Institute of tropical agriculture (IITA) and the Université Catholique de Louvain (UCL).

¹⁰⁸ OSRO/RAF/912/EC.

technics using the Farmers Field School (FFS) approach and received improved disease-resistant cassava varieties. Research and extension staff were also trained in surveillance techniques in order to develop a network of farmers and professionals able to monitor pest and disease spread and report updates to responsible bodies for immediate action. The project also supported effective information management through piloting of digital technologies in selected countries, such as Digital Pen Technology (to assist countries capture field-level data on post-planting and pre-harvest operations, rates of disease infection, number and location of beneficiaries, etc.) and Dynamic Atlas (to update cassava atlas in the region as data becomes available). One of the notable outcomes of the project was effective coordination at regional and national levels. The project promoted consistent and common approaches (eg. in areas of data collection, management, good practices, and FFS), harmonization of protocol and practices while strengthening partnerships with institutions that have a regional mandate (See Box 35).

Another good example of a regional approach to cross-border threats is found in the *Surveillance and Control of Cattle Disease in Southern Africa*¹⁰⁹ project, implemented in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) with the financial support of South Africa. Livestock is an important sector of agricultural production in the SADC and holds a high social value in rural communities across the region. A persistent and severe drought had reduced grazing areas in the region leading to competition between wildlife and livestock for grazing and watering points resulting in the transmission of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) from buffaloes to livestock. Other contagious diseases like Bovine Pleuropneumonia (CBPP) have also threatened the animal health status of the region and the livelihoods of many rural communities, thus affecting their ability to trade in livestock and livestock products.

¹⁰⁹ OSRO/RAF/511/SAF.

BOX 35

REGIONAL COLLABORATION IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CASSAVA BROWN STREAK DISEASE

Recognizing their extensive experience, technical expertise and regional mandates in the fight against tropical and other transboundary diseases, including those related to Cassava, FAO has strengthened its collaboration with research and development partners in Africa. Key partners include the Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), International Institute of tropical agriculture (IITA), the Consortium for Improved Agriculture-based Livelihoods in Central Africa (CIALCA). FAO also partners with other organizations such as the Catholic Relief Services (CRS). The aim of the collaboration was to establish a coordinated and concerted approach for Disaster Risk Management and Disaster Risk Reduction, specifically

in tackling transboundary pests and diseases. Strengthened regional collaboration enabled formulation of a number of joint proposals to 1) provide a rapid response to the Cassava Brown Streak Disease; 2) strengthen the national and community-based platforms and build capacity to prepare for and manage acute incidences of pest and diseases; 3) put in place a transitional pathway bridging response and mitigation with more sustainable mechanisms for value chain development for cassava and other food crops. With the active involvement of the national partners in the development of the proposal, they provide an excellent mechanism for medium and longer-term action planning¹¹⁰.

110 Information extracted from the progress report of the Regional Cassava initiative.

The regional project was, thus, implemented with the aim of controlling and arresting the spread of these transboundary animal diseases (TADs) through improved detection, identification, monitoring and surveillance; capacity development through training key stakeholders in disease control techniques; and public awareness campaigns. The project contributed to the arrest of the widespread outbreaks of these diseases in the countries in the region. Among key factors for the success of the project include the establishment of 'Mobile veterinary laboratories' and vaccinations; training of technical staff in veterinary and related departments in various aspects of TAD control; public awareness campaigns through radio broadcasts, posters, and pamphlets; effective surveillance including through digital pens. The latter was an innovative approach to disease surveillance for capturing field data and instant transmission to a server via a mobile telephone or the internet.

Locusts are other transboundary agricultural pests that threaten food security and the livelihood of rural agricultural communities sharing common borders. In the Caucasus and Central Asia region, national borders are situated on traditional locust habitats and breeding areas, resulting in a movement of locusts across borders and posing a serious threat to agriculture, pastures, and rangelands in countries in the region. Overcoming this transboundary challenge required a regional response and the programme on *Locust Management in the Caucasus and Central Asia (CCA)*¹¹¹ was implemented to prevent and control the threat posed by migratory locusts with active participation and concerted efforts by the 10 countries in the region.

111 An inter-regional and multi-funded programme (from USAID, JICA, FTTP and FAO) covering Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The programme fostered effective coordination, including through the establishment of a technical network of experts on locust management in the region. Countries regularly exchanged information and shared experiences at various workshops organized for this purpose. Furthermore, joint cross-border surveys were carried out involving locust experts from the ten countries to collect data and evaluate locust situation along the borders. The programme supported the harmonization and standardization of survey and data collection tools, including through the use of smartphones, tablets and computers and creation of a geographical information system to closely track and monitor the status of locust in the region.

Cross cutting issues (gender, nutrition, climate change, governance)

Gender, climate change, governance and nutrition are central to FAO's work and are integrated in the Strategic Framework as cross-cutting themes. FAO accords high priority to the cross-cutting themes, including in its policy and programmatic work, to ensure effectiveness in the delivery of the Strategic Objectives. By mainstreaming cross-cutting themes in their design and implementation, SSTC projects contribute to FAO's work in these area and Strategic Objectives.

Gender equality and women empowerment

Gender equality is central to FAO's mandate to achieve food security and nutrition for all. FAO promotes gender equality both as a fundamental human right and as an essential means of achieving sustainable rural development, food security and nutrition. Gender equality objectives are met in FAO through

mainstreaming gender issues in all its work while also implementing programmes and initiatives that specifically target women¹¹².

SSTC projects contribute to FAO's work on gender equality and the Strategic Objectives by incorporating gender perspectives in their design and implementation. Gender equality is an important component, especially in those SSTC projects that sought to enhance sustainable and productive agriculture. Gender perspectives are effectively addressed in these projects by ensuring that beneficiary groups include a fair number of women in trainings, demonstrations, and other capacity enhancing activities. For instance, in *China-Liberia SSC* project, women accounted nearly to a third of the Liberian graduates who participated in the training by Chinese technicians on crop, livestock, fisheries and poultry production. In the *China-Namibia SSC* project, women accounted for a majority of the beneficiaries (government officials and farmers) who benefitted from capacity-building training and demonstrations session on sustainable horticulture and cereal production. Gender balance was also maintained by ensuring equal participation of women and men in major project activities in the *China-Mongolia SSC* project.

Projects implemented through TrC arrangements also ensured gender perspectives are properly addressed in all project activities. In the case of *reinforcement of the production policies on basic grains in Central American Agricultural Council (CAC)* project, women producers accounted for 33 percent of the beneficiaries in training and capacity building workshops on sustainable seed production. Women empowerment was the priority focus

¹¹² FAO's work in this areas is guided by its Policy on Gender Equality and the UN System-Wide Action Plan (SWAP) on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (SWAP).

of the *Special Programme for Food Security in Lao DPR*, another TrC project. The project ensured adequate level of women participation in project planning and implementation, especially in the preparation of community action plans in the FGDP and Revolving funds. Women also served in executive committees of the Farmers Organizations and most of the these organizations had women groups as one of the main FGDP groups. In the *Special Programme for Food Security in Bangladesh*, about half of the VBO membership was women, including women-headed households, and every VBO contained women groups. Women were also part of the executive committees of the VBO and took part in study tours and numerous capacity-development trainings, including a special training programme on gender issues.

Climate change

Agriculture and food systems, core areas of FAO's mandate, are partly responsible for greenhouse emissions but are also a fundamental part of the solution for adaptation to and mitigation of the effects of climate change. Recognizing this, climate change issues are accorded a top-line corporate priority in FAO as reflected in its Strategy on Climate Change that focuses in three areas: enhancing the institutional and technical capacities of its member countries through provision of technical knowledge and expertise; improving the integration of food security, agriculture, forestry and fisheries into the international climate agenda; and strengthening the delivery of FAO's work¹¹³. Numerous global programmes in FAO supports countries to develop and implement policy frameworks and institutional arrangements that

are conducive for agricultural development under pressing challenges of climate change. SSTC projects contribute to that endeavor by promoting agriculture that contributes to sustainable stewardship of the environment as the illustrative examples below demonstrate.

Numerous FAO-China SSC projects have supported the adoption of production systems and practices that are environmentally-friendly and contribute resilience of the agro-ecosystem to effects of climate change. The rice-fish culture is an example of such practices that is climate smart integrating rice and fish production in an ecological symbiotic relationship. Through the *China-Nigeria SSC programme* (phase I and phase II), the system was introduced in eight states in Nigeria resulting in the doubling of rice and tilapia production in some of the demonstration sites. With support of the programme, the system was further expanded to 10 thousand hectares benefitting a large number of smallholder farmers and contributing to their resilience to climate change. Other FAO-China SSC projects supported the introduction of this system in Uganda, Malawi, Mali and Senegal where there is considerable potential for integration of irrigation and aquaculture benefitting a large number of rural households.

FAO-China SSC projects also supported the introduction of crop production and management practices that contribute to adaptation to and mitigation of the effects of climate change. Through the *China-Uganda SSC project* (Phase I and phase II), small-holder producers adopted high-yield drought-resistant crop production and farming systems that enhanced their resilience to the effects of climate change. Among the notable results include introduction of new improved Chinese varieties of foxtail millet adapted to the ecological environment in Uganda. As the result of the new varieties, the growth cycle of foxtail millet was shorted (enabling skipping the dry season) and production area

¹¹³ FAO Strategy on Climate Change accessed at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i7175e.pdf>

expanded in Uganda, resulting in more efficient and resilient system contributing to food security and nutrition in the country. The high-quality seeds have been also introduced in Namibia and Ethiopia through other China-FAO SSC projects.

Adoption of climate-smart crop production and management technologies are other notable contribution of SSC projects. *The China-Mongolia SSC project*, for instance, supported the successful introduction of intensive farming technologies that improved crop and livestock production under extreme climatic conditions, contributing to enhanced resilience and adaptation to effects of climate change. The project supported the adoption of Chinese greenhouse technologies in Mongolia that contributed to prolonged planting season and crop diversification in Mongolia. With the introduction of these greenhouse technologies, for instance, thirty two new varieties of vegetables were introduced for large-scale production. Furthermore, other technologies and practices (eg. smart irrigation, water management technologies and soil management practices) have further contributed to increased stability of production system from climate change shocks and reduced rural farmer's exposure to climate-related risks.

Other SSC projects focused on capacity development of policy makers on policies and actions that contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation. For instance, the *capacity building for sustainable management watersheds in Central Asia and the Caucasus* project sought to enhance the capacities of decision makers in the region on the methodologies for planning and implementation of integrated and multidisciplinary sustainable management of mountain watersheds. The project supported capacity development of a significant number of experts and policy makers in the rehabilitation and sustainable management of mountain watersheds through a regional on-the-job training, practical courses and workshops.

While the contribution of these projects to climate change mitigation and adaptation is indirect (through introduction of climate-smart and environmental-friendly agriculture), other SSC projects have direct impact. The *Satellite Forest Monitoring in Central Africa Forest Commission (COMIFAC)* project for instance aims to strengthen the satellite land monitoring systems (SLMS) of the ten member countries in COMIFAC for monitoring, measuring, reporting and verification for REDD+, as well as for improved land-use management. Through activities targeted towards the development of institutional framework for remote sensing and geospatial tools and capacity development in the application of remote sensing data and others, the project contributes to the reduction of deforestation and forest degradation in the ten countries of the Congo Basin to mitigate the effects of climate change in the region.

Nutrition

Improving nutrition and ensuring food security for all are central to FAO's mandate and work. FAO gives increased attention to nutrition by addressing the long-term economic, social and environmental constraints to food security and nutrition, in particular those related to sustainable food systems and value chains. In achieving its objectives, FAO supports countries to improve nutrition through better food and agriculture systems, working with partners at global, regional and national levels. FAO work in this area is guided by its strategy and is based on four guiding principles: shape food and agriculture systems to be more nutrition-sensitive in order to produce good nutritional outcomes.; have greater impact at country level by harnessing knowledge and experience across the Organization, and by aligning work to build upon and serve country initiatives, policies and programmes; work in partnership, as well as across sectors; and promote economically, socially, environmentally

sustainable and gender-sensitive policies, programmes and investments¹¹⁴.

SSTC plays an important role to the realization of FAO's goal and vision on nutrition. The contribution of SSTC projects to improved nutritional outcomes is sometimes direct, for instance by supporting the establishment of national policy, legal and institutional frameworks for food security, nutrition security and sustainable school feeding programmes. Indirectly, SSTC projects also contribute to nutrition through promoting sustainable agriculture and food systems that lead to improved availability, access to and consumption of diverse foods.

Mesoamerica without Hunger Programme is one example of SSTC projects that directly contributed to improved nutritional outcomes by supporting the establishment of public policy, legal and institutional frameworks in participating countries to ensure FSN as a fundamental human right. In the case of *Strengthening School Feeding Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean*, participating countries have put in place legal and institutional framework and implemented sustainable school feeding programmes contributing to significant improvement in nutrition status of students through daily provision of fresh and high nutritional quality food at schools. The *PAA Africa programme* also contributed to improved nutrition in the participating countries through introduction of school meals and dietary diversification of students.

SSTC projects on sustainable agriculture and food systems have indirectly contributed to improved nutrition by promoting the availability, access to and consumption of diverse foods. For instance, the introduction

of new agricultural techniques and new plant varieties through the *China-Liberia SSC* brought an increase in rice yield (in some cases 300 percent) resulting in higher income and availability of food for consumption in Liberia. In the case of *China-Malawi SSC* project, introduction of new animal production and husbandry technologies resulted in an increase in milk yield over 20 percent, contributing to higher income and consumption of beneficiary farmers. Low-cost technologies and sustainable practices introduced through the *South-South cooperation Technical Assistance Programme* project brought a significant increase in fish production and consumption in Namibia. Similarly, through the *China-Nigeria SSC project*, rice-fish agricultural system introduced in Nigeria almost doubled rice and tilapia production at some of the demonstration sites, significantly contributing to higher income, consumption and improved livelihood of beneficiary farmers.

Governance

Governance is another important area of work and a concern for FAO and is critical to achieving the Strategic Objectives. FAO works at all levels of governance—national, regional and global—to improve capacities for effective collective action and to solve problems as diverse as hunger, malnutrition, poverty, climate change, sustainable agriculture and use of natural resources, health and safety of food and agriculture systems, among many others. While at global level, FAO works to build institutions and mechanisms that provide international norms, standards and data, and promote international cooperation, at country levels FAO helps governments identify their most important government challenges related to food and agriculture, and improve the inclusiveness of their policies and programmes to address them more effectively.

¹¹⁴ Strategy and vision for FAO's work in nutrition, accessed at <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4185e.pdf>

By integrating governance perspectives in their design and implementation, SSTC projects contribute to the effectiveness of FAO's work on governance at regional and country levels. At regional level, SSTC projects contribute to improved governance through enhancing the capacities of regional coordination mechanisms and processes established to promote policy dialogue and development on various issues such as food security, nutrition, agricultural productivity and others. For instance, the *Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Regional Coordination Centre for food security (RCC)* project contributed to improved governance in the ECO region by strengthening the regional coordination mechanisms (RCC), established to foster policy dialogue, coordination on FSN among countries in the region. In Africa, the SSC project on *Food and Nutrition Security in Community of Portuguese Language Speaking Countries (CPLP)* contributed to improved governance by enhancing the capacity of the CPLP regional mechanism for civil society engagement. Governance was one of the major themes in the SSC project on *strengthening dialogue among FAO, Governments and Civil Society* where

coordination and multi-stakeholder engagement in policy dialogues and debates on FSN was fostered in Latin America and the Caribbean as a result of the project.

At the national level, SSTC projects also contributed to improved governance by fostering multi-stakeholder policy processes on FSN and related issues. The *Mesoamerica without Hunger Programme and National and Sub-regional strategies for FSN and Poverty Reduction in Latin America and the Caribbean* project contributed to improved governance in Latin America and the Caribbean by supporting the active engagement of key stakeholders (governments, civil society, farmer groups and parliamentary groups) in policy dialogues and policy development on FSN, and other areas. National governance mechanisms for sustainable agricultural and production systems were enhanced through SSTC projects. For instance, through *Seed Sector Development in the ECO* project the capacities of experts, specialists, and policymakers was enhanced and participating countries were able to develop a national seed policy and establish a national budget for the strengthening of the seed sector. ■

LESSONS LEARNED AND THE WAY FORWARD

Overview of the lessons learned and challenges

SSTC continues to expand and its demand is set to grow in the coming years. More than ever, countries of the Global South are turning to each other for the critically needed human, technical and financial resources to meet their development needs and are increasingly seeking the support of UN system organizations in catalyzing this cooperation. United Nations support is particularly sought in the identification of relevant Southern partners and solutions to a myriad of development challenges, including sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition. FAO has effectively positioned itself to respond to the growing demands of Members, consistent with its comparative advantage and mandate. Over the years, the Organization has proved to be a reliable and effective SSTC partners as highlighted in the previous chapters. This section presents important lessons from FAO's SSTC projects and initiatives analyzed in this report and identifies a set of challenges and opportunities for FAO's future SSTC work.

Lessons learned from implementation of SSTC projects and initiatives

“Tripartite model” in brokering South-South knowledge and experience

Clearly defined frameworks, rules and guidelines for SSTC are indispensable for brokering knowledge and sharing experience among countries. In this regard, the tripartite model pioneered by FAO in its SSC projects, involving a host (recipient) country, a cooperating (provider) country and FAO, has proved effective in achieving this objective. Based on a Tripartite SSC agreement, the model provided clear guidelines for South-South exchanges, defining the responsibilities of the recipient, cooperating countries and FAO. This approach has enabled recipient countries to identify their own needs, including technical, institutional and financial challenges that are then effectively matched with solutions in other countries with FAO's catalytic support. FAO's comparative advantage, including its neutrality, global reach, country presence and technical expertise, has been a key factor in instilling trust between partners, enabling the Organization to catalyze and broker knowledge exchanges between many recipient and provider countries.

National leadership and ownership in South-South exchanges

A key lesson drawn from SSTC projects analyzed in this report is the need for national leadership and ownership for effective implementation of SSTC projects and initiatives. One of the prerequisites for a successful and systematic transfer and exchange of knowledge, experience and technologies is a thorough needs assessment that should precede any SSTC project implementation to identify capacity gaps and needs that can be best addressed through SSC. In many of the SSTC projects and initiatives analyzed in the present report, national governments of host countries have demonstrated their national ownership and leadership in SSTC projects, conducting needs assessment to identify their capacity gaps, define priorities and needs that were addressed by provider countries with FAO's catalytic support¹¹⁵.

Flexibility in SSTC modalities within and across countries

Another key driver of success in FAO's SSTC project portfolio is the flexibility in the use of SSTC modalities consistent with regional priorities and needs. For instance, in Africa, where the majority of SSTC projects have focused on sustainable agricultural production, the deployment of experts into the field for a longer term of at least two years, covering two agricultural production seasons, was required to ensure diffusion and uptake of knowhow and technology in the host country. In Latin America and the Caribbean, where the majority of SSTC projects largely involved policy dialogue, technical missions, and study tours, the modality of work required the fielding of experts and technicians from cooperating countries for a medium term (more than 6 months). Within countries, however, FAO uses a

¹¹⁵ NPFS were owned and implemented by national governments (in contrast to SPFS that were largely implemented by FAO), including SSTC projects and initiatives implemented in support of these programmes.

standard average contracting period of two years for most of the SSC cooperants. Flexibility in the length of the contracting period will enable identification of more different areas for SSC support. For a shorter period of a few months, specific SSC support in the area of training support on a specific technology could be identified.

Building institutional capacities for uptake of Southern knowledge, experience and technologies

The SSTC projects analyzed in this report highlighted the effectiveness of the FFS approach, involving on-site demonstrations and on-the-job training, in supporting the diffusion and uptake of new production methods, farming techniques and technologies by farmers and extension workers in recipient countries. This approach has been effective in strengthening the capacities of farmers, extension workers to adopt and adapt new farming practices and technologies. However, scaling-up and the wider application of new technologies were at times limited or slowed by national regulations and laws that require prior testing and approval of new or improved technologies and practices by the official research institutions (which often lack the human and technical resources to quickly test, review and approve these technologies) before they become part of the agricultural extension service. Despite this challenge, SSTC projects have had a lasting impact on local institutional capacities in the hosting countries as they target research and other authoritative supporting institutions rather than working directly with extension service providers in the field¹¹⁶.

¹¹⁶ For instance, in the case of Nigeria, the challenge was overcome by stationing SSC cooperants at the Regional Multiservice Extension Centres (REMSECs) which served as incubation centres for Chinese agricultural technologies to be used for demonstration of vetted and successful practical technologies developed during Phase I of the China-Nigeria SSC project and training as well as support to Research and Development.

A regional approach to SSTC with national and sub-national focus

The review has highlighted that SSTC projects and initiatives produce a greater impact when they support sub-regional and regional mechanisms, processes and frameworks established by Southern countries to foster regional cooperation. In this regard, SSTC projects have contributed to regional efforts in rallying support for and galvanizing political commitment, for instance, to reduce hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition. Regional commitments, in turn, reinforce political will at the national level. SSTC projects have also proved effective in spurring collective action against transboundary challenges that affect agriculture, including plant and animal diseases and other man-made and natural disasters, crises and shocks. Moreover, a decentralized approach to SSTC involving non-state actors (for example city-to-city and farmer-to-farmer exchanges) has proved effective to achieve more direct impact at grassroots levels by paying special attention to vulnerable groups, including rural women, indigenous groups and the youth.

Strategic engagement with diverse group of actors

Strategic engagement with a diverse group of countries is one of the key factors behind the expanded SSTC project portfolio in FAO. Leveraging the comparative advantages, capacities and resources of these diverse group has fostered the mobilization of adequate financial and technical resources to implement SSTC projects and initiatives focused on various aspects of FAO's mandate. Strategic engagement with Brazil, for instance, powered the implementation of SSTC projects in Latin America and Africa, largely focused on food security and nutrition. Effective partnerships with China, and the creation of SSC trust funds, supported financing of SSTC projects on sustainable agriculture largely in Africa and the Asia. The review also has shown that SSTC projects, supported by these partners, could be catalytic in mobilizing more resources, including

through Unilateral Trust Fund and other funding arrangements from host countries. For instance, Angola has financed the use of Brazil's expertise from its own national budget. Nigeria has done the same to acquire expertise from China.

Challenges to furthering SSTC in FAO

The review of SSTC projects and initiatives has highlighted a number of challenges that need to be addressed to improve FAO's future SSTC work.

- **Lack of a clear understanding of SSTC:** One of the main limitations to FAO's SSTC work is the lack of a clear understanding of the concepts and definitions of SSTC, resulting in a sub-optimal use and application of SSTC approaches at country, regional and global levels. Although the modality for SSTC has broadened in recent years, enabling FAO to be more responsive to the increasing demand for SSTC by Members at global, regional and country levels, the traditional forms of collaboration involving the "sharing of knowledge and experience" largely dominate FAO's SSTC work. While there are numerous sub-regional and regional projects involving multiple Southern countries jointly addressing cross-border challenges (for instance SSTC projects related to transboundary animal diseases), these projects are not always categorized as SSTC. It is also reported that, while there are numerous partnerships involving SSTC, in many instances these are recognized by Regional and Decentralized Offices as "regional partnerships" or "global partnership" without "Marking" them to SSTC. Furthermore, Officers at regional and country offices consider SSTC as a resource mobilization tool and are reluctant to initiate engagement in SSTC unless they foresee resource mobilization opportunities. This not only limits the values that would have accrued and the benefits exploited through application of SSTC, but also reduces the visibility of FAO's SSTC work.

- **Limited resources for SSTC:** Although FAO's strategic engagement with key Southern countries and creation of trust fund has brought in the much-needed technical and financial resources, enabling the financing of numerous large-scale and multi-component SSC programmes, these have not kept up with the increasing demand for SSTC, especially at country and regional levels. While resources from traditional donors have been instrumental in financing numerous SSTC projects and initiatives in the past, this has declined in recent years via Triangular cooperation schemes. Attracting resources directed to SSTC projects from traditional donors has been challenging. It is reported that one reason for this is that, while consultations with donors are technical-area based, SSTC as an implementation modality get less attention from traditional donors. Through its regular programme budget, matched with financial and technical resources from cooperating and host countries in cost-sharing arrangements, FAO has supported the financing of SSTC projects and initiatives. However, accessing funds, either through Regional Initiatives or Regular Programme funds to provide support for and leverage more SSTC opportunities has proved to be difficult.
- **Narrow partnership base:** Over the years, FAO has broadened its engagement with a diverse group of countries and was able to mobilize financial and technical resources to meet the increasing demand for SSTC. While this trend has been encouraging, still very few Southern countries account for a largest share of FAO's SSTC project portfolio¹¹⁷. Middle income Southern countries play a major role in financing a significant number of SSTC projects in FAO. Although enormous potential lies in the regions, for instance, in Latin America and the Caribbean which hosts a large number of middle income countries, this has not been leveraged effectively

to secure more financial and technical resources to meet the increasing demand for SSTC. On the other hand, with the exception of countries (such as Japan, Spain, Netherlands, and few others), the participation of Northern countries in SSC projects has been limited.

- **Lack of proper reporting and monitoring mechanism on SSTC:** The quality and impact of SSTC is hampered by a lack of appropriate reporting and monitoring mechanism for SSTC in FAO. In the past, SSC was considered an integral part of technical assistant support of FAO, for instance, to the implementation of SPFS and was not a separate project. Consequently, this has limited reporting on the actual impact of SSC or its contribution to achieved results of the SPFS. Although reporting has improved, in recent years, a corporate requirement for reporting on SSTC projects is still lacking. Furthermore, as most SSTC projects are small-scale in nature, they do not pass the corporate requirement for evaluation, limiting the opportunity to measure their impact and effectiveness. Until recently, internal mechanisms didn't allow close monitoring and provision of quality assurance, and technical support for SSTC during FAO's project cycle. The recent inclusion of a quality marker about SSTC in FAO's project cycle provided information about new proposals that consider the SSTC as a modality of implementation and enabled close follow-up and monitoring on SSTC. However, technical teams are not well informed that such a qualifier about SSTC exists and could be included in the preparation of new concept notes (as per FAO's cycle project) and also as a modality of implementation. This is one of the reasons that not all the projects on implementation, and also new ones in negotiation, have not included the SSTC qualifier, although it is mentioned in the project document. Lack of adequate human resources for technical support, quality assurance and monitoring of SSC at country level (a single SSC officer assigned to each region) also hampers the quality of service to SSTC and effective project follow-up, monitoring and reporting on SSTC.

¹¹⁷ Brazil and China together finance approximately 35 percent of all FAO's SSTC projects.

FAO's SSTC vision, opportunities and the way forward

Going forward, the challenges highlighted as part of the strategic review could be translated into opportunities to enhance FAO's organizational effectiveness in the delivery of SSTC towards implementation of the 2030 development agenda and beyond.

Enhancing awareness about the concepts and definitions of SSTC

Effective mainstreaming of SSTC across Strategic Programmes, Regional Initiatives and Country Programming Framework and other planning instruments requires a clear understanding of the concepts and definitions of SSTC. To this end, it is imperative to raise awareness of the unique principles, advantages, values and benefits of SSTC internally and among external partners through the preparation and dissemination of case studies, practical operational frameworks, guidelines, and "how to" manuals. This needs to be pursued in tandem with regular trainings, workshops, e-learning and other tools that foster learning and diffusion of SSTC approaches in all areas of FAO's work. FAO's corporate strategy on SSC should be applied by Strategic Programmes, Technical units, Regional Offices and Decentralized as a 'living document', regularly updated based on the lessons learned from its implementation. As a living document, the Strategy should provide a robust definition to SSTC to enable its optimal application in the Strategic Programmes, Regional Initiatives and Country Programming Frameworks.

Broadening the partnership base

The demand for SSTC outstrips the supply. There is a critical need for FAO to expand its partnerships base to include other potential providers of support for SSTC in order to meet the ever increasing demand for SSTC. In particular, strategic partnerships need to be forged with middle-income countries that are increasingly contributing to the global development

agenda; they have much to offer, in both financial and technical terms, building on their development successes in the recent past. A clear strategy for partnerships with middle-income countries on SSTC needs to be developed through effective dialogue and proactive engagements pursued with a view to securing more financial and technical resources as well as good development practices and policy options from such partners. Northern countries remain key partners in the financing of SSC projects and in the provision of expertise, technology and many other resources. The strategy to engage more triangular partners in SSC projects needs to be developed. Furthermore, engagement with non-state actors in civil society, academia and the private sector needs to be further strengthened especially as such partners are better positioned to apply science, technology and innovation to improve access to adequate nutritious food during the evolving fourth industrial revolution.

Measurement of SSTC

In-kind contributions play an important role in the facilitation of SSTC projects at FAO. The TPA agreement signed between the host-country, provider country and FAO does include an indication of in-kind contributions from the host country including provision of counterpart experts, lodging and accommodation costs, and local travel expenses, amongst others. These costs, when factored into the project budget, provide a more accurate cost of the project and a fairer picture of the contribution from the receiving Southern partners. However, there is no system in place to measure such contributions from the host-countries. It is recommended that a technical note to provide a harmonized understanding and approach to measuring in-kind contributions to SSTC projects be developed.

Reporting and monitoring on SSTC

Monitoring and reporting are critical to measure the effectiveness and impact of FAO's current

and future SSTC work. As part of a corporate requirement, mechanisms need to be put in place to ensure regular reporting on SSTC activities across Strategic Programmes, Technical units, Regional and Decentralized Offices. For this purpose, a practical set of performance indicators, together with tools for quality assurance needs to be developed for accountability through more effective monitoring and reporting. Furthermore, surveys need to be conducted on a more regular basis to monitor the extent to which SSTC has been effectively mainstreamed across Strategic Programmes, Regional Initiatives and Country Programming Frameworks and other planning instruments. There is a need to build awareness on the entry points for SSTC projects in FAO's broader project cycle and for a related monitoring mechanism to track SSTC at activity/ initiative levels under regular programming arrangements across the Organization.

Develop a robust knowledge exchange platform

The mapping, documentation and dissemination of good practices on SSTC is central to scaling up the impact of SSTC during the implementation of the 2030 agenda. Knowledge exchange platforms play an important role to facilitate the sharing of expertise, knowledge and agricultural development solutions. To meet the increasing demand by Members for development solutions in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, FAO's SSC Gateway needs to be revamped into a dynamic feature, to serve as a one-stop-shop for development solutions on agriculture, food security and nutrition. Beyond networking, new features should be added to transform the platform into a dynamic knowledge brokering tool enabling concrete exchanges of solutions, expertise and technologies among Southern countries.

Foster interagency collaboration

RBA collaboration on SSTC is a clear response to global calls by Member States for enhanced

United Nation system-wide coordination in the mainstreaming of SSTC in United Nations policies and operational activities. In going forward, this collaboration needs to be further strengthened, including in areas that have been emphasized in global frameworks for SSTC, including BAPA and the Nairobi outcome document. Some of these areas seeking further collaboration include:

- **Promoting policy dialogue:** Building on past experience, RBAs should organize regular thematic events, panels and expert-group discussions to foster policy dialogue on SSTC in the areas of their mandates.
- **Mainstreaming SSTC in policies and operational activities:** To enhance the coordination in the mainstreaming of SSTC, new tools, strategies and guidelines need to be jointly developed. RBAs need to organize and conduct regular joint training and learning activities to ensure optimal use and application of SSTC in country programming frameworks and regional initiatives.
- **Monitoring and reporting:** RBAs need to pursue the development of effective monitoring and reporting tools on SSTC. The current Monitoring and Evaluation toolkit developed jointly by the RBAs is a step in the right direction. Similar tools need to be further developed and used.

Beyond the RBAs, collaboration with other sister organizations, including with the United Nations Office for South-South cooperation (UNOSSC) need be further strengthened.

A new SSTC vision and strategy

As mentioned earlier in the report, greater emphasis is placed on SSTC in the context of the 2030 agenda and the SDGs call for a renewed vision and a strategy for SSTC in FAO. The strategy should articulate how FAO should further leverage SSTC to meet the ever increasing demand for the approach in the

implementation of the ambitious Agenda. It should elaborate a clear direction on more innovative partnerships, private sector engagement and funding mechanisms for SSTC, including through blended finance and other financing instruments.

With its renewed vision and strategy, SSTC will continue to play a more important role in achieving sustainable agriculture which is central to FAO's mandate. This strategy aims at ensuring an inclusive economic growth through sustainable investments that support implementation of the transformative agenda and the SDGs.

Despite the notable progress witnessed in recent years, there is an immediate need for all actors to work in concert to achieve better development results and enhance accountability. There is a global call for action that requires mobilization of resources (both financial and in-kind contributions), not only from governments, triangular and southern partners, UN agencies and civil society, but also from a diverse range of actors in the private sector. Since the adoption of SDGs in 2015, there has been growing recognition of the unique long-lasting impact that investment can have in building a sustainable future. This inclusive partnership highlights the role of private investments and financial institutions that are key to

agricultural development and this engagement should allow FAO to multiply impact and achieve scale.

SSTC has been a priority for the Organization for some time and it has a long history of successful implementation of this type of technical collaboration. This priority became even more evident since 2012 reflecting Senior Management's commitment to SSTC and anchored on expansion of this framework in the international context. The Organization, since then, has implemented several structural changes in order to reflect FAO's commitment to this important delivery mechanism.

The most recent change is the creation of a full-fledged Office for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (PSS) in January 2019. A separate Office for SSTC was deemed necessary in order to provide greater alignment of FAO's Strategic Framework with the SDGs and the National Development Plans Members. One of the first tasks of this Office is to integrate FAO's new strategic direction through the revision of the existing strategy. The new strategy should promote and facilitate a more proactive and catalytic role in support of FAO's Membership. It should foresee the strengthening of triangular partnerships and private sector participation, among other innovative partnerships. ■

South-South and Triangular Cooperation in FAO

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS
TO ACHIEVE THE SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for strengthened partnerships in the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including North–South, South–South, and triangular partnerships.

The report *South–South and Triangular Cooperation in FAO: Strengthening Partnerships to Achieve Sustainable Development Goals* illustrates how South–South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) can be leveraged to enhance agricultural productivity and improve food security and nutrition in the developing world. It aims to deepen the understanding of the role and contribution of SSTC to agricultural development, food security, and nutrition.

The report also offers practical lessons on how SSTC could be further strengthened and scaled-up in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda with the support of the United Nations system, multilateral organizations and other development partners.

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