

CHINA-IFAD SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION FACILITY



SSTC GRANT

Grant value

US\$483,470

Focus countries

Kenya and Rwanda

Duration

Dec 2021–Jun 2023

Implementation partner

Cordaid

Cooperation partners

Youth Engagement in Agricultural Network, Rwanda

Reseau Interdiocesa in de Microfinance (RIM LTD)

Viamo

UMUCYO Savings and Credit Cooperative Organization

Agribusiness Market Ecosystem Alliance

Beneficiaries

Smallholder farmers

(45 per cent women, 40 per cent youth) working in cereal value chains in Kenya and Rwanda

Strengthening Agricultural Resilience through Learning and Innovation (STARLIT)

BACKGROUND

As a consequence of the COVID-19 crisis and climate change, farmers in the cereal value chain in Kenya and Rwanda are facing decreasing incomes and food insecurity. The STARLIT project aims to enhance the resilience of smallholder farmers in East Africa through transfer of technology and training.

STARLIT covers four thematic areas:

- Access to digital information services for improved agricultural practices
- Access to agricultural mechanization, including training for youth in equipment maintenance
- Access to rural finance and training of microfinance institutions
- South-South knowledge exchange between Kenya and Rwanda

The project focused on sustainability beyond the project duration by creating partnerships with private companies and by engaging youth networks in training on equipment maintenance, which can then be offered on a fee basis, thereby creating employment opportunities for rural youth.

Building resilience through innovation, mechanization, financing and knowledge exchange in Rwanda and Kenya

18 young people trained in maintenance services

3,400 smallholder farmers benefited from training in good agricultural practices

1,176 smallholder farmers received loans

12 saving and credit cooperative organizations received training

For more information please visit www.ifad.org/sstcf



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ACHIEVEMENTS

The STARLIT project has already achieved following results:

Supported access to agricultural mechanization: The project collaborated with farmers' organizations, irrigation equipment suppliers and local authorities on the topic of irrigation for drought control. Through a partnership with the Youth Engagement in Agricultural Network, STARLIT established an agricultural equipment maintenance model and trained 18 youths to provide fee-based maintenance services to farmers. Field demonstrations allowed 46 smallholder farmers to assess solar irrigation equipment suitable for small plots with low operation costs.

Provided access to agricultural digital information services: In collaboration with Viamo and the Rwanda Agricultural Board, eight digital trainings focusing on good agricultural practices for improved maize production were developed. These trainings used interactive voice responses in the local language (Kinyarwanda) to deliver information to smallholders through their mobile phones. Directly, 1,772 farmers benefited from the project's digital training, and an additional 1,623 non-project beneficiaries accessed the training.

Facilitated access to agricultural finance: Microfinance institutions were supported in developing tailored agri-financial products, including an agricultural equipment loan product suitable for farmers' needs. The project introduced the Agricultural Credit Assessment Tool (A-CAT) to help financial institutions estimate the required loan amount. Financial institutions were trained in agri-finance risk management. Twelve saving and credit cooperative organizations (SACCOs) and four microfinance institutions received training, and 1,176 smallholder farmers received loans from SACCOs.

Enabled South-South knowledge exchange: STARLIT facilitated knowledge sharing and exchange between Rwanda and Kenya for 68 participants and initiated business-to-business linkages with private companies, the Agribusiness Market Ecosystem Alliance and local governments.



Rural youth participating in training on agricultural machinery maintenance.