



UNITED NATIONS ROME-BASED AGENCIES

CELEBRATION OF THE 2020 UNITED NATIONS DAY FOR SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

The role of South-South and Triangular
Cooperation in the transformation of
food systems in view of COVID-19

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Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
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Investing in rural people



World Food
Programme

REAFFIRMING COLLABORATION AMONG THE ROME-BASED AGENCIES ON SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION

On the occasion of the 2020 celebration of the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation on 12 September, the United Nations Rome-based agencies (RBAs) – the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) – take the opportunity to reaffirm their commitment to strengthening their collaboration on facilitating South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Three years have passed since the launch of the RBA Joint Roadmap on SSTC. Since then, a number of initiatives have taken place both in Rome and at the decentralized level to operationalize the main objective of the Roadmap, which is to enhance collaboration among the RBAs in the field of SSTC. These initiatives have included the development of a joint monitoring and evaluation methodology on SSTC, joint knowledge management activities and official meetings such as the Second High-Level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40) and the Global South-South Development Expos of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation.

The close partnership between FAO, IFAD and WFP is now more relevant than ever in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which is threatening, in particular, the food security of the world's most vulnerable communities.

While each agency is putting in place robust mechanisms to support the efforts of the broader United Nations system in tackling the impact of the pandemic, the RBAs note that their joint action is key to further ensuring that no one is left behind. In this context, SSTC can play a bigger and more effective role not only in addressing the challenges and vulnerabilities of our food systems, but also in sharing knowledge and lessons learned across countries. SSTC can contribute to increasing resilience to shocks in all sectors, while helping countries to build back better food systems and ensuring we are all better prepared to respond to future crises.

As they reaffirm their commitment to working together on the ground by leveraging the comparative advantage of each agency, the RBAs reiterate their pivotal role in supporting the most vulnerable and mitigating the impact of current and future challenges on food systems. To this end, they look to position SSTC as a strategic instrument for achieving food security, improved nutrition and sustainable agriculture.



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THE ROLE OF SSTC AND FAO IN MITIGATING THE IMPACT OF CURRENT CHALLENGES TO FOOD SYSTEMS

FAO has embraced SSTC as a catalyst of agricultural development, food security and nutrition. SSTC is integrated into all facets of FAO's work and promoted as an important mechanism to deliver on FAO's mandate. Over the past 40 years, FAO and its partners have mobilized more than US\$370 million in support of SSTC projects, deploying more than 2,000 experts to 80 developing countries.

SSTC continues to support sustainable agricultural development and food systems in developing countries, creating employment, spurring innovation and stimulating self-reliance and entrepreneurship, which are essential ingredients for overcoming hunger.

In September 2019, following the BAPA+40 conference, FAO Director-General QU Dongyu launched the Hand-in-Hand Initiative. By bringing together development actors from northern and southern countries, the private sector, development banks and financial institutions, this high-impact initiative will give thrust to SSTC in accelerating the implementation of the SDGs, especially SDG 1 and SDG 2.

As a facilitator of SSTC, FAO connects countries that have development solutions with countries that can benefit from applying and adapting such solutions to their own context. Throughout this process, FAO plays a number of key roles, including facilitating dialogue between relevant stakeholders, transferring technology and knowledge, providing a framework for cooperation and exchange, leveraging FAO assistance to mobilize further resources and offering technical oversight.

FAO-China South-South Cooperation project in Madagascar

The two-year FAO-China South-South Cooperation project in Madagascar officially started in October 2019, with nine Chinese experts being fielded to the country to work primarily in hybrid rice planting and animal husbandry.

Madagascar is a low-income food-deficit country with high malnutrition rates and a population severely affected by food insecurity and food shortages. The Government relies on rice imports mainly to ensure national food security.

The project aims at increasing agricultural production, productivity and profitability through the support of the Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Sector Programme (PSAEP) 2016-2020 and the FAO Madagascar Country Programming Framework 2014-2019. Technical assistance will be provided in three areas that are priorities for Madagascar: hybrid rice production, livestock and agribusiness. The project objectives are the following: (i) contribute to national food security and household incomes; (ii) contribute to the achievement of Madagascar's self-sufficiency in rice by 2025, while reducing the outflow of hard currency in importing rice; and (iii) promote investment, agribusiness and trade in agriculture.

FAO SSTC response to COVID-19

FAO recognizes COVID-19 as a turning point for the Global South to accelerate their food systems transformation and increase their contribution to the global value chains and agrifood trade. FAO has a key role to play in this process, via SSTC, by promoting stronger regional cooperation, dialogue and integration, technology transfer and value chain upgrading, and increasing South-South trade and investments as complementary growth strategies to bring much-needed investments into the agrifood sector.



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IFAD LEVERAGES THE SSTC MECHANISM TO BUILD RESILIENCE, INCOMES AND FOOD SECURITY IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

IFAD is a specialized agency of the United Nations and an international financial institution that works where poverty and hunger are deepest: in the most remote regions of developing countries and fragile situations, where few development agencies venture. By investing in rural people, and in small and medium-sized enterprises, IFAD's work reduces poverty and hunger, results in greater resilience, helps people change their lives and communities, and contributes directly to the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the SDGs.

SSTC is fully embedded in IFAD's business model, providing support to the mainstreaming of the Fund's four key thematic areas: gender, youth, nutrition and climate change. And increasingly, IFAD promotes SSTC as a key mechanism for delivering targeted and cost-effective development solutions and other resources to beneficiaries and partners across the globe. The Fund has now established three SSTC and Knowledge Centres (in Brazil, China and Ethiopia), in addition to the China-IFAD SSTC Facility; stories about work in this field are shared through the Rural Solutions Portal.

To tackle the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on rural communities, IFAD has launched a multi-donor COVID-19 Rural Poor Stimulus Facility, in alignment with the United Nations Socio-Economic Response Framework and complementing the Fund's broader COVID-19 response efforts. In this context, the China-IFAD SSTC Facility is designating its funds to the generation and exchange of innovative solutions, approaches and methodologies that can be of value in the post-COVID-19 recovery period. To build long-term

resilience, the Facility will select projects that can be subsequently scaled up and can benefit a wider population of poor rural people, to build back better, more resilient societies.

RBA collaboration on the ground

Approved under the China-IFAD SSTC Facility, the project "Local Production of Fortified Cassava Flour in Bouenza Department in Congo" aims at establishing a framework and an evidence-based business plan for the production of fortified cassava flour and sales of the products in the national and regional markets. Implemented by the FAO, IFAD and WFP country offices in the Republic of the Congo, in collaboration with the Agricultural Company of Congo and the Chinese Academy of Tropical Agricultural Sciences, the project will also reinforce the capacities of small-scale cassava producers and their organizations to allow them to supply fresh cassava to cassava mills. Targeted small-scale farming cooperatives will be able to benefit from increased production capacity and access to industrial value chains, thus improving their income and food security.

This is the first time the RBAs are working together to promote South-South collaboration in cassava production. Together, the agencies will develop national standards for cassava, establish a public-private partnership to build a cassava mill that will make affordable fortified cassava products available to the public, and support small-scale cassava growers who supply the mill. Bringing in each agency's experience and competencies, RBA collaboration will be leveraged to achieve global objectives, and contribute to food and nutrition security.



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WFP BROKERS SSTC TO CREATE BENEFITS FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE IN THE FIELD FOR PROGRESS TOWARDS ZERO HUNGER

WFP is brokering SSTC that focuses on achieving SDG 2 and creating benefits for the most vulnerable people at risk of being left behind. The approach recognizes the valuable knowledge and experiences of developing countries in the context of saving and changing lives.

WFP-facilitated SSTC builds on WFP's strong field presence in 88 countries and a network of WFP Centres of Excellence in Brazil, China and Cote D'Ivoire. To date, 85 per cent of WFP country offices (COs) engage in SSTC – a sharp increase from 48 per cent in 2014, as outlined in WFP's Special Thematic Report on: *Leveraging progress against hunger through South-South and Triangular Cooperation* as part of WFP's 2019 Annual Progress Report. With support from China's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA), WFP is addressing the needs of vulnerable populations through field-oriented South-South pilot projects in Ecuador, Kenya, Peru, the Republic of the Congo and Sri Lanka.

WFP offers COVID-19 support through service line

Responding to country demand from the field, WFP is offering a dedicated service line for host governments and WFP COs in view of COVID-19:

- **Data and analytics.** Support to host governments through a digitalized WFP South-South brokerage model at the policy, technical and grassroots level, in view of COVID-19. This initiative is supported by WFP's Innovation Accelerator in Munich.

- **Operational support.** WFP has launched a dedicated COVID-19 South-South Opportunity Fund, which facilitates the roll-out of eight pilot projects and activities in eight countries across four regions. The projects are realized with seed funding support from MARA, China and WFP internal funds. For example, in Zimbabwe, WFP-facilitated SSTC will support mitigating the impact of COVID-19 in local markets by enhancing smallholder farmers' access through e-commerce and online marketing platforms with training from China. The projects address COVID-related needs, focusing on strengthening food systems, social protection, school feeding, emergency preparedness and response and nutrition.
- **Programme advice and advocacy.** With the aim of making voices from the field heard and inspiring more investment in food systems, WFP is rolling out a global webinar series focused on country-led SSTC responses to COVID-19.

WFP and China jointly work towards strengthening rural smallholder farmers' resilience

In 2019, with support from WFP China and as part of the SSTC field pilot project in Ecuador, WFP promoted: (i) farm stays in China for two leaders from farmers organizations and two technicians from the Ecuadorian Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock; (ii) peer learning between experts from Ecuador and the Hunan Agricultural University in China, to develop techniques that diversify rice crops and improve access to markets; and (iii) peer learning between rural women from Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras and Peru, to formulate recommendations for Ecuador's public rural-development policy, while promoting access to markets for rural women. In 2020, phase two of this project becomes even more critical in view of the impact of COVID-19 on pre-existing vulnerabilities.



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Joint roadmap towards BAPA+40

STRENGTHENING COLLABORATION AMONG ROME-BASED AGENCIES ON SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION (SSTC)¹

28 November, 2017

I. Background

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP), also known as the Rome-based agencies (RBAs), taking into account their respective mandates, comparative advantages and distinctive strengths, share a common vision for an effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, through holistic approaches aimed at achieving in particular Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2 – *End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture*.

The objective of this Joint Roadmap, entitled “Towards BAPA+40: strengthening collaboration among Rome-based Agencies on South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC)” is to present a shared action plan for enhanced collaboration between the RBAs in the area of SSTC, outlining the working mechanisms and shared priorities that the three RBAs will put in place, as well as the enhanced coordinated efforts leading to the Buenos Aires Plan of Action 40th anniversary (BAPA+40).

II. Preamble

The three RBAs,

Acknowledging that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been the reference framework for the international development agenda since its adoption in 2015 and that its effective implementation will require action on various fronts, such as: fostering innovation; increasing knowledge-sharing; scaling up successful development solutions; and building new partnerships;

Recognizing that the United Nations agencies, and specifically the RBAs, have a key facilitation role to play, by promoting and mobilizing SSTC as a cost-effective and crucial means for implementing the commitments of the 2030 Agenda;

Also recognizing that in 2016, during the GSSD Expo in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, the three RBAs presented a joint paper outlining their collaboration, with emphasis on their support to countries in achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda;

Emphasizing the strengths of each of the three RBAs, and the joint vision as a tool to strengthening collaboration in support of Member States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

Considering that collaboration in mainstreaming SSTC into the development cooperation agenda, to deliver on important food and nutrition security development goals will require commitment to promote and raise the visibility on the benefits of SSTC and the concrete results it achieves;

Hereby agree to develop a plan of action for the implementation of the joint roadmap for the period 2018-2019.

¹ The Roadmap outlines the activities that the RBAs have agreed to work on leading up to BAPA+40, however, many of the areas still remain valid. The document is considered the guiding tool for RBA collaboration on SSTC.

III. Working methodology

The three RBAs agree to:

- a. Convene regular meetings, on a rotational basis, of the Directors of the respective SSTC units/divisions and concerned staff, at least twice a year;
- b. Discuss common operational and administrative issues related to collaborative efforts on SSTC;
- c. Evaluate past joint initiatives and select potential future areas of action;
- d. Jointly release an annual report/ highlights briefing note on joint SSTC activities and the results achieved.

IV. Shared priorities

The RBAs will jointly explore concrete SSTC initiatives at the country and regional levels. In particular, they will cooperate through thematic knowledge exchanges to facilitate/strengthen:

- a. **Policy dialogue** to promote an enabling environment for food and nutrition security, at national, regional and global levels;
- b. **Knowledge sharing**, through the leveraging of southern institutions, learning hubs, sharing of rosters of experts and technical networks for SSTC;
- c. **Technology transfer**, through grass roots best-practices, demonstrations and exchanges of applicable and affordable technologies;
- d. **Joint resource mobilization** activities for attracting financing for SSTC, with a focus on emerging economies and through triangular cooperation arrangements;
- e. **Multi-stakeholder approaches** to SSTC, particularly by further engaging Southern non-state actors, academia, the private sector, and farmer organizations;
- f. **Explore complementarities** within in country-level engagement, through the organization of field missions, technical assistance programs, workshops, etc.;
- g. **The undergoing United Nations Reform**, which requires further strengthening of partnerships and coordination among UN agencies and development organizations. The RBAs in particular, through their joint SSTC activities can support the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and support the mobilization of resources, promoting investments, cooperation and business-to-business links among developing countries.

V. Way forward

The RBAs commit to actively organize the following activities to achieve the abovementioned priorities:

- a. **Joint RBAs SSTC Event** to commemorate the UN Day on South-South Cooperation on 12 September. The 2018 event will specifically identify approaches and pathways towards BAPA+40, and will be hosted by FAO. Subsequent events will be hosted by the RBAs on a rotational basis;
- b. **Annual SSTC Report/highlights** on RBAs activities at global, regional and country level;
- c. **IFAD-China SSTC Workshop**, the annual SSTC workshop jointly organized by China (Ministry of Finance) and IFAD, to include the participation of FAO and WFP officials;
- d. **Identification of opportunities at the project and country level** to concretize collaboration at the operational level, where RBAs could explore synergies in complementary SSTC activities in countries where they operate;
- e. **Joint knowledge management activities**, to contribute to the respective SSTC platforms to facilitate experience sharing and peer learning through periodical exchanges of development solutions. This would also feature RBA SSTC initiatives, solutions and events on the SSTC communication channels of each agency;
- f. **Joint participation at the annual UN Office of South-South Cooperation Global South-South Development Expo**, through the organization of joint panel session and side events;
- g. **Jointly support SSTC activities** as trainings, workshops, seminars, and high level policy dialogues for SSTC, targeting the areas of value-chain management to support small holders better access to market, climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as pro-poor Zero Hunger strategy and nutrition;
- h. **Joint SSTC assessments, research and M&E**, where feasible and appropriate.



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