



China-IFAD South-South and Triangular Cooperation Facility

Annual Progress Report 2022



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China-IFAD SSTC Facility: Projects and Achievements 2018-2022

- Ongoing projects
- Completed projects



Global

Strengthening business-to-business linkages and investment opportunities through IFAD's SSTC and Knowledge Centres



Cuba

Supporting local solutions towards a more resilient food system in Cuba

Latin America & the Caribbean

Rural Youth Innovation Award

15,934

direct beneficiaries across the world

60,000

indirect beneficiaries reached

55%

are women

45%

are youth

US\$7M

co-financing mobilised

127

capacity building & policy dialogues

39

innovations piloted

12

platforms in operation

146

knowledge products

64

technologies transferred

208

SSTC experts mobilised

21

B2B linkages established

118

Public-Private partnership established

Ghana & Nigeria

Promoting Sustainable Cage Aquaculture in West Africa (ProSCAWA)

Ghana, Tanzania & Kenya

Small-scale dryers for post-harvest management enterprises in Africa

Republic of Congo

Local production of fortified cassava flour in Bouenza department in the Republic of Congo

Cameroon, Ghana, Ethiopia & Madagascar

South-South Triangular Cooperation for the Inter-Africa Bamboo Smallholder Farmers Livelihood Development Programme

Rwanda & Kenya

Strengthening Agriculture Resilience through Learning and Innovation (STARLIT)

Tanzania

Supporting and Strengthening Community Resilience in Tanzania (SSUOCORETA)



Ethiopia

Promoting Water Conservation and Irrigation Water Use Efficiency in Ethiopia

Bangladesh

Inclusive agriculture and agro-industrial value chain development as an enabler of poverty reduction in Bangladesh

Cambodia, China, Laos & Vietnam

South-South Cooperation for Scaling up Climate Resilient Value Chain Initiatives (SSCVC)

Pakistan

Effective South-South Cooperation in Agriculture to Unleash Transformative Power of Agriculture Sector for Inclusive Development in Pakistan

Tajikistan & Afghanistan

Promoting Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Livelihood Opportunities in Rural Mountainous Areas through Upgrade Cashgora Value Chains



Global

Strengthening the Rural Solutions Portal and IFAD's IT tracking system to increase the uptake of rural development solutions



Global

Learning from SSTC in project design for better results and greater sustainability

I. Facility overview

1.

Background. In 2022, the global community faced an unprecedented food crisis, driven by a convergence of factors including conflicts, extreme weather events, rapid inflation, and the ongoing repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges exerted immense pressure on both global and national food systems, leading to alarming levels of food insecurity and 783 million people suffered from hunger in 2022. High-impact interventions are needed to respond to these crises, focusing on the key role of small-scale farmers who grow 70 percent of the food consumed in the Global South.

2.

Recognizing the urgency of the situation, the China-IFAD South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) Facility - IFAD's first facility dedicated to SSTC established in 2018 - is leveraging local knowledge from China and the Global South to share proven solutions and innovative agri-food practices among Member States. This year the Facility intensified its efforts to help IFAD and its Member States achieve sustainable and inclusive rural transformation by building trust, forging partnerships, sharing knowledge, scaling up proven solutions and boosting investment. Specifically, in 2022 the Facility placed greater emphasis on addressing climate change impacts on smallholder farmers, fostering engagement with the private sector to stimulate job creation and strengthen value chains, as well as enhancing the resilience of rural communities.

3.

Objective. The Facility aims to mobilize knowledge, technologies and resources from the Global South to accelerate rural poverty alleviation, enhance rural productivity and advance rural transformation. Since 2018, the Facility has provided to IFAD, its Member States and partners:

- Complementary financing to support the implementation of the IFAD corporate SSTC Strategy.
- A programmatic mechanism to integrate SSTC into IFAD's country programmes and operations.
- Access to expertise and solutions from the Global South to promote local agricultural production and rural transformation.
- A variety of partnerships to enhance collaboration among the Global South at the grassroots level.

4.

Priorities. The strategic priorities of the Facility are to:

- Address knowledge gaps and scale up innovations by strengthening the productive, managerial, financial and marketing capacities.
- Foster partnerships and opportunities for inclusive production and business models.
- Promote dialogues among developing stakeholders, and build capacity for rural people and SSTC partners.

5.

Following the IFAD SSTC Strategy 2022-2027¹ adopted in December 2021, the focus of the Facility in 2022 closely aligned with the key pillars of the Strategy and was placed on facilitating policy dialogues, bridging inclusive partnerships, and promoting capacity building around SSTC.

6.

Portfolio Summary. By the end of 2022, among 16 Facility-funded projects, seven (7) projects were closed, and four (4) projects were completed. Five (5) projects will continue under implementation in 2023 (see Table 1). These projects cover the regions of Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and a diverse range of thematic areas, such as value chain development, climate-smart agriculture, aquaculture, agro-machinery, post-harvest management, rural financing, crisis response, gender equality, nutrition improvement, youth empowerment, and more.

7.

Financial Status. As of 31 December 2022, the approved funds under the Facility amounted to US\$ 7,698,536 for financing 16 projects, the secondment of staff from China, as well as the Facility management fees. The remaining available resources were US\$ 2,419,653 at the end of 2022.

8.

Annual Progress Report 2022. This fifth progress report highlights the achievements and findings of the Facility over the past year in 2022. It provides an overview of the Facility portfolio, project highlights, and Facility management, which includes updates of the Facility's Results Measurement Framework, formulation of new proposals, strengthened monitoring and supervision, and increased outreach and communication. Based on lessons learned, the report also outlines the actions for the future.

¹ <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/134/docs/EB-2021-134-R-8.pdf>

Facility at a Glance in 2022



Facility's Themes in SDGs



Table 1 Facility Project Portfolio 2022

No.	Initiative Title	Focus Countries	Main Thematic Area	Status by the End of 2022
1	Inclusive agriculture and agro-industrial value chain development as an enabler of poverty reduction in Bangladesh	Bangladesh	Value chain upgrade	Closed
2	South-South Cooperation for Scaling up Climate Resilient Value Chain Initiatives (SSCVC)	Vietnam, China, Laos, and Cambodia	Climate resilience enhancement	Closed
3	Rural Youth Innovation Award	Latin America and the Caribbean	Cross-cutting	Closed
4	Strengthening the Rural Solutions Portal and IFAD's IT tracking systems to increase the uptake of rural development solutions	Global	Other	Closed
5	Strengthening business-to-business linkages and investment opportunities through IFAD's SSTC and Knowledge Centres	Global	Other	Closed
6	South-South Triangular Cooperation for the Inter-Africa Bamboo Smallholder Farmers Livelihood Development Programme	Cameroon, Ghana, Ethiopia and Madagascar	Value chain upgrade	Closed
7	Promoting Water Conservation and Irrigation Water Use Efficiency in Ethiopia	Ethiopia	Productivity improvement (Water resource management)	Completed
8	Local production of fortified cassava flour in Bouenza department in the Republic of Congo	Republic of the Congo	Value chain upgrade	Closed
9	Small-scale dryers for post-harvest management enterprises in Africa	Ghana, Tanzania and Kenya	Value chain upgrade	Completed
10	Effective South-South Cooperation in Agriculture to Unleash Transformative Power of Agriculture Sector for Inclusive Development in Pakistan	Pakistan	Productivity improvement	Completed
11	Learning from SSTC in project design for better results and greater sustainability	Global	Other	Completed
12	Promoting Sustainable Cage Aquaculture in West Africa (ProSCAWA)	Ghana and Nigeria	Productivity improvement (Aquaculture)	Ongoing
13	Supporting and Strengthening Community Resilience in Tanzania (SSUCORETA)	Tanzania	Value chain upgrade	Ongoing
14	Strengthening Agricultural Resilience through Learning and Innovation (STARLIT)	Rwanda and Kenya	Value chain upgrade	Ongoing
15	Supporting local solutions toward a more resilient food system in Cuba	Cuba	Crisis response	Ongoing
16	Promoting Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Livelihood Opportunities in Rural Mountainous Areas through Upgrading Cashgora Value Chains	Tajikistan and Afghanistan	Value chain upgrade	Ongoing
17	Strengthening SSTC Policy Engagement and Capacity Building	Global	Other	In pipeline
18	Information and Communication Technologies for Digital Rural Inclusion and Youth Empowerment	Latin America and the Caribbean	Cross-cutting	In pipeline
19	Empowering Rural Youth through Innovative Horticultural solutions in Tomato Value Chain in Kenya	Kenya and China	Value chain upgrade	In pipeline

II. Portfolio summary

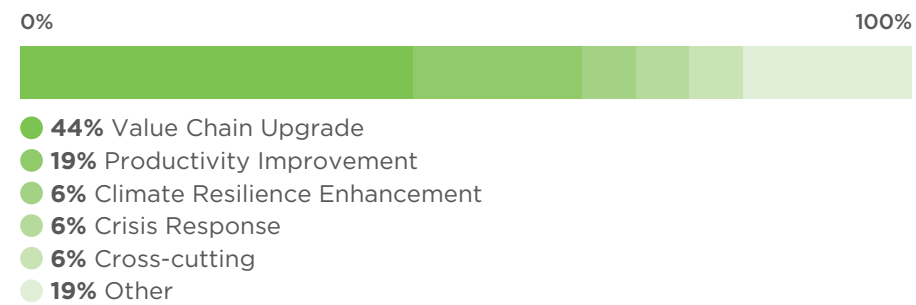
9.

Overview. To date, the Facility has provided financial support to 16 projects across the globe. In 2022, among 11 active projects, six (6) projects were completed and entered the closure stage (two of them closed by the end of 2022), and five (5) projects were under implementation and will be taken forward into 2023. As COVID-19 was gradually phasing out, many projects stepped up the implementation and started to show results on the ground.

10.

Thematic distribution. The Facility-funded projects cover a broad range of thematic areas, such as value chain upgrade (post-harvest management, rural financing, etc.), agricultural productivity improvement (water resource management, aquaculture, agromachinery, etc.), climate resilience enhancement, crisis response, cross-cutting topics (gender equality, nutrition improvement, youth empowerment, etc.) and others. Value chain upgrade is the thematic area of the highest concentration of projects.

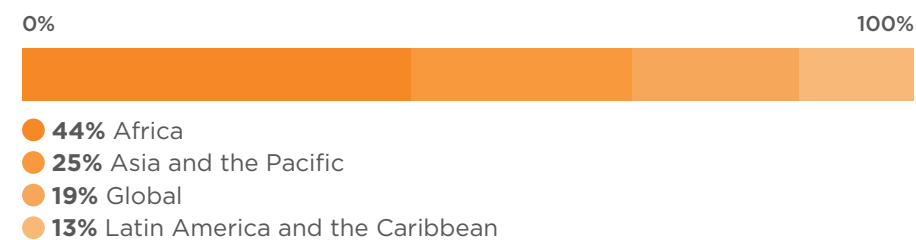
Figure 1 Thematic distribution



11.

Geographic distribution. The total number of countries that benefited from the Facility reached 38 in 2022. The supported countries by region are eight (8) in Asia and the Pacific region; five (5) in East and Southern Africa and four (4) in West and Central Africa; and 21 in Latin America and the Caribbean. The geographic distribution of the 16 Facility-funded projects is as follows: seven (7) projects in Africa, four (4) in Asia and the Pacific, and two (2) in Latin America and the Caribbean. In addition, three (3) projects were directly implemented by IFAD at the global level.

Figure 2 Geographic distribution



12.

Priority working areas. The Facility focuses its projects and activities in four (4) areas: (i) share and adapt development solutions to similar country contexts, (ii) facilitate technology innovation and technical cooperation, (iii) build business-to-business (B2B) linkages and private-public-producer partnerships (4P) to catalyse South-South trade and investments, and (iv) mainstream SSTC in IFAD operations to promote rural transformation and enhance food security. Half of the projects are invested in fostering technical cooperation between countries in the Global South. Another 38 percent is dedicated to South-South knowledge exchange, facilitating the sharing of knowledge, solutions, and innovations. Six (6) percent each are directed towards South-South rural investments and mainstreaming SSTC into IFAD's programs and operations.

Figure 3 Priority areas



13.

Profile of grant recipients. Eligible recipients who can apply and receive funds from the Facility include government institutions, non-profit organisations, UN agencies and international organisations, and private companies. Currently, the highest number of recipients are non-governmental organisations (NGOs), UN agencies and international organisations, representing 36 percent and 30 percent respectively of committed funds. They are followed by projects implemented by IFAD Divisions in collaboration with external partners, which received 19 percent of the committed funds. SSTC projects that were implemented by the governments of Member States stand at 15 percent.

Figure 4 Grant recipients



14.

Partnership base. Partners are key to ensuring the smooth implementation and greater synergies and impact of the Facility's projects. These partners identify suitable solutions, provide technical assistance, and bridge the "last mile" from the solutions to the rural people in the local communities. To date, the Facility has identified and collaborated with 33 partners throughout project implementation (see Table 2).

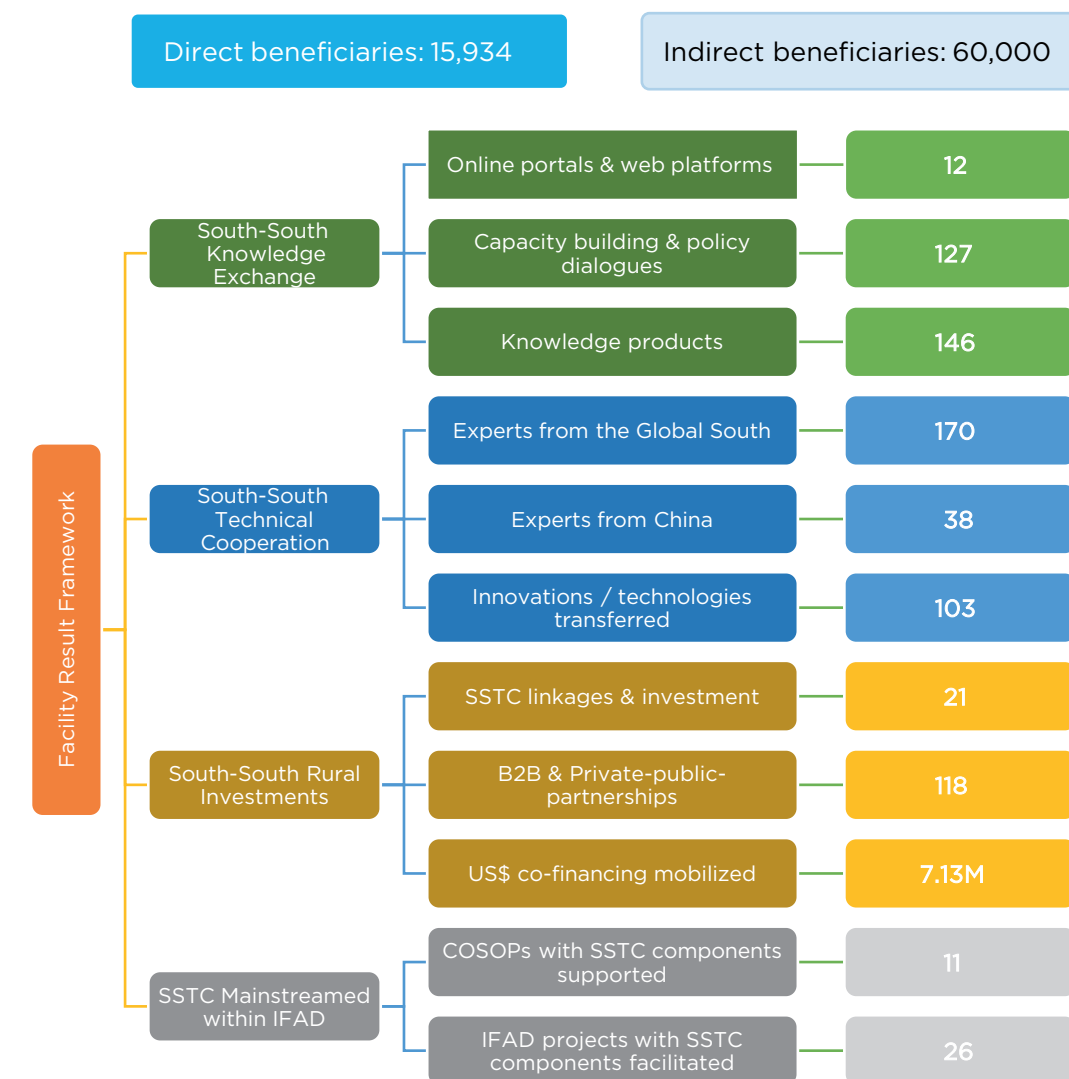
Table 2 Facility partners at the project level

NO.	Partners
1	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
2	United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
3	Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock (MoFL) of Bangladesh
4	Viet Nam Centre for Agrarian Systems Research and Development (CASRAD)
5	Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS)
6	Lao PDR National Agriculture and Forest Research Institute (NAFRI)
7	Cambodia Centre for Policy Studies (CPS)
8	Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) of Ethiopia
9	International Bamboo and Rattan Organisation (INBAR)
10	Ministry of Forests and Wildlife (MINFOF) Cameroon
11	Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources of Ghana
12	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MEFCC) of Ethiopia
13	Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD) of Madagascar
14	World Food Programme (WFP)
15	Chinese Academy of Tropical Agricultural Sciences (CATAS)
16	WorldFish
17	Sugarland Farms Ltd., Ghana
18	Orisha Farms Nigeria
19	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)
20	Kakindo Seed Farm, Tanzania
21	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)
22	Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO)
23	GRATIS Foundation, Ghana
24	Foreign Economic Cooperation Center (FECC) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of China
25	National Rural Support Programme (NRSP), Pakistan
26	Cordaid
27	Aga Khan Foundation
28	Fundación Alpina
29	Universidad Ean
30	International Poverty Reduction Centre in China (IPRCC)
31	Brazil Africa Institute (IBRAF)
32	Alliance Bioversity International (CIAT)
33	Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI)

15.

Project performance. In 2022, a review of project performance against the Facility's results framework (see Figure 5) showed that, from 2018 to 2022, the Facility-funded projects organized 127 capacity development and policy dialogue events, developed 146 knowledge products, engaged some 208 experts, and facilitated around 120 business-to-business linkages, benefiting 15,934 smallholder farmers directly with 60,000 indirect beneficiaries in developing countries. A detailed description of the projects' progress and achievements is provided in Section III.

Figure 5 The Facility's results framework: project performance



16.

South-South knowledge exchange. In terms of South-South knowledge exchange, almost all of the projects organized policy dialogues, online or on-site training events, workshops, and exchange visits. These projects also produced knowledge products and made rural solutions available on IFAD or project platforms. For example, national strategies and action plans on the bamboo value chain were developed in Ethiopia, Ghana, and Madagascar through regional workshops and studies under the IFAD-International Bamboo and Rattan Organization (INBAR) SSTC project. The STARLIT project introduced Agricultural Credit Assessment Tool (A-CAT), which has been proven effective, to help financial institutions estimate the required loan amount and loan size in the rural communities of Rwanda.

17.

South-South technical cooperation. It mainly involves leveraging expertise from the Global South, as well as the transfer of solutions and innovations to other developing countries. Examples include expertise in water-saving irrigation and marine fisheries provided by the Foreign Economic Cooperation Center (FECC) of China to the National Rural Support Programme (NRSP) in Pakistan. Cassava cultivation and management solutions were adapted by the experts of the Chinese Academy of Tropical Agricultural Sciences (CATAS) to the local context of Congo. Sustainable cage aquaculture solutions were transferred by WorldFish from China and Egypt to fish farmers in Ghana and Nigeria. In Tajikistan, experts from Afghanistan provided technical training to women processors in remote mountainous areas for upgrading Cashgora value chains.

18.

South-South investment. The Facility assisted partners from the South to build technical contacts, B2B and/or private-public partnerships to promote trade and investment with each other. For instance, the SSUCORETA project facilitated business meetings and B2B linkages for sunflower oil and cassava chip producers in Tanzania and buyers from neighbouring countries.

19.

Mainstreaming within IFAD. Finally, all the in-country projects funded by the Facility built synergies with existing IFAD loans or grants in the respective countries. The SSTC project implemented in Ethiopia was designed and implemented as part of IFAD investment programs. The Facility also supported a study carried out by the IFAD Quality Assurance Group (QAG) to improve the quality of IFAD project design for better mainstreaming SSTC within IFAD operations.

20.

SSTC models. The 2022 review of project performance revealed that two types of SSTC models are of great value to forge long-term partnerships, deliver concrete results and increase sustainability and, therefore, have great potential to be scaled up in the future projects funded by the Facility. The brief characteristics of these SSTC models are summarized in Table 3 and will be further developed and fleshed out as guidance for future SSTC project development.

Table 3 Identified SSTC models under the Facility

<p>Extension and Improvement of Agricultural Value Chains</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction. This approach promotes business collaboration along agricultural value chains, to enhance the value of local agricultural products and gradually shift away from the current practice of exporting agricultural raw materials while importing food/feed products, as well as creating jobs in rural areas. • Modalities. Assistance for business plan development, facilitation of public-private-producer partnerships (4Ps), piloting of business models, and creating job opportunities for rural women and youth. • Partnerships. It focuses on the private sector, including agro parks, agri-processing businesses, and financial service providers. It also requires collaboration with governments, NGOs and local communities. • Counterpart contribution. Implementing partners are expected to provide: i) business development plan targeted to certain market segments/agricultural products and/or financial services; ii) specific expertise and know-how on agricultural production; iii) B2B linkages or 4P opportunities; and iv) seed investment, etc.
<p>Facilitation for Access to Foreign Markets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction. This approach builds on national policies and trade agreements on agricultural products to promote the development of export-led agricultural sectors, enhance competitiveness, and increase the market share of local agricultural products. • Modalities. Policy dialogues, technical support to trade agreements and/or market access conditions, exporter-importer docking and facilitation events, etc. • Partnerships. Potential partners are governments, key actors in the market such as aggregators, processors, exporters and importers, as well as farmers' organisations and associations in the field. • Counterpart contribution. Implementing partners are expected to provide: i) policy and technical guidance; ii) expertise and capacity training; iii) access to markets; etc.

III. Highlights of projects

South-South Triangular Cooperation for the Inter-Africa Bamboo Smallholder Farmers Livelihood Development Programme

Promoting Water Conservation and Irrigation Water Use Efficiency in Ethiopia

Local production of fortified cassava flour in Bouenza department in the Republic of Congo

Promoting Sustainable Cage Aquaculture in West Africa (ProSCAWA)

Supporting and Strengthening Community Resilience in Tanzania (SSUCORETA)

Strengthening Agricultural Resilience through Learning and Innovation (STARLIT)

Supporting local solutions toward a more resilient food system in Cuba

Promoting Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Livelihood Opportunities in Rural Mountainous Areas through Upgrading Cashgora Value Chains

South-South Triangular Cooperation for the Inter-Africa Bamboo Smallholder Farmers Livelihood Development Programme

GRANT VALUE
US\$ 500 000

FOCUS COUNTRIES
Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana and Madagascar

PROJECT PERIOD
Oct 2019 – Jun 2022

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER
International Bamboo and Rattan Organisation (INBAR)

BENEFICIARIES
285 bamboo farmers, and staff of government agencies
Indirectly reached 5,000 rural smallholder farmers and community members, particularly women and youth

The project objective was to create an enabling bamboo value chain environment, strengthen the policy engagement capacity of local practitioners, and promote investment from China to African countries. It was an SSTC-specific component of the IFAD grant “Inter-Africa Bamboo Smallholder Farmers Livelihood Development Programme in East and Southern Africa”.

The main results achieved from the project were:

1. Created an enabling environment for bamboo value chain development. The project improved both small-scale artisanal and industrial bamboo value chains through 16 diverse capacity building events. These value chains covered bamboo pulp and paper, bamboo panel boards, bamboo charcoal, incense sticks, curtains, toothpicks, and bamboo bicycles. At the policy level, the project promoted policy recommendations on critical actions and policy strategies to make bamboo a productive sector of the economy in Africa. By the end of this project, Ethiopia, Ghana, and Madagascar have developed dedicated bamboo strategies and action plans, and Cameroon was in the process to finalize its national bamboo strategy.
2. Improved technical assistance on high-quality standards setting. The project enabled the creation of a community of practice with 52 experts from over 30 countries. Five (5) Voluntary Guideline Standards (VGS) were developed by this project on technical topics, such as bamboo charcoal kiln design and construction, improved cookstove design and construction, bamboo bio-energy commoditization, the use of bamboo for forest landscape restoration, and criteria for certification of natural and established plantations. The project also helped many African countries to participate in the development of ISO international standards within the framework of the ISO/TC 296 - Bamboo and Rattan.



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3. Strengthened knowledge sharing and scaling up. The successful models, technologies, best practices and experience in adopting VGS from four (4) project countries were replicated and upscaled to an additional 18 African countries through SSTC study tours and regional workshops.

- 12 bamboo-related technologies transferred in 22 African countries
- 5 solutions transferred
- 5 innovations piloted
- 5 knowledge products (Voluntary Guideline Standards) produced
- 16 policy dialogue or capacity development events organised
- 2 South-South partnerships established with INBAR and developing countries
- 17 experts from the Global South mobilised to provide technical assistance



China-IFAD South-South and Triangular Cooperation Facility

Promoting Water Conservation and Irrigation Water Use Efficiency in Ethiopia

GRANT VALUE
US\$ 499 905

FOCUS COUNTRIES
Ethiopia

PROJECT PERIOD
Apr 2019 – May 2022

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER
Ministry of Agriculture, Ethiopia

BENEFICIARIES
4 Irrigation Water Resource User Associations (IUWAs)

169 Rural farmers in Amhara (Keskash Scheme), Oromia (Melka Scheme), SNNPR (Menisa), and Sidama (Aweyea Nemcha)

This project aimed to introduce and adopt water-efficient irrigation and rainwater harvesting technologies in Ethiopia, with the ultimate goal to improve production, productivity, and the livelihoods of the project farmers. It was an SSTC-specific component of the IFAD Participatory Small-Scale Irrigation Development Programme II (PASIDP II) in Ethiopia.

The project achieved the following results:

1. Capacity of policymakers and Irrigation User Water Associations (IUWAs) was strengthened. Sixty-three members of four (4) IUWAs were capacitated on community organizations to effectively and sustainably manage their irrigation infrastructure systems. The project also supported 23 policymakers and experts, to enhance their knowledge of efficient irrigation, IUWA operation, and water resource management.
2. Gravity-fed irrigation and rainwater harvesting systems were adopted. Four (4) gravity-fed low-head sprinklers and drip systems were designed and established in the selected regions of the PASIDP II programme. This work was supported by the experts from IFAD Upper Tana Catchment Natural Resource Management Project in Kenya. As a result, 169 rural farmers benefited from these irrigation systems. For example, Mr. Dubena Kari, one of the project beneficiaries, used to face issues related to water scarcity and was unable to properly irrigate his farmland. Since the gravity-fed sprinklers and drip system were established by this project, he has seen an increase in the volume of harvest and has even diversified production with sugar beet, pepper, haricot beans, and tomatoes.

- 4 gravity-fed low-head sprinklers and drip systems established
- 3 irrigation technologies transferred
- 5 policy dialogue or capacity development events organised
- 3 experts from Kenya mobilised



©PASIDP II



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Local production of fortified cassava flour in Bouenza department in the Republic of Congo

GRANT VALUE
US\$ 492 438

FOCUS COUNTRIES
Republic of Congo

PROJECT PERIOD
Apr 2020 - Apr 2022

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER
World Food Programme (WFP)

BENEFICIARIES
107 cassava producers and cooperative groups in Congo (at least 50 percent are female)

The project aimed to establish a framework and evidence-based business plan for the production of fortified cassava flour and sales of cassava products and to reinforce the capacities of small-scale cassava producers and their organisations to supply fresh cassava to the mills.

As a Rome-based UN agencies (RBAs) joint SSTC initiative, each agency brought its own expertise to the table. IFAD focused on creating organisations and linkages: setting up multi-partnerships and generating initial funds to enhance small-scale producers' capacities. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) led the development and adoption of policy standards for cassava flour. World Food Programme (WFP) coordinated amongst the various partners for implementation and helped to facilitate better market access for cassava producers.

The project consisted of two key components with the results achieved below:

- Studies and national standards for fortified cassava flour and sales of fortified products have been developed. A market analysis was completed to identify the acceptability of fortified cassava flour; three (3) cooked fufu samples with different cassava flours were found acceptable by students in Brazzaville; FAO developed a national standard for fortified cassava flour, in collaborating with the Congolese Agency for Standards and Quality Control, and the National Laboratory.
- Capacity of smallholder cassava-producing farmer organisations was increased. 107 smallholder farmers from ten (10) farmer organisations in the Loudima region improved the capacity in preserving crop yields and increasing productivity, provided by the Chinese Academy of Tropical Agricultural Sciences (CATAS); approximately 105,642 disease-free stem cassava cuttings (equivalent to 5,300 linear meters) were distributed to these farmers in Loudima to ensure productive cassava harvesting; ten (10) farm sheds were constructed and handed over to each farmer organisation.

- 1 national standard for fortified cassava flour developed
- 21 policy dialogue or capacity development events organized
- 10 cassava sheds constructed for farmer organisation
- 2 experts from China (CATAS) mobilised



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Ongoing Project

Promoting Sustainable Cage Aquaculture in West Africa (ProSCAWA)

GRANT VALUE
US\$ 500 000

FOCUS COUNTRIES
Ghana and Nigeria

PROJECT PERIOD
Mar 2020 - Mar 2023

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER
World Fish

BENEFICIARIES
500 Smallholder farmers

100 cage manufacturers, feed producers, and hatcheries

Despite their vast water resources, Ghana and Nigeria import most of their fish due to overfishing and a lack of regulation, as demand surpasses supply. Depletion of local fish populations has severe knock-on effects, including reduced food security, especially for communities relying on fishing for income and sustenance. However, cage aquaculture offers a solution to meet the growing demand. It involves raising fish inside mesh enclosures in natural water bodies, providing accessibility and a lower carbon footprint as it does not need expensive and energy-intensive water pumps.

The objective of this project is to empower and transform the livelihoods of smallholder farmers in West Africa through enhanced Sino-African application of knowledge, technologies, and expertise in cage aquaculture. The main project components included empowering rural communities through sustainable cage culture, enhancing employment and incomes through productive and sustainable cage farming, and establishing links and partnerships for improved rural entrepreneurship.

ProSCAWA collaborated with two (2) private sector companies: the project Fish Hub in Ghana and Orisha Farms in Nigeria, to develop the capacity of fish farmers and businesses in sustainable cage culture farming systems. It achieved the following results:

1. Established 18 demonstration sites with cage culture materials for smallholder farmers in Kotorkor, Ghana, and Afowo Lagoon in Badagry, Nigeria.
2. Provided Genetically Improved Farmed Tilapia (GIFT) fish seeds, nutritionally balanced feed, and water quality equipment.
3. Produced 7.3 metric tons of tilapia, generating fish sales of US\$16,700 in six (6) months from 12 cage units at the demonstration sites in both countries.
4. Trained over 500 smallholder farmers on Best Management Practices (BMPs) for cage culture operations using a training of trainers approach.
5. Created employment for seven (7) people in the communities and indirect employment for over 100 people in cage construction, production, and fish processing, addressing youth unemployment.
6. Developed an online fish marketing platform for market links and business connections.

The project demonstrated the possibility of sustainable large-scale fish farming in local water sources using cage aquaculture. It serves as a model for the development of rural coastline communities, particularly vulnerable ones in West Africa.



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Ongoing Project

Supporting and Strengthening Community Resilience in Tanzania (SSUCORETA)

GRANT VALUE
US\$ 489 417

FOCUS COUNTRIES
Tanzania

PROJECT PERIOD
Dec 2021 - Dec 2023

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER
International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)

BENEFICIARIES
Smallholder farmers (50 percent women and 30 percent youth) in five regions (Dodoma, Geita, Manyara, Morogoro and Mwanza) of Tanzania
Trader/agro-processor small and medium-sized enterprises

The COVID-19 pandemic and conflicts have adversely affected Tanzania’s agricultural sector, disrupting global supply chains and international commodity trade. To address these challenges, the SSUCORETA project aims to restore and increase the productivity, profitability, and market access of three high-demand crops (beans, cassava, and sunflower) for rural women and young farmers in Tanzania, mitigating the negative impact of COVID-19 and enhancing resilience.

To achieve its objectives, SSUCORETA consists of three components:

1. Boosting the resilience of smallholder farmers by improving the productivity of cassava, sunflower, and beans. It trained over 12,000 smallholder farmers in good agronomic practices to address climate change challenges. ICT tools such as Kobo Toolbox, Seed Tracker, Plant Village Nuru, and A KILIMO were utilized to track and document project activities and results.
2. Improving market access, value chains of cassava, beans, and sunflower, and private sector development. A market characterization study was completed on beans and sunflowers to identify key value chain actors, assess demand and supply, understand gender involvement, and identify constraints and opportunities. This led to the training of 3,741 farmers to capitalize on market preferences for specific bean varieties.
3. Facilitating South-South partnerships and trade with China and countries in East and Southern Africa, enabling the export of dried cassava chips and sunflower oil to domestic and regional markets. SSUCORETA provided Chinese processing equipment to farmers for demonstration, and played a significant role in training farmers and lower-level aggregators in post-harvest management and fostering local connections between aggregators and youth entrepreneurs. B2B facilitations resulted in the development of innovative platforms such as the functional business ecosystem in the sunflower value chain, benefitting over 1,200 smallholder farmers and 21 youth.

However, the project has faced challenges of seed shortages due to drought and trade difficulties due to COVID-19 in the first year of implementation. Smallholder farmers have also faced difficulties accessing improved varieties, particularly in bean seeds due to drought. The project plans to work with commercial seed multipliers and implementing partners to address this issue and ensure a consistent supply of early-generation seeds.

Rural women have established a sunflower oil milling business to support their community

One of the beneficiaries, Anna Leone, received sunflower oil press machines through the SSUCORETA project and actively participated in B2B networking events organized for the sunflower oil value chain actors in Tanzania. Equipped with a small oil press and filter machines from China, she not only produced sunflower oil for her family-owned company but also assisted neighbouring farmers in immediate milling.

Anna Leone explained, “In the past, the mill cannot process small quantity oil for farmers who came with 70kg or less of sunflower seeds. With the new equipment provided by SSUCORETA, we are now able to immediately help our community members even upon random requests”.

Additionally, the NAKI mill hired young villagers to collect sunflowers from rural areas and deliver the milled cold-pressed oil back to farmers or local markets. This initiative has created employment opportunities for rural youth, thereby contributing to local economic growth.



Ongoing Project

Strengthening Agricultural Resilience through Learning and Innovation (STARLIT)

GRANT VALUE
US\$ 483 470

FOCUS COUNTRIES
Rwanda and Kenya

PROJECT PERIOD
Dec 2021 – Jun 2023

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER
Cordaid

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

As a consequence of the COVID-19 crisis, farmers in the cereal value chain in Kenya and Rwanda are facing decreasing incomes and food insecurity. The Strengthening Agricultural Resilience through Learning and Innovation (STARLIT) project aims to enhance the resilience of smallholder farmers in the face of prolonged disasters like the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change.

STARLIT focuses on providing innovative financial and non-financial services to improve farmers' productivity and restore their access to markets. The project also collaborates with private partners to develop and implement market development systems, offering innovative agricultural solutions. These solutions are to enhance access to agricultural mechanization, agricultural information, and agricultural finance for smallholder farmers and rural youth.

Coordinating South-South solutions transfer among the East African region by Cordaid, key results achieved in the project components in 2022 included:

1. Access to agricultural mechanization: The project collaborated with farmer organisations, irrigation equipment suppliers, and local authorities to raise awareness about the importance of irrigation for drought control through field demonstrations. Additionally, the project developed an agricultural equipment loan product in collaboration with the microfinance institution RIM Microfinance. Through a partnership with the Youth Engagement in Agricultural Network (YEAN), 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, contributing to carbon emission reduction.
2. Access to agricultural digital information services: STARLIT collaborated with the digital company VIAMO and the Rwanda Agricultural Board (RAB) to design eight digital remote pieces of training focusing on good agricultural practices (GAP) to improve maize production. The project used Interactive Voice Responses (IVR) in the local language (Kinyarwanda) to deliver voice training to smallholders through their mobile phones. A hotline "845" was established for farmers to connect with buyers and access information on best farming practices for maize. Directly, 1,772 farmers who owned mobile phones benefited from the project's digital training, and an additional 1,623 non-project beneficiary farmers accessed the training.



3. Access to agricultural finance: STARLIT supported partner microfinance institutions, such as RIM and Duterimbere MFI PLC, in developing tailored agri-financial products, including an agricultural equipment loan product suitable for farmers' needs. The project also introduced the Agricultural Credit Assessment Tool (A-CAT) to help financial institutions estimate the required loan amount. A-CAT allows loan officers to determine the ideal loan size based on land size, crop, and expected revenue, reducing the risk of over- or under-lending. Moreover, the project provided training to partner financial institutions on agri-finance risk management. Twelve (12) Saving and Credit Cooperative Organisations (SACCOs) and four (4) microfinance institutions received training, and 1,176 smallholder farmers received loans from SACCOs.
4. South-South knowledge exchange: STARLIT facilitated knowledge sharing and exchange between Rwanda and other countries, mobilised by Cordaid, to disseminate successful interventions and promote replication in other projects. The project-initiated knowledge exchange and business-to-business linkages with private companies, NGOs like the Agribusiness Market Ecosystem Alliance (AMEA), and local governments in Kenya and Rwanda. Scheduled South-South knowledge exchanges between Kenya and Rwanda in 2023 will focus on related knowledge products.

STARLIT also worked closely with other ongoing projects, particularly the IFAD Kayonza Irrigation and Integrated Watershed Management Project - Phase II (KIIWP2), the World Bank Sustainable Agricultural Intensification and Food Security Project (SAIP), and government institutions, to foster synergy, share knowledge and innovation, and facilitate the replication and expansion of project interventions.

Supporting local solutions toward a more resilient and sustainable food system in Cuba

GRANT VALUE
US\$ 481 098

FOCUS COUNTRIES
Cuba, Latin America and Caribbean

PROJECT PERIOD
Dec 2021 – Dec 2023

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER
World Food Programme (WFP)

BENEFICIARIES
Rural people, including smallholders, inputs and services providers, and traders
National and local decision-makers and experts
Children and elderly people in social protection systems

Cuba’s food systems faced significant challenges, including damage caused by hurricanes and droughts, economic and financial embargoes, and fuel shortages. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic further worsened the situation, leading to a sharp decline in national and household incomes as well as reduced private sector activities and family remittances. Consequently, there was a scarcity of food and basic supplies in local markets.

To address these issues, this project aims to enhance the efficiency, resilience, and nutrition-sensitive approach of Cuba’s food systems, focusing on implementing local solutions in Gibara, a high-priority municipality in the country’s efforts to mitigate the socio-economic impact of the pandemic. This initiative will serve as a platform for scaling up successful practices and disseminating the achieved results to other municipalities, informing national policies and programs, and benefiting a larger population.

The project is to specifically target the improvement of yields, diversification, quality, and risk management capacities within the local food system, so as to address the challenges posed by climate change and disasters. It prioritizes strengthening the linkages between smallholder farmers, their cooperatives, and social protection programmes, such as Family Support Systems, through enhancing school feeding programmes, promoting locally produced nutritious diets, facilitating market access, and empowering municipalities to make autonomous decisions. Built on Cuba-China technical cooperation, this project is looking for support from the WFP’s Centre of Excellence in Beijing and collaboration with IFAD. Additionally, the project also fosters exchanges with Central American countries to learn from decentralized school feeding management models based on local food products.

After a complex coordination process, WFP together with IFAD, Cuba and the Chinese Embassy in Cuba, officially launched this project on 15 December 2022 in Havana, Cuba.



China-IFAD South-South and Triangular Cooperation Facility

Promoting Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Livelihood Opportunities in Rural Mountainous Areas through Upgrading Cashgora Value Chains

GRANT VALUE
US\$ 446 440

FOCUS COUNTRIES
Tajikistan

PROJECT PERIOD
Dec 2021 – Dec 2023

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER
Aga Khan Foundation (AKF)

BENEFICIARIES
Cashgora fibre producers, farmers, spinners, knitters and weavers, dehairing facility staff, veterinary physicians, returned migrants, youth and female-headed households

In Tajikistan, goat producers sell unprocessed fiber to traders or local processors – usually poor rural women – who then make cheap, low-quality products that sell for low prices. In doing so, women generate a meager income that does little to reduce poverty or change the traditional and inequitable gender roles at home and in the community. Women in remote mountainous areas need access to processing skills, technologies, information, and marketing know-how to make high-end yarn or products that can compete in international markets. Investments in smallholder goat development and related value chains are effective means to reduce poverty and increase the incomes of women and men from resource-poor households.

The project aims to foster sustainable economic opportunities and livelihood development for rural people, specifically women and returning migrant workers affected by the pandemic. It will promote high-grade and advanced cashgora goat breeding production solutions and support their expansion to other areas of the country.

Since the project started, it has supported the establishment and scale-up of a dehairing facility to improve the productivity and manufacturing capacities of local communities in Tajikistan. In November 2022, the team enhanced the technical capacities of the staff of a Fiber Dehairing Facility (FDF) by bringing a technical expert and a mechanical engineer from Afghanistan to operate the dehairing line, with the support of the Ministry of Industry and New Technology. The technical expert conducted practical training for the facility’s staff on the effective usage/maintenance of the Chinese equipment in the dehairing line.

The project team also discussed issues related to safety and security, waste recycling, organizational management, and product marketing. These capacity-building training events benefited 15 staff members of the FDF. During the training, all staff members were given an opportunity to engage in maintaining the machines and learn about maintaining safety and security in the facility’s operations. Moreover, the project team was able to partially purchase the fiber from 350 cashgora fiber-producing households – this directly benefited 1,980 people, 60 percent of whom are women.

The project will continue to benefit from the expertise and support of China and Afghanistan through the exchange of knowledge and technology transfer in areas such as business construction and development, improvement of extension services, and gender and youth empowerment.

China-IFAD South-South and Triangular Cooperation Facility

IV. Facility management

A.

Updating the Facility's Results Measurement Framework

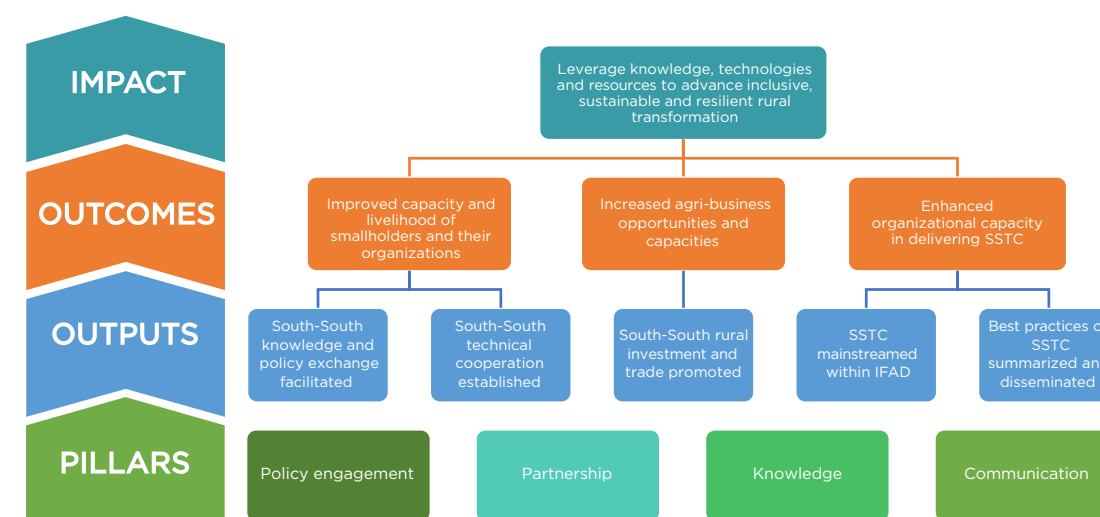
21.

In line with the result orientation of the Facility and the priorities of both the Facility and the IFAD SSTC Strategy, and following the recommendations of the Facility's midterm review, the Facility's Results Measurement Framework (RMF) was updated to have a stronger focus on concrete outputs and outcomes, as well as the logic chain from pillars to impact, to guide the Facility's operation and results assessment.

22.

For future projects supported by the Facility, stronger alignment with and contribution to the Facility's RMF will be required. As illustrated in Figure 6, projects and their activities should be structured around four (4) main pillars: (i) knowledge; (ii) partnerships; (iii) policy engagement; and (iv) communication, with clearly defined outputs in the five areas that should causally contribute to the three (3) clusters of outcomes at the Facility level: (i) improved capacity and livelihood of smallholders and their organisations, (ii) increased agri-business opportunities and capacities, and (iii) enhanced institutional capacity in delivering SSTC.

Figure 6 Updated logframe of the China-IFAD SSTC Facility



B.

Modifying proposal identification process and evaluation criteria

23.

Based on lessons learned from the previous calls for proposals, and internal and external consultations with relevant stakeholders, the Facility Secretariat modified the identification process of proposals and refined the evaluation criteria, intending to ensure the quality at entry of the proposals and increase the effectiveness, impact and visibility of the Facility. In addition to the original guiding principles outlined in the Facility Strategic Note, the following additional criteria were introduced to review and improve project proposals in terms of impact, sustainability, innovativeness and synergies with IFAD's PoLGs:

a. Additional criteria:

- Align with Facility's priority areas and RMF: knowledge and policy dialogue; technical cooperation; rural investment and trade, mainstreaming SSTC within IFAD.
- Directly benefit local communities and rural farmers, with concrete results on the ground.
- Leverage knowledge and expertise from China in project design and implementation.
- SSTC is prominently featured in the project design.
- Establish a sound monitoring and evaluation framework.

b. Original guiding principles:

- Place a high priority on national ownership and leadership, development of local capacity and inclusive participation.
- Build on IFAD's comparative advantages, and complement IFAD's programme of loans and grants.
- Supervision and monitoring of project implementation are adequately planned and budgeted within the budget of sponsoring divisions.

C.

Formulating new proposals

24.

To improve the quality of project proposals in line with the requirements of the Facility and to ensure that the proposal content is more solid, reasonable and feasible, the Facility Secretariat has directly participated in the pre-screening and design of project proposals for the project sponsors. In close cooperation and consultation with the relevant IFAD SSTC and Knowledge Centres, regional and country offices, partners and stakeholders, five (5) SSTC project proposals have been formulated. The Facility Secretariat reviewed all five (5) proposals and recommended three (3) as listed below, to the Advisory Panel of the Facility for review and comments. The other proposals are included in the Facility's proposal pool for further improvement.

1. Strengthening South-South and Triangular Cooperation Policy Engagement and Capacity Building.
2. Empowering Rural Youth with Innovative Horticultural Solutions in Tomato Value Chain.
3. ICT for Digital Rural Inclusion and Youth Empowerment.

D.

Monitoring and supervision

25.

The Facility Secretariat enhanced its capacity to ensure the monitoring and reporting of the ongoing projects are timely and substance sufficient. Periodic meetings were organized to review project progress, and recommendations were made to address arising challenges. Special efforts were made to strengthen financial oversight to ensure work plans and expenditures are in line with the objectives and activities planned in the projects.

26.

For the projects entering the closure stage in 2022, the Facility Secretariat guided the process, and facilitated greater coordination between the IFAD country offices and the grant recipients for the timely completion of all the requirements. Five (5) projects (three of them completed in 2021 and two of them completed in 2022) finished the closure process with the return of unutilized funds to the Facility, while other completed projects were on track to finalize the financial closure in the first quarter of 2023.

E.

Outreach and communication

27.

Regular consultation with donor. To strengthen the coordination with the counterpart agency of China, a quarterly consultation mechanism was initiated by the Facility Secretariat. The first consultation meeting was held with the Permanent Representation of China to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture in Rome (the China Mission) in September 2022 to review the Facility's achievements, progress, challenges and workplan 2022-2023.

28.

Broadened partnership base. The Facility Secretariat actively explored new technical partners or reactivated existing strategic partnerships, in order to effectively promote SSTC landing on the ground. For instance, to support proposal formulation, the Chinese Academy of Tropical Agricultural Sciences (CATAS) was mobilised to provide technical expertise in tropical fruit value chains and international trade between China and Cambodia; Nanjing Agricultural University and Egerton University were identified as implementation partners in the new SSTC proposal, to transfer horticultural techniques, improve extension service and enhance tomato value chain in Kenya.

29.

Promotion and communication products. At the Facility level, a short introductory video² of the Facility was produced, and published on the Facility webpage and social media platforms, in both English and Chinese languages. The Facility Secretariat developed a new Facility brochure³ to update recent developments in 2022.

30.

For individual projects, the Facility Secretariat worked with project teams to capture success stories, knowledge products, and research findings for greater visibility and impact. Achievements and case stories of the Facility and its projects were also promoted on the IFAD SSTC newsletters, social media posts, op-eds, interviews, and high-level events, such as the UN Day for South-South Cooperation 2022 at the UN Global South-South Development (GSSD) Expo held in Thailand.⁴

² <https://youtu.be/eFTaBUtvFN8> and the Chinese version: <https://video.weibo.com/show?fid=1034:4874482335285280>

³ <https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/41086202/ifad-china-sstcf.pdf/d5ee1b8e-515b-5277-7eb2-e40cc9966b7e?t=1683020743193>

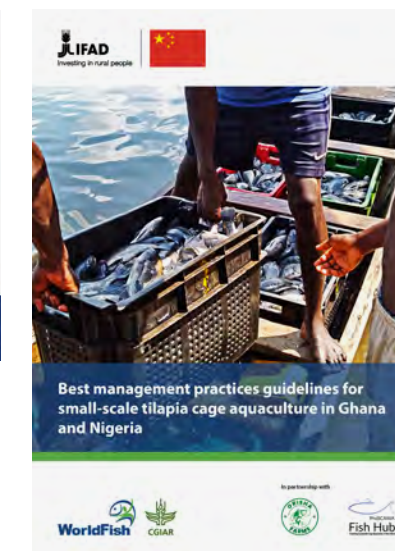
⁴ <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/-/ifad-at-gssd-expo-2022>

F.

Knowledge management

31.

Knowledge management at the project level is one of the priorities that the Facility Secretariat is promoting and supporting for upscaling and peer learning. In 2022, six (6) ongoing projects organized nearly 30 capacity development events and produced over ten (10) knowledge products. At the Facility level, the Facility Secretariat published these knowledge products on the Facility webpage and promoted them through high-level visibility occasions and events. For example, *best management practices guidelines for small-scale tilapia cage aquaculture in Ghana and Nigeria*⁵ was developed by WorldFish, and a peer-learning event *IFAD-WorldFish: Partnership on aquatic foods*⁶ was co-organized by IFAD and WorldFish to promote solutions generated from IFAD-funded projects, including the ProSCAWA project funded by the Facility.



⁵ <https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/47397034/worldfish-proscawa-china-manual.pdf/1ca929a5-6225-74ea-848b-5e2d916099a5?t=1681379918262>

⁶ <https://worldfishcenter.org/events/ifad-worldfish-partnership-aquatic-foods>

V. Way forward

32.

Optimizing the utilization of the Facility's remaining funds.

Approaching the last phase of the Facility, special efforts will be placed on prioritizing fund allocation to scale up innovative solutions and effective SSTC models, particularly in the areas of value chain improvement, market access enhancement, private sector engagement and institutional capacity building to reinforce the results and the impact of the Facility at scale.

33.

Expanding the inclusive and diverse partnership base.

By 2022, the Facility engaged 33 partners in its projects and identified 38 partners from academia, the private sector, and NGOs for future cooperation (see the IFAD Rural Solutions Portal⁷). The Facility will deepen cooperation with these partner organizations, and try all means to leverage their knowledge, technologies, expertise, and resources in support of the needs of rural people and of inclusive and sustainable food systems transformation.

34.

Demonstrating achievements and promoting exchanges.

The Facility has accumulated lots of case studies, success stories, and development knowledge. A comprehensive knowledge management and communication plan is being implemented to summarize these success and knowledge and to further disseminate them to a broader audience. This includes an increasing role of project beneficiaries in communicating the positive changes brought into their lives by the Facility-funded projects.



@IFAD/SSTC Unit

⁷ <https://www.ruralsolutionsportal.org/en/web/guest/partners>

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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