



Food and Agriculture
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2014 Annual Report on FAO's projects
and activities in support of producer
organizations and cooperatives

2014 Annual Report on FAO's projects and activities in support of producer organizations and cooperatives

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Acronyms

ACDA	Agricultural Cooperatives' Development Agency
AEC	Agro-Enterprises Centre
AFA	Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development
AFEKON	African Forest Enterprise Knowledge Network
AFSP	Agriculture and Food Security Project
AHL	Animal Health Law [of Angola]
AMPB	Alianza Mesoamericana de Pueblos y Bosques
APFS	Agropastoral Field School
ATA	Agricultural Transformation Agency
ATER	Technical Assistance and Rural Extension
ATI	Agricultural Training Institute
AUSCOOP	Acte Uniforme relatif au droit des Sociétés Coopératives
BoARD	Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development [Ethiopia]
BSSP	Business Support Service Providers
BTEB	Bangladesh Technical Education Board
CA	Conservation Agriculture
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CAHW	Community Animal Health Worker
CAM	Cooperative Assessment Tool
CBT	Competency Based Training
CD	Capacity Development
CDD-G9	Le Cadre de Collaboration et de Dialogue entre Organisations Paysannes [Niger]
CDVD	Central Deposit of Veterinary Drugs and Equipment
CENTA	National Agricultural Technology Centre
CERMES	Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies
CFM	Community Feed Mill
CFS	FAO Committee on World Food Security
CLC	Community Listeners' Club
COAG	FAO Committee on Agriculture
COFI	FAO Committee on Fisheries
COFO	FAO Committee on Forestry
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
COPAC	Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives
CPA	Cattle Producers Association
CPF	Confederation Paysanne du Faso
CSA	Agricultural Service Centre [Madagascar]

CSA	Climate-Smart Agriculture
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CTA	Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation
DADO	District Agriculture Development Office
DCP	Department of Crop Production
DFID	Departmental for International Development [United Kingdom]
DLSO	District Livestock Service Offices
DSA	Daily Subsistence Allowance
EAC	Eastern Africa Community
EAFF	East Africa Farmer Federation
EGM	Expert Group Meeting
ENPARD	European Neighborhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development
ESS	Environmental and Social Safeguard
ETFRN	European Tropical Forest Research Network
EU	European Union
EU FLEGT	EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
F2S	Farm to School
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FD	Demonstrator Families
FFF	Forest and Farm Facility
FFPO	Forest and Farm Producer Organization
FFS	Farmer Field School
FI	Irradiated Families
FIA	Foundation of Agrarian Innovation
FLEGT	EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
FLW	Food Losses and Waste
FMC	Farmer Marketing Collective
FMVH	Medicine Veterinary Faculty of Huambo
F/PFS	Farmers/Pastoral Field School
FRDA	Regional Fund for Agricultural Development
FSS	Food Security Sector
GACF	Forest Global Alliance of Community Forestry
GAP	Good Agricultural Practice(s)
GCFI	Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute
GDDF	Global Dialogue on Family Farming
GEP	Good Entrepreneurial Practice(s)
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GIAHS	Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems
GMP	Good Manufacturing Practice(s)
GMPF	Grameen Motsho O Pashusampad Foundation
GTFS	Government Trust Fund for Food Security and Food Safety
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
HFLS	[Extension System for] Household Food and Livelihoods Security
HH	Household
HR	Human Resources [Management]
HVC	High Value Crop(s)
IAITPTF	International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests
IAPP	Integrated Agricultural Productivity Project
ICA	International Co-operative Alliance
ICN2	Second International Conference on Nutrition
ICTA	Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology

IDA	Agricultural Development Institute
IDS	Integrated Dairy Scheme
IEC	International Egg Commission
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFFA	International Family Forestry Alliance
IFTCC	Integrated Farmers Thrift and Credit Cooperative Society
IGAD	Institut Gabonais d'Appui au Développement
IGG	Inter-governmental Group
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IITA	International Institute for Tropical Agriculture
IIV	Veterinary Research Institute
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	Indigenous Micro-organism
INDAP	Agriculture and Livestock Development Institute [Chile]
INIA	National Institution of Agriculture Investigation [Chile]
IPA	Institute of Artisanal Fisheries [Angola]
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IPPM	Integrated Pest Production Management
ISAM	Informed Strategic Adaptive Management
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
ISV	Institute of Veterinary Services [Angola]
IT	Information Technology
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IYC	International Year of Cooperatives
IYFF	International Year of Family Farming
IYS	International Year of Soils
JFFLS	Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools
JP	Joint Programme
JTA	Assistant Junior Technician
JT	Junior Technician
KhDU	Khatiz Dairy Union
LA	Livestock Auxiliary
LCG	Local Consultative Group
LENAFU	Lesotho National Farmers Union
LK	Livestock Keeper
LoA	Letter of Agreement
LSP	Local Service Provider
LT	Livestock Technician
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
M&L	Monitoring and Learning [system]
MA&D	Market Analysis and Development
MAG	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock [El Salvador]
MAGA	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food [Guatemala]
MAIL	Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock [Afghanistan]
MALIS	Improving Food Security and Market Linkages for Smallholders project
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development [Viet Nam]
MASA	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security [Burkina Faso]
MDA	Ministry of Agrarian Development [Brazil]
MFI	Microfinance Institution
MINEC	Ministry of Economy [El Salvador]
MMO	Mutual Marketing Organization

MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoAD	Ministry of Agricultural Development [Nepal]
MoCS	Ministry of Commerce and Supply [Nepal]
MOSAP	Market Oriented Smallholder Agriculture Project
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRGM	Mwea Rice Growers Multipurpose Cooperative
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise(s)
MTot	Master Training of Trainers
MVP	Municipal Veterinary Pharmacies
n.a.	information not available or not applicable
NAIP	National Agricultural Investment Plan
NARC	Nepal Agricultural Research Council
NASFAM	National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGPTA	Nepal Ginger Producers and Traders' Association
NPPO	National Plant Protection Organization
NTDT	National Technical Drafting Team
NTFP	non-timber forest product
ODEPA	Agriculture's Studies and Policies Office
OMVA	Order of Veterinarians of Angola
OPAP	Professional Agricultural Organizations and Fisheries
OPC	FAO office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development
OPCP	Partnerships branch of the FAO office for Partnerships, Advocacy and Capacity Development
OWG	Open Working Group
P4P	Purchase for Progress
PAA	Food Acquisition Programme
PAF	Family Agriculture Plan
PAF-SAN	Food Security and Nutrition Plan
PEA	Project Executing Agency
PESMC	Project Environment and Social Management Committee
PG	Producer Group
PMU	Project Management Unit
PNATER	National Policy of Technical Assistance and Rural Extension
PO	Producer Organization
PRA	Participatory Rapid Appraisal
PRONAF	National Programme for Strengthening of Family Farming
PROPAC	Plateforme sous-régionale des Organisations Paysannes d'Afrique Centrale
PROSAP	Programme of Provincial Agricultural Services
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PY	Project Year
QDS	Quality Declared Seed
RAI	Responsible Agricultural Investment
RBA	Rome-Based Agencies
REAF	Special Meeting on Family Farming of MERCOSUR
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
ROPPA	Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organizations of West Africa
SACAU	Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions
SACCO	Saving and Credit Cooperative
SAPA	South African Poultry Association
SC	Steering Committee

SDDP	Smallholder Dairy Development Project
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEED	Sustainable Employment and Economic Development Programme
SFVCD	Sustainable Food Value Chain Development
SIME	Information System of Monitoring and Evaluation
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SO	FAO Strategic Objective
SOMDA	Somaliland Meat Development Association
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
SRI	Rice Intensification System
SSA	Small Scale Aquaculture
SSF	Small-Scale Fisheries
SSF VGs	Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication
SVS	Seed Village Scheme
SWAGEN	Support for Women in Agriculture and Environment
SWI	System of Wheat Intensification
TA	Technical Assistant or Assistance
TCP	[FAO] Technical Cooperation Programme
TMF	Terrafina Microfinance
TMR	total mixed rations
ToF	Training of Farmer Facilitators
ToT	Training of Trainers
TUGIS	Turkish Food and Beverage Industry Employers Association
UMA	Arab Maghreb Union
UMAEB	Union Maghrébine des Eleveurs de Bovins
UMAOC	Union Maghrébine Ovine et Caprine
UMAPI	Union Maghrébine de l'Apiculture
UN	United Nations
UNACA	Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Angola
UNDESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UN-REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
UPA-DI	Union des Producteurs Agricoles du Québec – Développement International
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
VC	Value Chain
VCA	Value Chain Approach
VCD	Value Chain Development
VDPA	Village Dairy Producers' Association
VDRF	Veterinary Drugs and Equipment Revolving Fund
VGGT	Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests
VICOPA	Village Community Banking
VMI	Viet Nam Metrology Institute
VSLs	Voluntary Savings and Loan Schemes
WBF	World Banana Forum
WEAMU	West African Economic and Monetary Union
WFO	World Farmers' Organization
WFP	World Food Programme
WPSA	World's Poultry Science Association
ZPA	Zimbabwe Poultry Association

Foreword

Producer organizations (POs) and cooperatives are important partners for FAO to achieve its mandate of ending hunger. The new FAO Strategic Framework incorporates their roles of rural poverty reduction and of enabling more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems at local, national and international levels.

The 2014 International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) proclaimed by the UN, was pivotal to remind the international community of the position of POs and cooperatives as actors of change towards sustainable agricultural development. Indeed 2014 represented a crucial occasion to reaffirm the central role of these institutions in helping family farmers overcome the constraints they face. An important outcome of the IYFF was to have raised awareness on the need for stronger POs and cooperatives to unlock the potential of family farming for food security and sustainable development. An organized family farming sector around farmer-based collective action has the potential to increase the efficiency of the sector. In this sense, the IYFF gave the opportunity to leverage the legacy of the 2012 International Year of Cooperatives (IYC) and to mark a further milestone in raising the profile of POs and cooperatives at global level.

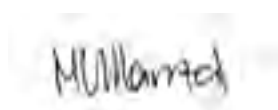
FAO's support to POs and cooperatives has increased tremendously over the last years. This has been widely documented in the six Annual Reports that FAO has produced since 2009. From last year's edition, the format has been revamped making it more reader-friendly and accessible to a wider audience. As such, the Report remains a useful resource to exemplify the aggregated support that FAO provides to farmer-led activities at global, regional and country level.

The 2014 Report provides further evidence of such support. Through the 97 contributions provided by FAO staff from both headquarters and decentralized offices, this edition illustrates how FAO collaborated with Member States, cooperatives, POs and other actors, to support collective action in the field, ultimately enabling farmers and their families to become food secure and escape from rural poverty. As widely documented in the Report, the main actions encompass facilitating the

participation of POs and cooperatives in multi-stakeholder platforms and policy-making fora; supporting the development of capacities at individual and organizational level; supporting governments to promote the enabling environment for POs and cooperatives to thrive; and producing knowledge sharing materials.

This edition of the Report was produced as a joint collaboration between FAO and the Department of Economics of Roma Tre University. The two organizations have developed close relations, collaborating particularly around the theme of food security, nutrition, rural development and institutions for development. More recently, they initiated collaboration on the theme of cooperatives, to which the Department of Economics of Roma Tre University pays particular attention through targeted postgraduate and undergraduate courses.

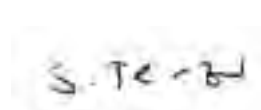
We hope that this edition of the Annual Report will serve as a useful tool for policy-makers, development practitioners and academics to acquire wider knowledge about FAO's projects and activities in support of POs and cooperatives and to raise awareness about the great potential of these organizations in contributing to achieve food security and sustainable development worldwide.



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1 Introduction

The role of POs and cooperatives in poverty reduction and food security has been widely repositioned during the last decades, both within International Organizations' agendas (e.g. UN, 1992-2013¹; FAO/IFAD/WFP, 2012; ILO-ICA, 2014) and the academia (e.g. Birchall, 2004, 2011; Develtere, Pollet and Wanyama, 2009; Johnson and Shaw, 2014).

POs and cooperatives have been particularly praised for adopting a participatory way of working and putting people at the heart of their business, therefore representing a vehicle for human development (Sen, 2000; Vicari and De Muro, 2012). Moreover, evidence from the ground shows that when strong rural organizations provide a full range of services to small producers, they are able to play a greater role in meeting a growing food demand on local, national and international markets (Herbel *et al.*, 2012).

POs and cooperatives in many developing countries play a significant role in boosting rural economies. They facilitate small-scale producers' access to natural resources such as land and water; information, communication and knowledge; markets, food and productive assets such as seeds and tools; and policy- and decision-making (FAO/IFAD/WFP, 2012). Also, they enhance the bargaining power of farmers in the markets and in the value chains. POs and cooperatives need an adequate enabling environment to properly perform, flourish and meet their members' needs in order to unleash this high potential towards poverty reduction and food security.

Based on these considerations, this edition of the Annual Report aims at documenting projects and activities carried out by FAO at global, regional and country level, both to support member states to provide the adequate enabling environment for POs and cooperatives and to support such rural organizations to effectively perform and thrive. Indeed, POs and cooperatives are considered as strategic partners for FAO and important agents of change, as clearly stressed in the FAO Strategic Framework 2010-2019² and highlighted in this Report.

1 Since 1992, the UN Secretary-General has published biennial reports on the role of cooperatives in economic and social development. Reports since 2005 are available at <http://undesadspd.org/Cooperatives/UNDocumentsonCooperatives.aspx>.

2 The New FAO Strategic Framework identified five new Strategic Objectives representing the main areas of work on which FAO has concentrated its efforts in striving to achieve its mandate. They are as follows: 1. Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition; 2. Increase and improve 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 at local, national and international levels; and 5. Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises. Notably, the roles of POs and cooperatives are recognized and mainstreamed in every single Strategic Objective.

The publication is structured as follows. Section 2 highlights key achievements obtained by FAO in 2014 in maintaining POs and cooperatives high on the global development agenda. Main attention is paid to acknowledgments achieved at policy level on the role of collective action for food security, including within the process towards the definition of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Section 3 showcases main trends regarding FAO's support to POs and cooperatives at global, regional and country level. Main findings from the survey carried out between January and March 2015 among FAO headquarter offices, units and decentralized offices are presented. This section provides an analysis of implemented actions such as: capacity development for governmental officers as well as members of POs and cooperatives; support to the enabling environment; support to cooperatives' and POs' participation in policy dialogue; as well as the production of knowledge-sharing materials. Section 4 draws conclusions and way forward. Finally a detailed review of projects and activities implemented at global, regional and country level is provided in Annex 1 for those who may wish to examine them more in depth.

2 Putting producer organizations (POs) and cooperatives at the heart of the global development agenda

2.1 Acknowledgments on collective action, POs and cooperatives received in the context of the 2014 International Year of Family Farming

According to the FAO Report on Food Insecurity (SOFI), in 2012-2014, 805 million people were estimated to be chronically undernourished, with a decrease of more than 100 million over the last decade (FAO, 2014a). Despite this encouraging trend, it is both unacceptable and a paradox that more than 70 percent of the world's food-insecure people still live in rural areas in developing countries, with most of them being small-scale farmers who cannot afford to meet their families' demand of food (FAO, 2014b). As indicated in the 2014 *State of Food and Agriculture* (FAO, 2014b), an FAO flagship publication, more than nine out of ten farms in the world are family farms, representing the dominant form of farming in most countries. There are more than 570 million farms in the world, out of which at least 500 million are owned by an individual or a family, and rely primarily on family labour. Many family farms are small (<2 ha), but they occupy a large share of the land and contribute a substantial share of food production in most developing countries (FAO, 2014b).

It is in this perspective that the UN proclaimed 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF). This meant putting the spotlight on the important contribution that those 500 million family farms can bring to achieving the goal of a world without poverty and hunger. In fact, although they are the ones who manage the majority of the world's agricultural land and produce most of the world's food, yet they face many challenges which reduce their capacities to be food secure. Indeed the IYFF legacy was to have "given visibility to family farming and put it on the policy agenda, both nationally and internationally" (FAO, 2015a: 21).

Even if not explicitly focused on POs and cooperatives, the IYFF was another milestone, two years after the International Year of Cooperatives (IYC), in the global effort to advocate for the important contribution of various forms of collective action to reducing hunger and poverty. It represented a unique occasion to recall and endorse the crucial role of POs and cooperatives in unlocking the potential of the family farming sector for food security and sustainable development.

An important legacy of the IYFF was not only to have put the needs of family farmers at the heart of the global agenda, but also to have mobilized family farmers themselves and their organizations. By participating in several events, farmers had the chance to discuss their challenges and advocate for their needs, eventually influencing the policy processes

The 2014 International Year of Family Farming – an occasion to raise the profile of family farming and the crucial role of POs and cooperatives for food security and sustainable development

towards consensus. Indeed, 87 representatives from 51 POs and cooperatives from 37 countries participated in the Global Dialogue on family farming³. On that occasion, a highlight was the consensus reached by all the stakeholders on the importance of family farmers and their organizations to address challenges such as poverty, hunger and sustainable agriculture development. It also identified farmers' organizations, along with governments and other non-state actors, as key actors for transferring the current global momentum created by the IYFF into concrete action beyond 2014. The need of stronger farmer organizations was also underlined, as they are acknowledged as "important to balance the economic and political power of other actors and in consolidating the voice of family farmers. (...) Farmer organizations must be involved in more inclusive decision-making processes." (FAO, 2015a: 7).

**Supporting small-scale
farmers and their
organizations to reduce food
losses and waste**

An important acknowledgement of the need to support small-scale farmers and their organizations emerged from the Forty-first Session of the Committee on Food Security (CFS41) (Rome, Italy, 13-18 October 2014). Nearly 800 representatives of CFS stakeholder groups (governments, civil society, private sector, international and regional organizations and observers) registered for CFS41 (CFS, 2014).

In the CFS41 round table on "Food Losses and Waste (FLW) in the context of sustainable food systems", states were encouraged to take effective steps to reduce FLW by, among others, "supporting small-scale food producers and processors and their organizations for better access to knowledge and innovation, markets, financial services, logistics (e.g. storage, processing, packaging, and transport) and other services which are important to reduce FLW" (CFS, 2014: 5).

**POs and cooperatives as
catalyst of innovation**

In 2014, POs and cooperatives were acknowledged as catalyst of innovation. This was clearly affirmed during CFS41 as well as stated in the SOFA report. On the occasion of World Food Day⁴, CFS41, together with the Steering Committee of the IYFF, organized a special event on "Innovation in Family Farming: Towards Ensuring Food Security and Nutrition". The SOFA report released that day highlighted the role of innovation in family farming, acknowledged as a priority to increase the productivity and sustainability of small-scale farmers' produce and to combat poverty. In this regard, it was underlined how initiatives of collective action among family farmers, such as POs and cooperatives, can play a pivotal role in helping farmers overcome the constraints they face and to boost their capacity to innovate. As highlighted, strong, effective and inclusive organizations can work to help family farms access markets, technologies and financial services. They can also provide services to their members or facilitate contacts with other external service and information providers, such as research institutions. Finally, POs and cooperatives can help family farmers participate in policy-making and make their voice heard. Moreover, as family farming also involves small-scale fisheries and forestry, it was also noted that family farmers who depend on other

3 The Global Dialogue on Family Farming (GDFF) was the culminating event of the IYFF. It brought together government representatives, family farmers and their organizations, civil society, private sector, academia and development agencies, to take stock of the momentum created and set the tone for a pro-family farming agenda for action post-2014. The GDFF took place on 27-28 October 2014 at FAO Headquarters in Rome. Further information on the IYFF is available at <http://www.fao.org/family-farming-2014/en/>

4 The 2014 World Food Day was celebrated at FAO Headquarters in Rome on October 16 and focused on the theme: "Family Farming: Feeding the world, caring for the earth". See: <http://www.fao.org/world-food-day/home/en/>

resources, such as forests, pastures and fisheries, can improve their condition by linking with POs and cooperatives active in these sectors (FAO, 2014b).

These themes were further explored in the side event of CFS41 titled “Producer organizations and cooperatives: key to an efficient farming sector” and organized by the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC)⁵. Panelists discussed how agricultural POs and cooperatives through collective action can effectively enhance the critical contribution of the family farming sector to reduce rural poverty and achieve food security throughout the world.

The International Symposium on Agro-ecology for Food Security and Nutrition, held in Rome, 18-19 September 2014, was another occasion for highlighting the role of family farmers and their organizations as catalysts of innovation, this time particularly in agro-ecology. Around thirteen farmers and farmers’ associations related to over 20 countries participated in the Symposium to present agro-ecological experiences and best practices they had identified, thereby influencing the debate (FAO, 2015b: 7). Indeed, the pivotal role of farmers and their organizations as agro-ecological innovators was acknowledged. As was pointed out by panelists (FAO, 2015b), farmers have had to work collectively to find appropriate agro-ecological solutions in response to technical constraints or failures, such as weed problems, loss of soil fertility, and pesticide-related health problems, for which extension services often have not developed agro-ecological expertise. As noted, “the transition towards agro-ecological systems, which are knowledge-intensive systems, should be based on a bottom-up approach and closely associate farmers and producers at every step of the process”(FAO, 2015b: 12). Hence POs and cooperatives can achieve a lot in promoting the adoption of agro-ecology practices, for instance by facilitating participatory extension services; farmer to farmer communication and exchange; promoting access to technology and credit; and participation in policy- and decision-making processes⁶.

Farmers and their organizations acknowledged as agro-ecological innovators

Another key achievement recorded in 2014 was the strategic commitment taken by the international cooperative movement to recognize the importance of agricultural and food cooperatives in achieving food security, and thereby supporting international efforts in this direction, including those of FAO.

Cooperatives committed to increase food security: the Quebec Declaration

As stated in Commitment no. 3 of the Quebec Declaration, the final outcome of the 2014 International Summit of Cooperatives⁷, cooperatives affirmed their key role in the global fight against hunger and committed themselves to increasing food security and to:

5 The Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) is a coordinating body for international inter-agency collaboration between the cooperative movement and the UN system on activities related to cooperatives, and on sustainable cooperative development. COPAC consists of in the United Nations through its Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), and the World Farmers’ Organization (WFO).

6 In this regard, due to their bottom-up action, producer organizations and cooperatives are also acknowledged as key partners for promoting the adoption of Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA)-related practices. They are also acknowledged as important stakeholders for implementing instruments, such as Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI) and the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGTs), as further explained in Section 2.2.

7 The International Summit of Cooperatives, organized by Desjardins Group and the International Cooperative Alliance, took place in Quebec City, Canada, from October 6-9, 2014. The Summit aimed to be the leading economic platform for cooperatives and mutual, hence enabling managers, decision-makers and leaders of cooperative and mutual enterprises to network, do business and acquire effective tools to grow and thrive. For further information please visit <http://www.intlsummit.coop/>

- Actively support international efforts, including those of FAO, to achieve food security, reduce poverty and eradicate hunger worldwide.
- Support projects aimed at promoting the production of non-animal sources of protein.
- Help put an end to discrimination in access to resources, especially for women in the farming sector, with respect to their right to land ownership and financial services.
- Pursue efforts to improve the access of rural populations to affordable energy for food processing and preservation.
- Promote better management of agrifood systems to reduce speculation and price fluctuations by strengthening the market power of producers throughout the supply chain, locally, regionally and internationally.
- Be present throughout the supply chain: locally, regionally and internationally.
- Facilitate access to farmland and help preserve local ownership by promoting and implementing voluntary guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests in the context of each nation's food security.
- Put in place mechanisms to ensure generational transfer in the farming sector, especially those which help young farmers through access to training, financing and innovation, to ensure a smoother transition between generations and thereby build a sustainable farming sector rooted in regional realities.

FAO actively participated in the 2014 International Summit of Cooperatives and contributed in drawing up the final declaration.

2014 was an important year for forestry POs and cooperatives. The 22nd Session of the FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO22) held in June opened with the signing of a four-year agreement between Agricorn⁸ and FAO, whereby Agricorn committed to support forest and farm POs in developing countries through the Forest and Farm Facility (FFF)⁹ by contributing Euro 1 million to the FFF multi-donor fund, with support from the Governments of the Netherlands and of Finland. The COFO22 side event "Family Forestry is Family Farming" gathered forestry farmer representatives from all over the world, and was a further occasion to recall the need for farmers to be empowered through their own organizations to develop their respective national economies.

Last, but not least, an additional acknowledgment achieved in 2014 on the importance of collective action emerged during the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2)¹⁰.

8 Agricorn is a network of "agri-agencies", NGOs for development cooperation with structural links to the farmers' and rural members' organizations in their home countries, including the organizations of rural women, young agrarians, cooperatives and agri-business. For further information please visit www.agricord.org/

9 The FFF is a partnership launched in September 2012 between FAO, the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Its Steering Committee is formed by members affiliated with forest producer, community forestry, indigenous peoples' organizations, international research community, business development service provider organization, private sector, government, and donors. Actual Donors include Finland, Germany, Sweden, the United States of America and Agricorn (www.fao.org/partnerships/forest-farm-facility/about/en/). Further information on the FFF is provided in the entry no 4 of Annex I.

10 The Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) was a high-level intergovernmental meeting, held in Rome, 19-21 November 2014. The Conference focused global attention on addressing malnutrition in all its forms. Over 2200 participants attended the meeting, including representatives from more than 170 governments, and 250 representatives from civil society, the business community and farmers' organizations. For further information, please visit www.fao.org/about/meetings/icn2/en/

Indeed, the Declaration on Nutrition approved by ICN2 states that “collective action is instrumental to improve nutrition, requiring collaboration between governments, the private sector, civil society and communities”. This is a further reminder of the importance of promoting an institutional environment that is conducive to the development of POs and cooperatives and to put in place policy tools that could facilitate the process, as explained in the next section.

2.2 Policy tools for promoting an enabling environment for family farmers and their organizations

2014 provided an important acknowledgment of the fact that governments should support family farmers, recognizing the challenges they face and providing them and their organizations with the appropriate enabling environment. This was clearly stressed during the IYFF, as also highlighted in the Global Dialogue. Indeed the development of an appropriate enabling environment for food security and sustainable development requires that Member States partner with other actors, including farmer organizations, the private sector, financial institutions, research institutions and civil society organizations (CSOs). In this regard, important instruments were developed in 2014 to boost policy dialogue. They all considered POs and cooperatives as stakeholders for their implementation. These instruments are the Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment (RAI) and The Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF VGs), both endorsed in 2014, and the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGTs), endorsed in 2012.

The RAI, endorsed by CFS41, aimed “to promote responsible investment in agriculture and food systems that contribute to food security and nutrition, thus supporting the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security” (CFS, 2014: 27). This tool has been developed with the purpose of identifying the key stakeholders with regard to responsible investment in agriculture and food systems and of delineating their respective responsibilities, thus providing a framework to guide their actions. These principles recognize a multistakeholder responsibility to promote responsible investment in agriculture and food systems that are capable to contribute to food security and nutrition. Here, Member States – identified as the primary responsible actors for achieving food security and nutrition – are also acknowledged (CFS, 2014) as key players in:

- improving access to education, training and capacity development for small and medium enterprises, cooperatives, associations, and farmer and producer organizations, to enable them to enter into agreements and engage with other market actors;
- promoting innovative technologies and practices, including small-scale own innovations, such as through awareness raising and technical assistance, farmer-to-farmer skills sharing, as well as the transfer of technology as mutually agreed among individuals, local, national, or international parties; and
- fostering transparent and inclusive business models and partnerships, including public-private partnerships, to promote sustainable development.

Promoting Responsible Agricultural Investments

At the same time, small-scale producers and their organizations are seen as the main investors in their own agriculture and therefore are asked to apply the Principles by, among others, increasing income and productivity; adding value in their operations; using natural resources sustainably and efficiently; participating in policy, programme, and monitoring processes at all levels; managing risks; and strengthening capacities of those they represent to invest responsibly through improved access to inputs, extension, advisory and financial services, education, training, and access to markets (CFS, 2014: 37).

**The Voluntary Guidelines
for Securing Sustainable
Small-Scale Fisheries in
the Context of Food Security
and Poverty Eradication
finally endorsed**

In June 2014, the 31st Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) endorsed the “Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication” (SSF VGs). Notably, these Voluntary Guidelines highlight the role of the states and development partners not only to recognize fishery forms of collective action, such as POs and cooperatives, but also to “promote their adequate organizational and capacity development in all stages of the value chain in order to enhance their income and livelihood security in accordance with national legislation” (COFI, 2014: 23-24). The VGs also acknowledge small-scale fishery communities and their organizations as holder, providers and receivers of knowledge and information. They point out the importance of promoting collaborations, networks and platforms that could facilitate the exchange of knowledge, experience and information and to facilitate their participation in decision-making processes (COFI, 2014). It is also interesting to underline the process that led to the achievement of the SSF VGs, which was participatory using a bottom-up approach, valuing the contributions from POs and other fisher and fish-worker organizations and their umbrella organizations¹¹.

Another important instrument for family farmers and their organizations is the Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests. Their purpose (FAO, 2012: iv)¹² is:

**POs and cooperatives
as stakeholders of the
Voluntary Guidelines on
Responsible Governance of
Tenure of Land, Fisheries
and Forests**

“to serve as a reference and to provide guidance to improve the governance of tenure of land, fisheries and forests with the overarching goal of achieving food security for all and to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food in the context of national food security.”

Endorsed by the CFS Session in 2012, the following years, including 2014, have been crucial for raising awareness about the importance of their implementation. As outlined, the VGGTs can be used by Member States and by organizations of farmers and small-scale producers, of fishers, and of forest users, among other stakeholders (FAO, 2012: iv). In this regard, in 2014 several workshops were organized at country level to promote the implementation of the VGGTs and in which the participation of farmer organizations has been very much encouraged and effective.

11 Further information on the SSF VGs is provided in entry no 2 of Annex I.

12 For further information on the VGGTs please visit www.fao.org/nr/tenure/en/

2.3 Post-2015 Development Agenda: raising the profile of agricultural cooperatives

2014 represented a key turning point at international level for debate on the future of the Global Development Framework. While praising the achievement of important progress across all the Millennium Development Goals, with some targets already met, Member States, along with the international organizations and CSOs, have been fully engaged to define the post-2015 Development Agenda (UN, 2014a). It is required that a consensus on goals, targets and indicators for sustainable development be reached before the end of 2015. FAO has embraced the post-2015 process, identifying 14 thematic areas in which it has supported Member States in arriving at new goals¹³.

So far, the Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has worked hard through a consultative process to come up with a proposal of 17 Goals¹⁴ and 169 associated targets. Such goals are described as “action-oriented, global in nature and universally applicable, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development” (UN, 2014b: 10). In addition, the UN Secretary General in his latest report on the post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda, provided six essential elements aimed to better frame and reinforce the agenda itself, which include (UN, 2014b: 1): (a) dignity: to end poverty and fight inequality; (b) people: to ensure healthy lives, knowledge and the inclusion of women and children; (c) prosperity: to grow a strong, inclusive and transformative economy; (d) planet: to protect our ecosystems for all societies and our children; (e) justice: to promote safe and peaceful societies and strong institutions; and (f) partnership: to catalyse global solidarity for sustainable development.

POs and cooperatives joined the process in the definition of the post-2015 Development Agenda

Here, although POs and cooperatives would have had a lot to contribute to defining the Sustainable Development Agenda, they have actively joined the consultative process only in more recent steps. This happened although important acknowledgments achieved by the cooperative movement in previous years, such as the 2012 Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development that recognized the potential role of cooperatives in the realization of sustainable development.

In 2014, FAO and ICA and other COPAC members have been jointly advocating for inclusion of POs and cooperatives' contribution in the Post-2015 Agenda.

Three important events held in 2014 contributed to raising awareness on the role of cooperatives in achieving sustainable development. The first one was the International Day of Cooperatives, promoted by COPAC. Celebrated globally on 5 July, it focused on the theme “Cooperative enterprises achieve sustainable development for all”. On that occasion, the UN Secretary General highlighted the role that cooperatives could play in the post-2015 Development Framework, stressing that “as member-owned, member-run and member-serving businesses, cooperatives can put social justice and equity at the heart of economic progress while helping to ensure that the production and provision of goods and services matches the needs and aspirations of communities.” In its message, FAO clearly stated that promoting the important role of POs and cooperatives in achieving

¹³ The themes are based on the Organization's global goals – the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition; the elimination of poverty; and the sustainable management and utilization of natural resources, and are closely linked to FAO's five Strategic Objectives.

¹⁴ The Open Working Group was established on 22 January 2013 by decision 67/555 (see A/67/L.48/rev.1) of the General Assembly.

food security and sustainable development is among the Organization's priorities. It also took the opportunity to re-affirm the role that Member States can play in supporting agricultural cooperatives through improved regulatory and legal frameworks, an enabling investment climate and facilitating opportunities to participate in policy-making processes.

The second event took place in October in the UN Headquarters in New York. Co-organized by the FAO Liaison Office, the Permanent Mission of Mongolia to the UN and the International Co-operative Alliance, this event aimed at starting a discussion with UN Member States for the inclusion of co-operatives in the Post-2015 Development Agenda and creating an informal group of countries friendly to co-operatives that would support this aim. Several countries participated in this meeting, including Mongolia, Italy, Netherlands, Brazil, Argentina, Canada, Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, China, Singapore, Philippines, Malaysia, Ethiopia and the EU. Other agencies, such as DESA, WFP, IFAD and UNWOMEN, also joined the discussion. This informal group would later meet several times in 2015 to follow-up on the discussions and provide support to the inclusion of co-operatives in the process.

The third event was the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) and Capacity-building Workshop on "The Role of Cooperatives in Sustainable Development: Contributions, Challenges and Strategies" which took place in Nairobi, Kenya, 8–10 December, and was promoted by UN-DESA.

Beyond such events, ICA issued in 2014 a position paper specifically focusing on the post-2015 Development Agenda. This document stresses the important contribution that cooperatives can bring to sustainable development and highlight the need for an appropriate enabling environment to unlock the potential of the sector. Four policy measures were identified (ICA, 2014):

- Recognition that cooperative enterprises are a model well suited for business to deliver Sustainable Development Goals.
- Inclusion of specific targets and indicators related to the promotion and development of cooperatives in member countries, in accordance with the definition, values and principles.
- Access to specific implementation measures and programmes, including funding; these programmes and measures should be adapted to the specific characteristics of cooperatives and respect their specific business model, by which, inter alia, the share capital must be owned and democratically controlled by their members.
- Participation of cooperative structures in the discussions and decision-making processes regarding the Sustainable Development Goals.

Another report, "Cooperatives and the Sustainable Development Goals: A contribution to the post-2015 development debate", was issued by ICA jointly with ILO. Based on a survey carried out in 2013, the report aims to bring cooperative voices into the discussion around the post-2015 Development Agenda.

ILO further advocated inclusion of the cooperative model in the post-2015 Development Agenda as an effective means of achieving food security and the other sustainable development goals, by delivering a statement at the Second Committee of the 69th United Nations General Assembly on Agenda item 25 Agriculture Development, Food Security and Nutrition¹⁵.

15 The full text of the ILO's statement is available at: http://www.ilo.org/newyork/speeches-and-statements/WCMS_320433/lang--en/index.htm

Finally, to complete the picture on the important acknowledgments obtained by cooperatives in 2014 that helped raise their profile in the perspective of the post-2015 Development Agenda, it is also worth mentioning two achievements from both the European Union (EU) and the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA).

First, the communication “A stronger role of the private sector in achieving inclusive and sustainable growth in developing countries” was released by the European Union on 13 May¹⁶. It underlines the strategic role of cooperative enterprises in international development and particularly stated that “cooperatives [...] are often leading the way in providing decent jobs, sustainable livelihoods and inclusive solutions to social problems”.

Second, a Resolution was adopted by UMA recognizing the role of POs in the sub-region and calling for support to and strengthening of their activities. Within this framework, agricultural producers have already benefited from capacity strengthening activities targeting their organizations, implemented by FAO and its partners, and in close collaboration with UMA.

2.4 Knowledge generation and sharing

2014 saw the production of important publications that actually inform and influenced acknowledgments obtained by POs and cooperatives.

A first one to mention is a flagship publication of FAO, already quoted in Section 2.1, the *State of Food and Agriculture* (SOFA) on “Innovation in Family Farming”. Indeed, as already outlined, this edition of SOFA contributed to raising awareness on the role of POs and cooperatives as catalysts of innovation and as important vehicles to unlock the potential of family farming for food security.

**FAO publications
addressing cooperatives
and POs at global level**

Another important publication, “Youth and Agriculture”, was published by FAO in collaboration with the Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). This publication, based on experiences, showcases how to re-engage youth in agriculture, including through farmer organizations.

The FAO Rural Infrastructure and Agro-Industries Division in 2014 produced several publications that are relevant to POs and cooperatives. First, a handbook titled “Developing sustainable food value chains: Guiding principles” was published as the first in a new set of handbooks on sustainable food value chain development (SFVCD). These handbooks aim to provide practical guidance on SFVCD by facilitating the spread of innovative solutions emerging from the field to a target audience of policy-makers, project designers and field practitioners. Here collective action, including POs and cooperatives, is discussed as a way to both reduce differences in market power among VC actors and to lower transaction costs.

As outputs of a joint collaboration with CTA, other two publications on trade and value chains were published, respectively titled “Developing Sustainable, Green and Inclusive Agricultural Value Chains in the Caribbean and the Pacific Islands” and “Opportunities for Sustainable, Green and Inclusive Agricultural Value Chains in ACP Countries”. Several case studies are showcased in both of the publications. The two publications review a wide range of factors affecting commercial value chain development in respective

¹⁶ The communication followed the ‘Agenda for Change’, the main EU political document for development cooperation for the period 2014-2020.

regions, with emphasis being placed on how the chains studied have maximized the inclusion of small-scale producers and on identifying ways in which they have been able to address sustainability concerns. The case studies were selected because they were established and developed principally by the private sector, including cooperatives, and have interesting inclusive and green characteristics.

Finally a series of case studies on “Public sector support for inclusive agribusiness development” was produced which – among other aspects – also analyses how the public sector promotes POs and cooperatives. The series cover 18 countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia¹⁷.

Other important publications are related to the forestry and fishery sectors. The Forest and Farm Initiative produced two major publications: A policy brief titled *Roadmap for strengthening forest and farm producer organizations*, which aimed to set out a “roadmap by which an international partnership can boost support for forest and farm POs worldwide” (FAO, 2014c); and Working Paper Number 1, co-produced with the IFFA and Tropenbos called *Making Change Happen: What can governments do to strengthen forest producer organizations?* The publication aims to be “a first step in a process to create enabling environments for FPOs worldwide. It focuses on what governments should and should not do to enable FPOs to form, thrive and create benefits for their members and the resources they manage” (FAO, 2014d: v).

Concerning the fishery sector, in 2014 the proceedings of the workshop held in 2013 on “Strengthening Organizations and Collective Action in Fisheries: A way forward in implementing the international guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries” were published. The framework provided in the workshop was adopted to carry out case studies, as further explained in entry no 2 of Annex I.

**Important efforts in place
to produce global statistics
on cooperatives**

In 2014 important efforts were put in place to produce global statistics on cooperatives, although further efforts should be done to harmonize methodologies for data collection and analysis, as agreed recently by COPAC board members. Indeed, a notable legacy of the IYC was acknowledgment of the need

“to intensify and expand the availability and accessibility of research on the operations and contribution of cooperatives and to establish methodologies for the collection and dissemination of comparable global data on and the good practices of cooperative enterprises” (UN, 2014c)

In 2014, at least two major publications were produced that provided statistics on cooperatives at global level. These were the Global Census on Cooperatives – prepared by Dave Grace & Associates for UNDESA – and the World Cooperative Monitor (in its third edition) – issued by the European Research Institute on Cooperative and Social Enterprises (EURICSE) in partnership with ICA.

The Global Census on Cooperatives is based on the most representative database currently existing, with around 2.6 million cooperatives from 145 countries in all regions of the world. These cooperatives comprise a membership of over 1 billion. They employ 12.6 million persons – this roughly represents 0.2 percent of world’s population. As highlighted in the report, the most common type of cooperative from a sectoral point of view are agricultural cooperatives. As shown, this is mostly due to the massive presence

¹⁷ The case studies are available at the following link: <http://www.fao.org/ag/ags/ags-division/publications/country-case-studies/en/>

of agricultural cooperatives in India and China, where the agricultural sector is largely compounded by small-scale farmers who find, in the cooperative model, a way to achieving economies of scale and scope.

The World Cooperative Monitor collected data on 1 926 cooperatives from 65 countries. These cooperatives reported a total turnover of US\$2 623.1 billion in 2012. Among them, 523 cooperatives are active in the agricultural and food sector, distributed in 30 countries, with a total turnover in 2012 of US\$598.9 billion.

Beyond these global achievements in terms of acknowledgments at policy level of the importance of collective action for food security and sustainable development as well as the production of knowledge sharing materials, there is a lot that FAO, through its technical offices and units and its decentralized offices, has accomplished in 2014 in its efforts to support POs and cooperatives. An in-depth analysis of such commitment is provided in the next section.



3 FAO's support to POs and cooperatives at global, regional and country level: Survey Findings

In order to get a better understanding of FAO's projects and activities in support of POs and cooperatives as implemented in 2014, a survey was carried out, as was done for previous editions. An online questionnaire was circulated among 457 FAO officers and budget holders at headquarter offices and units¹⁸ and decentralized offices, and 97 contributions were collected between January and February 2015. This section provides an overview of main survey findings, showing aggregate data on the main characteristics of these projects and activities. Aggregate data here presented is based on descriptive statistics. Although this data allows one to get a better picture of the typology of projects and activities examined, and related lessons learned and good practices, in no way does it assume to be representative of the overall projects and activities implemented by FAO in support of POs and cooperatives. Regional analyses and detailed information on each of examined projects and activities are provided in Annex I.

3.1 Geographical distribution and type of actions implemented

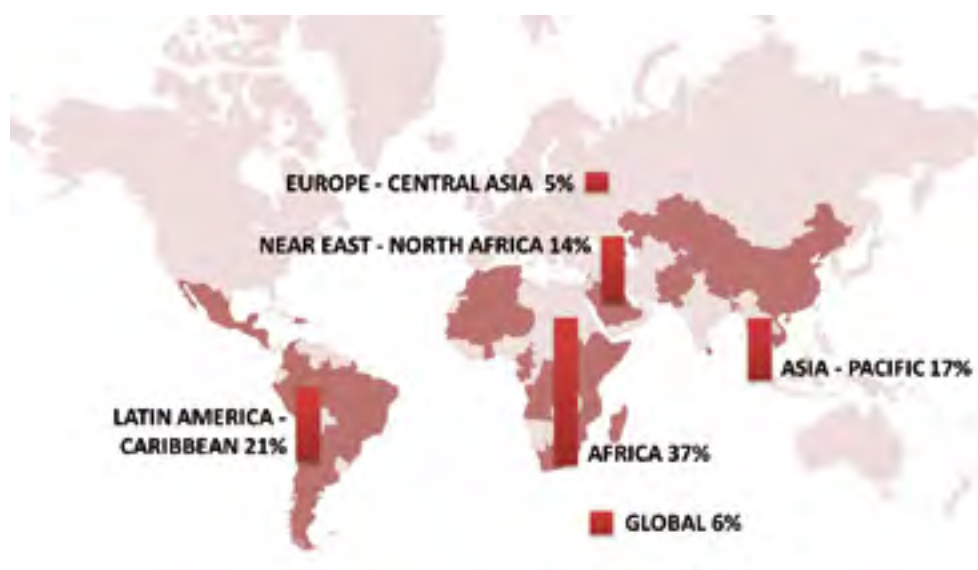
FAO's projects and activities in support of POs and cooperatives are implemented at global, regional and country levels. The majority the projects and activities documented are implemented at country level (73%), followed by those implemented in a few countries of the same regional area (21%) and at global level (6%). With regard to regional distribution, beyond those 6% of projects implemented at global level, 37% out of the total are implemented in Africa; 21% in Latin America and Caribbean; 17% in Asia and Pacific; 14% in the Near East and North Africa; and finally 5% in Europe and Central Asia.

The majority of initiatives documented in this 2014 Annual Report – nearly 78% of contributions received – are comprehensive projects that support directly or indirectly POs and cooperatives by strengthening Member States' capacities to support them and to provide an enabling environment. Nonetheless, interesting information collected through the survey included singular initiatives in support of POs and cooperatives, such as workshops; technical advice; and publications. All these projects and activities contributed mainly to achieving SO3 (65%), followed by SO1 (51%), SO4 (41%), SO2 (39%) and SO5 (23%)¹⁹.

¹⁸ The questionnaire is available in ANNEX II

¹⁹ See note 1 for further information on the Strategic Objectives.

Figure 1: Geographical distribution of projects and activities documented in this report



Projects and activities focused mainly on five types of action: Capacity development (87%); Knowledge generation and sharing (45%); Support to enabling environment (40%); Development of market linkages (39%); and Voice and participation (32%).

3.1.1 Capacity development

Projects with actions focused on capacity development have generally two types of target beneficiaries: PO and cooperative members, and government officials who deal with POs and cooperatives. In both cases, capacity development can be focused on strengthening either “soft” capacities or “hard” capacities. In the first case, FAO capacity development programmes aim at strengthening the capacities of members of POs and cooperatives to manage the organization as an equitable, democratic and inclusive institution. Issues such as internal governance, negotiation ability with stakeholders, gender equality, youth participation and leadership, are at the heart of training programmes. In fact, increasing the capacities of PO and cooperative members to influence decision-making at policy level and within the organization is also part of this type of action. Capacity building focused on developing “hard” capacity is aimed at strengthening the capacities of PO and cooperative members to access natural resources, technical and financial inputs, technical expertise, and markets, as well as to increase productivity and improve agricultural capacities. Both types of capacity development actions can eventually strengthen individual capacities and improve the performance of the PO or cooperative. Although most of the projects and activities adopt a methodology that mainly focuses on one type of capacity development, examples of synergies are not missing, such as for the case of the CoOpEquity project, the Dimitra project, and other projects promoting Farmer Field Schools²⁰ in Africa.

²⁰ Detailed information on methodologies is provided in section 3.4. For an in depth analyses of CoOpEquity and Dimitra projects see respectively entry no 6 and entry no 7 of Annex I.

3.1.2 Knowledge generation and sharing

FAO being a knowledge organization, generation and sharing of knowledge is crucial in its contribution to supporting POs and cooperatives. This activity ranges from the production and publication of case studies and best practices, to the production of guidelines, from training modules to the translation of key documents in the local language of PO and cooperative members. An example at regional level is the publication led by FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean on family farming cooperatives in MERCOSUR countries. The publication, which is still under review, aims at providing an analysis of the current situation of family farming cooperatives in the region as well as at identifying recommendations for a regional action plan to improve their participation in rural development and food security policies²¹.

3.1.3 Support to enabling environment

Governments are the immediate beneficiaries of FAO's programmes. Beyond supporting the capacities of government officials who deal with POs and cooperatives, FAO also supports member states to promote an environment conducive to cooperative and PO development. This type of action includes support to the development of consultation frameworks for policy-related dialogues between governments and various stakeholders, such as POs and cooperatives. It also includes support to issue and periodically review legislative and policy frameworks which affect POs and cooperatives directly or indirectly. Examples of this type of action come for instance, among others, from the Subregional Office of North Africa²² and from the country office in Georgia, Europe²³.

3.1.4 Voice and participation

This type of action mainly aims to increase the participation of POs and cooperatives in policy dialogue and decision-making processes.

In many countries, POs and cooperatives have a bad reputational legacy from the past. Therefore they need to raise their profile and visibility and to gain ground as actors accountable for development policies and results. Therefore, through this action FAO's projects and activities support the active participation of PO and cooperative members in multistakeholder platforms, by strengthening their capacity to influence decision-making processes, hence promoting effective engagement of governments and other stakeholders in policies that are of interest to small-scale producers, such as investment in agriculture. An example, among many others, is the activity implemented by the Forest and Farm Facility in many countries to involve forestry POs and cooperatives in policy dialogue²⁴.

Through this action, PO and cooperative members are also supported to actively participate in local, national, regional and global events – whereby they can illustrate their best practices and share experiences – thus helping shape national and international policies. This is crucial to raise policy-makers' awareness of the role of POs and cooperatives in the achievement of food security and sustainable development.

21 For further information on this publication, please see entry no 59 of Annex I.

22 Between September 2013 and September 2014, under a programme aimed to strengthen the role of agricultural and fishery POs in the Maghreb, FAO SNE launched a regional study focused on the legislative framework related to POs. For further information, see entry no 78 of Annex I.

23 By supporting the newly established Agricultural Cooperatives' Development Agency, FAO has not only provided capacity development to the officers as well as facilitated the dialogue between cooperatives and the government. For further information see entry no 57 of Annex I.

24 For further information, see entry no 4 of Annex I.

In addition, this type of action can be aimed at increasing the pro-active participation of PO and cooperative members in value chains, thus increasing their bargaining power and strengthening their ability to negotiate and enlarge their network.

Beyond this, some projects and activities are also focused on increasing members' active participation within their respective POs and cooperatives. As such, they mainly aim to give voice to the most marginalized, especially women and youth. This action goes hand-in-hand with activities focused on strengthening soft capacities.

3.1.5 Market linkages

This type of action covers three out of four actions mentioned above (capacity development; voice and participation; and support to enabling environment) but focuses on developing market linkages for POs and cooperatives. It can be a mix of capacity development programmes geared to PO and cooperative members and government officials; value chain development, including the promotion of POs and cooperatives' participation in value chain platforms; and support to inclusive business models linked to the public sector, such as the institutional procurement models that link small farmers to public buyers. As it is a crucial area of work for the development of sustainable POs and cooperatives, it is presented here as a specific type of action. Examples can be found in all regions.

3.2 Introduced elements of innovation

Almost all of projects and activities in support of POs and cooperatives introduced innovative elements. These types of innovation vary between product and process innovation (introduced by 55% of the projects and activities); institutional innovation (introduced by 60% of them); and social innovation (introduced by 53% of them).

3.2.1 Product and process innovation

In most of the projects, this type of innovation is introduced with the overall aim of increasing production and productivity. In these cases, the establishment of new processing or new mills in the communities, as well as the introduction of new technology, including ICT, represents the starting point for increasing production and productivity and in turn improving the performance of the organization. In some cases, such as in the Dimitra's Clubs, the introduction of solar-powered radio in communities and the consequent broadcasting of group discussion also led to institutional effects. In fact, by increasing the access to information by farmers, this innovation facilitated breaking rural isolation and moving further steps towards collective action²⁵.

In some cases, the innovation leads to the development of more sustainable production. In these cases it may start with the introduction of participatory extension services, which aim at developing sustainable agriculture practices (e.g. agro-ecology; conservation agriculture) and promoting the adoption of learning by doing processes among PO and cooperative members. In other cases, the innovation is represented by the establishment of seed growers' groups to produce good quality seed of desirable varieties. This is considered as an important innovation for POs and cooperatives since it

²⁵ Further information on the Dimitra project is in entry no 7 of Annex I.

constitutes a factor of sustainability for organizational performance by assuring continued access to quality seed.

Other types of innovation involve the introduction of income diversification activities. It may be developed for instance through integration of agriculture, livestock and aquaculture, as in the Regional project in Latin America²⁶. Other projects promote the utilization of waste as raw material for the development of innovative non-agricultural production, as done, for instance, in Somalia²⁷.

3.2.2 Institutional innovation

Elements of institutional innovation involve changes in terms of workplace organization, governance, services provided by the organization, as well as partnership development with social, political and economic actors.

In this regard, in some countries the development of POs and cooperatives represented in itself an element of institutional innovation. It happened in countries where this organizational model experienced failures in the past, and therefore re-introducing it has required attitudinal and organizational changes. This included learning from previous mistakes and adapting the cooperative model to the context. This is for instance the case in Somalia, where cooperatives have been re-established after the collapse of the Somali government in 1991. This is also the case for Pakistan, where a new organizational model of collective action – named Farmer Marketing Collectives (FMCs) – has been introduced to replace the failed previously existing model of cooperatives²⁸.

In some projects, institutional innovation is introduced by promoting informal groups, which become the basis for the creation of future POs and cooperatives. It happens for instance in South Sudan, where FFS groups are then gathered in FFS clusters, and only in a second stage are registered into formal POs and cooperatives²⁹.

Exactly by learning from the past, other innovations are introduced in terms of innovative markets and financial models. For instance, member savings mobilization and input credit schemes are introduced to incentivize investments and avoid exposure to unsustainable debts, this being one of the major reasons for failure of cooperatives in the past. Another example of innovative inclusive financial model is that of what has been done by FAO in Tanzania in partnership with Rabobank and rice producer associations to adapt warehouse receipt systems to small-scale clients³⁰. Another example is the work done in Ethiopia, which developed a hybrid model that combines Value Chain development, Value Chain Finance and strengthening of Enabling Environment³¹.

Regarding access to market, innovative partnerships have been promoted between value chains actors. An example is the work done in Zimbabwe³² aimed at building a common vision at value chain level on the development of sustainable national POs in the poultry sector. Value chain platforms are often the starting point for the development of innovative public-private partnerships, and eventually facilitate PO and cooperatives' access to market, as in the case of WFP P4P programmes. In other projects, especially in remote rural areas, partnerships between POs and schools were promoted, whereby

26 For further information please see entry no 61 of Annex I.

27 For further information please see entry no 31 of Annex I.

28 For further information please see entry no 50 of Annex I.

29 For further information please see entry no 34 of Annex I.

30 For further information please see entry no 37 of Annex I.

31 For further information please see entry no 24 of Annex I.

32 For further information please see entry no 39 of Annex I.

POs supply their produce to schools and thus increase their market. An example can be found in Buthan, with the Farm to School (F2S) projects developed with Telefood funding, whereby POs are supported to supply vegetables to local schools³³.

Other interesting innovation regards the development of North-South peer-to-peer partnerships, as it happens in Burkina Faso and in Niger with the “Union des producteurs agricoles du Québec – Développement International (UPA-DI)”. In both cases, the Canadian institution at the heart of rural development strategy in Quebec since 1924, has made available its expertise to national POs in improving their organizational performance³⁴. South-South partnerships are also developed, especially to promote knowledge exchange and experience sharing, as developed for instance in Bangladesh by visiting the Indian Seed Village Scheme³⁵. Finally, other interesting types of partnerships with external actors are developed with other NGOs with specific expertise on POs and cooperatives, such as We Effect (formerly Swedish Cooperative Centre), as in the case of Forest Farm Facility and CoopEquity.

3.2.3 Social innovation

Elements of social innovation are introduced in most of the projects where the participation of women and youth in POs and cooperatives is promoted. Some projects developed a specific methodology to this end, such as CoopEquity and Dimitra, as further explained in section 3.4, in order to foster equitable and inclusive POs and cooperatives. In other cases, women's cooperatives are targeted by projects, facilitating their access to market as a way to increase their empowerment and wellbeing, such as in the project implemented in Ethiopia under the partnership between FAO, Eataly and the Italian Ministry of Agriculture³⁶. Regarding youth, innovation can also include partnerships with POs to develop communication tools to raise awareness among small-scale farmers on child labour in agriculture, as in the case of the project implemented in Malawi and Niger³⁷. In some other cases, such as in Mali, FAO supported government's efforts to generate decent employment opportunities for rural youth³⁸.

Interestingly some projects documented that the introduction of social innovation brought in important achievements in terms of organizational performance. For instance, in Central America, the significant presence of youth in decision-making positions of POs and cooperatives led to an entrepreneurial cultural change and the development of market-oriented POs and cooperatives that are now more capable of surviving in a market economy³⁹. Similarly, in the CoOp Equity project, the increase in terms of women's participation led to improvements in the business performance of POs and cooperatives, as well as in enhanced wellbeing for small-scale farmers and their families.

33 For further information please see entry no 45 of Annex I.

34 For further information please see entry no 18 of Annex I for the project in Burkina Faso and entry no 6 for the project in Niger.

35 For further information please see entry no 44 of Annex I.

36 For further information please see entry no 23 of Annex I.

37 For further information please see entry no 9 of Annex I.

38 For further information please see entry no 28 of Annex I.

39 For further information please see entry no 62 of Annex I.

3.3 Outcomes

Table 1. Number of projects and activities that achieved the outcome (%)

Outcome	Success rating
Human Capital increased	68%
Policy Dialogue increased	57%
Bridging Social Capital increased	51%
Access to Productive Resources increased	48%
Increased leadership empowerment	45%
Access to market increased	44%
Food Security	42%
Bonding Social capital increased	39%
Financial Capital increased	33%

Outcomes achieved by FAO's projects and activities in support of POs and cooperatives here examined are discussed below, and summarized in Table 1.

3.3.1 Increased member human capital

The increase in terms of member human capital is the immediate consequence of a projects and activities focusing on capacity development. Members, as well as government officials, learnt about how to produce and increase productivity, how to diversify production, and how to implement sustainable practices. They also learnt how to better manage organizations, improving their skills in accounting, computing, administration, and so on. Such focus on technical and managerial skills is often complemented by improvement in soft capacities, such as leadership, governance, equity and gender equality.

3.3.2 Increased participation in policy dialogue and decision-making processes

This outcome was documented in a large percentage of projects and activities, giving an indication of the important work done by FAO to facilitate relations between POs, cooperatives and policy-makers. This is the result of capacity development geared to increase members' ability to make their voice heard in policy dialogues and in decision-making processes.

3.3.3 Increased bridging social capital

Anytime projects and activities are focused on developing partnerships between POs, cooperatives and other similar organizations, external agencies, private companies, local authorities and governments, an increase in terms of bridging social capital has been recorded. This type of outcome particularly documents closer and more effective collaborations between POs and cooperatives in federations, alliances, unions and apex organizations. Through these more complex organizations, POs and cooperatives

become more effective in advocating and claiming their rights, as well as influencing policies and decision-making processes that affect their members' lives. It is in fact an outcome closely linked with the previous one.

3.3.4 Increased member access to productive resources

Some projects reported that cooperative and PO members achieved an improvement in terms of access to productive resources, mainly land, water and seeds. Better access to land was achieved principally as a result of collective action. Indeed, members became empowered by participating in POs and cooperatives, and in turn strengthened their self-confidence to claim their rights, including the right to access and control over land and other natural resources. This happened for instance for women belonging to Dimitra Clubs in Niger, or for farmers in Malawi and Mozambique⁴⁰. Actively participating in policy dialogue, members also managed to raise awareness of authorities on the importance of small-scale farmers' access to natural resources and related implications in terms of maintenance of rural environment.

About access to water, collective action in the form of water user associations and irrigation cooperatives improved farmers' management of water, enabled their access to drip irrigation systems and in turn led to an increase in terms of cultivated land and crop diversification. An example is the project carried out by FAO in Argentina⁴¹.

Other significant outcomes have been achieved in terms of access to seeds whereby the creation of seed producer groups made available higher quality seed of desirable varieties to farmers, as in the case of IAPP project in Bangladesh⁴², or the case of the project implemented by FAO in Haiti⁴³.

3.3.5 Increased leadership empowerment

Achieving leadership empowerment is often a pre-condition for a PO or cooperative performing well. This can be the result of targeted capacity development in organizational governance as well as the outcome of empowering experiences made by leaders through visit exchanges and participation in policy dialogue. Examples of projects and activities with a component geared to leaders are not obvious, but most structured approaches for their empowerment can be identified in the projects adopting the Farmer Field Schools, as well as in the CoopEquity and Dimitra programmes.

3.3.6 Increased access to markets

This outcome was reported as the result of actions implemented to develop market linkages with other players within the chain, including financial institutions, public and private buyers as well as to increase produce marketability. In some cases, quality control and access to national and international certifications, such as ISO, represented important achievements.

3.3.7 Increased food security of members and their families

Through capacity development and the introduction of innovations, as well as by facilitating access to productive resources, markets and financial resources, members are enabled

40 For further information please see entry no 7 for the project in Niger and entry no 8 of Annex I.

41 For further information please see entry no 64 of Annex I.

42 For further information please see entry no 44 of Annex I.

43 For further information please see entry no 74 of Annex I.

to increase food security for themselves and their families, which is indeed the ultimate intention of FAO's actions.

3.3.8 Increased bonding social capital

Increasing bonding social capital implies improving feelings of trust and reciprocity among members within the same PO or cooperative. This results in stronger motivation to join and lead collective action and to strengthen the organizational performance. Improvements in management and governance are also observed as a consequence of improved bonding social capital.

3.3.9 Increased member access to financial capital

One of the most common challenges faced by small-scale farmers is difficulty in accessing financial capital. Some projects focused on providing internal financial mechanisms to facilitate members' access to loans, such as revolving funds. Other projects focused on promoting innovative financial products, risk management strategies and inclusive investment models in order to increase cooperatives' and POs' access to financial resources, which in turn implies increased benefits for members.

3.4 Methodologies

Critical factors of success for projects and activities have been identified as follows: internal factors, meaning those factors that focus on organizational capacity, organizational motivation, leadership, etc. (63%); networking factors, such as partnerships and alliances between POs and cooperatives and variously development agencies, CSOs, other stakeholders, etc. (54%); or external factors, which are factors that modify the enabling environment, such as administrative and legal systems, policy and institutional frameworks, economic environment, socio-cultural norms, participatory mechanism (40%).

Examining all the contributions received, some key features of adopted methodologies have been identified. First of all, almost all projects and activities, although not all of them, adopt a participatory approach. This means considering farmers and their organizations as agents of change and not as beneficiaries. This also means paying specific attention to activating learning-by-doing processes, enhancing local knowledge and promoting peer-to-peer experience sharing. Indeed, for projects and activities in support of POs and cooperatives, the adopted methodology is important in itself, because as such it can promote (or inhibit) those soft capacities that in turn improve organizational performance, governance and forth.

Methodological approaches focused on strengthening POs and cooperatives include:

3.4.1 CoopEquity

A three level strategy is adopted by the CoopEquity programme, which includes: (i) facilitating dialogue between POs and Governments; (ii) supporting organizational change for improved governance and gender equality in POs; and (iii) promoting women and youth's empowerment and leadership within POs. This methodology also links with other participatory methodologies (e.g. Farmer Field Schools, DIMITRA) at local level that contribute to enhancing participation of rural men and women in producer and other rural organizations.

3.4.2 Dimitra

The entire process of the FAO-Dimitra Clubs is participatory and community-owned. The clubs belong to their members, who decide how they will function, what will be discussed and how to achieve common goals. The Dimitra Clubs are centred on action. The process of the Dimitra Clubs includes capacity development at different levels (NGOs, partnering radios, community members, local facilitators, local authorities, etc.) in participatory communication, gender, organizational skills, leadership, networking, situation analysis, and oral expression.

3.4.3 Organizational development – FAO Learning Module 4

The module focuses on strengthening organizations to empower small-scale farmers to become agents of change. It covers four main areas: (i) understanding organization analysis and development; (ii) supporting the design of change processes; (iii) engaging in effective multistakeholders' processes; and (iv) measuring organizational change. Tools from this learning module were used to design and implement (1) a self-evaluation workshop with the development of an action plan for the poultry value chain in Zimbabwe (December 2014); and (2) one Training of Trainers (TOT) in partnership with the Canadian Producer Organizations – UPA DI on performance, equity and governance for 38 representatives of producer organizations from 4 countries in the Maghreb region (June 2014).

3.4.4 Participatory extension services: Farmer Field Schools and Junior Farmer Field Schools

These are an innovative approach to farmer education. Instead of relying on extension workers who provide unilateral advice to farmers, FFSs and JFFSs enable groups of farmers to autonomously find solutions to their own problems through participatory extension and learning by doing process⁴⁴.

3.4.5 My.COOP

This is a training package and programme on the management of basic agricultural cooperatives, which aims at improving the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of cooperative services for members. The programme includes components to enable the training of trainers, as well as the training of managers of agricultural cooperatives. My.COOP is the result of a collaborative effort involving a wide range of partners, such as cooperative development agencies, cooperative colleges and universities, cooperative and producer organizations, knowledge institutes and agencies of the United Nations, among which FAO and ILO.

3.4.6 Monitoring and Learning system

This is the methodology adopted by Forest and Farm Facility (FFF). It is a participatory tool involving different stakeholders for applied adaptive management of the FFF-supported activities, and for generating lessons and best practices for broader sharing and application⁴⁵.

44 More information available at <http://www.fao.org/nr/land/sustainable-land-management/farmer-field-school/it/>.

45 For further information please see entry no 4 of Annex I.

3.4.7 Value chain development approach

This methodology considers actors and their roles and interactions, as well as technical and business development services needed for chain development. Technicians from public extension systems or research institutions are involved to build local capabilities. Strategic alliances with commercial actors are supported. National or local stakeholder platforms are encouraged and supported to discuss value chain issues. This model applies the value chain approach to family farming, as an alternative to actions taken by isolated individuals. It takes into account how actors relate to each other, and coordinate helping them to reduce risks and costs, thus generating higher earnings.

3.5 Lessons learned

The main lessons learned, as identified by respondents, have been captured through the implementation of projects and activities in support of POs and cooperatives. They can be gathered into three principal categories: (1) lessons learned on intra group aspects; (2) lessons learned on inter group relations; and (3) lessons learned on extra group linkages. These are considered below.

3.5.1 Lessons learned on intra group aspects

- **Individual capacity strengthening.** Capacity development addressed to members is effective when people are involved in learning-by-doing processes. Participatory approaches are fundamental to ensure that members acquire experience of how to participate in activities of the cooperative or PO. Members need to properly understand their role and how POs and cooperatives function, to fully engage and actively participate in the life of the organization. Capacity development actions should reach each member involved in the process, including women and youth. This is extremely important for POs and cooperatives in order to become real agents of change and not mere project beneficiaries. This could also ultimately develop a sense of ownership that motivates member's active participation and strengthens the organization.
- **Organizational capacity strengthening.** From the experience of the projects documented in this report, it is imperative to strengthen organizational capacities. Proper training that aims to develop and strengthen organizational capacities is crucial, and should be based on preliminary diagnosis of strengths and weaknesses of internal governance of the targeted POs and cooperatives. A well-defined governance structure is crucial to stimulate members' participation in decision-making and promote efficient relationships between cooperative members and their board and management. Moreover, when managers are dedicated, motivated and skilled, organizational capacities are more likely to be developed.
- **Capacity development in leadership.** Lack of capacity for leadership is often the main constraint for proper functioning of POs and cooperatives. Empowering leaders through targeted and demand-driven training is a sustainable way to strengthen organizational performance.
- **Promotion of members' savings:** a lesson learned from the past is that in most of the countries where cooperatives failed, they were heavily indebted and reliant on external financial resources. Mechanisms that aimed to mobilize members' savings proved to improve the financial sustainability of the cooperative or PO, and at the same time enhanced members' sense of ownership.

- **Best combination of soft and hard skills.** Although most of the projects focus on strengthening either soft or hard skills, an important lesson learned is that of finding the most appropriate combination of the two. Indeed, an important lesson learned is that developing sustainable POs and cooperatives requires strong, equitable organizations with qualified and skilled members.
- **Prioritizing existing groups.** Working with existing groups, POs and cooperatives – instead of creating new ones – has proved to be more effective in building fuller engagement of people in the project.

3.5.2 Lessons learned on inter group relations

- **Peer to peer exchanges.** The participation of members in international events, in networking experiences and in study exchanges with other POs and cooperatives within or outside the country of reference proved to be effective in strengthening both individual and organizational capacities.
- **Secondary-level organizations.** Where national federations of POs or cooperatives exist, their engagement in policy dialogue is more likely to be effective. Moreover, any initiative aimed at creating secondary level organizations, such as apex, unions or networks, has to come from within the POs and cooperatives themselves.

3.5.3 Lessons learned on extra-group linkages

- **Market linkages.** Enabling members of POs and cooperatives to successfully access markets is a key component in transforming agricultural productive systems. To this end, an important, frequently mentioned, lesson learned is the value of the development of linkages with value chain stakeholders, including through formal agreements that ensure success of business management through reduced market risks and better planning. These linkages proved to successfully help members identify the real needs of the value chain stakeholders, and therefore better respond to their demands. Moreover, to access markets, POs and cooperatives also need knowledge and technologies to produce high quality products, and appropriate business skills. However, POs and cooperatives often suffer from being “the weak link” along the value chain. Therefore, their strengthening through well targeted and demand-driven capacity development actions is necessary.
- **Relations with the government.** The facilitation of close and collaborative relations between cooperatives, POs and various Ministries has been noted as an important factor for the development of successful and sustainable interventions. This eventually boosted policy dialogue and the possibility for POs and cooperatives to influence policy-making processes through their effective participation at the various stages.
- **Relation with financial institutions.** The facilitation of trustworthy relations between POs, cooperatives and financial institutions is noted as an important component to enable POs and cooperatives to access credit, other financial services and develop sustainable business linkages, especially in rural areas.
- **Time horizon of development interventions.** Supporting POs and cooperatives includes activities focused on creating trust and reciprocity within the cooperative or PO, and with external actors. This is a process that requires a long time horizon and longer donor commitment if the objective is self sustained organizations. Short-term projects cannot be properly effective in promoting sustainable POs and cooperatives.

3.6 Good practices

On the basis of the lessons learned emerging from previously implemented as well as ongoing projects, some good practices in support of POs and cooperatives have been identified. What follows is a tentative list formed on the basis of contributions received for this edition of the Report. This list is not meant to be exhaustive, since many other good practices are in the process of being identified and published in 2015. However, some critical good practices identified in this report are considered below.

3.6.1 Capacity development and partnership development

- **Promote VCD through multistakeholder platforms.** This kind of platform is acknowledged as an effective means to build a common vision and develop vertical and horizontal integrations along the value chain. This is a space where actors can directly express their needs and expectations from other actors, and can develop a common action plan. When POs and cooperatives develop closer relations with other VC actors, the VC itself can work more effectively and efficiently. Mutual beneficial outcomes are then spread among all VC participants.
- **Institutional procurement of food from small-scale POs and cooperatives.** Market access for small-scale farmers can be facilitated by linking their organizations with public buyers, based on the Purchase for Progress (P4P) model developed by the World Food Programme (WFP). In this regard, it is noted that FAO partnered with WFP for the development of country case studies about experiences of WFP's P4P programme, with the final aim being to prepare recommendations for the public sector on how to make institutional procurement more competitive, sustainable and inclusive of small-scale producers and their organizations. Consolidated results of this analysis will be published in 2015.
- **Promote innovative and inclusive rural finance instruments.** One of major challenges for small-scale farmers is access to credit and other financial services. This is a challenge often linked to constraints faced by small-scale farmers, including lack of collateral and potential weather risks. This situation is often characterized by the absence of tailored financial products for cooperatives and small-scale farmers, leading to reluctance on the part of financial institutions to provide financial services to such clients. In this regard, good practices are identified for the development of innovative financial and risk management mechanisms. A reported example is the Warehouse Receipt System adapted to small-scale farmers, as in Tanzania, where a warehousing operator stores the produce delivered by farmers and a SACCO provides farmers with loans through the warehouse receipt, that works as collateral. In such a way, farmers are cushioned from risks as they only sell their commodity when prices are favourable.
- **Organizational strengthening.** Including a component focused on organizational strengthening, specifically on governance and leadership empowerment, in projects supporting POs and cooperatives proved to be a good practice, since it ultimately has a positive impact on business performance.
- **Invest in women and youth.** Focusing on women and youth, boosting their participation as PO and cooperative members, as well as in decision-making positions, is valued as an effective good practice, not only for their empowerment, but also to improve business performance.

- **Promote environmentally friendly and conservation agriculture.** The adoption of green and sustainable agricultural practices, such as conservation agriculture, are considered an effective good practice to increase productivity and conserve farmers' natural resources, as well as to access new profitable market segments for certified organic products.
- **Peer-to-peer cooperation.** The development of peer-to-peer cooperation between either North-South or South-South POs and cooperatives is identified as a good practice to ultimately strengthen the skills of farmers and their organizations. In fact, as for instance in the experience of the project implemented in Burkina Faso⁴⁶, the partnership with a similar organization from Canada enabled the Burkina farmers involved in the oilseed value chain to exchange knowledge on how to address problems and eventually to strengthen their capacities and improve organizational performance.

3.6.2 Enabling environment and policy dialogue:

- **Multistakeholder platforms.** In order to facilitate space for dialogue between cooperatives, POs and state officers, the development of multistakeholder platforms is suggested. They can be either multisectoral or within a specific sector. They are usually developed at national level, but in some cases, to bring the policy dialogue closer to the local producers, it might be a good practice to establish them also at local level.
- **PO platforms.** To support policy dialogue more effectively, the development of PO platforms is acknowledged as a good practice. For instance, a CSO platform was built up to support the development process of the SSF VGs. In such a way, the CSOs were able to constructively engage in the process at all levels, capturing the contributions from their constituencies at the local level and bringing them into the discussions at the national, regional and international level. PO platforms are also effective in helping POs to achieve a shared position prior to the policy platform meetings, hence being more effective in influencing policy decision-making.
- **Involvement of national stakeholders in project development.** Involving national stakeholders actively in project development, both from POs and government, facilitates building national capacities, creating ownership and engagement of all actors, and ensuring long-term sustainability of the programme activities, as shown for instance in the case of CoopEquity. This in turn can also facilitate dialogue among actors and ultimately influence policy dialogue.

46 For further information please see entry no 18 of Annex I.

3.7 Recommendations

Recommendations identified by respondents to the survey were mainly addressed to governments in order to promote a more effective enabling environment for POs and cooperatives to develop and thrive, and to identify how to replicate and scale up the initiatives. They are listed below.

- There is a need to continue to involve POs and cooperatives in the implementation of Voluntary Guidelines (both SSF VGs and VGGTs).
- Promote the periodical review and update of legislation on POs and cooperatives, or develop it where it is missing, in order to make sure that POs and cooperatives are recognized and they can participate in policy dialogue at different levels (local, national or regional).
- Recognize the importance of involving government staff and legislators in overseas exchanges in order to expose them to new ideas for policies and regulations, hence triggering positive policy change.
- Recommend governments to develop quality standards, as well as extension services to support POs and cooperatives. In this regard, it is recommended that national stakeholders, such as government cooperatives officers, are fully involved in project actions, especially training events, to ensure local ownership and support long-term sustainability of programme activities.
- Strengthen the participation of youth, women and vulnerable members in POs and cooperatives. In particular, it is recommended that young producers are put at the centerpiece of a “pro-poor” agricultural growth agenda.
- Finally, it is important that governments commit themselves with financial resources on a long-term horizon to enable scaling up of projects and the sustainability of interventions.



4 Conclusions and the way forward

As shown through FAO's projects and activities here reported, POs and cooperatives are important vehicles for reducing rural poverty and contributing to socio-economic development and food security. Indeed, they are considered as strategic partners for FAO and important agents of change.

Projects and activities (e.g. workshops, technical advice and the production of knowledge sharing materials) geared towards supporting POs and cooperatives were implemented at global, regional and national level by technical units, together with decentralized offices, and 84% of such projects and activities will continue to be implemented over 2015. In particular, 77% of them declared that they will provide capacity development to governments as well as to POs and cooperatives; 50% will produce knowledge sharing materials; 44% will work with governments to support the enabling environment; 34% will support the development of market linkages; and 30% of them will support cooperatives' and POs' voice and participation.

Generally speaking, some key actions that will continue to be implemented in 2015 are:

- Support the participation of POs and cooperatives in policy dialogue, for instance by establishing and facilitating inclusive multistakeholder platforms at global, regional and national levels, and facilitating the participation of POs and cooperatives in these processes. An example is the involvement of POs and cooperatives as implementing agents of the VGGT, the SSF VG and the RAI.
- Support the enabling environment by providing technical advice to governments.
- Produce knowledge sharing materials on topics that are relevant for POs and cooperatives, and further document and disseminate good practices and lessons learned.
- Targeted and demand-driven capacity development activities to be provided to member governments, as well as direct to POs and cooperatives in order to strengthen organizational capacities.

Moreover, 2015 will be an important year for POs and cooperatives for at least three reasons.

First, 2015 has been proclaimed by UN as the International Year of Soils (IYS). The main goal of the IYS is to raise awareness about the importance of healthy soils and to advocate for sustainable soil management in order to protect this precious natural resource. In this regard, 2015 will be another important occasion to remind the world of the important role of POs and cooperatives for sustainable development and food

security, and particularly to show that supporting healthy soils also requires supporting family farmers and their organizations to manage soils sustainably.

Second, the Universal Exhibition Expo Milano 2015, entitled Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life, will take place from May 1 to October 31. The Expo will be a platform for the exchange of ideas and shared solutions on the theme of food, aimed to identify concrete strategies to guarantee healthy, safe and sufficient food for everyone, while respecting the planet and its equilibrium. This platform will be another tremendous opportunity to highlight the pivotal role of POs and cooperatives in achieving food security and sustainable development.

Third, in the post-2015 Development Agenda that is expected to be approved by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015, food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture are being placed at the centre of the Sustainable Development Goals. As the international community moves towards implementation of the SDGs, including follow-up to the financing for Development Agenda⁴⁷, agricultural POs and cooperatives will have a fundamental role to play. Partnerships between global institutions such as FAO, national public authorities and POs and cooperatives, will be essential to better deliver the goals and to realize a food-secure world.

Building upon these tremendously important joint efforts, it will be of pivotal importance to consolidate a multidisciplinary way of working outside and inside FAO in order to strengthen POs and cooperatives. Such a multidisciplinary approach could be further developed by strengthening the linkages among various foci of expertise in technical units and decentralized offices, hence cementing a synergetic organizational approach when working in partnership with POs and cooperatives at national, regional and global levels.

⁴⁷ The Third International Conference on Financing for Development 2015 will be held 13-16 July 2015, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Annex 1

Projects and activities in support of POs and cooperatives carried out in 2014: detailed information by regions

What are the projects and activities implemented at global, regional and country level in 2014? What information can be extracted from them? This Annex aims to provide more detailed information on each of the contributions collected through the survey. They are presented by geographical area of intervention and show in detail how FAO's projects and activities work in support of POs and cooperatives.

Global

1 Support to the development of the World Banana Forum (WBF)

Background

Project Symbol	MTF/GLO/308/MUL
Geographical coverage	Latin America, Africa, Asia, Europe
LTU	EST
Contact person	Pascal Liu (Team Leader)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Knowledge generation and sharing; Market linkages
Budget	US\$170 000 (2014)
Duration	4 years (2011-2015)
Web site	www.fao.org/wbf

Description

The World Banana Forum (WBF) is a permanent space of assembly for participants representing the global banana supply chain, to promote open dialogue on challenges facing the banana industry. This ground-breaking initiative brings together producers, their organizations, trade unions, cooperatives, exporter groups, fresh produce companies, retailers, traders, public agencies, governments, research institutions and civil society organizations.

The mission of the WBF is to inspire collaboration between stakeholders, to produce pragmatic outcomes for the betterment of the banana industry, and to achieve an industry-wide consensus of best practices regarding workplace issues, gender equity, environmental impact, sustainable production and economic issues.

Innovation

Main innovations are implemented at institutional and social level.

Outcomes

Outcomes reported include increased bonding and bridging social capital; increased leadership empowerment; and increased access to market.

Methodology

Networking factors among POs and cooperatives as well as the committed leadership of such organizations are noted as key components for the success of the WBF.

Issues to be resolved

Constraints include: (1) lack of resources; (2) uneven participation of stakeholders; and (3) the fact that building institutional capital is slow by nature.

Lessons learned

Building trust and collaborative relationships between stakeholders of a sector where there are many social and environmental issues is a complex process. It requires a long-term horizon (over 10 years) and much support. The full effects of the project cannot be really seen before then. Therefore a long-term commitment by donors and development partners is needed.

Good practices

The WBF develops best practices regarding workplace issues, gender equity, environmental impact, sustainable production and economic issues. It builds consensus among the stakeholders of the banana sector on these best practices. Good practices for successful management-labour relations, as well as for addressing gender issues, will be published in 2015.

Recommendations

Steady support is needed by a neutral institution with expertise, such as FAO.

100 percent self-funding is unlikely initially, and also not desirable. Donor support is important as the project is creating a public good.

Actions planned for 2015

In 2015 the following actions are planned:

- Holding the Global Meeting of the WBF in the Dominican Republic (200 participants expected).
- Launching a global programme to combat Panama disease.
- Studies on costs of sustainable production.
- Developing a web portal on *Best Practices for Sustainable Production*.

2 Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF VGs)

Background

Project Symbol	n.a.
Geographical coverage	Global
LTU	FIPI
Contact person	Nicole Franz (Fishery Planning Analyst)
Principal actions	Voice and Participation; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing
Budget	US\$100 000 (in 2014 for 1 year of technical assistance to the development of SSF VGs)
Duration	4 years (2011-2014)
Web site	http://www.fao.org/fishery/topic/18240/en

Description

In 2011, FAO was mandated by the Committee on Fisheries (COFI) to develop international guidelines on small-scale fisheries to complement the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

The development process for these Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication (SSF VGs) was facilitated by FAO between 2011 and 2014. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and POs played a major role in this process, in particular in terms of gathering the contributions from small-scale fisheries actors at the local level. The SSF VGs went through a negotiation process in the form of Technical Consultations in May 2013 and February 2014, and were endorsed by COFI in June 2014 as the first ever negotiated instrument entirely dedicated to small-scale fisheries.

Innovation

The SSF VGs are innovative as they go beyond fisheries and include, for example, chapters on social development, employment, decent work, and gender equality. The development process of the SSF VGs was extremely participatory and bottom-up, valuing the contributions from POs and other fisher and fishworker organizations and their umbrella organizations. The outcomes of the national and regional organizations fed into broader international processes, namely the Technical Consultation on the SSF VGs and the COFI session during which the SSF VGs were approved. The way the Technical Consultation was conducted was innovative as it allowed CSOs to actively contribute to the discussions, which are traditionally restricted to Member Governments.

Outcomes

The SSF VGs process supported collaboration between different CSO umbrella organizations representing small-scale fisheries. This collaboration improved information flows and coordination among and within these organizations, providing also the opportunity to engage with new partners throughout the process. Moreover, the SSF VGs create an enabling environment for cooperatives and SSF marketing association to access markets at better conditions.

Methodology

The development process of the SSF VGs actively enabled CSOs to self-organize to engage in this important policy process. CSOs organized over 20 national and regional consultations and participated in the Technical Consultation that negotiated the text of the SSF VGs, as well as in the COFI session during which the SSF VGs were endorsed.

Issues to be resolved

Budget constraints due to lack of extra-budgetary funds to provide sufficient support to POs and other fisher and fishworker organizations need to be overcome.

Lessons learned

POs and other fisher and fisherfolk organizations were a key driving force in the development of the SSF VGs. Enabling them to actively engage at all levels in an international policy development process strengthened their capacity to organize and to voice the concerns as well as to demonstrate the abilities of the actors of the SSF sector to engage in policy development processes.

Good practices

A group of major umbrella organizations representing small-scale fisheries POs and interests formed a CSO platform to support the development process of the SSF VGs. Through this coordinated approach the CSOs were able to constructively engage in the process at all levels, capturing the contributions from their constituencies at the local level and bringing them into the discussions at the national, regional and international levels.

Recommendations

It is recommended to maintain this coordinated approach, which greatly facilitates the engagement of FAO, other UN organizations, donors and other partners with the CSOs. It is particularly recommended to continue to involve POs and cooperatives in the implementation of the SSF VGs.

Actions planned for 2015

As mandated by COFI, FAO will develop a Global Programme to support the implementation of the SSF VGs. POs and other fisher and fishworker organizations are expected to greatly benefit from this programme and to continue to play a major role also in the implementation of the SSF VGs.

3 Strengthening Organizations and Collective Action in Fisheries: Towards the Formulation of a Capacity Development Programme

Background

Project symbol	n.a.
Geographical coverage	Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Costa Rica, Tanzania, Timor Leste, Indonesia, Norway, United States of America
LTU	FIRO
Contact persons	Daniela Coswig Kalikoski (Fishery Industry Officer) Susana V. Siar (Fishery Industry Officer)

Principal actions	Through case studies, workshops and publications: Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing
Duration	Case studies undertaken in 2014 and workshop to present the findings held 4-6 November 2014

Description

Case studies were undertaken in selected countries using the framework designed during the 2013 FAO Workshop on “Strengthening Organizations and Collective Action in Fisheries: Towards the Formulation of a Capacity Development Programme” (<http://www.fao.org/3/a-i3540e.pdf>) with a view to developing a capacity development programme. The results of the case studies were discussed and presented during the Workshop. The Workshop took place at the Accra Beach Hotel, Bridgetown, Barbados, 4-6 November 2014, and was organized to take place in conjunction with the 67th annual meeting of the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute (GCFI). The GCFI (www.gcfi.org) is the oldest and largest regional annual gathering of marine scientists, managers, students and fisherfolk in the wider Caribbean Region. Twenty-four participants from Africa, the Americas, Asia, the Caribbean and Europe attended the workshop. The workshop was locally organized by the Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies (CERMES) of the University of the West Indies, which was also the host of the 67th GCFI. On 3 November, workshop participants attended the GCFI Fishers Forum session that was focused on fisheries livelihoods as the theme for fisherfolk presentations. The objectives of the workshop were to: (i) present and discuss the findings of in-depth case studies of fishers’ organizations and collective action; (ii) identify lessons and good practices; and (iii) develop a programme to strengthen organizations and collective action in SSF to support implementation of SSF VGs. The agenda of the workshop included both presentations and discussions in plenary and working groups. A field trip to visit commercial fish landing activities and sites, with emphasis on livelihoods, took place on 4 November 2014.

Outcomes

Findings from the in-depth case studies (Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Costa Rica, Tanzania, Timor Leste, Indonesia, United States of America and Norway) were presented and discussed. Based on the case studies, recommendations were formulated on how to strengthen collective action and organizations in fisheries.

Methodology

The in-depth case studies followed a participatory action-research approach. The case-studies analyses were conducted closely with the organizations, engaging them through participatory research in self-evaluation processes, where the organizations evaluate themselves in a co-research type of activity in order to encourage ownership by the organizations of the acquired knowledge.

Learning-research-evaluation sessions were organized at times convenient to the group. The sessions took the form of structured in-depth meetings, mini-workshops, focus group discussions, and related approaches. The identification of challenges and of suggestions regarding how to overcome them came from the group itself.

Preliminary findings of each case study were discussed with representatives of the organization, and their comments and suggestions were included in the final versions.

Recommendations

Formulate a capacity development programme.

Actions planned for 2015

The case study papers will be published in the *FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Proceedings* series.

A special issue on collective action featuring the case studies presented in the workshop will be published in the peer-reviewed journal *Maritime Studies*.

Pilot sites to implement a Capacity Development Programme on Strengthening Organizations and Collective Action in Fisheries will be selected. Initial pilot sites include activities in Costa Rica and activities to initiate dialogue, partnership and organizational strengthening among fisherfolk organizations in the Caribbean region.

4 Forest and Farm Facility

Background

Project symbol	PGM/MUL/2012-2017/FFF
Geographical coverage	Bolivia, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Gambia, Liberia, Kenya, Myanmar, Nepal, Viet Nam and Zambia; Regional and Global
LTU	FOE
Contact persons	Jeffrey Y Campbell (Manager FFF) Sophie Grouwels (Forestry Officer)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing; Market linkages
Budget	US\$4.5 million (2014)
Duration	2012-2017
Web site	http://www.fao.org/partnerships/forest-farm-facility/en/

Description

The Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) is a partnership launched in September 2012 between FAO, IIED and IUCN. Its Steering Committee is formed by members affiliated with forest producer, community forestry, indigenous peoples' organizations, the international research community, business development service provider organization, private sector, government, and donors. Actual Donors include Finland, Germany, Sweden, the United States of America and Agricord.

The FFF Mission is to promote sustainable forest and farm management by supporting local, national, regional and international organizations and platforms for effective engagement in policies and investments that meet the needs of local people.

The FFF funds partnership agreements and small grants with small-scale producers, women, community and Indigenous Peoples' producer organizations and governments at local, national, regional and international levels through three pillars:

- Pillar 1: Strengthen small-scale producers, women, community and Indigenous Peoples' producer organizations for business and livelihoods development and policy engagement.
- Pillar 2: Catalyse multisectoral stakeholder policy platforms with governments at local and national levels.
- Pillar 3: Link local voices and learning to the global arena through genuine participatory processes and communication and information sharing.

This support builds, wherever possible, on existing initiatives and catalyzing promising processes at each level.

Multi-year partnership agreements are ongoing in six countries: Gambia, Guatemala, Liberia, Myanmar, Nepal and Nicaragua. Four additional countries were selected by an external panel of experts in mid-2014: Bolivia, Kenya, Viet Nam and Zambia.

Country grants are allocated to forest and farm producer organizations, government agencies and service providers at the country level, and focus on organizing forest and farm producers for livelihoods and business. The supported activities reflect the local priorities, respect national dynamics between stakeholders, stimulate dialogue between parties, and respond to the variety of country contexts and opportunities.

Regional and global grants support forest and farm producer organizations to play a more strategic role at regional and global levels by linking local voices and learning to global processes, and to share best practices, learning and experiences.

These grants help link the many national and various international networks that represent forest and farm producers and forest rights holders, assisting them to pursue a shared agenda, bring local success stories to the notice of global decision-makers to facilitate successful local-level investments, and help shape international and national policies and actions through the sharing of knowledge and experience among local forest and farm producers.

In 2014, regional and global grants were allocated to the following organizations: The International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal peoples of the Tropical Forest (IAITPTF), Global Alliance of Community Forestry (GACF), the Alianza Mesoamericana de Pueblos y Bosques (AMPB), the Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development (AFA), and the International Family Forestry Alliance (IFFA).

Outcomes

FFF during 2014 managed to deliver the following:

1) **Forest farm producer organization strengthening**

Support was provided in varying amounts to 3 global and 2 regional forest farm producer alliances (each representing a large number of national federations), 8 specific national federations and more than 100 local forest and farm producer organizations of various sizes (more than 500 if you include member groups of the national alliances). Members represented by these producer organizations number substantially more than 40 million people (figures still need more accurate compilation). In much of its more specific work on organizational strengthening at national level, the majority of these producer organizations have comprised women (45-100 percent) with slightly more variable leadership by women (16-100 percent) depending on the country.

2) **Policy representation of forest farm producers**

Support for more than 224 forest farm producer organization planning meetings, many of which involved planning for policy representation in 91 multisectoral planning meetings (at which specific changes were targeted in 25 policies), with 3 new mechanisms resulting directly from FFF support. Nevertheless, there is still considerable work needed to strengthen representation of those organizations in multi-sectoral policy platforms and to improve reporting on the nature of these interactions.

3) **Business development by forest farm producers**

There were strong perceptions of progress in five countries where work had focused on training producer organizations in Market Analysis and Development (MA&D) to improve market access (with country teams, such as Guatemala, running processes in other countries, such as Bolivia and Nicaragua). Concrete advances in market access were

recorded for a wide range of products, including timber production, timber management services, bamboo, rattan, textiles, fisheries, honey, craftwork, nuts and other non-timber forest products (NTFPs). The remaining countries were planning similar processes of capacity development. Some 23 service provider organizations had been mobilized in support of FFF's work. A total of 10 national exchanges were organized, resulting in at least 8 concrete examples of transfer in either technical or business practice.

4) Multisectoral coordination

FFF support was given to facilitators of 18 in-country multisectoral policy processes, to which at least 9 different forest farm producer organizations had improved access. However, reporting needs to be improved to capture the detail of this representation. Some 15 new networks or linkages proved of benefit to producer organizations as a result of their participation in these platforms.

5) Linking local to global processes

A total of 11 different communication packages were prepared with direct inputs from forest farm producer organizations for use in national, regional and international processes. Some 11 international representation events were attended by forest farm producer organizations, and 9 strategic advocacy strategies were being developed regionally or globally.

6) Communication tools and publications

2014 was the International Year of Family Farming, and FFF was linked during several events at FAO HQ and worldwide related to the IYFF. An active web-site is being populated with experiences from country activities and international activities. Around 50 news items were posted in 2014. Several new sections were developed, such as the *Voices from the land*, composed of several sub-pages related to the international events organized by the FFF, giving a voice to the indigenous people and producer organizations.

Fifteen print communications products have been produced by FFF. In addition, a set of four policy briefing papers has been prepared by IIED and disseminated through the web site and in hard copy: (i) Stronger forest and farm producers' groups can help deepen Myanmar democracy; (ii) Stronger forest and farm producer groups can reduce poverty in the Gambia; (iii) Multi-stakeholder governance strengthens sustainable livelihoods in Bosawás, Nicaragua; and (iv) The FFF – building strength in numbers. Moreover, a new book has been published by IIED that draws on FFF experiences through the Forest Connect alliance: *Prioritizing support for locally controlled forestry enterprises*.

A policy brief – *A Road Map for Strengthening Forest Producer Organizations* – has been published, along with FFF Working Paper Number 1 co-produced with IFFA, FAO, FFF and Tropenbos called *Measuring up: What can governments do to strengthen forest producer organizations?* It was launched at the 22nd FAO Committee on Forestry (COFO) held on 23-27 June 2014, together with an FAO Press release.

The outcome of the World Forest Week event, *Family forestry is family farming*, co-organized by FFF and IFFA was summarized in the publication *Talking about forests and family farms: growing relationship on fertile ground* as a conversation between POs and government officials, in an original format giving high visibility to the speakers, with large format pictures, unusual in FAO publications. This publication has been widely distributed to partners.

Methodology

FFF applies the Monitoring and Learning (M&L) system, which is a participatory tool involving different stakeholders for applied adaptive management of the FFF supported

activities, and for generating lessons and best practices for broader sharing and application. There are six main objectives of the FFF M&L system:

- To build a record of decisions taken, consequences of those decisions and progress made, all of which are important in a multi-actor, multi-country initiative with many possible outcomes.
- To provide lessons from the various FFF processes and activities (at country and international levels) to support their continuing improvement.
- To enable course correction and adaptation, reflecting changes in stakeholders priorities or conditions in the field.
- To elicit stakeholder feedback on FFF's added value, thus continuing the spirit of participation and inclusiveness.
- To enable reporting to the Steering Committee, donors and stakeholders, ensuring FFF's effectiveness and transparency .
- To provide for accountability: internal among the management team and Steering Committee, country teams, consultants and immediate partners; and external for donors and stakeholders.

The M&L framework combines quantitative and qualitative indicators to be assessed, and if desired, modified according to country needs. Qualitative indicators are explored through a series of questions to capture stakeholder perceptions and understanding about how and whether the processes and focus to achieve FFF long-term objectives are effective or need to be re-adjusted. It is a key means to generate information and research outputs on approaches that work locally and that can be scaled up globally.

Considerable efforts were made during 2014 in making it operational.

Lessons learned

■ **Pillar 1. Strengthen producer organizations for business and policy engagement**

Progress has been highest in countries where there exist national federations of forest farm producer organizations. Knowing this can help enhance the future vision forest farm producer organizations, such that local business groupings have a vision for associating at regional level, and then federate nationally.

Early exchange visits have proved very inspirational, not only within country, with other FFF partner countries, but also regionally such as the small-scale forester meeting of the Americas, and globally, such as the joint FFF Forest Connect meeting in Viet Nam on successful locally controlled forestry business models. Such exchanges allow producer groups to observe things that are working elsewhere, make new market contacts, learn technical and business skills from one another, and scale up their vision and ambition. In some countries, local partners with initially low levels of engagement gained considerably in motivation and commitment to the FFF effort once they had worked with other similar organizations through an exchange visit. In some contexts these exchanges have led to the voluntary formation of new networks, such as the African Forest Enterprise Knowledge Network (AFEKON).

It proved useful in exchange visits to have a diversity of participants, from communities, NGOs, the Forest Departments, and State Parliaments. Local township administration could be included in future exchanges. Domestic exchanges improved some NGOs and communities' relationships with their local forest department office because it gave them more opportunity to interact in a neutral arena.

Groups found helpful the Training of Trainers (ToT) and direct Market Analysis and

Development (MA&D) training events on how to identify market opportunities and how to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the group business and management structure. Learning through practice is important, and participants appreciated the process of reflection on five areas of business development within the context of their own product development ideas: economy and finance; technology and product development; natural resource management and the environment; institutional and legal dimensions; and social and cultural aspects.

Having a strong support focus on the organizational structure of producer groups is crucial. Making improvement here has created strong motivation for members to join and participate in such groups.

Some groups have set up a revolving fund that is funded through a membership fee, or from an agreed percentage contribution from group bulk product sales. One group uses the fund for community development priorities, while another gives out loans with interest to finance business ideas for the group.

Leadership training in organizational governance is an area of great importance and perhaps not adequately covered in business development training packages. In some more advanced country contexts, leadership training has proved very effective.

Developing and signing FAO Letters of Agreement has proved time consuming for hard pressed local partners, and some have complained that fund disbursement was slow. Budget transfer issues need to be streamlined as much as possible so that delays in this do not delay the whole programme.

Larger grants to bigger, national-level organizations were fine, but the budget size of the small grants was felt to be too small (in at least one country), meaning that national partners (especially intermediary NGOs in countries such as Myanmar) have to look for funding outside of the FFF project, which can lead to delays and late reporting.

■ **Pillar 2: Catalyse multisectoral policy platforms**

Multisectoral platforms are now operational (or in the process of becoming operational) in all partner countries, through FFF support. In well-established platforms there have been direct successes in defining policy mechanisms (e.g. in Guatemala, the approval of the Probosque process, the creation of an enforcement agency against illegal timber extraction, the development of a technical commission to resolve agrarian issues, and the coordination mechanisms to oversee the road development between Guatemala and Belize).

Strong efforts to reach out to producer groups, communicating in ways that they can understand, are important in encouraging their participation.

In several countries, including Bolivia, Nepal and Nicaragua, multisectoral platforms are being established at province or district levels within countries.

In some countries, divergent views could be seen in policy meetings among local forest farm producer members.

Inconsistencies in representation (especially from government ministries) during policy platform meetings slowed progress significantly, remedied by identifying one focal person in each institution and ensure that they were able to participate.

Making sure that there is periodic information given to the public through the mass media showing the progress of multisectoral platforms is one way to maintain momentum and keep the participants focused.

■ **Pillar 3: Linking local voices to global processes**

While the development of advocacy strategies for engaging regionally and globally takes time, the FFF has established a strong capacity to represent forest farm

producer group interests by linking and building participation among the 'Strength in numbers' meeting in China, the small-scale foresters meeting of the Americas, and the forthcoming African small-scale producer meeting leading up to the World Forestry Congress. This has complemented additional engagement with the Committee on Food Security on World Food Day, and the Global Landscapes Forum.

The links between FFF and knowledge networks such as the European Tropical Forest Research Network (ETFRN) and the Forest Connect alliance have been used strategically to involve partners of FFF in knowledge-related workshops, and in presenting their work at an international level through documented case studies and briefing papers.

In several countries, FFF is linking forest and farm producer organizations more directly into the formulation of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD and REDD+) and EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) strategies. For example in Viet Nam, one of the FFF pilot regions feeds directly into the operational development of the UN-REDD-led Vietnamese REDD+ strategy. In Guatemala, the FFF engagement has supported creation of an enforcement agency against illegal timber extraction that has the approval of forest farm producer groups.

Recommendations

■ **Pillar 1: Strengthen producer organizations for business and policy engagement**

It is important to involve government staff and parliament in international exchanges because such trips and the discussions during them highlight the need to change forest policies, and government staff can influence policy change. International trips are important for exposure to new ideas for policy and regulation, technical management and businesses.

Organizational strengthening support can be further enhanced if there is a strong emphasis on business and revolving loan funds to help members diversify or upgrade their activities. However, more thought needs to be given to how to link first tier organizations into second tier associations, and ultimately into national federations.

Capitalizing revolving funds would help to attract new members into producer organizations.

■ **Pillar 2: Catalyse multisectoral policy platforms**

For national platforms, there might need to be more support to help producer organizations prepare position papers for particular policy discussions. Improving the level of detail in monitoring and learning is a priority for the year ahead, addressing how representation was structured, what policy positions were developed, and what impacts resulted. One suggested alternative to national platforms is to try and bring the policy dialogue closer to the local producers by some form of structured field visits, or even basing the dialogue in the the producers own region.

Concerning multisectoral platforms established at province or district levels within countries, it will be valuable to track whether such local-level activity is more responsive to producer organizations and their concerns, and more effective at linking different arms of government in practical implementation.

Due to the divergent views between local forest farm producer members in policy meetings, there is need for sensitization to the issues, time for reflection and dialogue within the Forest and Farm Producer Organization (FFPO) and then preparation of a shared position – all prior to the policy platform meeting. Preparation of local leaders to interpret what is really being discussed in multisectoral dialogues at national and international level was thought to require more attention.

Training needs to be given in facilitation methods for making progress in these multi-sectoral meetings. In country facilitators need to know more about the methodologies and tactics that can be used to generate a cross-sectoral agenda.

■ **Pillar 3: Linking local voices to global processes**

There continues to be a need to forge better linkages between the work of the regional and global federations and alliances, and the work of national level producer organizations, so that national producer groups can articulate their needs better and participate in global processes. One strategy is to encourage those regional alliances to deepen their membership links with the national-level organizations. Linkages should be established with those regional organizations, such as the Network of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organisations of West Africa (ROPPA) which is a close partner to many national apex organizations. There are still relatively few organizations that represent communities or forest and farm producer organizations at an Africa-wide level.

Related to this pillar is the communications work. It has been realized that at the global level the FFF has very good products and an actively updated and informative web site (at least in English so far), but does not have a sufficiently well developed marketing strategy to increase readership and viewership. At the same time, there is awareness that the more important communications work probably needs to be done at the country level. The FFF is putting more resources into expanding the work started in 2014, thanks to one-year top up funding from Sida.

5 Partnership development with POs and cooperatives

Background

Project symbol	n.a.
Geographical coverage	Global, Regional
LTU	OPCP
Contact persons	Nora Ourabah Haddad (Team coordinator) Emma McNerney (Liason officer)
Principal actions	Multiple activities (publications; technical advice; workshops) in support of: Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to the enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing
Web site	http://www.fao.org/partnerships/cooperatives/en/

Description

The OPC POs and cooperatives team was established in 2013 in the advent of the International Year of Cooperatives, to: (1) provide strategic advice to influence policy change through consultation and participation of POs and cooperatives; (2) promote and support the development of strategic partnerships with global, regional and national POs and cooperative movements aligned within the new FAO Strategic Framework; (3) develop tools and mechanisms to support sustainable partnerships and facilitate an enabling environment; (4) provide regular advice and facilitate participation and representation of POs and cooperatives in FAO's and partners' programmes at regional and national levels; and (5) generate knowledge and share information by showcasing promising cooperative and PO models and documenting good practices.

Innovation

FAO seized the opportunity of the IYC to increase Member States' awareness on the importance of working in partnership with cooperatives to enable it to fulfil its mandate, enhance its effectiveness in assisting its members to achieve their goals, and to ensure that it carries out its new Strategic Framework. As part of this innovative approach, FAO acknowledges POs and cooperatives as important agents of change and key partners to achieve its mandate.

Outcomes

Main outcomes achieved in 2014 by the OPC POs and cooperatives team include enhanced visibility and awareness raising worldwide about the contribution of POs and cooperatives to achieving food security and sustainable development, as noted below.

- Engagement in high-level events significantly enhanced international visibility regarding the critical role of POs and cooperatives in achieving food security, achieved through three global initiatives. The first event took place in October in UN Headquarters in New York and co-organized by the FAO-Liaison Office, the Permanent Mission of Mongolia to the UN and the International Co-operative Alliance. It aimed at starting a discussion with UN Member States for the inclusion of co-operatives in the Post-2015 Development Agenda and creating an informal group of countries friendly to co-operatives that would support this aim. Several countries participated in this meeting, including Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Ethiopia, Italy, Kenya, Malaysia, Mongolia, Netherlands, Nigeria, South Africa, Singapore, Philippines, and the EU. Other agencies, including DESA, WFP, IFAD and UNWOMEN also joined the discussion. This informal group would later meet several times in 2015 to follow-up on the discussions and provide support to the inclusion of cooperatives in the process. The second event was held during the 41st Session of the Committee on World Food Security, October 2014, organized by Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC), a multi-stakeholder platform for which FAO serves as Chair in 2014-2015. Global attention focused on the key role of POs and cooperatives in ensuring an efficient family farming sector. The third event involved FAO raising the global profile of POs and agricultural cooperatives at the 2014 International Summit of Cooperatives, held in Quebec, Canada, and hosted by Desjardins.
- FAO supported the engagement of POs and cooperatives in multi-stakeholder processes and policy and decision-making forums at global and regional level, including in the six multi-stakeholder Regional Dialogues on Family Farming; Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGT) implementation workshops; Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2); Committee on World Food Security (CFS) sessions and side events; the Agroecology Symposium; and FAO Technical Committees (COFI, COFO and COAG) where several representatives of POs (fisherfolk, farmers, forest holders and livestock keepers) expressed themselves on a number of issues related to food security. This representation was facilitated by a continuous dialogue with the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) and the World Farmers' Organization (WFO).

Significant outcomes achieved in 2014 by the OPC POs and cooperatives team also included generating and sharing knowledge and showcasing good practices:

- Successful youth initiatives in agriculture from around the world were highlighted in the publication *Youth and agriculture: key challenges and concrete solutions* launched in

2014, and prepared by FAO in collaboration with the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and IFAD, showcasing successful stories of youth accessing the agricultural sector. Bringing youth together into producer organizations has been identified as a key solution to overcome the challenges faced by youth when becoming involved in agriculture.

- FAO projects and activities helped to strengthen POs and cooperatives as key to achieving food security through 93 projects reported from all regions in the world in 2013, supporting small-scale farmers and their organizations to access markets, strengthen their organizational capacities, raise their voices in dialogue and decision-making events at national and international levels, and advocate for a conducive enabling environment in which they can develop and thrive. These reported projects and activities, for a total ongoing budget of at least US\$245 million, are detailed in the 2013 Annual Report on FAO's Projects and Activities in Support of Producer Organizations and Cooperatives.

In collaboration with FAO's technical units and decentralized offices, support was provided to governments, which led to strengthened enabling environments for the development of POs and cooperatives, recognizing and bolstering their critical role in achieving food security and eliminating rural poverty:

- A resolution adopted by the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) recognizing the role of POs in the sub-region and calling for support to and strengthening of their activities. Within this framework, agricultural producers have already benefited from strengthened capacities of their organizations, through activities implemented by FAO and in close collaboration with UMA. These strengthened capacities of POs are an important means to achieve food security and reduce poverty in the Maghreb region.
- FAO has been supporting the Government of Burkina Faso and the national farmers' union (Confédération Paysanne du Faso), leading to including the development of the national oilseed value chain as a priority in the National Programme for the Rural Sector. This will lead to increased production and availability of good quality vegetable oils in the country, contribute to the diversification of the rural economy and support the achievement of food security in Burkina Faso. Interest has also been shown by the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WEAMU) to scale up the initiative at the sub-regional level in West Africa.

Small-scale producers and family farmers gained improved access to markets, natural resources, information and knowledge, credit, as well as participation in policy and decision-making processes through strengthened capacities of their organizations (POs and cooperatives). This was achieved through building strategic multi-stakeholder and peer-to-peer partnerships:

- In Burkina Faso, development of the national oilseed value chain supported achievement of food security and reduced dependency on imported products (especially vegetable oils). FAO sponsored the implementation of a stock-taking exercise of the pilot phase related to the production and commercialization of sunflower oil (Please see entry no. 18).
- In North Africa, FAO supported the empowerment of small-scale farmer POs through training of trainers sessions that were facilitated in partnership with the UMA and the Union des Producteurs Agricoles du Québec – Développement International (UPA-DI). The objective is to reach out to more than 1500 members of the Professional

Agricultural Organisations and Fisheries (OPAP) to improve the performance of their organizations and hence deliver a number of services to individual producers, including facilitating their access to input and output markets. (Please see entry no. 78).

Methodology

The FAO OPC POs and cooperatives team carries out its work in support of POs and cooperatives through signing and implementing Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with cooperative and PO representative organizations at global level – such as ICA and WFO – and at regional and country level, such as in the case of UPA-DI.

Capacity development for organizational strengthening is implemented by adopting the LM4 training module, produced by the team and published in 2014. The module focuses on strengthening organizations to empower small-scale farmers to become agents of change. It covers four main areas: (i) understanding organization analysis and development; (ii) supporting the design of change processes; (iii) engaging in effective multistakeholders' processes; and (iv) measuring organizational change. In 2014, this approach was used in Zimbabwe in order to strengthen the poultry value chain by creating a common vision and developing an action plan. (Please see entry no. 39).

Recommendations

POs and cooperatives are crucial vehicles for reducing rural poverty, and they are strategic partners for FAO and important agents of change. They should not be regarded as mere beneficiaries of FAO's support as they are key actors without whom FAO cannot achieve its mandate related to food security, hunger eradication and poverty reduction in the world. However, what is often lacking is the set of conditions that enable such organizations to develop and thrive. In this regard it is recommended that FAO does its utmost to encourage and assist its member governments in providing the enabling environment for POs and cooperatives to be empowered and become efficient and equitable as service providers.

Actions planned for 2015

In 2015, the OPC POs and cooperatives team plans to focus its efforts on consolidating the actions that started in 2014, both within FAO and externally, with strategic partners and aimed at enhancing the role of POs and cooperatives at various levels.

Indeed, the OPC POs and cooperatives team will consolidate its triple role:

- Identify and promote key partnerships that can leverage FAO's work in support of inclusive and efficient POs and cooperatives, and ensure the representation and voice of POs and cooperatives in various processes, as well as in decision-making forums, at national, regional and global levels within and beyond FAO.
- Facilitate inclusive and participatory partnership approaches and multi-stakeholder processes that engage POs and cooperatives for food security and rural poverty reduction, at country and regional levels.
- Provide strategic advice for organizational development of POs and cooperatives. This is addressed to governments, POs and cooperatives, as well as FAO technical units and decentralized offices, to enhance the performance of these organizations in improving food security. This action is carried through by linking various expertise available in FAO technical units and decentralized offices, while ensuring that the organization follows a synergistic approach when working in partnership with POs and cooperatives at national, regional and global levels.



Africa

This report documents 36 projects and activities carried out in Africa in support of POs and cooperatives, with 72 percent implemented at country level and 28 percent at regional level. Of them, 86 percent implemented capacity development actions; half of them contributed to support the enabling environment; around 45 percent supported the development of market linkages; and 38 percent were involved in knowledge generation actions as well as in actions aimed at increasing POs and cooperatives' voice and participation. Concerning their contribution to the FAO Strategic Objectives (SOs), 67 percent of the initiatives contributed to SO3; 53 percent to SO1; 47 percent to SO4; 44 percent to SO2; and finally 30 percent to SO5.

Regional projects in Africa

6 EU/FAO Programme on Global governance for hunger reduction. CoOPequity output: Strengthening performance, governance and gender equity of producer organizations

Background

Project symbol	GCP/INT130/EC
Geographical coverage	Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Niger
LTU	ESPDD
Contact persons	Carol Djeddah (Team Leader) Zoe Bienvenu (Consultant)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing
Duration	4 years (2012-2015)
Web site	www.fao.org/rural-institutions/en

Description

CoOPequity supports governments in enabling the development of equitable, gender-sensitive and economically viable POs. The programme contributes to FAO Strategic Objective 3 (i.e. Output 1.1 Reduce rural poverty). Its overall objective is to contribute to reducing poverty and improving food security through supporting the development of strong and equitable POs, and enabling their active participation in policy dialogue at local and national levels. The programme started in 2012 in Niger, and was further expanded to Ghana, Ethiopia and Kenya in 2013 (see previous OCPC 2014 Annual Report). In 2014, the CoOPequity approach was also integrated in the FAO Strategic Objective 3 Initiatives in Bolivia, Guatemala and Malawi.

In 2014, the programme carried out a number of activities addressing the SOs.

- 1) **Support to the enabling environment** by facilitating consultations and coordination among apex POs, and their effective participation in national and local dialogue platforms with policy-makers. In particular, CoOPequity:
 - supported apex POs and their networks in coordinating and preparing a common position on the Draft Law on agricultural policy; and their active participation in the process of implementation of the National Strategy on Food Security and Sustainable Agricultural Development (Initiative 3N – 'Les Nigériens Nourrissent les Nigériens'); and

- facilitated the establishment of a District-level multi-stakeholder platform for dialogue with POs in the cassava value chain in West Gonja, Northern Region, Ghana.
- 2) **Organizational development** by strengthening target POs' organizational and technical capacities, leading to reinforced performance, equity and governance. In particular, CoOPequity:
 - strengthened capacities of target government cooperative promotion officials (at the district level) and producer organizations in Niger for governance, management and gender equality;
 - strengthened capacities of apex POs in understanding and negotiating issues related to agricultural policy and law in Niger;
 - improved the organization of target POs in the cowpea and peanuts value chains in Niger through the provision of training in governance and management; and
 - facilitated the development of the governance and management structures for the three Community Service Centres in Ghana (Northern Region).
- 3) **Voice and participation** by enabling male and female members to participate and influence the decisions taken within their organizations. CoOPequity:
 - strengthened capacities of POs in target countries and their staff, with a focus on equity and gender equality, and building women's leadership and negotiation skills in POs;
 - contributed to a gender-sensitive analysis of the small-ruminant value chain in Amhara and Tigray, with a focus on the role of women and youth groups engaged in small-ruminant production; and
 - supported the gender focal points of target POs and their networks in Niger to enable them to participate in decision-making processes of their organizations and in policy dialogue.
- 4) **Knowledge generation** with the production of methodologies, training material and tools as well as case studies related to the PO enabling environment, organizational development and gender equality. In particular, CoOPequity:
 - finalized and field-tested a series of gender-sensitive capacity analysis and development tools for internal governance, management and gender equality, based on experience from Niger, Ethiopia and Ghana (e.g. a Training of Trainers (ToT) handbook on gender-sensitive analysis of the organizational performance of POs; a ToT on strengthening gender equality, equity and governance in POs; and a gender-sensitive methodology for value chain analysis, with a focus on the role of POs); and
 - produced a joint FAO/IFAD study on good practices for women's leadership within POs.

Innovation

Main innovative elements introduced by the project have been at the institutional and social levels.

- **Institutional innovation.** The CoOPequity programme supports the implementation of innovative partnerships, such as that between FAO and UPA-DI, based on the principle of solidarity between North and South farmers. Promoting a “farmer-to-farmer” cooperative model, UPA-DI has drawn on the expertise of the UPA, an institution that has been at the heart of Quebec's rural development strategy since 1924. In Niger, the partnership with UPA-DI significantly contributed to strengthening the National Network of apex POs (CDD-G9), as well as to building a pool of national facilitators (including government extension officers and PO members)

for participatory and gender-sensitive organizational analysis and development. CoOPequity also partners Swedish WeEffect (formerly Swedish Cooperative Centre) and FAO Forest and Farm Facility (FFF) to develop joint programmes on capacity development and training in support of POs, including in the forestry sector, emphasizing organizational development, governance and gender equality.

The partnership at present focuses on Kenya, and aims to expand to Zambia, Gambia and other areas.

- **Social Innovation** In Africa, women's participation in POs is increasing. However, their access to decision-making and leadership positions within POs remains limited. This affects strongly the way the POs perform, as well as rural development of communities in general. This is because women farmers perform different activities and tasks from men, and have different competencies and needs. An active and equitable participation of women in POs is a decisive element for the improvement of their economic performance and the reinforcement of their capacity to influence policies. By strengthening internal governance and gender equality within target POs, the CoOPequity Programme works to ensure that both men and women can effectively benefit from services and opportunities offered by POs, including participating in decision-making processes and policy processes. Beyond benefits in economic terms, using a gender and equity-sensitive approach in the organizational development of farmers' organizations can also lead to a sustainable improvement in small-scale producers' living conditions and to qualitative changes in the status of women and youth within a society in general.

Outcomes

The programme activities contribute to reinforcing POs' capacities, including representing men and women producers' interests in decision-making and policy processes. The main programme outcomes can be summarized as:

- **Improved capacities** of government cooperative agents and target POs in terms of gender equity and governance within POs. An important result of the programme so far has been the development of a number of participatory and gender-sensitive tools for organizational analysis and development. These were used as part of capacity development processes at country level that enabled target government and PO stakeholders to improve their knowledge and capacities in the field of PO governance, equity and gender equality.
- **Strengthened bonding relations** within target POs. CoOPequity activities contributed to strengthening bonding relations within target POs (notably, in the women's Union Koda Naka in Maradi region, Niger; in women and youth groups in Ethiopia; and in the Community Service Centres in Ghana) and resulted in strengthened capacities on the part of rural men and women to reshape their organizations and their environment through better understanding and stronger knowledge of and skills in PO governance, management and gender equality.
- **Strengthened bridging relations** between POs. Programme activities also contributed to strengthen bridging relations between apex POs, particularly within the framework of the National Network for collaboration among POs (called CDD-G9) as well as between PO federations, their Union members and grassroots POs. In the process, the activities also contributed to improve PO capacities to understand and negotiate issues related to agricultural policy and law in Niger, and to better relate to other relevant actors, including government authorities.

- **Increased participation** by POs in policy dialogue and decision-making processes. The capacity development process initiated thanks to the CoOPequity Programme resulted in increased PO participation in policy dialogue and decision-making processes, through strengthened PO advocacy skills and engagement, and stronger collaboration and dialogue between POs and governments, particularly in the process of elaborating the draft Law on Agricultural Policy in Niger.

In the long-term, this capacity development process initiated by CoOPequity, targeting both grassroots and national-level POs, will enable the design and implementation of more sustainable and gender-equitable agricultural policies, laws and programmes, leading to better food security governance and positive changes in the livelihoods of thousands of small-scale producers and their organizations.

Methodology

CoOPequity follows a three-level strategy in country-level activities.

- **Facilitating dialogue** between POs and Governments. CoOPequity facilitates networking and collaboration among POs to improve their capacity to speak with one voice and represent small-scale producer interests in policy negotiations. It also supports the strengthening of existing multi-stakeholder platforms for dialogue and consultation between POs and governments for inclusive and gender-sensitive policy-making and implementation processes.
- **Supporting organizational change** for improved governance and gender equality in POs. CoOPequity supports POs in strengthening their internal governance and equity as critical conditions for enhancing their access to markets and economic sustainability. This includes support to more equitable and transparent management, communication and information sharing, and reinforcing participation of women and youth in their organizational management and leadership.
- **Promoting women and youth empowerment** and leadership within POs. CoOPequity promotes collective action of small-scale producers and strengthens group dynamics and entrepreneurship. The programme organizes and facilitates specific training and coaching sessions to strengthen women and youth negotiation, leadership and management skills, reinforce their self-esteem and enable them to actively participate in decision-making processes and leadership positions. It also links with other participatory activities (e.g. Farmer Field Schools, DIMITRA) at local level that contribute to enhancing participation of rural men and women in producer and other rural organizations.

Issues to be resolved

The first major issue to be resolved relates to improving the quality of internal governance and strengthening gender equality in target POs in order to support them in fully playing their social and economic role. In target countries, a majority of POs face difficulties in providing necessary services to their members, and representing their interests at decision-making level. This is largely due to the lack of organizational motivation; weak internal governance with concentrated decision-making; lack of information sharing; and insufficient technical, managerial and negotiation capacity. Also, women and youth often remain excluded from services and benefits provided by POs, and face difficulties in accessing leadership positions.

Another important challenge relates to the capacity of POs to participate in decision-making processes and be recognized as a valued and active actor. There is currently a

need for POs from all agricultural sectors to better coordinate their advocacy actions and start speaking with one voice in order to be in better positions to bargain and influence the formulation and implementation of relevant policies and laws. In many countries, the PO landscape is fragmented and characterized by a lack of unity, coordination and common action on issues of common interest between different structures. As a consequence, PO participation in policy dialogues and negotiations is not as strong as it could be, and the voice of small-scale producer, especially women, struggles to be heard by decision-makers.

In this sense, it was critical to focus on strengthening governance, gender equality and equity within target POs; facilitate the reinforcement of their negotiation and management capacities; enhance dialogue and collaboration not only among POs and their networks, but also between POs and government; and support the processes of empowerment of women and youth members.

Lessons learned

The programme continues, and it is too early to assess its significance relative to its objectives. Up to now, however, the main lessons learned so far relate to:

- the importance of bringing together governments and POs, and working jointly on mechanisms for dialogue and gender equality. This approach has proved useful in generating common understanding and synergies between actors, building confidence and fostering collaboration, which will contribute to long-term sustainability of results;
- another lesson relates to identifying and implementing the ‘best fit’ combination of capacity development interventions: at the level of the enabling environment (e.g. improved consultation and dialogue), at the level of organizations (e.g. improved organizational capacity, governance and gender equity) and at the level of individual members (e.g. women’s empowerment, improved bonding; social capital), all of which address the different country needs and the linkages among them, ultimately maximizing the impact of the programme;
- in order to ensure both ownership and sustainability of the activities beyond the time of the programme, it has proved critical to ensure a participatory process throughout, involving relevant stakeholders at each stage, building national capacities (e.g. by training a pool of national facilitators from relevant ministries and institutions); and
- the importance of complementing CoOpequity’s specific focus on developing POs’ “soft” capacities with other initiatives that focus on other aspects of strengthening POs, and on inclusive rural development in order to enable them to become real agents of change.

Good practices

Three good practices identified by CoOpequity stand out.

- CoOpequity’s **focus on developing “soft” capacities** of POs can be considered a good practice *per se*. Indeed, strengthening POs implies not only increasing their access to financial services, markets or technical know-how, but also includes improving gender equality and equity, internal governance mechanisms and their capacity to participate effectively in policy processes on behalf of all their members. CoOpequity’s specific focus is precisely on developing these “soft” capacities as a necessary complement to other actions and approaches that prioritize “hard” financial or technical inputs.
- Another CoOpequity good practice relates to the **development of a gender-sensitive methodology** for analyzing and strengthening PO capacities, with a specific focus on internal governance and gender equality, with the aim of developing PO “soft” capacities and equipping them to better play their social and economic role. The analytical

framework and the training tools designed focus on the capacity of a given organization to respond to the varying and specific needs of all its members, including women and youth, as a decisive characteristic of a viable and equitable producer organization. It helps POs and relevant stakeholders to understand how men, women and young people are involved differently in the functioning of the PO, its management and service delivery.

- A **participatory and gender-sensitive process** involves all relevant stakeholders in different stages of the implementation of CoOPequity activities at country level. This has been at the heart of CoOPequity's work, and has enabled CoOPequity to build national capacities, create ownership and engagement of all actors, and ensure long term sustainability of the programme activities. For instance, in Niger, the CoOPequity tools were developed together with national stakeholders, from both POs and the government (cooperative services). The strong accent on participation, inclusion and dialogue put by CoOPequity in Niger also facilitated the work within the National Network for collaboration among POs (called CDD-G9), established by five main federations of POs, their professional networks and the Chamber of Agriculture. The CDD-G9 is currently formulating a common producers' position on the draft Law on Agricultural Policy, which will influence the formulation and implementation of national policy and legal instruments that will affect thousands of small-scale producers – and, in turn, food security – throughout the country.

Recommendations

There are four main recommendations for scaling up the project.

- Engage all relevant stakeholders – governments, POs, NGOs and research entities – and ensure their commitment to and support for all Programme activities.
- Facilitate the strengthening of national capacities at the enabling environment, organizational and individual levels.
- Work with national stakeholders (e.g. government cooperatives officers) for the rolling out of activities, notably training events, to ensure local ownership and long-term sustainability of the programme activities.
- Develop complementarities between, on the one hand, CoOPequity's approach that focuses on people's empowerment and strengthening gender equality, equity and governance of POs and "soft" capacities (e.g. negotiation, leadership), and on the other hand, other approaches that focus on strengthening POs "hard" capacities, namely financial or technical inputs.

Actions planned for 2015

Four main activities are planned for 2015.

- **Support to the enabling environment.** Continuing support to PO consultations, and coordination and dialogue with policy-makers, in particular POs' active participation in the process of elaborating the Draft Law on agricultural policy and the implementation of the National Strategy on Food Security and Sustainable Agricultural Development in Niger by facilitating two meetings with the PO collaboration platform, and two meetings between the PO platform and government.
- **Capacity development.** Continuing technical support to two target POs in Niger (Dosso and Maradi regions) for better organizational capacities and the implementation of their action plans to strengthen governance, equity and performance; providing training in governance and management to three Community Service Centres in Northern Region, Ghana; providing training in group development management and marketing for target

women and youth groups in Ethiopia; providing training in governance and gender equality for target POs in the forestry and indigenous chicken value chains in Kenya.

- **Participation and voice.** Continuing to strengthen capacities of government cooperative agents and target POs in focus countries for governance, equity and gender equality within POs, and particularly negotiation and leadership skills; continuing support to the gender focal points of target POs and their networks in Niger to enable them to participate to decision-making in their organizations and in policy dialogue; and empowering PO members by linking and bridging FAO participatory and empowering approaches (CoOPequity with FFS and Community Listener's Clubs) at the community and country levels in Niger.
- **Knowledge generation.** Development of a CoOPequity toolkit for organizational development of POs with a specific focus on governance and gender equality.

Planned activities for 2015 also include support to CoOPequity components in other FAO programmes (i.e. the Forest and Farm Facility) and initiatives, in particular SO3 Regional Initiative on Reducing Rural Poverty in Bolivia, Guatemala, Kenya and Malawi.

7 Dimitra Phase II and “Reduce rural poverty through information, participatory communication and social mobilization for rural women, men and youth”

Background

Project symbol	GCP/INT/810/BEL et FMM/GLO/113/MUL
Geographical coverage	Burundi, Ghana, DR Congo, Niger, Senegal, Mauritania
LTU	ESP
Contact persons	Christiane Monsieur (FAO Dimitra Project Coordinator) Andrea SanchezEnciso (Consultant)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Knowledge generation and sharing
Duration	17 years (1998-2015) and 3 years (2014-2017)
Web site	http://www.fao.org/dimitra/home/it/

Description

FAO-Dimitra makes use of participatory and gender-sensitive communication approaches which produce transformative change at individual, collective and institutional levels, in particular with the Dimitra Clubs' approach. The programme contributes to the capacity development of rural populations and their organizations (formal and informal) through access to information, partnerships, networking, advocacy, knowledge exchange and strengthening of farmers' organizations. This applied gender programme operates mainly in sub-Saharan Africa and facilitates a process by which rural populations address concrete issues as determined by themselves. In particular, it promotes the leadership and voice of the most marginalized, women and youth, in an effort to improve their livelihoods and food and nutrition security.

Innovation

The Dimitra Clubs' approach is the main innovation developed within the Dimitra Programme. This gender-sensitive information and participatory communication approach is very simple:

the Dimitra Clubs are groups – variously single gender or mixed – who voluntarily decide to organize and mobilize to discuss their own development priorities, make informed choices to address their problems, network and take collective action to bring about changes in their communities. The clubs are equipped with wind-up and solar-powered radios and, in some cases, sets of solar-charged cell phones. As members discuss topics and share concerns, priorities and needs, their debates are aired live on partnering community radio stations or recorded for later broadcast. This stimulates discussions in other clubs, focusing on concrete actions that can be taken in the community and by networking among all the Dimitra Clubs in the area. This mechanism provides rural communities with an opportunity to break down the barriers of rural isolation, exchange experiences, make their voices heard, gain self-confidence, actively participate in decision-making and look for ways to act together to solve common problems. People are socially and economically empowered thanks to this approach. The capacities of rural women and men are developed in the field of gender awareness and participatory communication to ensure they can join in and play an active role in their own development, including within both their informal associations and formal POs. By increasing women's self-esteem, this gender-sensitive approach has contributed to enhance rural women's leadership, recognition of their role as agricultural producers, and economic and social empowerment.

Outcomes

About 1 200 FAO-Dimitra Clubs have been established in six countries in sub-Saharan Africa, with about 36 000 members and more than 250 000 indirect beneficiaries. When it comes to outcomes, the results recorded so far reflect changes in terms of improved organizational capacities of Club members, transformation of gender roles and relations, enhanced women's leadership, behaviour changes and new practices at community level (agricultural practices and techniques, innovations, nutrition, health, education, sanitation, education, etc.).

As an applied-gender approach, the Dimitra Clubs focus on roles of both women and men, relationships, responsibilities, aspirations, needs, priorities and concerns. Looking beyond efficiency and economic utility to long-term sustainability, there is a focus on the human level by empowering men and women and ensuring that power is shared equally between them. Women and men are more aware of and challenge gender inequalities in their daily lives and at different levels (households, communities, organizations, etc.).

Through access to information and participatory communication, the participation and contribution of rural women and men in the economic, political and social life of their community has greatly expanded. Women are able to speak in public with self-confidence and take on leadership roles. Clubs have also prompt discussions of taboo subjects, such as those linked to sexual violence or HIV/AIDS. With radio as the intermediary, dialogue can be established in and between communities, helping to overcome disinformation, prejudice and harmful traditional beliefs and gender discriminatory socio-cultural norms.

Thanks to the dynamics of the Dimitra clubs, women participate more actively in the life of their communities and organizations, speak up, gain self-confidence, acquire social status and take on leadership roles. By making their voices heard, women have been able to secure access and control over land. In Niger, after discussions within the clubs, women managed to gain access to land thanks to a 99-year lease contract. They have organized into a producer group to plant vegetables for consumption and for sale on the market.

Club members are able to improve their knowledge of issues that are of interest for them through improved access to information, discussion and networking. The clubs

have strengthened the organizational capacities of their members and have opened opportunities for income-generating activities. A woman from a Community Listeners' Club (CLC) in Gassedra (Niger) says that

“thanks to the listeners' clubs we were able to organize ourselves. We succeeded in obtaining a multifunctional platform. Now we can have our cereals ground. This greatly alleviates our workload and we have more time for ourselves.”

The Dimitra clubs stimulate a process whereby rural communities, particularly women and youth, become organized into formal producer groups, enabling them to participate in and benefit from rural development. Many of the members of the Dimitra Clubs are also members of formal producer groups. This dual membership has proven successful in improving the governance and gender equality of producer organizations. Evidence shows that members of the clubs have put into practice the principles of the Dimitra Clubs (transparency, gender equality, respect of other's views, democracy) within their producer groups. As active members of the Clubs, women have applied their leadership, organizational and negotiating skills within their producers' groups, and men have become more aware of gender inequalities within their organizations. Both women and men try to find solutions together to combat gender inequalities within their organizations.

In Senegal, the Dimitra Clubs have discussed how to improve the constitution of a PO so as to improve the inclusiveness and democracy of the organization. In Ghana, the dynamics of the Dimitra Clubs has been crucial in revitalizing the existing *susu* groups (local saving groups).

In Democratic Republic of the Congo, close links exist between the Dimitra Clubs and the POs. In 2012, a women's club set up an organized tontine, with an individual contribution of 500 F Congolese. This tontine, an informal grouping, became after a year a savings and credit cooperative with a capital of US\$8 000. It has expanded and brings together three types of members: POs, Dimitra clubs and individuals.

Methodology

The entire process of the FAO-Dimitra Clubs is participatory and community owned. The clubs belong to their members, who decide how they will function, what will be discussed and how to achieve common goals. The Dimitra Clubs are centred on action. Decisions and solutions emerge from the members themselves, and this strengthens people's willingness to make changes and take action. All this encourages autonomy and ownership.

The gender-sensitive methodology of the Dimitra Clubs is based on a few principles: the clubs need to facilitate access to useful information; they are geared for action; they are based on voluntary participation; they pay special attention to the inclusion of groups that are marginalized (women, youth); and they function in a network.

All members are committed to the idea that they can influence their own development and take collective action that will benefit the community as a whole. The methodology needs to be tailored to the context, and is flexible so as to be easily adapted and replicated.

Collaboration between the Dimitra Clubs and community radio stations is central to the approach, and based on a win-win partnership: the radio stations relay the voices of the clubs' members thereby becoming broadcasting by and for the community, and in tune with the community. Community radio stations allow the clubs – and hence the community – not just to have access to information, but also to express their concerns and needs, and exchange knowledge.

The process of the Dimitra Clubs includes capacity development at different levels (NGOs, partnering radios, community members, local facilitators, local authorities, etc.) in participatory communication, gender awareness, organizational skills, leadership, networking, situation analysis and oral expression. The only equipment provided by the initiative is a wind-up and solar-powered radio, which in some cases (Niger and Ghana) is paired with cell-phones that operate in a fleet.

Issues to be resolved

The FAO-Dimitra approach is based on the premise that development can be achieved only if rural actors are the main drivers of social change. Concretely, this means that no financial or material support is provided direct to the communities (except for a small solar-powered radio set). To the contrary, the process initiated through the Dimitra Clubs develops rural women's and men's capacities to actively participate in their own development. This is a new way to envisage development and one that is not automatically understood. Therefore, awareness-raising sessions on the approach and its advantages need to be organized from the inception phase in the communities, including the traditional authorities, to obtain people's interest and involvement. Special attention needs also to be given to training (gender awareness and communication, technical aspects, etc.). Similarly, to ensure the community radio stations' collaboration and partnership, it is crucial to sensitize them and show the win-win aspect of the collaboration, also providing them with small equipment to record and broadcast the clubs' debates and the people's voice.

Lessons learned

One of the main lessons learned from the Programme is that it is crucial to consider people as the main actors of their own development and not simply as 'beneficiaries'. Local 'ownership' is essential to sustain capacity but depends on widespread and gender-sensitive participation. If both men and women are equally involved at all stages, then programmes have a far greater chance of success than those imposed from 'outside'.

The support provided by local NGOs and the quality of their services are fundamental to guarantee that the approach will be implemented in line with the methodology and its basic principles.

The use of information communication technology, in combination with capacity development interventions, has also played a key role. As noted, the approach is based on the premise that development can be achieved only if rural actors are the main drivers of social change. The physical investment in the Dimitra Clubs (solar-powered radios and possibly cell phones) is modest, but there is substantial investment in building the capacity of the facilitators and partners for inclusive grassroots-led development.

Another lesson learned is that it is necessary to ensure that the informal groups and organizations benefit equally from development interventions and receive adequate technical support to join or transform into formal groups.

Partnerships are also crucial. It is important to build solid partnerships at different levels. Local actors (extension officers, community leaders, traditional chiefs, NGOs and local authorities) need to be involved from the beginning of the project. In the case of the Dimitra Programme, methodological alliances with other participatory approaches and advocacy in the field of rural development have been crucial. Indeed, the Dimitra approach should not be seen as a standalone action. It is part of a larger process based on multi-level partnerships, synergies with other participatory approaches (e.g. FAO Farmer Field Schools

and CoOPequity), information exchange, knowledge generation, dissemination of good practices through publications, advocacy initiatives and South-South cooperation.

Good practices

The methodological alliance between the Farmer Field Schools and the Dimitra Clubs is a good practice that has been consolidated during 2014. Both are participatory approaches developed by FAO to help reducing poverty and hunger and to strengthen social cohesion and collective action. The Farmer Field Schools enable the clubs to have a strong local base, with close support. And the community listeners' clubs ensure that the issues dealt within the Farmer Field Schools reach the entire community through discussions and radio broadcasts. The Dimitra Clubs also bring a stronger gender dimension into the work of the Farmer Field Schools.

Another experience developed in 2014 regards South-South cooperation activities between the Dimitra Clubs from different countries. This has allowed concrete exchanges of practices and knowledge.

Recommendations

- Promote conducive national policies, laws and regulations, and government commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment and participatory methodologies.
- Target both formal and informal groups in development programmes, strategies and policies.
- Ensure women's participation and representation in policy dialogue and consultations at different levels.
- Increase understanding of the importance of equitable gender relations within communities, organizations and households.
- Develop strategies that enlist men and young boys as change agents. Work with men and boys to engage them in discussions about the benefits of gender equality so they can become champions of change in their communities and organizations.
- Promote collective action and recognize women as central players in development (producers, entrepreneurs, employees and consumers).
- Make use of gender-sensitive and participatory approaches that consider people as the main actors of their own development.
- Build solid partnerships with different development actors (producer organizations, local authorities including traditional and religious, literacy training centers, NGOs, civil society organizations, etc.).
- Engage a broad array of actors. Development interventions need to involve both women and men, and other actors at the community level, including traditional chiefs and public authorities, who are crucial in transforming discriminatory attitudes and practices.

Actions planned for 2015

In 2015, FAO-Dimitra will continue its activities in the field of participatory communication, gender equality and women's empowerment.

Many of these activities will contribute to the strengthening of POs and cooperatives. In Niger, FAO-Dimitra is the main entry point of the UN Joint Programme on "Accelerating Progress towards the Economic Empowerment of Rural Women". A specific component of this programme relates to the empowerment of rural women through the promotion of gender-sensitive approaches that strengthen producer groups. In the framework of this

programme, FAO-Dimitra will work with other partners (CoOPequity, WFP, UN-Women and IFAD) to reinforce the gender and governance aspects of producer groups.

In February 2015 an International Meeting on the Dimitra Clubs will be organized in Kinshasa. This event will gather all Dimitra stakeholders (members of the clubs, community facilitators, local partners, NGOs, community radios, informal groups, and authority representatives) from different countries to discuss how the approach has achieved impact and results, and provide an opportunity to share experiences. A specific session on the main results of the Dimitra Clubs in terms of social capital is envisaged.

The results of this meeting will feed the Methodological Guide on the Dimitra approach (foreseen for June 2015).

FAO-Dimitra has achieved remarkable results in the field and has been recognized by FAO and other development partners as a good practice. Now it is becoming increasingly necessary to elaborate a document that describes the methodological process of the approach.

Articles of the Dimitra Newsletter will highlight how the Dimitra Clubs are strengthening community dynamics, including other formal and informal producer groups in rural areas.

FAO-Dimitra also plans to increase awareness on the Dimitra Clubs' results and achievement in Niger and Democratic Republic of the Congo through a film on the Dimitra approach. This will be an opportunity to showcase the impact of the Dimitra Clubs in the life of rural communities, including the ways in which the approach has generated organizational change at community level.

Other information and knowledge sharing products foreseen for this year, such as the Dimitra six-monthly Newsletter and other publications and information briefs on gender equality and women's leadership, will focus on social capital and on the importance of enhancing women's leadership within producer organizations.

8 Integration of small-scale farmers in the market economy through soybean value chains in Malawi and Mozambique

Background

Project symbol	MTF/RAF/470/CFC
Geographical coverage	Malawi and Mozambique
LTU	EST
Contact person	Joyce Mulila Mitti (Plant Production/Protection Officer)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing; Market linkages
Duration	4 years (1 May 2011 to 30 April 2015)

Description

The project's main goal is to facilitate the pro-active participation of small-scale farmers in soybean markets in Malawi and Mozambique through linkages with key stakeholders (NGOs, seed companies, processors, traders, etc.) as a way of improving the economic well-being of the farmers as well as the processors. The project has focused on providing technical support to the farmer organizations for improved productivity through demonstrations and capacity development for skills in applying improved technologies (use of high quality seed, and better agronomic practices) and improving access to good quality inputs for soybean production.

The project has been providing support to POs and cooperatives by identifying service providers involved in the soybean value chains and establishing linkages. The project is designed to promote the active participation of POs, cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in order to make their interests considered by the district, provincial and national public institutions. A Steering Committee (SC) has been set up in each of the two countries to support the enabling environment for effectively linking small-scale farmers with soybean markets. Key public and private stakeholders in the soybean value chain (VC) participate in the SC.

POs and cooperatives have also benefited from training in management and marketing skills, thanks to partnerships established by the project with NGOs and the private sector. These partners have also benefited from the capacity development provided by the project on soybean value chain development (VCD) and are now more confident in providing services to POs and cooperatives. The higher productivity achieved by POs and cooperatives along with the possibility to have stronger intermediate soybean producers linking to bigger commercial processors are the main incentives for the various NGOs and the private sector in providing their services to POs and cooperatives.

Another activity carried out by the project concerns knowledge generation and sharing through publications, workshops and documentation of project results.

Innovation

The establishment of soybean seed grower groups to produce high quality certified soybean seed has been an innovation that has built in an element of sustainability of good seed supply in the communities in both countries. Such seed producer groups did not exist before the project, and hence access to good quality seed was a big problem for small-scale farmers. The availability of seed processing equipment within the project area (shelling and cleaning) has also contributed to improving the quality of seed available at farm level. The project has facilitated the provision of seed quality control and certification services through the involvement of the national regulatory services in the project. This is in particular working very well in Malawi, and has started to be enforced in Mozambique.

In both countries, soybean stakeholder platforms have been established, and comprise POs, processors, traders and financial institutions, together providing an environment for increased public-private partnerships and also opportunities for strong advocacy for policies that support the development of the soybean sub-sector.

Another innovation of note is the establishment of soybean enterprises for women groups that are POs and also have started a business of selling specialized soybean products (various baked goods and soybean flour), sold on contract with established institutions in the Mozambique project.

Outcomes

The main outcomes achieved by the project are note below.

- **Increased access to productive resources.** The project significantly improved member access to inputs (mainly seeds, inoculum and fertilizers). Access to land improved by working in a group. In Mozambique, specific interventions were made to improve women's access to seed to ensure that some of the soybean produced by the family was left as food for the children. This is because most of the soybean produced by the men would be sold, given the very good market.
- **Increased member access to financial capital.** The project supported POs in accessing financial capital through its partnerships with NGOs and private sector

entities that were interested in supporting the development of the soybean sector. Most of these partners have strong gender policies, and most project site POs were very representative of both women and youth. Some of the POs were only women, or youth groups exclusively.

- **Increased member human capital.** This has been the main focus of the project. Women, who are the majority, have been targeted.
- **Increased bonding and bridging social capital.** This has been developing at group level and between groups.
- **Increased food security of members and their families.** The project has been addressing food security both in terms of increased productivity as well as better utilization, by promoting home-based processing of soybean. In this case, women have taken the lead.

Outcomes in terms increased leadership empowerment, policy dialogue and market access are also starting to be achieved, and are expected to manifest more in the last year of the project, 2015.

Elements of the project identified as beneficial for POs and cooperatives are: (i) proactive linkages with reputable service providers (NGOs and the private sector); (ii) support in capacity development for business management aspects; and (iii) establishing viable enterprises by providing threshing machine services at local level, and soybean processing businesses for intermediate products.

Methodology

Internal, networking and external factors were all important for project implementation. Among them, the most prominent in the project for achieving success has been the strong networking that has been a key feature of the project. Through this project, the various stakeholders in both countries have been provided with opportunities to interact regularly, to plan and review their activities together, and to identify gaps and potential solutions. The role of NGOs, National Farmers' Associations and the private sector (financial institutions) has been crucial in achieving the promising project results. The Project Executing Agency (PEA), which is the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA), has made significant contribution to the establishment of the stakeholder platforms that are instrumental in strengthening the networking among the partners in the project.

Issues to be resolved

The main issue that needs to be resolved is improvement in contractual arrangements between farmers that are soybean seed growers and the seed buyers, particularly the NGOs who are the main buyers, especially in Mozambique. So far it has been the norm for the seed crop to be grown before firm contracts are drawn up for an assured market and price by the NGOs. This situation is discouraging to the farmers, who are required to maintain high production standards and expect a premium price for the seed crop. The situation is better in Malawi, where firm contracts are provided to seed growers by the National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM) and the farmers are assured of a market for their seed crop.

Lessons learned

The major lesson that has been learned in this project is that there is great potential for small-scale farmers to actively participate in commodity markets once supported with the

knowledge and skills to produce high quality commodities, as long as they are also linked well to the appropriate service providers that provide opportunities to the POs to gain management and business skills. The project has demonstrated that POs do respond to economic opportunities once assured of the viability and stability of such markets. Provision of such services in close proximity to the communities is also very important in achieving sustainable results.

Good practices

The good practices in this project are several.

- Demonstration of the various soybean products to POs for both home consumption and for sale. This motivated farmers to produce for both home consumption and for market. The project has hence contributed to better household food security, contributed to improved nutrition, and imparted nutrition knowledge in households.
- Improved access to processing equipment in the project area. As soybean processing is a demanding activity, the introduction of threshers in the project areas in close proximity to the farmers is an excellent practice. This way the farmers are able to thresh and clean the crop fast enough and have it ready for market in a timely manner. Those who purchased the threshers have also become economically empowered.
- IITA's promotion of improved technologies for soybean production, input use efficiency techniques (such as those related to the rotation of soybean with maize), particularly the fact that you can reduce fertilizer application to a soybean crop if grown after a well fertilized crop of maize, is a good practice for farmers as it makes the production of soybean not only profitable, but also contributes to maintaining healthier soil fertility status. Another practice is the promotion of use of inoculum and the concomitant reduction in the need for high-N fertilizer.

Recommendations

For the project interventions to be sustained, the Steering Committees that have been established should be maintained so as to continue to provide support for the various stakeholders.

The platforms need to be formalized to continue to regularly interact. It is hoped that the private sector would initially support the convening of the platforms until such a time that all stakeholders are able to self-finance. The role of the platform is to maintain dialogue and to advocate for an enabling policy environment for the sector.

FAO should consider providing support for potential resource mobilization to scale up the project, possibly in collaboration with other agencies and donors.

Actions planned for 2015

The project is closing in 2015, with an evaluation mission planned for March 2015. It is not yet clear what activities will be sustained. The above activities are those that are in the work plan till project termination in March 2015.

9 Child Labour Prevention and Reduction in Agricultural-based Economies: A Pathway toward Sustainable Rural Development and Poverty Reduction

Background

Project symbol	n.a.
Geographical coverage	Niger, Malawi, Global
LTU	ESP
Contact person	Ariane Genthon (Child Labour Expert – Consultant)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Duration	2013-2015

Description

The project is implemented in both Malawi and Niger. In Malawi, in 2013, FAO agreed with a producer organization, the National Smallholder Farmers' Association of Malawi (NASFAM) to develop jointly communication tools to raise awareness among small-scale producers concerning child labour in agriculture. Radio programmes dealing with the different aspects of child labour in agriculture have been aired since September 2014 during NASFAM's time slots on national radio.

In Niger, in 2013, FAO commissioned a case study to assess the child labour situation, limited to the three regions along the Niger River (Tillabery, Dosso and Niamey). The report was released by the Ministry of Agriculture in 2014 in collaboration with the Ministry of Employment, and the Ministry of Population. Results shown a worrying situation, where one out of four children was found in child labour.

A national workshop was organized to present results to the main stakeholders, including producer organizations, and to build potential synergies and activities to prevent and reduce child labour.

Innovation

In Malawi, there has been an increasing momentum since 2012, when the national framework for action on child labour in agriculture was adopted. Since then, FAO has been supporting the implementation of this framework through, among other activities, the development of producer awareness of child labour in agriculture and good agricultural practices.

Child labour in Niger is a very sensitive topic, and not always perceived as a danger or harmful activity, but rather seen as a cultural process in a child's education. A workshop increased awareness among the participants and created an enabling environment to continue the discussion and find potential collaborations. A steering committee was established and was planning and coordinating awareness-raising, and policy and legislative actions to prevent and reduce child labour in agriculture.

Outcomes

In Malawi, radio programmes developed by producer organizations have been aired targeting rural communities to sensitize them concerning child labour in agriculture. Producer organizations have participated in the development of messages to be disseminated by extension officers, integrating the issue of child labour.

In Niger, a national steering committee that includes main actors from government and civil society was created at the end of 2014. It holds regular meetings with the support of

FAO to identify priorities, exchange information on ongoing activities, and build potential synergies on child-labour-related topics.

Methodology

In Malawi, the entry point was FAO commitment to the implementation of a key policy document: the framework for action on child labour in agriculture.

In Niger, the entry point was a background research study in a limited area to get sufficient information on the situation related to child labour, to be used as a basis for discussion and potential activities. After the results were presented, discussed and confirmed during a national workshop, labour unions and Chambers of Agriculture expressed their willingness to launch awareness-raising actions and develop communication products on child labour in agriculture.

Issues to be resolved

In Malawi, the main issues are to have POs working as a team with extension officers, and to have within the POs champions with enough time to dedicate to FAO's activities, as these persons have a lot to follow up on.

In Niger, one of the main issues to be resolved is to integrate the child labour issues within the ongoing programmes and also to raise awareness with local POs to explain to their own members the dangers related to child labour in agriculture, and try to promote labour saving practices.

Recommendations

In Niger, tackling the issue of child labour in agriculture requires that there be in place both a good institutional environment and active efforts to change people's perception through the promotion of good practices. Local mass media can support by reaching out to a wide range of farmers at all levels using national and rural radio, television and leaflets, to share as much information as possible and create discussion and debates in order to reduce child labour in agriculture and find appropriate mechanisms to cope with the child's withdrawal from hazardous tasks.

Actions planned for 2015

At global level, the project is also developing a FAO-ILO e-learning course "End child labour in agriculture" for global use. The course aims to raise awareness and develop capacities of agricultural stakeholders, including POs, for the prevention and reduction of child labour in agriculture. The course will be available in English, Spanish and French, and adapted to regional contexts.

In Niger, activities with the national chamber of trade are planned.

In Malawi, a calendar designed and conceived by POs on the risks and hazards of child labour in agriculture is going to be released.

10 Renforcement des capacités de la Plateforme sous-régionale des Organisations Paysannes d'Afrique Centrale (PROPAC)

Background

Project symbol	TCP/SFC/3502
Geographical coverage	Burundi; Chad; Cameroun; Gabon; Equatorial Guinea; Congo; Democratic Republic of Congo; Sao Tomé et Príncipe; UNACA; Central Africa Republic (RCA)
LTU	RAF
Contact person	Sylvana Ntaryamira (Partnerships officer)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Budget	US\$226 000 (total)
Duration	18 months (8 May 2014 to 30 October 2015)

Description

This project aims at the empowerment of PROPAC and its members to enable them to contribute effectively in development of programmes and food and agriculture policies at national, regional and global levels.

Innovation

The project focuses on the institutional building of PROPAC and its member organizations at national level.

Outcomes

The project is expected to strengthen the capacities of PROPAC to enable them to fully contribute in the regional policy dialogue on food security and nutrition.

Methodology

The project was launched in August 2014. It is ongoing, and involves a methodology of strengthening the organizations that are members of PROPAC for greater impact of their actions.

Actions planned for 2015

Institutional capacity building of PROPAC and its national structures of Farmer Organizations.

Capacity building in the area of advocacy to enable them effectively to participate in the debates related to development policies.

Operational capacity building of PROPAC (IT infrastructure and training).

11 Sub-regional Dialogue on Family Farming in Eastern Africa

Background

Project symbol	n.a.
Geographical coverage	Eastern Africa
LTU	RAF
Contact person	Sylvana Ntaryamira (Partnerships officer)
Principal actions	Voice and Participation
Budget	LoA RAF – Support for Women in Agriculture and Environment (SWAGEN)
Duration	2 days

Description

The aim of this Sub-regional Dialogue was threefold:

- To raise awareness among stakeholders on the important role of Family Farming in food and nutrition security, as well as ecosystem and biodiversity conservation in the Eastern Africa region.
- To provide a forum for East African Family Farmers and other stakeholders in food and nutrition security for consultation on, formulation of, and promotion of a coherent Eastern Africa position on CFS global policy discussion.
- To identify the special problems and priority areas of work of the Eastern Africa region Family Farmers and other stakeholders that should be taken into consideration in the CFS discussions.

Outcomes

The main outcome of the initiative was in terms of increased participation in policy dialogue and decision-making processes. A final declaration was issued by leader family farmer and social movement representatives on recommendations to improve family farming in the sub-region.

Recommendations

- Create a global database of laws, policies and agreements that affect small-scale farmers' access to seed, water and land.
- Create a widely-accessible database on ecological farming, fishing, pastoralism and food preservation for women and small-scale producers and food processors.
- Document success stories and case studies showcasing initiatives with holistic integrated approaches to agriculture and environmental sustainability, and demonstrating best practices, activities for climate change mitigation, successful adaptation, sustainable development and food security.
- Create a database of training modules to empower women regarding local and international food security. This must include workshops and training on local and international acts and laws pertaining to the production and marketing of food and the creation of food chains, tools to build women's capacity to ensure food security for their families, and modules on seeds, biodiversity and resource management.
- Urgently embark on a deliberate and vigorous public relations campaign to change the image of agriculture from being an economic activity for poor people who have failed elsewhere, to a profitable economic activity of choice. This should involve not giving agricultural activity as a punishment to errant pupils in school, but as a reward to those who perform well; making agriculture a priority in national budget allocation; and giving incentives to family farmers

12 Support to farmer organizations in institutional strengthening in agricultural modernization in Eastern Africa

Background

Project symbol	TCP/SFE/3403
Geographical coverage	EAC countries (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda)
LTU	AGS
Contact person	Filippo Brasesco (APO Agribusiness)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing
Budget	US\$498 000 (total)
Duration	3 years (1 October 2012 to 1 October 2015)

Description

The project has undertaken functional mapping in the five East Africa countries, with the aim to hold consultations and identify key priority areas for institutional strengthening and capacity building for producer or commodity associations and cooperatives in agribusiness, management and marketing.

The cooperatives and farmer associations in the five countries are federated within the East Africa Farmer Federation (EAFF). FAO has collaborated with EAFF and the national governments to develop a regional strategy for institutional strengthening for farmer organizations and cooperatives.

In 2014, a Characterization and Functional Analysis of Producer Organizations and Cooperatives in East Africa was carried out. The main goal of this study was to contribute to increasing the competitiveness of small-scale producers and other SME value chain actors in the agricultural sector, with the overall aim of promoting agricultural commercialization and transformation.

Innovation

Through the TCP, FAO and EAFF will pilot the e-granary system. The immediate challenge for small-scale producers (and especially women) in Eastern Africa is lack of market aggregation, lack of finance, and no supply obligations. To address this issue, FAO and EAFF are piloting an innovative approach that first and foremost builds on already ongoing work on market integration within the Eastern Africa Community (EAC). To support farmers in market integration, the initiative will focus on aggregation (virtual), business linkages to enhance relationships with the private sector, and knowledge sharing and learning to enhance peer learning through exchange visits. FAO and EAFF will therefore pilot the development of the e-granary, a digital platform that will help farmers (with a focus on women) to aggregate production in a virtual space. Farmers will be linked to markets through a network of buyers (cross-border large private companies). FAO and EAFF will partner with CABI to document agronomy practices by farmers, and package these – plus additional technical knowledge – to provide e-extension services on good agronomic practices through the digital platform. EAFF's Financial partners that provide mobile banking and credit services, tailor-made innovative credit and insurance packages, will be developed for small farmers to be accessed through mobile phones. Women farmers will have the opportunity for training in structured trade and financial management. Small-scale farmers will be encouraged to form operational commodity networks, building on the existing ones to be able to learn from each other and share experiences.

Outcomes

The overall aim of the project is to contribute to capacity building for POs and cooperatives to facilitate inclusive development of agricultural commodity value chains. The activities under this TCP also contribute towards increased rural incomes and employment.

The overall anticipated outcome is enhanced competitiveness of the agricultural sector, leading to agricultural transformation and commercialization, resulting in increased production and productivity; enhanced market-oriented production; improved marketing efficiency; and enhanced value addition for agricultural commodities.

Methodology

The aim of the Characterization and Functional Analysis of Producer Organizations and Cooperatives in East Africa survey was to generate a strategic framework for institutional strengthening through capacity development.

Specifically, the study identifies organizational capacity of farmer organizations and cooperatives in relation to facilitation and promotion of agribusiness and marketing development, capacity development needs to enable them play a key role in catalytic capacity development for their members, appropriate business models and best practices to support farming as a business with effective vertical and horizontal integration along commodity value chains, and working linkages and coordination with private and public organizations.

Issues to be resolved

Effective service provision to farmer organization members, including related capacity development in technical and managerial issues, is crucial

Lessons learned

Farmer organizations and cooperatives' contribution towards transformation of agriculture in terms of marketing and agribusiness development is paramount to the economies of Eastern Africa countries. Farmer organizations and cooperatives not only ensure adequate supply of services such as credit, extension, inputs and marketing of outputs to farmers, but also harness a myriad of benefits from state and non-state partners through advocacy, lobbying and influence on policies.

Good practices

Although farmer organizations and cooperatives are experiencing several key challenges or hindrances to optimal production and marketing of their commodities, some have been able to establish appropriate business models and best practices to support farming as a business, facilitated by effective vertical and horizontal integration along commodity value chains.

The maize model of MVIWATA Shiri Mgungani in Kilimanjaro Region, Tanzania, is an example of best practices. This model involves operating a warehousing business and a SACCO, through which farmers are cushioned from risks as they only sell their maize when prices are favourable.

Another successful model is the one practiced by the Mwea Rice Growers Multipurpose (MRGM) Cooperative in Kenya. In this model, the cooperative provides almost all services that farmers need, including credit for activities other than agricultural.

Conclusions and recommendations

There are several main policy issues and recommendations related to farmer institutions.

- Farmer organizations and cooperatives have been useful in integrating producers into commodity value chains and have been benefiting producers through policy influence, advocacy and facilitating access to farm services, value addition and marketing services and facilities.
- Many farmer organizations and cooperatives in EAC are young and therefore in need of capacity building in order to realize their potential.
- Generally, the policy environment in EAC is favourable for the flourishing of farmer organizations and cooperatives because governments and development partners have been encouraging empowerment of farmers.
- The participation of youth, women and vulnerable members of society in farmer organizations and cooperatives needs to be strengthened in all the countries.
- Lack of capacity for leadership is the main constraint on the proper functioning of farmer organizations and cooperatives in the region.
- There is need to establish cooperative banks in Rwanda and Burundi. These would follow the Kenyan model in order to supplement credit supply to producers and producer groups.

13 Food security through commercialization of the agricultural sector in marginalized areas in Kenya and South Sudan under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) Framework, with focus on women and youth

Background

Project symbol	GTFS/RAF/478/ITA
Geographical coverage	Kenya, South Sudan
LTU	AGS
Contact person	Filippo Brascesco (APO Agribusiness)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Budget	US\$1.9 million (total)
Duration	2 years (1 July 2013 to 30 September 2015)

Description

This project is aimed at improving food security and incomes of organized small-scale producers and emerging SMEs, through development of the key priority agricultural subsectors in northern Kenya and southern South Sudan, focusing on food commodities, horticulture and livestock value chains.

Within this intervention a training event was organized to develop the capacity of farmers' organizations in implementing selected agribusiness models that promote inclusiveness of small-scale producers holders and small-scale value-chain actors, as well as in enhancing an enabling policy environment for inclusive agribusiness development. The training consisted of 2 modules:

- Module 1 focused on components of a business plan, key tools to assess industry and business and concepts of marketing;
- Module 2 focused on concepts of entrepreneurship, chain dynamics and managerial accounting.

In both modules, several methods were used to enhance competencies of participants: lectures, case studies, group work, visits to companies and reflection on the visits.

Outcomes

The overall objective of the project is to improve food security and incomes of small-scale farmers through various market-led capacity development interventions targeting key priority agricultural sub-sectors in the project area. The specific objectives of the training were to: (i) define key entrepreneurial characteristics; (ii) explain key business and marketing strategies and concepts; (iii) explain the need for market intelligence and key methods for data and information collection; (iv) recall and apply tools for business analysis; and (v) develop high-level business plans.

The participants gained knowledge on strengthening marketing linkages and agribusiness development, and income generation from lucrative market opportunities in the domestic and cross-border markets.

Lessons learned

Participants acquired the knowledge necessary to be able to develop business plans, but more time is needed for a deeper follow-up for the preparation of business plans.

Based on the training, the most dynamic and knowledgeable participants could act as facilitators in subsequent training. Their on-the-job training could be complemented with ToT training. In this way, a pool of trainers on the subject could be established.

Actions planned for 2015

Capacity development

14 Improvement of food security in cross-border districts of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda, in support of the modernization of agriculture under the NEPAD-CAADP framework

Background

Project symbol	GTFS/RAF/391/ITA
Geographical coverage	Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda
LTU	AGS
Contact person	Filippo Brasesco (APO Agribusiness)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing
Budget	US\$9.2 million (total)
Duration	9 years (1 May 2006 to 15 June 2015)
Web site	http://www.fao.org/tc/faoitaly/projects-detail/en/c/50854/

Description

The main objective of the project is to improve food security and reduce rural poverty in Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Uganda under the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) framework.

The project aims to increase incomes and living standards of the small-scale rural householders in the cross-border districts of Burundi (Ngozi and Kayanza), Rwanda (Humure, Nyagatare and Butare), Uganda (Kabale and Kisoro) and recently also of

Democratic Republic of Congo, through more profitable crop systems and increased market access. The project also addresses constraints specifically related to the post-harvest segment of the value-chain.

In collaboration with all stakeholders, FAO supported the enhancement of the commodity value chain through market-based solutions.

Innovation

Innovative elements introduced for POs and cooperatives by the project include:

- Building social capital through bridging and merging already existing spontaneous farmer groups and farmer associations into cooperatives, and upgrading them into legally recognized entities.
- Ensuring sustainability in supporting these cooperatives as independent business-oriented units, building them as autonomous democratic institutions, providing technical capacity to improve the productivity and profitability of member farmers, training members in best practices in the operations of agricultural cooperatives, and promoting good governance and leadership.
- Investing in the capacities of farmer cooperatives to formulate and articulate their demands and to request services so as to make service providers more accountable.
- Developing cooperative capacities to respond directly to their members' needs by managing and providing basic services to members themselves.
- Facilitating appropriate capacity development for members to conduct their own research, diagnose problems, test innovative solutions and adopt practices and technologies most suitable to their production systems and to different business models.
- Supporting development of linkages with input suppliers, rural micro-finance and markets, so as to reduce transaction costs and improve the competitive position of cooperatives in the marketplace by achieving economies of scale and reducing costs to produce and market products.
- Building support relationships with service providers.

Outcomes

The agricultural policy strategies of the four recipient countries and the main expected project outcomes are:

- Strengthening farmer, small trader and agro-processor associations into market-oriented entities in order to improve access to input and output markets.
- Enhancing entrepreneurial, technical skills and learning for producers and other value chain actors for increased market-oriented production, value addition and a value chain-oriented approach.
- Facilitating agri-business linkages and contract arrangements, especially among producers' cooperatives, traders, and local agro-processing firms.
- Providing institutional and regulatory support for enhanced cross-border trade, including support to exploit market opportunities within the Eastern Africa Community (EAC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

Methodology

The value chain development approach included capacity development and institutional strengthening (mainly for associations and cooperatives of producers, processors and traders), facilitation of business-to-business linkages and support in terms of marketing facilities and services.

Lessons learned

The main lessons learned related to mechanisms put in place to enhance the performance, competitiveness and sustainability of associations and cooperatives. They include:

- use a participatory approach in training and education to ensure members' understanding of the role and functions of cooperatives and their participation in cooperative activities;
- facilitate availability of and access to infrastructure (e.g. warehouses, storage, processing and value-addition equipment, transport) on a cost-sharing basis;
- ensure that managers of associations and cooperatives are dedicated persons with vision, business and management skills;
- continually enhance governance mechanisms to ensure that a well defined governance structure is in place to stimulate members' participation in decision-making and efficient relationships between cooperative members and their board and management;
- offer continued training in managerial and business skills to ensure that managers of associations and cooperatives have the abilities to develop and implement business strategies;
- build partnerships, increase membership in apex organizations and build networks to ensure that cooperatives work and develop linkages with other cooperatives to gain access to market and market information, controlling a large share of product supply and building a position in the market;
- support formal arrangements (e.g. contracts, MoUs, agreements) with other actors in the value chain (e.g. input dealers, traders, processors and micro-, small and medium enterprises) to ensure success of business management through reduced market risks (i.e. access to the formal market) and better planning; and
- provide training and coaching in the preparation of business plans for value chain financing (and in some cases, such as Burundi, with innovative public-private partnership arrangements with local authorities).

Good practices

One of the key elements of success of the project has been the focus on capacity development for cooperatives in management and in improving their governance. This has enabled them to fully benefit from the capacity building to improve their business performance. Also, the intervention aimed to support short-term business improvement to showcase the success of the project, and to ensure the cooperatives' full engagement in the medium- and longer-term interventions.

Actions planned for 2015

- Publishing three value-chain studies prepared under project GTFS/RAF/391/ITA and two pamphlets on best practices in agro-industries development in the Eastern Africa sub-region.
- Production of a video documentary for the FSCA programme in Eastern Africa. The video will aim to display the results achieved, as well as the lessons learned during programme implementation. This will be also an instrument to advocate for the role of small-scale producers along the value chain to increase food security in the countries involved.

Country projects in Africa

15 Market-Oriented Smallholder Agriculture Project (MOSAP): Consultancy services financed by the International Development Association for Farmer Field School component

Background

Project symbol	UTF/ANG/047/ANG
Geographical coverage	Angola
LTU	TCSF
Contact person	Afonso Zola (Programme Assistant)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing; Market linkages
Budget	US\$2 655 961(total)
Duration	2 years (01 August 2012 to 31 July 2014)

Description

The main activities undertaken by project included are recruiting and equipping of project staff; training in participatory rural appraisal addressed to the field technicians operating in the project; participatory rural appraisal; master-training in order to ensure training for leader communities as well as farmers; the creation of farmer field schools (FFS) in the identified areas of the three beneficiary provinces of the project; the monthly training of facilitators; and the training conducted in the FFS.

Innovation

The main innovations introduced by the project include the introduction of mills in the communities, the introduction and acceptance of new production techniques of crop raising in whole communities, and the greater use of animals in agricultural activities in some localities in the north province. All these innovations brought positive changes to the project areas in terms of increasing production and productivity. The situation has completely changed compared with the past, before implementation of the project. Communities are consulted by local institutions in decision-making processes so they now contribute to the performance and sustainability of their institutions.

Outcomes

As main outputs, 14 297 farmers were trained and have been applying new techniques of production; 490 operational FFS were created in the Agricultural Development Institute (IDA); and 64 master trainers were trained among the IDA technicians and became fully operational. In terms of equality, women and young ladies in certain domains outnumber men. In many cases they are leading some FFS in their communities. They take an active part in the management of the mill revenue. They also contribute to the dissemination of knowledge gained in the process of training, assisting other rural women communities who did not benefit directly from the project.

Methodology

The participatory approach through the enlargement of the platform for consultation and coordination in the agricultural sector was the main methodology used in the implementation of the project. All parties concerned without exclusion – men, women

and youth – became part of the decision-making process. This was certainly fundamental to project success.

Lessons learned

A significant lesson learned is the ability to anticipate possible solutions to problems at the province level before they are brought to the national level.

Facilitating regular consultations among project stakeholders is another important lesson. In fact, before many actions are taken, it is requisite to go through a consultative process, whereby a large number of rural communities are called to give their views. The decentralization of local partnerships at provincial level is now a fact in three provinces covered by project implementation.

Recommendations

Ensuring the sustainability of project activities is essential. The communities have learned a lot throughout the implementation of the project, and demonstrated through practice that they are able to ensure increased production through the knowledge learned. However, it is important that sustainability conditions are secured by partners once the project is over.

The government must continue the search for funding so that project's achievements are not only preserved but are also extended to other communities of recipient provinces of the project, as well as in other provinces.

Actions planned for 2015

The project is now ended. However, procedures for its extension are ongoing. This is a project that has yielded tangible results, to the satisfaction of all stakeholders involved in its implementation. The extension would continue to develop some activities, and especially expand the project in other locations in the same recipient provinces.

16 Strengthening of Livestock Services in Angola

Background

Project symbol	GCP /ANG/037/EC
Geographical coverage	Angola
LTU	AGAH
Contact person	Afonso Zola (Programme Assistant)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing; Market linkages
Budget	US\$4 498 860 (total)
Duration	5 years (01 April 2009 to 30 June 2014)

Description

The immediate objective of the project was to increase livestock production and control important animal diseases (and zoonoses) to enhance livestock keeper's livelihoods, reduce poverty, and improve food security, by delivering functioning, professional, cost-effective and sustainable livestock services in five selected provinces of Southern Angola (Cunene, Huila, Benguela, Namibe and Huambo).

A Veterinary Drugs and Equipment Revolving Fund (VDRF) proposal – including *modus operandi*; stock kind and quantity; personnel required, logistics and management;

technical support; monitoring and evaluation; and cost assessment and other administrative matters – was developed by a group of consultants with the involvement of different stakeholders. A network of 15 Municipal Veterinary Pharmacies (MVP), supplied by a Central Deposit of Veterinary Drugs and Equipment (CDVD) and managed by the Livestock Technicians (LTs), was created to sell veterinary drugs and supplies to the Livestock Auxiliaries (LAs) at a competitive price, who in turn would provide services to livestock keepers (LKs) from their own communities. In Lubango, LKs are organized in a Project Office, which benefited from the project.

Various international consultants were hired to prepare the training programme and teaching material for LTs and LAs, following a participatory methodology known as the “Animal Production Wheel”. An international consultant was hired by the project to assess the National Veterinary Epidemio-surveillance System in Angola: define the key points related to veterinary epidemio-surveillance; recognize weaknesses and strengths; harmonize disease epidemio-surveillance data collection systems; identify national needs (training, equipment, management issues, legislation requirements, etc.); and propose synergies and options for collaboration with other projects, partners and institutions.

Six Project Steering Committees (PSCs) were organized during the implementation of the project in Lubango, Huambo, Benguela, Ondjiva and Luanda. The PSC meetings were an opportunity to present and discuss work plans and policy objectives; review implementation progress of project activities; present results of studies and assessments developed by the project; and to agree on amendments and/or additions as required. The Animal Health Law (AHL) of Angola had not been up-dated and therefore lacked many regulations, and the project was not able to address all of them, priorities were therefore discussed and agreed with the project counterpart.

A solar-powered refrigerator was distributed to each of the 12 MVPs, with the exception of those in Cunene Province, where three solar-power systems were installed to provide power to the cold rooms located within the Institute of Veterinary Services (ISV) facilities of the three municipalities where the project is being implemented. During the early phase of the project, a study tour was organized to North Namibia in order to learn about the organization of vaccination campaigns in a livestock system similar to the one in South Africa. Throughout project implementation, regular visits were undertaken with LAs to the different municipalities and rural communities, to monitor their performance and ensure they were providing a proper service.

Several agencies and institutions at the provincial, national and international level have benefited from FAO's coordination efforts, particularly through the organization of the six PSC meetings throughout the implementation of the project. In addition to the project counterparts, other partners and stakeholders were invited to these meetings: the Union of agricultural cooperatives of Angola (UNACA), the Order of Veterinarians of Angola (OMVA), the Veterinary Research Institute (IIV), the Medicine Veterinary Faculty of Huambo (FMVH), European Commission (EC) Delegation in Angola, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), etc.

Innovation

Awareness raising and transfer of knowledge techniques in adults by LTs and LAs interacting with LKs led to their becoming responsible for conducting awareness sessions within rural communities on various relevant topics, particularly the VDRF, using participatory techniques. In addition, the project has produced specific awareness material, such as rabies prevention and control manuals and leaflets, which were distributed to all ISV offices, LTs and LAs.

Outcomes

Fifteen municipalities within the five Provinces where the project was implemented were selected, in consultation with the Provincial ISV Directors, according to their livestock numbers and potential for livestock production. Up to 123 LAs were also identified with the support of the LTs from the selected municipalities, as well as local administrations and traditional leaders. A network of 15 MVPs, supplied from CDVD and managed by the LTs, was created to provide veterinary drugs and supplies to the LAs at a competitive price that, in turn, would provide services to LKs from their own communities. The results of this assessment, as well as the strategic plans and guidelines, were shared with the ISV and subsequently presented and discussed with the project counterpart and other stakeholders. Six PSCs were organized during the implementation of the project in Lubango (December 2010), Huambo (March 2011), Benguela (August 2011), Ondjiva (January 2012) and Luanda (June 2013 and June 2014). The legal recognition as veterinary paraprofessionals of LAs and the definition of the veterinary activities that could be legally conducted by them was identified as a major priority. Following a comprehensive needs assessment and discussions with the project counterpart, the 15 MVPs related to the project were rehabilitated and constructed according to the needs identified for each pharmacy. During the last period of project implementation this network was upgraded with the installation of a more powerful system, which also benefited the Project Office. Installation and monthly payments of internet bills were the responsibility of the project until its termination.

Methodology

The overall project management strategy adopted “Informed Strategic Adaptive Management” (ISAM) for all project activities, and outputs focused on ensuring that the outcomes would achieve the stated impact of increasing livestock productivity. The term ISAM is largely self-explanatory and has been coined by the project consultants to denote a management approach which is “grounded on an accurate information system that allows intelligent and targeted decisions responsive to changes and impacts experienced by the livestock system”.

As a first requisite, ISAM required a careful analysis of constraints faced by the livestock production system, and the relative impacts of these constraints. This activity was based on the findings of a comprehensive needs assessment, and led into a prioritized action plan.

The second stage was to determine what solutions might be applied to address the identified constraints. Views and ideas of the livestock keepers and experienced livestock field staff were incorporated in this process.

A critical concept within the ISAM approach was flexibility. It was important to recognize that first-choice solutions may not prove to be as successful as projected, and require amendment or abandonment altogether. It was recognized that project activities themselves would necessarily bring change to the system, and in doing so the activities undertaken will require continual performance review. In this respect, the management style was flexible to accommodate and respond to indicated changes in emphasis, approach and technical delivery.

Issues to be resolved

The project counterparts, i.e. local administrative and traditional authorities, decided to rehabilitate eight traditional cattle vaccination and treatment crushes in certain municipalities covered by the project: Chibia and Gambos in Huila Province; Caala Longonjo

and Ecunha in Huambo Province; and Cahama, Ombadja-Xangongo, Kwanhama-Ondjiva in Cunene Province.

Lessons learned

A VDRF system is currently installed and functional throughout a network of 15 MVPs, supplied by a CDVD, and managed by 15 LTs, to provide veterinary drugs and supplies to a total of 123 LAs, who assist livestock owners from their own communities. Veterinary drugs and supplies and other equipment or materials (including motorbikes for LTs and bicycles for LAs) to run the VDRF have been procured and distributed.

Throughout the implementation of the project, various governmental infrastructure was rehabilitated or constructed. The Project Office in Lubango, the CDVD and 15 MVPs (located in ISV provincial facilities) were rehabilitated or constructed, including provision of furniture, equipment, installation of power and water supply systems, etc.

The Project has generated a considerable amount of knowledge through the development of important technical studies and reports. A preliminary study on the population, livestock and farming systems in the 15 municipalities where the project has been implemented was developed in a first stage.

A total of 15 LTs and 123 LAs were trained in technical veterinary topics; work planning and management of financial flows; basic accounting and entrepreneurship; basic computer skills; LAs awareness raising; transfer of knowledge techniques in adults; etc. In addition more than 30 ISV veterinarians and other members of its staff related to the project, were trained in different topics, such as veterinary epidemiology; the use of GIS applied to animal diseases surveillance and control; animal health legislation; rabies prevention and control; and disease prioritization (addressing the national beef value chain).

Recommendations

■ **Monitoring and follow-up**

Monitoring and follow-up of MVPs are necessary and very important tasks for the functioning of VDRF and the sustainability of the project. Veterinary drugs stocked in the CDVD have to be released to the MVPs before their expiration date. The project team should be more pro-active regarding this issue, and contact the responsible LTs before every follow-up visit in order to simultaneously refurbish the MVPs. Monitoring and follow-up of LTs and LAs remain difficult due to the numerous tasks and responsibilities of LTs as ISV staff. This has been solved by some LTs by hiring people or LAs to manage the MVPs in their absence, and this approach could be applied to other municipalities. In some other cases, LTs are close to retirement, and not really have the capacity to manage a MVP.

■ **Project infrastructure**

The condition of some MVPs in terms of storage of medicines is not always the most appropriate. ISV should ensure that the MVPs meet the same official pre-requisites as those private businesses commercializing the same kind of products. The use of freight containers as MVPs, which is the case of the MVPs of Cunene province and the CDVD in Lubango, insulated inside to ensure the right temperatures for the conservation of medicinal products, is a model that could be promoted and used elsewhere in the future.

■ **Capacity building**

Taking into consideration the natural (and recommended) staff replacements expected in the near future, it becomes a necessity to continue with the training of those LTs

and LAs who will join the VDRF, as well as providing periodic refresher training to those already within the system.

■ Synergies with other projects and institutions

It is necessary to create collaboration, with resultant synergies, with other projects implemented in the country with a livestock component, and particularly within the same geographical area. Specifically in the case of FAO, two projects still under implementation (GCP/ANG/048/GFF and OSRO/RAF/404/USA) could further reinforce interactions by taking advantage of implemented activities, project infrastructure and lessons learnt.

Actions planned for 2015

The project ended in 2014. No activities are planned for 2015.

17 Support for industry of Artisanal Inland Fisheries: Extension of post-harvest technology to the northwest of Angola

Background

Project symbol	TCP/ANG/3403
Geographical coverage	Angola
LTU	AGAH
Contact person	Afonso Zola (Programme Assistant)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing; Market linkages
Budget	US\$393 000 (total)
Duration	14 months (2013-2014)

Description

The specific objectives of this project were to: (i) to increase the level of fishery catch and fish production from inland fishing in order to improve food security and contribute to poverty reduction; (ii) to use appropriate areas for storage as a way of fisheries conservation in order to increase products to be commercialized; (iii) enhance waste recovery for handmade fishmeal; (iv) promote capacity development of fisherfolk, both men and women, working in fish processing in order to improve methods of fishing, handling, storage, treatment and processing to increase fishing community revenues and ensure consumer protection.

Innovation

Through several training sessions within the country and abroad, the beneficiaries of the project, especially women, were able to acquire new technical knowledge, both theoretical and practical, in various fields, such as storage as a mean of fish conservation, processing, and smoking, among others. Modern metal stoves were introduced in the communities for the process of fish processing and packaging. From Senegal, women have learned how to make thermal boxes, starting from easily available materials.

Through training events, men, especially young people, have developed working experience in the fields of construction and cold chains, while women and girls have benefited from culinary and stitching training, among others.

Outcomes

During the implementation of the project, tangible results were achieved. A total of 62 community members, including fishermen, processors, women from the Institute of Artisanal Fisheries (IPA), the technicians of the Ministry of Fisheries, and inspectors from the provinces of Luanda and Kwanza Norte, participated in training for the implementation of quality control techniques and safety systems for fishery products.

Training in evaluation methods for post-harvest fish losses was provided for 28 participants, including fishers, the IPA, the Development Agricultural Station, and Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Angola (UNACA) technicians, and technicians of the Ministry of Fisheries. This took place in Kwanza Norte, in the community of Ngolome.

A total of 50 participants were trained at the Vocational Training Centre (INAFOP) in different fields, aimed at creating employment for young artisanal fishermen.

Data collection on post-harvest fish losses was carried out in the areas of Ngolome fishing communities – especially Saraiva Muiße, Cazokola, Kicoma and Baixa Grande – by six enumerators, accompanied by two technicians from the Ministry of Fisheries of Kwanza Norte.

Three participants (a craft fisherman and two women fish processors) benefited from a study trip to Senegal, which aimed to build capacity in treatment and processing techniques, as well as in value addition for fisheries products.

Concerning achievements in terms of infrastructure, the project reported construction of a gantry for provisional fish processing activities, the construction of a platform for artisanal fisheries, and construction of improved FTI THAIROYE-type stoves.

These results are documented in specific reports. In addition, a journalist was used to disseminate project results in the mass media, namely radio, print and television.

Methodology

The project has relied heavily on a participatory approach, based on jointly planned actions that pool the comparative advantages of all actors with an effective presence in the project area. The role of animation and facilitation of the coordinator was critical to the project's success. Given the specific institutional context of IPA, the coordinator worked also as national consultant in charge of the valorization of post-harvest products. His selection was coordinated with FAO and based on benchmarks set out in Annex V of the Project Document. National and international consultants hired for the project focused as priority action on strengthening the capacity of IPA officers and fisher leaders to ensure the effective adoption of new, introduced techniques, and their immediate diffusion.

Operationally, at decentralized levels, the officers of the Provincial Directorate of Agriculture ensured regular technical and methodological monitoring for the implementation of activities and close supervision of communities.

Due to insufficient IPA officers in the field and the need to strengthen the capacity building of technicians, leader fishers were identified as human resources and trained in collecting basic data on fisheries activities in the area.

The realization of infrastructure and the provision of equipment and materials were contracted in accordance with FAO procedures. The training was provided by international and national consultants in accordance with the Project Document.

Project coordination has ensured consistency and complementarity in the overall implementation and monitoring of the project. Particular attention was paid to the effective participation of the communities and their effective ownership of planned actions.

Issues to be resolved

Among the issues that require solution is the poor condition of roads leading to the community, and poor communication. Another problem is lack of data on post-harvest losses in capture fish sites and markets.

Lessons learned

One of the lessons learned during the implementation of this project is that communities, which sometimes work in a dispersive manner, can be turned into a real community group with a specific purpose. The use of new techniques, among others, in fish processing, preservation, and storage of fishery products, represents a significant contribution to the community.

The participatory approach was a key element in the learning process for both women and men.

The two study trips, to Senegal and to Tanzania, expanded beneficiaries' vision regarding fish processing, preservation and storage. This experience was shared with the rest of the community.

Communities, including women and young people, have learned through the process of "learning by doing".

Recommendations

Recommendations include supporting extension workers to disseminate the techniques learned throughout the implementation of the project, in particular during training sessions conducted both in the country and abroad. There is also a huge need to expand the project in another three provinces in the country with increased potential for fishing in inland waters. Moreover, the creation of an intersectoral group to monitor the platform operability is recommended.

18 Oilseed value chain project in Burkina Faso

Background

Project symbol	n.a.
Geographical coverage	Burkina Faso
LTU	OPC
Contact person	Denis Herbel (Senior Adviser for Producer Organizations and Cooperatives); Boris Gandon (Consultant)
Principal actions	Capacity Development; Support to enabling environment; Market Linkages
Duration	Started in 2012

Description

The project has aimed to promote a peer-to-peer partnership between POs to develop the oilseed value chain in Burkina Faso. In order to strengthen the capacities of the farmers involved in the oilseed value chain, FAO has been facilitating a peer-to-peer cooperation agreement between the French producer organization FNSEA-Agropol (MoU signed with FAO on 18 October 2012) and the apex producer organization from Burkina Faso (Confederation Paysanne du Faso (CPF)) as well as a Canadian producers' organization Union des Producteurs Agricoles – Développement International (UPA-DI) (MoU signed

with FAO on 18 October 2012), to share the experience and technical know-how of the French oilseed value chain and the organizational capacity of the Canadian producer organization to strengthen Burkina Faso's oilseed value chain.

This activity reflects a request in June 2012 from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MASA) in Burkina Faso to support the development of a national programme for the production and commercialization of oilseed crops as an important instrument to improve food security and to reduce national imports of vegetable oil.

Innovation

Technical and organizational peer-to-peer partnerships

Outcomes

A common vision has been developed, by the actors themselves, of a strong, inclusive and efficient value chain.

An evaluation study of the pilot phase has been conducted, examining what has been achieved and what will be the next steps toward a broader programme to strengthen capacities of the actors in the value chain at technical, organizational and institutional levels.

Methodology

The Project applied a participatory approach, with multistakeholder partnership, coupled with organizational analysis and development.

Issues to be resolved

Diversification of incomes for family farmers; improved food security by reducing oil import dependencies; production of high-protein food for livestock during the "hunger gap" in the dry season; and farmer empowerment through collective action at value-chain level.

Lessons learned

Multistakeholders partnerships can bring together complementary approaches and skills, for their common benefit.

Good practices

Peer-to-peer approaches in various fields

Recommendations

Steady dialogue among the various stakeholders involved should be maintained, with a need to develop and to agree on a common vision.

Actions planned for 2015

Fund raising to continue the dynamic started.

19 Etat des Lieux des Groupements de Femmes et jeunes producteurs

Background

Project symbol	TCP/CMR/3402
Geographical coverage	Cameroon
LTU	RAF
Contact person	Sylvana Ntaryamira (Partnerships officer)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Duration	1 month

Description

Inventory of Women and youth producers small groups in Cameroun.

Outcomes

A report on youth and women producers groups was produced.

Recommendations

Recommendations on how to organize such groups into cooperatives were provided during the workshop.

20 International Workshop on Family Farming and Sustainable Rural Development

Background

Project symbol	n.a.
Geographical coverage	Capo Verde
LTU	FAOCV
Contact person	Luciano Dias da Fonseca (Assistant Representative)
Principal actions	Voice and participation
Duration	2 days

Description

Based on the Baloi D'Horta initiative, the NGO Monte and the Regional Council of Partnerships of Santo Antão (CRP-SA) organized an International Workshop on Family Farming and Sustainable Rural Development, held on 27 and 28 November in Santo Antão, Cabo Verde. The International Workshop joined initiatives taken by various entities around the world to celebrate the International Year of Family Farming (AIAF) in 2014. FAO was invited to participate as the primary world advocate of family farming.

Innovation

Some key innovative elements were acknowledged during the International Workshop, namely:

- The recognition that agriculture should be encouraged as a key activity for sustainable development, being the main economic activity in rural areas.
- The decision taken by entrepreneurs of implementing a MoU with NGOs to identify key areas of development, particularly in the joint promotion of sustainable tourism in Santo Antão (training, new product and action development, and strengthening of associations).

- The development of associations, and in particular the definition of project selection criteria, particularly in the field of household economics, which take account of sustainability, resource enhancement and development of local cultures, with the inclusion of cultural values in sustainable development policies.
- The importance of supporting public policies for family farming was stressed, as well as the recognition that these instruments should enhance local authority and CSO efforts.

Outcomes

The main outcome of the seminar was the stressed placed on pointing out the importance of public policies to support family farming requires focusing on several dimensions, including instruments that emphasize the link between communities (associations), local authorities, training and research actions, and no less important: CSOs.

Methodology

The alliance created between private entrepreneurs, an NGO and public authorities to identify key areas of development of the sector, needs to be emphasized.

Issues to be resolved

The volcanic eruption recorded on the island of Fogo impeded the participation of some partners in the Seminar, including decision-makers.

Lessons learned

The seminar contributed to a common reflection on the importance of small-scale agriculture for sustainable development, and its primary role in the fight against hunger and poverty in rural areas.

Good practices

The successful participation of an international NGO, national private sector entities, national associations of farmers and national public institutions in organizing an international workshop was commendable.

Recommendations

It is necessary to raise the profile of family farming.

Actions planned for 2015

Involve CSOs in the implementation of activities promoted by FAO, through signing MOUs.

21 Revitalization of the local economy of Kungu, to support the process of reconciliation and peace

Background

Project symbol	OSRO/DRC/103/SWE
Geographical coverage	Democratic Republic of Congo
LTU	SFC
Contact person	Christian Akilimali (M&E)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Support to enabling environment; Market linkages
Budget	US\$4 565 660 (total)
Duration	3 years (1 July 2011 to 31 December 2014)

Description

The main activities implemented in 2014 are listed below.

- To conduct a study on agricultural chains.
- Structuring and training 200 producer groups (PGs), out of which 172 were crop farmer producer groups and 20 were livestock farmers, in associative and organizational principles, revenue management, good governance, working capital management, and autonomy.
- Capacity building of 3 208 members of PGs (1873 men and 1335 women) in associative principles and good governance.
- Capacity building of 60 management committee members of 20 PGs, including one-third women, trained in administrative, financial and technical management.
- Setting up of a community radio named “Radio Kungu Lisanga”.
- Training of 110 facilitators for Farmer Field Schools (FFS), including 17 women, selected among members of 172 agricultural producer groups. Training focus was on the principles and methodology of FFS, good agricultural practices (management of inputs, crop itineraries, combatting diseases and weeds, and soil conservation) and cross-cutting issues (conflict management, gender and HIV/AIDS).
- Diversification and increase in agricultural production, involving seed quality control, goats and ploughing tools.
- Improvement in marketing conditions through distribution and installation of 212 agricultural machines (gins, mills, shellers, blenders and winnowers), and construction of community infrastructure.
- Awareness raising among local authorities for their involvement in community mobilization for access to land and maintenance of rural roads.

Innovation

Main innovative elements introduced by the project were in terms of product and process innovation, coupled with social innovation.

- Capacity building for producer groups, addressing environmentally friendly crops and conservation, processing and marketing of agricultural products.
- Introduction of high quality seeds of varieties with high production efficiency and implementation of agricultural product processing and storage units.
- Empowerment of women in the management of producer groups (decision-making) and resource management (revenue) from commercialization.
- Women’s workloads reduction in the operations (production, storage and processing).

Outcomes

Main outcomes achieved by the project are:

- Structuring and training of 200 PGs (172 of crop farmers and 20 of livestock farmers) in associative and organizational principles, revenue management, good governance, working capital management and autonomy.
- Through sharecropping, the capital of each PG and beneficiary household increased.
- Federation of PGs in producer organizations (POs).
- Improvement of beneficiary food security through food diversification and increased production, with resultant increased beneficiary income.
- Facilitation of dialogue and conflict resolution between communities by raising awareness and using interactive radio broadcasting.
- Construction of warehouses and markets to facilitate marketing and trading.

Methodology

The methodology adopted employs the creation of an associative movement based on free choices.

Lessons learned

Having established a democratic debate within the group for harmonious conflict resolution, also creating a match between supply chain development and group economic interest.

Good practices

Good practices were observed in respect of environmentally friendly agricultural techniques, fish processing, and maintenance of rural roads by POs for product transportation.

Recommendations

The consolidation of activities related to community dynamics, marketing facilitation and professionalism of entrepreneurs should lead to the development of a cooperative movement.

22 Food security assistance to vulnerable groups including refugees

Background

Project symbol	OSRO/DJI/302
Geographical coverage	Djibouti
LTU	SFE
Contact person	Leone Magliocchetti Lombi (Water Management Expert)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development
Budget	US\$398 802 (total)
Duration	9 months (16 October 2013 to 30 June 2014)

Description

One component of this project aims at increasing the resilience and self-reliance of refugees and the surrounding host community in Djibouti. Targeted beneficiaries are characterized as highly dependent on food distributions (refugees) and external markets (host community), and most recent surveys confirm they are also suffering global and

acute malnutrition. Within the vision of fostering food security through durable solutions, FAO developed a package for the creation and management of multipurpose vegetable gardens at household level. This package was developed based on both the specifics of Djibouti's environmental conditions and the social context of Ali Addeh and Hol Hol refugee camps areas. The planned activities included: conducting a rapid participative study for selecting the vegetable crops to be promoted, which included the analysis of local markets; providing technical training on gardening techniques and water management, while creating local expertise; and distributing inputs and material for garden creation and consolidation of productive gardens.

Innovation

Based on the lessons learned through several years in the field in Djibouti, FAO developed a complete package for Ali Addeh and HollHoll of small-gardening activities that could contribute to increase and diversify the available daily food basket because it can be easily disseminated and practised at household level, in a safe and cost-effective manner. The package, which is "Djibouti's environmental challenges proof", includes a 5-month-long extensive training and all necessary inputs. Among other concerns, water availability being a strong issue for the refugees and rural local communities (51 percent of households have no easy access to water), the package is built on the maximization of water savings through effective and accessible technology.

Outcomes

The outcome achieved is that all key beneficiaries have availability and access to high protein and vitamin-rich vegetables. Forty drip irrigation systems, seed and tool kits to improve agricultural production were distributed in the refugee camps, and the beneficiaries were trained in their use. The beneficiaries from this activity were estimated to be 240 people (85 percent women and 15 percent men).

Methodology

From gardens already established and on the basis of previous experiences in the context of urban and peri-urban agriculture where there is a lack of available land and water, FAO Djibouti developed a module combining training with technical support and input provision. For the first pilot phase, the Holl Holl camp was identified because it was the most appropriate because the presence and availability of water was relatively better than Ali Adeh, and there was a better ratio between beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries.

Issues to be resolved

Challenges the project experienced were equipment delivery not ideally synchronized with the production cycle; and participation gradually reduced due to a phenomenon of delegation of responsibilities among participants.

Lessons learned

The approach of vegetable garden development in the refugee camp showed that:

- gardens are more productive with respect to the initial situation;
- understanding drip irrigation was an advantage, despite the relatively poor availability of water, and this contributed to increased production; and
- technical support and training should be provided constantly during the entire crop development cycle in order to best influence the final results.

Good practices

Prior to the actual start of activities, a preliminary discussion with the beneficiaries should clarify the entire cycle of training and crop production, with clearly expressed responsibilities. Economic drip irrigation systems should be adopted at family level, with delocalized production. Input distribution should be provided incrementally during the crop production cycle, limiting inputs to those beneficiaries who are actually demonstrating following up activities.

Recommendations

The technical support and training should be provided constantly during the entire crop development cycle in order to best influence the final results and, more important, to provide the needed motivation to beneficiaries involved with agricultural production.

Actions planned for 2015

During 2015, about 600 families will be supported through this kind of activity, scaling up this experience from applying the lessons learned during this project, which could be considered a pilot phase to research, test and adapt the package of training plus inputs.

23 Promoting intraregional commercialization of exotic and temperate fruits in Tigray and Amhara Regions [Ethiopia]

Background

Project symbol	GCP/ETH/073/ITA
Geographical coverage	ETHIOPIA
LTU	AGS/SFE
Contact person	Cristina Scarpocchi (Operations Officer)
Principal actions	Increase Production and Productivity; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment.
Budget	US\$3 050 000 (total)
Duration	8 years (1 July 2007 to 30 June 2015)

Description

The strategic objective of this project is to contribute to the improvement of food security and household income of farming communities through the diversification of horticultural crops, with an enabling environment for markets to improve livelihood. The intervention targets these main specific objectives:

- Further develop the capacity of Bureaux of Agriculture and Rural Development (BoARDs) to provide efficient extension services to fruit growers, although on a limited scale.
- Improve post-harvest handling for both fruit and cactus.
- Establish and develop business-oriented farmer organizations.
- Promote business-to-business linkages among value-chain actors.
- Promote the commercialization of targeted products at regional and national level.

Innovation

Given the very strong commitment demonstrated by the Tigray and Amhara regions to support the first and second phase of the project (for a total of five years), the expansion

of cactus and tropical fruits production at farmer level as major long-term programmes has received growing attention from the Government.

Outcomes

While the institutional beneficiary of this project will essentially be the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and its corresponding regional BoARDs, the immediate short- and medium-term beneficiaries will be Ethiopian fruit growers (about 10 000 small- and medium-scale farmers) who will see their production increased and livelihood diversified. The project will lead to a significant increase in the incomes of beneficiaries and households and will also contribute to food and nutrition security. The private sector will also benefit from this intervention. National research and development institutions, scientists, technicians and individual farmers who will benefit from the cascaded capacity development in fruit tree management, post-harvest handling, value addition and commercialization, will also benefit from the project. The implementation strategy has several elements.

■ Ensuring sustainability for cactus and fruit nurseries

The technical assistance in the fruit nurseries will be continued, at a lower level with respect to the previous phases, with the main objective of ensuring sustainability through a sound exit strategy based on the transformation of nurseries into fully fledged commercial activities.. In addition to this, the project will continue to focus on selected farmers in improving crop management for better quality *beles* [*Opuntia ficus-indica*] production and commercialization.

■ Improve post-harvest handling and promote market opportunities

The project will focus on the introduction and adaptation of suitable technologies for post-harvest handling of cactus and fruit crops. The post-harvesting practices will also include proper packaging and proper transportation to minimize damage and ensure good quality standards. In this respect, farmers' associations will be established and promoted. Formal business-to-business linkages with traders, processors and buyers will be facilitated.

■ Capacity development of BoARDs

The capacities of BoARDs of Tigray region and Amhara have already been enhanced through training of staff and technicians in the area of fruit production, post-harvest handling and commercialization. In order to contribute to a sustainable exit strategy, the present phase will include a reduced set of capacity development activities related to this component. In particular, a sustainable hand-over of nursery management will be facilitated by FAO, including facilitation to prepare business plan(s) to identify nursery profitability and support their transformation into a complete commercial activity within putative six months.

Good practices

One of the cooperatives supported by the project is engaged in the production of *beles* marmalade. Following the signature of a MoU between FAO and Eataly, an Italian food retailer has purchased 4 000 jars of the marmalade, to support small-scale producers by facilitating access to markets by family farming products (more info at bit.ly/1BtQXNd). FAO has followed the processing of the jam, and food quality checks have been carried out by laboratories in Ethiopia and Italy, who certified compliance with food quality standards. Cooperation between FAO, Ministry of Agriculture, Ethiopia, and Eataly has been crucial to the success of this initiative. It supports cooperatives and associations of

small producers for the collection, processing, storage and marketing of the cactus plant and products.

Activities for 2015

The project continues to strengthen the production of good quality fruit trees, to enhance quality of *beles* fruits through appropriate post-harvest handling, and to orientate farmers towards commercialization of fruits.

24 Multiple activities in collaboration with FAOETH and FAOSFE

Background

Project symbol	FMM/GLO/102/MUL
Geographical coverage	Ethiopia
LTU	AGS
Contact person	Calvin Miller (Senior Officer and Group leader)
Actions	Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Market linkages

Description

FAO in collaboration with the Terrafina Microfinance Programme (TMF) supported by the Rabobank Foundation identified a small number of cooperatives that would potentially get access to a loan from the microfinance institutions (MFIs) supported by TMF in Ethiopia. Two MFIs – Wasasa and Busa Gonofaa – have expressed their mutual interest to collaborate. In 2014, a workshop was organized by FAO, TMF, the MFIs and two primary cooperatives from the Oromia region. In order to facilitate the linkage between POs and MFIs, Wasasa and Busa Gonofaa have been trained in using a Cooperative Assessment Tool (CAM), which equips the MFI to gain better knowledge about the potential of the cooperatives. At present, the MFIs are assessing six cooperatives in Oromia region. Training material has been developed both for the cooperatives and for the MFIs, by FAO and TMF respectively, to address two different issues: first, exploiting the maximum potential of current assets by accessing credit (for example working capital); and, second, improving the mutual understanding of business practices at PO level and the due diligence processes at MFI level.

With respect to activities aiming at enabling the environment for POs and cooperatives, a policy forum on “Agricultural Risk Management and Innovative Financial instruments” was organized. It was attended by representatives of state ministries, donors, development agencies, practitioners, researchers and cooperatives. FAO, in collaboration with UNIDO, is also working with the Agricultural Transformation Agency (ATA) and the Ministries of Agriculture and of Industry, developing feasibility studies for the creation of Agri-food Parks, which represent new markets for cooperatives to supply their crops.

Finally, two documents have been prepared and are planned for publication, namely: “Innovative rural financial instruments in Ethiopia” and “The Ethiopia Commodity Exchange and innovative finance in the rural sector of Ethiopia”.

Innovation

Financial Innovation, Market linkages with POs, Agri-food parks, Risk management.

Outcomes

Workshops delivered, technical assistance provided, Policy Forum organized, 2 publications published, Rome-Based Agencies (RBAs) work on financial inclusion.

Methodology

Multiple facilitation for financial and market inclusion

Good practices

This is a hybrid model that combines Value Chain Development, Value Chain Finance and strengthening of the Enabling Environment.

Currently, cooperatives and small-scale farmers have difficulties in creating sustainable business linkages in rural areas. The main challenges that cooperatives and MFIs are facing are:

- lack of business mind-set of the cooperatives;
- limited knowledge about market potential for specific crops;
- weak collaboration and business relations between VC actors and supporters;
- underutilization of available assets;
- absence of tailored financial products for cooperatives and small-scale farmers;
- lack of financial institutions at *kebele* level;
- limited mutual trust between cooperatives and MFIs; and
- vague understanding of not only the business of the cooperative, but also the requirements of MFIs for loan disbursement.

The training material and training events provided have been improving the business mind-set of cooperatives, and simultaneously establishing mutual understanding and trust between cooperatives and MFIs.

The POs are currently mostly operating in loose value chains. To create a viable business, POs need to be strengthened and capacitated, and improved technologies and practices need to be introduced. Through such collaboration, small-scale producers will be able to create linkages with the market and to produce the right crop or specific variety in the desired quality and quantity, for a competitive price and at the right time. FAO will support the creation of structured linkages between VC actors, create awareness of the market, and provide tools to exploit the full market potential in targeted VCs.

Recommendations

A policy task force was formed and is currently operating for supporting the implementation of policies on agricultural risk management and related financial instruments.

Principal activities planned for 2015

Further PO training to be delivered on PO management and value-chain finance, to enable POs to become eligible clients of MFIs. This activity will be joint with the TMF, which will provide technical assistance to MFIs for developing specific products tailored to PO members' needs.

25 Entrepreneurial capacity strengthening of agricultural cooperatives in Gabon

Background

Project symbol	TCP/GAB/3403
Geographical coverage	Gabon
LTU	SFCM/ESW
Contact person	Afla Odile Angoran (Policy Officer)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Market linkages
Budget	US\$308 000 (total)
Duration	2 years (28 November 2013 to 29 May 2015)

Description

The cooperative movement is at an embryo stage, in the form of small associations. The project is organizing these associations into proper cooperatives by providing training on what a cooperative is, its functioning, its purpose, etc. The project has been able to help these associations merge into four cooperatives, which are receiving capacity building with the aim of having a single union of cooperatives. The next stage is to build capacity for enterprise development.

Innovation

The project put emphasis on conservation agriculture by teaching cooperative members new production techniques in line with environmental concerns (members are learning to plant in line, no more slash-and-burning, etc.).

Outcomes

The project's main focus is capacity building for the cooperative movement in Gabon. After ten months of implementation, real cooperatives are emerging, knowledge is being acquired, market access is being developed, and women constitute the majority of members.

Methodology

Organizational factors and motivation are very critical for the success of cooperatives. In Gabon, working together has not been very common, so the project has succeeded in helping the initial associations coming together to form cooperatives. Today, cooperatives have obtained legal recognition by the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Agriculture. As the project is still ongoing, capacity building is continuing.

Issues to be resolved

Slow perception of what is to be gained by working together.

Lessons learned

Yield increase by adopting conservation agriculture is evident to all members.

Recommendations

Continued capacity building on the functioning of cooperatives, entrepreneurship and market access.

Actions planned for 2015

Activities planned for 2015 are to:

- provide further training on associative life in cooperatives;
- develop and make available – to primary cooperatives and to the union which will be formed – management support in accordance with the Law on Cooperative Societies (AUSCOOP) of the Gabonese Republic;
- train cooperators in administrative, technical, financial and business management of a cooperative, together with accounting;
- continue structuring the cooperative movement (i.e. to form the cooperative UNION);
- organize and implement advisory support to cooperatives in collaboration with the Estuary Agricultural Province, the Kango agricultural sector, and the “Institut Gabonais d’Appui au Développement” (IGAD);
- participate in the preparation of the workshop for facilitators and creators of local cooperatives (including ministerial and NGO officers who support the creation of cooperatives);
- continue with the preparation of the Entrepreneurial Development Plans;
- assess needs in terms of capacity development and assistance;
- form cooperatives and monitor their businesses;
- support start-up business; and
- prepare and conduct training workshop on the “Market Analysis and Development” process.

26 Capacity building in agribusiness development: Lesotho National Farmers Union

Background

Project symbol	TCP/LES/3403
Geographical coverage	Lesotho
LTU	AGS
Contact person	Heiko Bammann (Enterprise Development Officer)
Principal actions	Voice and Participation; Capacity development; Market linkages
Budget	US\$442 000 (total)
Duration	2 years (11 September 2013 to 31 August 2015)

Description

In 2008, the Lesotho National Farmers Union (LENAFU) was formed as the apex body of Basotho farmers, encompassing the major commodity associations in the country (Lesotho Wool and Mohair Growers Association; Lesotho Horticulture Farmers Association; Lesotho Piggery Association; and the Lesotho Poultry Association). In total, it has currently about 19 member organizations, with about 60 000 individual members. The national association is a member of the Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU) and comprises some staff located in their central office, namely a Chief Executive and some administrative support. The association has a board of 23 persons, with 2 representatives from each district. It has accessed funds from IFAD and the EC through an agreement with SACAU covering staff costs, and the procurement of office furniture and equipment, as well as support for some work on policy and advocacy. This support ends in 2017, and there is a need to identify a sustainable financing mechanism

for LENAFU to secure its existence and ability to continue service provision to members post-2017. The mandate of LENAFU is threefold, namely: advocacy and lobbying support for farmers within the national development processes, including the CAADP country team process; support to members that include district farmer associations, which coordinate commodity organizations, cooperatives, and others; and dissemination of information on aspects of agribusiness, production and processing issues.

The FAO project provides technical assistance and expertise to LENAFU in developing a focused and sound strategic plan, as well as to build the capacity of the organization in the fields of lobbying and advocacy; technical and agribusiness support services to members; management; and communication. The support work is being implemented through a number of building blocks: (1) organizational assessment and outline of a strategic plan; (2) lobby training and follow-up; (3) guidance and training in agribusiness development services (using ERI/MY.COOP as a basis); (4) training + action planning financial management; (5) participatory development of a communication strategy; (6) assessment of HR resources; and (7) preparation of a strategic and business plan.

The FAO support work is being implemented in collaboration with and under contract by Agriterra.

Innovation

The history of farmer organizations in Lesotho is still very young. Institutional innovations will establish pre-conditions for later work on adoption of more productive technologies and, gradually, improved market access.

Outcomes

This comprehensive support project touches upon a number of areas. The most important are:

- Increased member access to financial capital.
- Increased member human capital.
- Increased bonding (social capital).
- Increased bridging (social capital)
- Increased participation in policy dialogue and decision-making processes.

Methodology

My COOP. and participatory assessment tools.

Recommendations

It is an ongoing project and it is too early to propose recommendations.

Actions planned for 2015

Capacity development; Market linkages

27 Support for the operationalization of CSA (Agricultural Service Centre)

Background

Project symbol	UTF/MAG/080/MAG
Geographical coverage	Madagascar
LTU	TCSF
Contact person	Randrianarisoa Elias (National Coordinator)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Knowledge generation and sharing
Duration	5 years (1 March 2010 to 30 June 2015)

Description

Main actions implemented by the project are:

- Support missions carried out by the persons in charge of the CSA Support Service (SACSA) for support to start-up activities; consolidation of skills acquired during the start-up phase and elaboration of the review of activities of the crop year; and preparation of participative strategic approaches.
- Training, information and capacity building provided by the CSA Support Service for members of the Regional Orientation and Allocation Committee, new staff and strategic partners. The aim is to have a better understanding and mastership of the Regional Fund for Agricultural Development (FRDA) Office in order to carry through their functions and activities.
- Support and monitoring of CSA in the CSA-FAO partnership through other projects.
- Development of a partnership agreement (convention) between FAO and CSA to link quality seed production with markets.
- Implementation of audit intervention and management control of the CSA, addressing control of financial management, human resources management, and governance.
- Elaboration of achievements on the activities for updating the baseline process; communication and sensitization; establishment of the list of buyers; support for contracting and technical support; etc.
- Evaluation of CSA regarding performance (governance, management and technical efficiency); assessment of the first impacts of developed sectors; and ability of the CSA to undertake new functions and typology support.
- Identification of needs for support, including: support for the development and implementation of the communication plan; the need to retrain on the use and operation of the demand database; the renewal of the arrangement with the local radio; the replacement of equipment and facilities (motorcycle, computer and audio-visual equipment); capacity building in structuring sectors in order to adopt appropriate methodology; capacity building in establishment of agreements, contracts and clauses; and negotiation and communication techniques.

Innovation

Main innovation are as follows:

- development of linkages between demand and supply of services;
- support for research funding;
- support for producers in the field of project management;
- promoting the development of a structured demand and the development of service offer in quantity and quality; and
- availability and dissemination of technical and economic information to producers and to rural development actors.

Outcomes

Producer capacities developed, mainly in: short-cycle breeding management; adoption of improved farming techniques; ability to cope with the lean period between harvests by selling small livestock products; reducing direct operating costs; reducing working time and crop losses; gradual increase in production; water control through infrastructure rehabilitation and implementation of the Rice Intensification System (SRI); strengthening solidarity among members in the joint management of equipment; and increasing CSA attendance rates.

Methodology

CSA aim to provide producers and their organizations with the advice they need to ensure their capacity development for financial, economic, organizational, legal and accounting issues. For that, they constitute a technical structure playing a role in information, animation in agricultural development, consultancy, support for demands, and monitoring actions.

Issues to be resolved

Main issues encountered include:

- The material and human resources available to the CSA are insufficient to contact and inform all municipalities in the district.
- Follow up is not sufficient after the establishment of contact between suppliers and demanders, and the outcome is not always known by CSA because of the lack of feedback from providers.
- Members of the Steering Committee do not communicate with their colleagues and sensitization actions with farmers have not been developed anymore. The members of the Steering Committee are developing a sensitization programme and monitoring among farmers, but a lack of resources is the main constraint.
- The CSA needs an internal staff member or access to one nearby to do monitoring and evaluation activities so that the necessary decisions can be made in a timely manner.
- Compared with agriculture activities, farmers wait for rains to deposit their applications for the service support they need. However, the application processing time must be considered before being able to satisfy the farmer's requests. Communication and information activities are insufficient and not diversified because farmers do not know enough about the CSA.
- Sensitization activities should be more effective and members of the Steering Committee, should interact with the technical team. The mandate of the Steering Committee members – two years – is too short for continuous and effective operationalization of functions; it should be 3 or 4 years to better perform the role. There are municipalities where applications are very few, implying that sensitization must be more intense and the members of the Steering Committee must interact with the technical team. Farmer producers took time to realize that the CSA is not a state project, so that CSA initially had a slow response from producers.

Lessons learned

Main lessons learned are that:

- 1) The technical team and Steering Committee need to be equipped (with human and material means) to match the intervention and to reflect the importance of the activities related to the five CSA functions.

- 2) The technical and economic partners need to be efficient and real collaborators to support the activities of producers.
- 3) The government agency for technical, financial and institutional support has to be rigorous and complementary to CSA.
- 4) Donors are the real allies of producers, who gain improved access to finance.
- 5) Dynamic and structured producers who are professional persevere in the search for better productivity in their production systems.
- 6) Local authorities collaboration facilitates all necessary administrative procedures.

Good practices

Experience shows that best practices include:

- establishment of a farmers' space in rural municipalities;
- setting up a platform for NGOs, projects and programmes;
- personalized mail correspondence to inform beneficiaries, developing partnerships with input suppliers;
- the development of information and communication tools to increase knowledge of CSA actions;
- field trips to mobilize demands for services;
- strengthening collaboration between service providers and farmers;
- developing close collaboration between the CSA and the Ministry for Planning and Control;
- mobilization of entities involved in information and communication so that CSA shares development of associative credit systems;
- development of collaboration between Microfinance Institutions and CSA to support farmers in the formulation of credit applications; and
- mandatory training for farmers in infrastructure maintenance long before the completion of construction, development of grassroots service providers, enhancing collaboration between service providers and peasant producers, in development of local services (the case of input shops).

Recommendations

Main recommendations focus on continuing strengthening of the various activities.

- Strengthen delegated project management with farmers' organizations.
- Strengthen the interface between producers and other partners.
- Support the creation of linkages between farmers' organizations and partners.
- Strengthen capacity building in PO formulation of demands.
- Strengthen the intervention of CSA in the agricultural marketing chain, and in the agricultural inputs setting, consolidating relationship between producers and markets.
- Support the development of promising sectors, such as: the production and marketing of rice, vegetables, dairy, short-cycle livestock including fish farming, etc.
- Strengthen financial mechanism networks enabling them to identify financial mechanisms effectively adapted to PO needs, and to sustainably support the CSA.
- Strengthen communication skills of the CSA, providing support for new information technologies to effectively carry out capacity development activities for POs and to ensure the dissemination of technical and economic information.
- Formulation of a new CSA strengthening project, taking into account the recommendations of the capitalization study of best practices, and focus on high potential areas.

Actions planned for 2015

The overall objective of the programme in 2015 is to contribute to poverty reduction and food security, as well as to improve living conditions in rural areas of Madagascar, through support to the implementation of the CSA programme

The specific objectives include improving the quality of services to producers, through the consolidation and support for CSA to attain full operational capability, and promoting training and information to improve production in rural areas.

The expected results are:

- consolidation and strengthening the capacities of CSA;
- the establishment of a CSA monitoring and control system at the Regional Directorates of Rural Development;
- design and dissemination of easy tools as reference to the regional offices of rural development and CSA; and
- networking CSA through the management of a Service Providers Database and integration of CSA programme and other programmes.
- FAO will assist the Directorate of Support to the Organization of Sectors (DAOFS) through the CSA Support Service (SACSA) until the end of June 2015, for the management of funds from the Ministry, facilitating their assignment and availability, to:
 - ensure continuity of coordination, technical support, monitoring and evaluation of CSA;
 - support the project management of the Support Service to CSA for operationalization and capacity building of support organizations, regional Directorates of Rural Development and the CSA;
 - organize workshops and training sessions on the Regional Fund for Rural Development; and
 - acquire additional equipment for the CSA.

28 Jeunesse au Travail: Réduction de la Pauvreté Rurale

Background

Project symbol	GCP/MLI/040/MUL
Geographical coverage	Mali
LTU	ESP
Contact person	Fulvio Cenci (Youth Employment Consultant)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Budget	US\$2 000 000 (total)
Duration	2 years (2014-2016)
Web site	http://www.fao-ilo.org/news-ilo/detail/en/c/243167/?no_cache=1

Description

Unleashing the capacity of young women and men to effectively participate in the modernization of the agricultural sector is imperative for enhanced resilience and poverty reduction in Mali, where more than 60 percent of the population lives in rural areas and is below the age of 25. The project is targeting two regions (Kayes and Mopti) and it is supporting government's efforts to generate 400 decent employment opportunities and improving the quality of 1000 jobs for rural youth.

Innovation

Since 2011, FAO has developed an innovative public-private partnership model for youth employment in agriculture, and has piloted the model in Malawi, Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar archipelago. The project in Mali is building from those achievements and adapting to the local context.

Outcomes

Twenty Facilitators for each region were trained using the FAO's Junior Farmer Field and Life Schools (JFFLS) approach at different levels (Agricultural Extension Officers, POs, Youth Groups) to replicate the training at field level and to support the selection of beneficiaries.

Methodology

An initial mapping of stakeholders working with youth and agriculture was done to identify possible synergies and geographical coverage. One steering and two regional committees were put in place to facilitate project activities and foster linkages among partners.

The approach makes use of JFFLS training methodology and aims to facilitate the establishment of long-term partnerships between public and private rural institutions in Mali, such as POs to facilitate access to land, market and credit for the beneficiaries

Recommendations

Young producers should be put at the centerpiece of a “pro-poor” agricultural growth agenda. Empowered through existing PO networks and made more competitive by both institutional and technological innovations, creating decent job opportunities for rural youth therefore requires a coordinated interplay between different institutions and partners, both local and international.

Actions planned for 2015

Actions planned for 2015 are mainly in the areas of: Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing; and Market linkages.

The first quarter 2015 will be dedicated to training facilitators, identifying beneficiaries according to criteria validated by the steering committee, and replicating the training with cascade training while the POs will be involved to support market linkages and land access.

29 Support to Agricultural Markets in Somalia

Background

Project symbol	OSRO/SOM/125
Geographical coverage	Somalia
LTU	SFEMD
Contact person	Osman Hussein (Agribusiness Development Advisor)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Market linkages
Budget	Euro 2 200 000 (total)
Duration	2,5 years (15 Dec 2011 to 14 Jun 2014)
Web site	http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/215914/icode/

Description

Cooperatives have played a prominent role in Somalia's economy, in particular in the agriculture sector. In 1991, Somalia entered into a protracted civil war period, with total collapse of the government, and consequent collapse of the cooperatives. As the country recovers, efforts are being made to revive agricultural cooperative. In 2013, a meeting was held in Mogadishu between the cooperatives, Somali traders, Government, FAO and WFP, with the aim of linking cooperatives and buyers (WFP and Somali traders). It was agreed to launch a pilot initiative where the production and marketing capacity of 100 farmers belonging to ten small cooperatives is enhanced in order to become suppliers to WFP's Local Procurement for its aid need in the country. Maize was chosen as the product for this initiative.

Working with cooperatives, the FAO Somalia technical team identified the technical gaps as well as the processes and technical capacity needed in order for the cooperatives to meet WFP's standards. As result, FAO trained 14 cooperative technicians in post-harvest managements and grading, as well as proper warehouse management, with aim of preventing and reducing post-harvest losses. Grading methods and aflatoxin concepts were introduced to Somali farmers for the first time. East African Standards for maize was initially chosen as a grading method before the country develops its own quality standards. Meanwhile, FAO equipped cooperatives with post-harvest handling and processing tools, and equipment such as tarpaulins, moisture meters, maize shellers, rapid aflatoxin testing kits, and maize grading tools, as well as urea fertilizers. Moreover, FAO mapped the geographic location of all the farms participating in the initiative for traceability and to provide a database of all farmers. FAO periodically monitored farmer fields and cooperatives during the crop production cycle, as well as in the post-harvest period. As a result, Somali farmers successfully produced and sold 200 t of Grade 1 maize to the World Food Programme under the WFP's Local Procurement Programme for its food assistance programme in the country. It was the first time in Somalia that WFP procured maize locally.

Innovation

- Maize grading to recognized standards and aflatoxin testing practices were introduced by the Somali cooperative farmers.
- Post-harvest and warehouse management reduced grain losses.
- Graded maize to the same standards as many East African countries will strengthen the link between cooperatives and international trade by opening new markets.
- Cooperative collective bargaining with a major buyer was concluded.

Outcomes

200 t of Grade 1 maize quality sold to WFP.

Issues to be resolved

Security is a major factor in Somalia and may still constrain project potential, since access is limited.

Lessons learned

Cooperatives were highly motivated, but lacked direction and a market for their produce. With market links, cooperatives mobilized and pooled their resources by renting warehousing and organizing maize transport. In addition, local communities benefited

with seasonal jobs created for day-labourers. Sense of ownership among the cooperative members was enhanced, and new members joining and old members renewing membership.

Good practices

Continued transfer of agricultural know-how and technical support as well as open communication are critical to the successes of the cooperatives as they rebuild their institutions and recover from a protracted civil war.

Recommendations

It is recommended that government develop quality standards, and enhance extension services to support the cooperatives.

Actions planned for 2015

A new project has been approved by the EU, and production will be expanded. In 2015, cooperatives are expected to provide 750 to 1000 t of maize to WFP.

30 Support to Somali farmers: achieving quality farm produce for better market access

Background

Project symbol	OSRO/SOM/411
Geographical coverage	Somalia
LTU	AGS
Contact person	Osman Hussein (Agribusiness Development Advisor)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Market linkages
Budget	Euro 3 000 000 (total)
Duration	2 years (1 August 2014 to 31 July 2016)
Web sites	http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/215914/icode/ http://www.fao.org/archive/from-the-field/detail/en/c/210857/ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ns6s6la1EM

Description

With the successful linkage between the cooperatives and the WFP in the pilot phase, the European Union, pleased with the outcome, is funding a new project OSRO/SOM/411EC which builds on the gains made during the project OSRO/SOM/125 EC. The new project now works with 500 farmers, compared with the 100 farmers of the pilot phase, but still the same 10 cooperatives.

The new project is jointly implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), FAO and WFP. MoA provides the extension services and supervision to the farmers at the village level. In addition, MoA is also expected to draft quality standards for grains and pulses. Under this project, FAO will build the MoA capacity by training and equipping the MoA Extension Field Officers. FAO is also supporting the cooperative by providing agricultural inputs to make the operations of the cooperatives efficient and more cost-effective. WFP as part of the implementing partners will help cooperatives in warehouse management, as well as purchasing the maize produced by the farmers.

Innovation

The project is a continuation of OSRO/SOM/125 EC. It continue innovative elements as before, including:

- maize grading and standards introduced by the Somali cooperatives and farmers;
- reviving MoA's Extension Office, and supporting extension training;
- mechanization and other means of reducing production cost; and
- improved storage systems at the farm level.

Methodology

The current project is jointly implemented by MoA, FAO and WFP. The project management structure includes:

- Steering Committee
- Operations Management Team
- Cooperative Management Committee
- Field Extension Officers of MoA
- Cooperative Technical teams

Issues to be resolved

Security is a major factor in Somalia and may still present some risk to the project.

Lessons learned

Scaling up has just begun.

Good practices

FAO will fine tune lessons learned during the pilot phase; however, it is too early to draw any firm conclusions.

Recommendations

It is still too early to recommend any concrete policy.

Actions planned for 2015

Principal activities planned for 2015 are in the areas of: Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing; Market linkages.

31 Sustainable Employment and Economic Development Programme (SEED) Phase II

Background

Project symbol	OSRO/SOM/203 UK
Geographical coverage	Somalia
LTU	Livestock Sector
Contact person	Edwin Barasa-mang'eni (Conflict Analyst)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Market linkages
Duration	4 years (December 2010 to September 2014)
Web site	http://somda.org/index.php/using-joomla/extensions/components/content-component/article-categories/78-somda-at-the-made-in-somaliland-exhibition http://www.scrip.org/journal/PaperDownload.aspx?paperID=40613

Description

FAO Somalia through the Sustainable Employment and Economic Development (SEED) programme funded by Department for International Development (DFID) of UK aid focused on creating economic wealth and employment opportunities in Somalia, a country embroiled in conflict in the centre and south, and with fragile stability in the northeast and northwest areas. The programme targeted vulnerable groups of women and young people in conflict-affected communities. The SEED Programme explored opportunities to develop innovations and research in market development, and to foster improved access to markets, as well as new employment creation opportunities along the meat value chain, including livestock by-products.

A learning tour was undertaken in regional facilities to provide women and youth groups with the opportunity to acquire hands-on experience in cottage industries within a Somali environment in Kenya. The aim was to emulate practical lessons that could be integrated into the Enterprise Development Programme being undertaken by FAO in Somaliland through the UK aid SEED programme. One group in Kenya, known as Bemosa Craft Developers, specialized in production of artistic items primarily derived from bones (cattle, goat, camel, sheep and fish), cattle horn, wood and metals, either singly or in combination. The products included flower vases, spoons, candle stands, key holders and a wide range of jewellery made from horn. Furthermore, the group was extracting bone marrow and fats to make ghee used for deep frying Somali traditional small meats (*Mugmad*).

Bone craft, soap production and a *Mugmad* production and packaging enterprise was found to be a viable option. This could be undertaken by both Somali women and youth once trained, producing various products from horn, bone, meat and animal fat as a means of product diversification to create wealth and employment opportunities to fight the rampant poverty in Somaliland.

An initial forty beneficiaries, with various trade skills and academic levels, were selected through the Somaliland Meat Development Association (SOMDA) with competency based training (CBT) skills being employed to build their capacity. One of the primary advantages of CBT was that it focused on the success of each participant. The competency-based approach was useful in enabling each trainee to attain a number of specific and job-related competencies through CBT on soap-making, bone handcrafts and hygienic *Mugmad* processing and packaging for the 40 beneficiaries targeted at the start of the programme. An additional 80 participants were later recruited and received similar training by the end of the programme in September 2014. The beneficiaries were expected to be absorbed into private enterprises that developed the livestock by-products on a commercial basis, although on a small scale. The first 40 beneficiaries were trained in basic skills of bone marrow harvesting from the bones in addition to using normal carcass fats.

Innovation

The project aimed at improving economic and employment prospects for sustainable economic growth, focusing on women and young people. The project's intervention focused on enterprises involving bone crafts, soap making from animal fat, and meat preservation.

The most innovative aspect of the programme centres on the utilization of materials that would otherwise be considered as waste, to create viable trade commodities through value addition. Waste slaughterhouse material used in the project included animal fat and bones. Animal fat derived from intestines and some drawn from bone marrow are the main ingredients of the soap-making process at SOMDA. Furthermore, the bones from slaughterhouses were previously disposed off in a hazardous manner, but since the

project started, it has had the effect of providing a more sustainable way of disposing of the slaughter by-products.

Dry meat, locally referred to as *Mugmad*, is readily available in the local market. However, the presentation and the preparation process were not done in a hygienic environment. The project ensured that *Mugmad* sellers adopted hygiene practices and new packaging techniques, which also enabled them explore distant markets after good reception in the local market. This move further enhanced the utilization of this technique as a meat preservation method in Somalia.

The project, being the first of its kind in Somalia, has attracted a huge level of goodwill and support from Somali people, who are proud to showcase locally made products in a market that is dominated by imports of a large percentage of commodities consumed at household level. This led to invitations for SOMDA to showcase their products in a trade exhibition in Birmingham, UK, and in Dubai in 2014.

Outcomes

The enterprise development activities were undertaken by SOMDA, through bone craft production, soap-making, and drying and packaging of traditional dry meat (*Mugmad*). By mid-2012, the project saw participants record personal income per participant of US\$45 per week for bone craft, US\$18 per week for *Mugmad* (dry meat) production, and US\$50 per week in soap production.

At the expiry of the project in September 2014, income per individual per week had increased from US\$45 per week to US\$50 for bone craft; *Mugmad* production accounted for US\$25, up from US\$18; while income for soap production per participants increased to US\$80, from US\$50 before.

In 2013, SOMDA inaugurated a training institute where interested persons can attend courses to learn about entrepreneurship and how to produce the aforementioned products. This has also seen increased income for the institution, which recorded US\$15 000 as income in 2012 and US\$22 000 in 2013.

The intervention created a total of 120 direct jobs related to either soap, bone-craft (trinkets) or *Mugmad* production. This was besides other indirect jobs that included bone collectors, fat trimmers, and final product retailers in shops and other product outlets. The intervention further reduced piling of bones that previously had been discarded into municipal landfills, contributing to environmental pollution and presenting a public health hazard. Moreover, the by-product value addition served as an alternative source of employment and wealth creation for the disadvantaged. The project affected the lives of 120 young women aged between 19 and 28, all based in Hargeisa in Somaliland. The project purposely avoided clan conflicts by ensuring a clan balance and consideration of the poor minority living in disadvantaged areas of Hargeisa district.

SOMDA has established offshoot companies – Bilan Company and future way Company – for marketing the products. Development of a tailored curriculum was carried out to specifically address the standardization and expansion of the product range. In addition to curriculum development, a marketing strategy for the goods was developed. This is expected to support marketing of the products, especially bone craft trinkets in and outside of the country, to ensure sustainability. This business initiative shows great potential since the entire animal is used, thereby accessing multiple market value chains. In addition, income and eventual profit streams are multi-dimensional.

Methodology

The project benefited from a global conflict analysis that was undertaken by the SEED programme. This served to shed light on existing societal dynamics that could have negative impacts on the project. Methodologies used were therefore selected with this and other key factors in mind.

Participatory approaches were adopted to ensure that ownership of the project by participants was sustained throughout. The contribution of participants in starting the enterprises served to solidify the gains, that took four years to develop.

The community and the local administration were consulted at every stage of the participant selection process. Transparency in terms of sharing information with the public was crucial to successful implementation within a context that has been riddled with instances of conflict over resources and opportunities.

In terms of training, the project brought in local experts for *Mugmad* production, and external experts for both soap and bone craft production. Training curricula were developed to focus on products targeted for value addition, and pre-tested in the field using a sample of selected participants. Participants were taken through 45 days of basic training for each product, followed by a 20-day deepening course, finishing with three months of on-site practical training applying learning-by-doing principles.

Issues to be resolved

Years of protracted conflict in Somalia have seen the emergence of dependency tendencies among beneficiaries of development interventions. While the project's strategy was to work around anticipated challenges, it took more time than anticipated, as it had to deal with elements of dependency typified by frequent requests from SOMDA for financial assistance.

Despite success in enterprise development, lack of policy to guide such interventions at country level continues to hamper efforts to further promote viable enterprises. This therefore means that there is no standardized training and licensing system that is specific to enterprises emerging out of such projects. Need therefore exists for support by the administration towards policy development.

Lessons learned

It is important to maintain neutrality and be transparent in community-related ventures. Relations between existing associations at the beginning of the project were acrimonious. This led to constant tensions and conflict among associations, which intensified when SOMDA was chosen as the beneficiary institution. However, to calm the situation, the project set aside time to interact with other associations to explain the process that led to the selection of SOMDA. Ultimately, it was clear to all that it was a transparent process and that SOMDA had a comparative advantage over other associations, especially in terms of record keeping, transparency and ability to maintain clear financial accounts.

Furthermore the importance of working with the administration in Somalia cannot be downplayed, as some of the challenges may require their direct intervention, especially when issues threaten communal relations.

One of the key lessons is that in such ventures, it is not wise to start off with many products, as learning by beneficiaries may not be in tandem with project timelines. While yoghurt, cheese and sweetened milk production were part of the initial plans, these had to be dropped when it became clear that participants were not ready for this.

Enterprise development presents a viable avenue through which employment opportunities could be built up in Somalia. Need therefore exists for further projects

aimed at promoting local enterprises. This will have the effect of boosting local economies and keeping young people engaged, hence dissuading them from engaging in illicit acts, such as crime, violence, armed conflict, piracy and drug use.

Good practices

The project has proved that investment in women and youth in Somalia can pay off as the effects are felt right up to the household level. This has challenged the dominant myth that women and youth in Somalia cannot engage in productive cottage industries apart from engaging in traditional trades of selling food, meat, milk and other domestic products.

The use of waste products has also promoted environmental awareness and hygiene within the city of Hargeisa

Recommendations

FAO should consider working with development partners in responding to the existing need for community-level enterprises as avenues for employment creation and income generation, and replicate the success of the project in all regions of Somalia.

Support to the administration in developing robust policies that will formalize emerging enterprises and provide a strong legal framework for strengthening micro-enterprises is of great necessity, especially as more regions of the country become newly liberated.

There is need to involve the private sector in enterprise projects, especially in terms of injecting business discipline and providing opportunities for mentoring of young entrepreneurs. A partnership approach will serve to strengthen the micro-enterprises and prepare them for engagement in the business world to a higher level, where their products will be appreciated in the local market and beyond.

Both development partners and the private sector could play a critical role by promoting emerging enterprises in Somalia through partnerships that result in access to affordable credit through micro-finance schemes.

Actions planned for 2015

FAO Somalia is adopting the “Promoting Inclusive Markets for the Poor” approach. This therefore means that efforts have to be intensified in enhancing the capacity of POs to work effectively within the market system.

In order to strengthen internal governance and accountability so as to enhance sustainability, FAO will undertake training for POs in good governance, conflict resolution, bookkeeping, business development and marketing, and reporting.

Appreciating that these POs operate within an environment that has either weak or non-existent policies, FAO will empower them through training in advocacy and effective decision-making for them to be part and parcel of advocacy for a friendly regulatory and policy environment.

32 ToT workshop for local implementing partners and FAO Somalia officers on agricultural value chain finance

Background

Project symbol	OSRO/SOM/203/UK
Geographical coverage	Somalia
LTU	AGS
Contact person	Calvin Miller (Senior Officer and Group leader)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Market linkages
Duration	7 days

Description

The aim of this workshop was twofold:

- to deliver training and ToT to local implementing partners and FAO Somalia officers on agricultural value chain finance tools and approaches and their application in the context of FAO-supported interventions in the country; and
- to discuss current and potential FAO programme work with respect to finance and investment.

Innovation

The main innovative elements introduced by the project are Financial Tools and Business Models for Financing.

Outcomes

The training was successful. Analysis during the course highlighted the fact that no single organization had the capacity to deliver support services for all of the value chain segments.

Methodology

Agricultural Value Chain Finance training toolkit delivered

Recommendations

It was recommended to the project management team to complement the course delivered with further technical assistance from AGS to FAO Somalia officers in order to accompany and mentor implementing partners along the process of implementation remaining activity under SEED's micro-finance component.

Actions planned for 2015

Nothing planned.

33 Capacity building for South African professionals in the field of Agriculture and Food Security (with initial emphasis on International Development Cooperation)

Background

Project symbol	GCP/RAF/412/SAF
Geographical coverage	South Africa
LTU	FAOR
Contact person	Tobias Takavarasha
Principal actions	Capacity development; Knowledge generation and sharing
Duration	7 years (1 May 2007 to 31 March 2015)

Description

The objective of the project was to build capacities of small-scale farmers to transform their farming activities into self-sustaining livelihoods and economically viable enterprises, whilst ensuring high productivity and competitiveness. Professionals in agriculture were also capacitated to improve among other things the services rendered to small-scale farmers, and the effectiveness and cost effectiveness of South African Aid.

Innovation

Beneficiaries have benefited from training that introduced crop diversification, conservation agriculture and integration of farming activities where there is complementary or supplementary behaviour between two farming products or enterprises.

Outcomes

The main outcome was in terms of food security and the overall improvement of rural livelihoods. There has been a limited improvement in leadership empowerment. However, while training on cooperative management was done, it did not target the leadership structures of the cooperatives.

Methodology

Through the project, beneficiaries were linked to other partners such as Techno-serve and EcoLink, which have operations in the communities. This proved to be beneficial for knowledge sharing, and market linkage and opportunities, even more so as the market access component was not included during project conceptualization.

Issues to be resolved

There is a need to:

- establish a benefit sharing policy that all beneficiaries (members of the co-operative) agree on;
- establish clear leadership structures and develop leaders;
- incorporate social development training component specifically addressing gender-related issues; and
- instil a sense of ownership. The beneficiaries form part of the land reform programme and still do not think of themselves as owners, thus wasting valuable talents and skills.

Lessons learned

The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) component should be included into the project in

the initial stages. Beneficiaries had not received capacity training prior to receiving land. The project inherited the land reform challenges. Lack of a social development agenda and blinkered harmonization of the training are counter-productive. Interventions should include agricultural, economic, social and rural development aspects.

Good practices

The partnership between the FAO and the funder has been solid. Their active participation, support and collaboration have been beneficial. The skills audit and gap analysis has helped develop a training programme that is informed by the identified needs of the beneficiaries.

Recommendations

The main recommendations are:

- Develop the capacity of the local actors, i.e. farmers, farmer leaders, extension personnel and traditional leaders to ensure sustainability.
- Develop a sustainable plan that is linked to a transition strategy.
- Strengthen the participation of all stakeholders and improve coordination mechanisms.

Actions planned for 2015

Main actions planned for 2015 are:

- local organizational development; and
- stakeholder management and participation through a mapping exercise.

34 Improved food security and livelihood development for agropastoralist communities in northern Bahr El Ghazal and Warrap States

Background

Project symbol	GCP/SSD/006/SWI
Geographical coverage	South Sudan
LTU	AGP
Contact person	Lita Jackson Joseph (Project Manager)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Budget	US\$720 000 (2014)
Duration	4 years (1 September 2013 to 31 August 2017)

Description

The project was funded by the Government of the Swiss Confederation, through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and implemented by FAO South Sudan, targeting 7050 households, or about 50 000 people.

The main objective is to improve food security, livelihoods and income for vulnerable but economically active agropastoralists in northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap States who, by definition, are reliant on both crop and livestock production. The specific objectives include to:

- Enhance the capacity of public and private extension service providers in Northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap States, and enhance community capacity for planning and improved agropastoral production systems.
- Introduce and promote climate-smart agriculture and conservation agriculture in northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap States.

- Build the capacity of government and other stakeholders in sustainable natural resource management.
- Improve livestock productivity through improved access to animal health services, water, and pasture and fodder production and conservation.

Innovation

The main institutional innovations are:

- Establishment of profitable income-generating activities;
- Strong democratic leadership;
- Establishment of voluntary savings and loan schemes (VSLs).
- Farmer Field Schools. In a group of 30 members, farmers through comparison and experimentation learned the principle of Conservation Agriculture including but not limited to time management, effective use of inputs, cover cropping and crop rotations, with resultant increased values of agro-silvi-pastoral systems and sustainable production.
- Farmer Field School cluster. On completion of a full cycle, FFS groups were congregated into more sustainable groups called FFS Clusters with increased organizational capacity. This forms the basis for agricultural POs and cooperatives.
- Community Based Seed Producers. Some former FFS groups formed Groups of Community Based Seed Grower POs.

Outcomes

The main outcome is the increased resilience and improved community stability among agropastoral communities in northern Bahr el Ghazal and Warrap State as a result of:

- increased food and nutritional security;
- increased access to extension services and agro-inputs; and
- improved social cohesion and increased leadership and organizational capacity among beneficiaries.

Methodology

The project adopted the Farmers/Pastoral Field School (F/PFS) extension approach as a platform for extension service delivery and for building farmers' organizational capacity. The F/PFS is a forum where farmers and trainers debate observations, experiences and present new information from outside the community. It empowers farmers with knowledge and skills, making them more expert in their own fields. It sharpens farmers' ability to make critical and informed decisions and helps farmers learn how to organize themselves and their communities.

Issues to be resolved

The transition from F/PFS to POs and cooperatives requires formalization with concrete modalities.

Lessons learned

The F/PFS Extension approach is well adapted to the socio-economic environment in South Sudan.

Through the F/PFS platform, farmers not only acquire knowledge and skills in Integrated Pest Production Management (IPPM), but also acquire improved organizational capacity to be able to sustainably manage cooperatives and producer groups.

Good practices

Conservation agriculture introduces, among others, time management; effective use of inputs; cover cropping; crop rotations; and values of agrosilvipastoral systems.

Farmers have also adopted group motivational and sustainability mechanisms, such as elective leadership, income generating activities, and village saving and loan schemes.

Recommendations

The main recommendations are:

- Adopt the F/PFS Extension approach for effective delivery of advisory services in South Sudan by the Government of South Sudan and the development partners.
- Extension-related development projects should be long term (at least five years) to allow for complete transition of F/PFS to POs and cooperatives for sustainability.

Actions planned for 2015

- Deliver extension services using the Farmers Field School approach
- Form more F/PFS and assist their transformation into Farmer/Pastoral Field School Cluster POs.
- Through the FFS approach, establish Community-Based Seed Systems (Seed Producer Groups).
- Build capacity for effective Natural Resource Management.
- Deliver livestock extension services using the Pastoral Field School approach.

35 Lakes State Agropastoral Community Resilience Programme

Background

Project symbol	GCP/SSD/002/SPA
Geographical coverage	South Sudan
LTU	AGA
Contact person	Louis Bagare (Project Coordinator)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Budget	US\$2 353 225 (total)
Duration	4 years (9 May 2013 to 8 May 2017)

Description

FAO is increasingly mainstreaming adaptation of FFS for Pastoralists Field Schools (PFS) in its capacity building activities within both the livestock and agriculture sectors. This Agropastoral Field School (APFS) project in the Lakes State of South Sudan aims at increased productivity and improved resilience to disasters among agropastoral communities. Comparative experimentation is used by the pastoralists in order to address challenges that they face in livestock and farming production and marketing, in order to improve their livelihoods. Communities are supported to become resilient through community planning and action.

Innovation

APFS approach is new to South Sudan and the project is one of the first in the country to integrate agriculture, fisheries and livestock in improving the livelihoods of communities. The aim is to ensure that the different sectors can complement each other to improve food

security and livelihoods within the pastoralist communities. Cereal banking is also to be used, whereby farmers keep cereals in times of harvest and then during times of need members of the community can get grain as a loan and pay back either in cash or in kind, with some small interest.

Outcomes

The 40 APFS established so far have 42 percent women. The members of the Field Schools are from different groups from the target communities. The facilitators are mainly youths while leadership responsibilities are shared between men and women.

Methodology

The project is ongoing and aims at building capacity of institutions, both national and state actors, in the Field School approach and practices. The APFS will result in networks of Field Schools that will engage in marketing their products through value addition and improved product quality. The APFS is an extension methodology that brings in 25 to 30 community members with similar interests for a cycle of learning, where they are able to address their farming and herding problems by collectively seeking innovative solutions.

Issues to be resolved

A major constraint to planned implementation is the scarcity of service providers within the State. This has resulted in high costs for the potential service providers, making it difficult to get LoAs signed, thus delaying implementation. There is the issue of insecurity within the target areas, due to inter-communal fighting, either as revenge killing or cattle raids. This is not helped by the fact that civilians widely own guns, making it difficult for the government to control a situation when violence erupts.

Lessons learned

By providing immediate input supply, equipment and agricultural training, as well as building organizational capacities, the APFS approach is further expected to form a platform for future longer-term interventions. The APFS approach complements existing efforts through pastoral institutional development in that the established groups form nuclei platforms through which support services that require organised and empowered groups can be channelled. This will also provide a foundation for a demand-driven services system, which is in line with ongoing reforms in extension service delivery systems in the developing world. By the nature of the APFS approach, there is a direct multiplier effect expected among the other members of the community and immediate neighbourhood of the beneficiary households in terms of improved production practices and entrepreneurial skills.

Good practices

Though the project is not yet fully implemented, the efforts to bring the community members together under the umbrella of the Field Schools is building peaceful co-existence among the target communities. The Village Savings and Loans Association, which is the economic strength of the groups, should build confidence within the individual groups, as well as with other groups. Training is being led by the farmers rather than outsiders, and therefore geared towards solving local problems through local innovations and resources.

Recommendations

The APFS approach should be institutionalized by the national government as a recognized extension system under the law or agricultural policy of the country, such that the government can provide for it in national resources allocations.

There is a need for development of the country framework for institutionalization.

Actions planned for 2015

Main action planned for 2015 include:

- Train PFS members on all aspects of ecosystem processes, livestock management and health, including related issues such as soil and water conservation, range and water management, and agropastoral crop production.
- Introduce and mainstream HIV, gender, climate change and conflict mitigation issues in PFS interventions.
- Carry out baseline and impact surveys among a sample of PFS participants.
- Regular mentoring support by regional PFS master trainers.
- Carry out a regional exchange visit for a selection of the PFS Facilitators to review PFS activities in neighbouring countries.
- Provide on-demand technical backstopping and mentoring to PFS field actors, with identification and documentation of PFS lessons learned and best practices.
- Hold PFS sensitization and institutionalization workshops for local and national government.
- Source appropriate quantities and qualities of livestock vaccines and drugs.
- Identify needs and beneficiary communities for livestock vaccination.
- Train Community Animal Health Workers (CAHWs) in the vaccination process.
- Build capacity of the existing members of the network of CAHWs for livestock disease monitoring and information gathering.
- Carry out livestock vaccination in target communities.
- Train a selection of member of the PFS groups in improved milk hygiene practices and simple milk testing, including distribution of hygienic milk equipment.
- Support improvement of local market infrastructures and collection points.
- Identify fishing communities within the target sites and provide training in improved fishing practices and correct use of nets and gear, alongside distribution of equipment and boats.
- Establish Village Community Banking (VICOBA) savings groups in each of the 20 target communities, and train VICOBA facilitators and train groups in marketing and business skills.

36 Development of a national agricultural investment plan (Technical Assistance to Drafting of the Kingdom of Swaziland's National Agricultural Investment Plan in 2014)

Background

Project symbol	TCP/SWA/3402
Geographical coverage	Swaziland
LTU	TCIA
Contact person	Wadzanai Katsande (Investment Officer)
Principal actions	Support to enabling environment
Budget	US\$100 000 (2014)
Duration	1 year (23 December 2013 to 31 October 2014)

Description

The main objective of the project was to assist the Government of Swaziland to formulate a National Agricultural Investment Plan (NAIP) that will significantly contribute to the attainment of sector goals and targets. FAO, through the contributions of the Investment Centre (TCIA), would specifically assume responsibility for facilitating the transfer of key investment areas into an investment plan. The overall development goal of the project was to assist Swaziland draft a strategic plan, provide technical expertise and guidance on formulating the NAIP. The primary outputs would be a comprehensive document, which would form the basis of the development of the NAIP that would constitute the strategic document for the agricultural sector in the Kingdom of Swaziland for the next five years.

Innovation

The main objective of the National Technical Drafting Team (NTDT) members is to contribute to working documents and further collaborate with national and international institutions. The TCP allowed for the NAIP to be drafted locally, utilizing local expertise in the form of 10 individuals from key ministries involved with agriculture, water resources, trade, rural development, infrastructure and roads, and agricultural marketing. The private sector – through a chamber of commerce and the umbrella farmers' organizations – were hired to undertake the analyses and development of the NAIP. The involvement of the NTDT member was designed to ensure ownership of the final document and to further enhance seamless transition from the final draft to implementation.

The NTDT member were expected to deliver over 15 working days, involving:

- participation in workshops and involvement in the CAADP process until the final business meeting;
- contributing to the comprehensive report, including suitable analyses for the development of the NAIP; and
- participating in other workshops organized within the CAADP Process and framework.

Outcomes

The key outcome was that farmers could have a voice in articulating the policy issues and development of the agricultural sector for the next five years. They were represented and participated in the development of the agricultural investment plan, and thus contributed to its development. They will also be involved in spearheading its implementation.

Methodology

The members of the NTDT met for four drafting workshops in which they were isolated in a hotel with all the relevant literature. They then developed the NAIP from doing a stocktaking review of the agricultural sector, including financial performance. They identified gaps and they then developed the agricultural investment plan based on the gap analysis. They analysed areas of maximum growth potential, which were then verified by an independent econometric study, with final adoption of the areas for investment made after the independent verification process.

Issues to be resolved

As the team had to be small, the NTDT farmers' representative was only able to speak for farmers within the organized farmer organizations. Thus the voice of farmers who were not involved with any organization might not have been heard. The process needed greater engagement from the private sector entities involved in agricultural marketing.

Lessons learned

The NAIP is country led, country owned and developed by country experts. They can all articulate why they derived the investment areas. Because it comprises experts within the broader scope of agriculture, it can be said to have been arrived at through a holistic and consultative process.

Good practices

The fact that the members of the NTDT sequestered themselves in an isolated place and discussed and mapped out issues was important, because they were thus able to concentrate on the development of the NAIP without their other duties interfering with the process. The members of the drafting team were also paid a consulting fee, which meant they were paid for their intellectual property. The multi-disciplinary nature of the NTDT can be used as a basis for a working group that can provide technical guidance to a steering committee for the implementation of the NAIP.

Recommendations

The use of local knowledge with the assistance of external consultants to provide an objective and more strategic overview of a process was beneficial. It helps in the integration of local knowledge with global processes and trends, and helps to situate the country globally.

Actions planned for 2015

The subsequent actions will be the adoption and implementation of the NAIP. The NAIP will be submitted for the NEPAD technical review, and then a business meeting will be held to try to finance the NAIP for implementation between 2015 and 2020.

37 Enabling small-scale producer households access to finance through collective production, storage and marketing strategies

Background

Project symbol	TCP/URT/3501
Geographical coverage	Tanzania
LTU	AGS
Contact person	Emilio Hernandez (Agricultural Finance Officer)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Budget	US\$430 000 (total)
Duration	3 years (1 July 2014 to 30 June 2017)

Description

The main objectives of the project are:

- improving small-scale farmer's financial literacy to enhance their credit worthiness and linkage with financial institutions, and facilitate access to finance by farmers and their organization;
- strengthening small-scale farmers' competitiveness in the market, linking them to other market actors, which calls for improvement in productivity and organization management capacities; and
- partnering Rabobank and FAO in order to deliver training to POs in Tanzania. Through training, new marketing techniques are delivered, productivity is increased and loan management is improved.

Innovation

Innovative elements introduced through training include Innovative Marketing and Financial Models for POs.

Outcomes

Two main outcomes have been identified, namely:

- selected women, men and youth paddy producer organizations in Morogoro have increased competitiveness in the local rice value chain; and
- women, men and youth Cassava Producer groups have increased investment planning capacity.

Methodology

Partnership with the private sector, in this case with Rabobank Foundation. Access to private information about agricultural markets and training on financial loan management that translate into more effective capacity development programmes.

Lessons learned

One of the lessons learned is to always try to consider the private sector as a possible partner.

Actions planned for 2015

The main action planned is to provide further training and coaching to improve new marketing and financial strategies for POs.

38 Promotion of commercialization of agriculture among resettling populations in Gulu, Kole and Lira district of northern Uganda to restore livelihoods and reduce poverty

Background

Symbol	GTFS/UGA/022/ITA
Country	Uganda
LTU	AGS/SFE
Contact person	Cristina Scarpocchi (Operations Officer)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Voice and Participation
Budget	US\$1 300 000 (total)
Duration	2 October 2012 to 1 October 2015

Description

The objective of the project is to contribute to commercialization of agriculture in Acholi and Lango sub-regions of northern Uganda through support to development of rice and sunflower value chains through four key outputs:

- targeted farmer institutions (FFS Networks and associations) strengthened to enhance market-oriented production and marketing;
- reduced post-harvest losses and increased market access;
- enhanced capacity of SMEs engaged in rice, sunflower and other potential products processing and marketing; and
- stakeholder platforms established or strengthened to engage in policy dialogue, formulation and enactment to promote enabling environment for cooperatives and private sector actors.

Innovation

The project will use a value chain development approach, with the aim of increasing incomes and living standards of the small-scale entrepreneurs (producers, traders, small agro-processing firms); improving access to input and output markets; supporting capacity building of private and public service providers; building trust among the value chain actors; facilitating platforms and information exchange between value chain actors; and supporting the strengthening farmer associations and cooperatives and similar organizations in the northern region.

Outcomes

The project builds on the application of value chain development as the implementation strategy. Key elements in the strategy are the focus on market linkages and access, empowerment of small-scale value chain actors, use of local skills, and spurring innovations.

The targeted beneficiaries are the small-scale farmers and SMEs along the value chain of rice and sunflower. In the project areas of Gulu, Kole and Lira district, small-scale farmers constitute over 90 percent of the producers, but are the weakest link in the value chain. At the same time, the SMEs who are very instrumental in providing market outlets and linkages for the farmers are often ignored in most interventions.

Methodology

The value-chain approach (VCA) will enable FAO to provide coordinated and integrated support to government priorities in the subsectors in order to achieve the vision of a competitive, market-oriented agro-industrial sector. The integrated and multi-dimensional nature of VCA opens up opportunities for cooperation with other partners with technical expertise and resources, to address various constraints along the value chain. This includes an opportunity to engage the competencies of various specialized public and private institutions in a coordinated and synergistic way, and build on some of FAO's core competencies, such as brokering multi-stakeholder approaches, engaging the private sector, linking to upstream policy, and performing an overall coordinating role.

Lessons learned

This project will build on the achievements of previous interventions in the region and further reinforce the existing farmer group structures, such as FFS networks and emerging SMEs, to stimulate sustainable production and marketing of sunflower and rice through value chains.

39 Strengthening poultry producers through organized action in Zimbabwe

Background

Project symbol	n.a.
Geographical coverage	Zimbabwe
LTU	AGA
Contact person	Olaf Thieme (Livestock Development Officer)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Budget	US\$24 000
Duration	3 days

Description

Within the new FAO Partnership framework with Non-State actors and as part of FAO Strategic Objective 3 – Outcome 1-001, FAO is supporting governments and relevant stakeholders to strengthen formal and informal rural institutions, organizations and services. FAO has started, in cooperation with the International Egg Commission (IEC), a process to support poultry producer organizations in countries of Southern Africa. AGAS and OPC in cooperation with the IEC through their International Egg Foundation, prepared a workshop programme to discuss with a wide range of stakeholders the development of the poultry sectors in Zimbabwe. This activity contributed to Activity 301010808 of SO3-001 – “Implement activities in cooperation with members of the national private poultry industry and development partners”.

The workshop took place from 3rd until 5th December 2014 and was attended by about 50 participants from Zimbabwe, organizers from FAO and IEC, and a few invited international participants (representing Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions (SACAU), South African Poultry Association (SAPA), and World's Poultry Science Association (WPSA). The national participants represented a broad range of stakeholders in the poultry sectors, including large- and small-scale producers, and representatives from the service sectors and government. The workshop was moderated by a facilitator, and was arranged in five modules (see the section on methodology).

The workshop participants concluded that Zimbabwe has a good potential for poultry production and that there is growing demand, both for poultry meat and eggs, that should be provided through local production. In addition to a well organized industrial sector, there are large numbers of small-scale farmers that produce for market. Better support for these smaller producers and integrating them into the Zimbabwe Poultry Association was identified as a high priority. While support can potentially be provided to them through the Government extension service, there was general agreement that this would not be sufficient and that private service providers should increasingly take a role of technical support for the small-scale producers.

The workshop participants agreed the following vision statement for the Zimbabwe poultry sector: “A vibrant, competitive and inclusive poultry sector, meeting consumer demand for safe, quality products in local markets and for export, contributing to food and nutrition security”.

Innovation

Improved analysis and dialogue between various actors along the value chain, such as egg and poultry meat producers, related producer organizations, other economic and industrial actors, as well as institutional actors from the government and the research community, in order to build a common vision for poultry production and commercialization, including identification of challenges, opportunities and priorities for the development of sustainable national poultry producer organizations.

Outcomes

A consolidated action plan and a report of the workshop was prepared, and shared with the participants and concerned institutions in Zimbabwe.

Methodology

A three days national workshop with a wide range of stakeholders from the Zimbabwe poultry sectors moderated by a facilitator, with five modules:

- Module 1 set the stage, with six presentations: an “Overview of the Zimbabwe poultry sector”; “The Zimbabwean stock feeds industry”; “Public and private services to the poultry sector”; “Government support for the poultry sector”; an egg consumption panel study report; and a presentation about the role and activities of SACA.
- Module 2 included presentations on good practices from the Republic of South Africa and from Tanzania on effective poultry sectors.
- Module 3 was a SWOT analysis of the national poultry sector by the participants, who divided into three working groups representing (i) small-scale producers, (ii) large-scale producers; and (iii) the service sector and enabling environment.
- Module 4 concerned the development of a shared vision for the poultry sector through group discussions.
- Module 5 focused on the development of a shared action plan for poultry sector development.

Issues to be resolved

A clear commitment has to be achieved from the involved stakeholder parties, including government, Zimbabwe Poultry Association (ZPA) and FAO Zimbabwe, to follow-up on the findings and recommendations of the workshop.

Lessons learned

The chosen approach was a good methodology to describe the situation, identify issues and develop an action plan. The skills of the facilitator greatly contributed to the success of the workshop. Participants felt that they had crafted a clear vision and action plan for the poultry sector, although the latter may need refining. They proposed a follow-up stocktaking workshop after six months. It would be necessary to include more stakeholders in subsequent workshops, e.g. consumers, retailers, and decision-makers from government, private sector and producers.

Good practices

Detailed sector analysis through SWOT.

Creation of a common vision involving different stakeholders.

Development of an action plan.

Recommendations

- FAO Zimbabwe should take a strong facilitating and monitoring role for the actions agreed in the action plan;
- FAO Zimbabwe should meet with key stakeholders in January 2015 to coordinate activities prioritized in the action plan, particularly with Zimbabwe Poultry Association and with the government, and liaise with FAO HQ for coordinated follow-up;
- FAO Zimbabwe and FAO Headquarters should respectively explore fund mobilization opportunities; and
- Activities envisaged by the project GCP/ZIM/022/EC would directly contribute to the development of the subsector strategy and to the development of extension material.

Actions planned for 2015

- Implement a broad consultation based on the report of this workshop to encourage buy-in from the poultry sector (high level dialogue, road show).
- Help the Zimbabwe Poultry Association to become more relevant through a re-design process of its structure and functions to become truly representative for the whole sector, with possible help from the South Africa Poultry Association (SAPA) and other stakeholders.
- Develop a twelve-month action plan with SMART objectives based on what can be realistically delivered.
- Engage with the Government to formulate the poultry subsector strategy.
- Implement technical interventions, including training of trainers, and development and testing of training and extension material (including in local languages).



Asia and Pacific

Contributions received on FAO's projects and activities in support of POs and cooperatives carried out in the Asia and Pacific Region were 16 in total (15 projects and 1 workshop), with one implemented at regional level and 15 at country level. All of them implemented capacity development actions; half of them supported the development of market linkages and were involved in knowledge generation actions; finally 38 percent of reported initiatives contributed to support the enabling environment and 19 percent to increase POs and cooperatives' voice and participation. Moreover, within the various activities, 75 percent initiatives out of the total contributed to SO1; 63 percent to SO4; 56 percent to SO3; 44 percent to SO2; and finally 31 percent to SO5.

40 Smallholder dairy development in Bangladesh, Myanmar and Thailand: Improving the bargaining power and sustainable livelihood of smallholder dairy farmers, through the enhancement of productivity and market access in dairy

Background

Project symbol	MTF/RAS/259/CFC
Geographical coverage	Bangladesh, Myanmar and Thailand
LTU	FAORAP
Contact person	Vinod Ahuja (Livestock Policy Officer)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Knowledge generation and sharing
Duration	4 years (March 2011 to June 2015)

Description

In Thailand, the Smallholder Dairy Development Project (SDDP) has been implemented in five cooperatives in Chiang Mai and Lamphun provinces in upper northern Thailand. The project is working with 512 small-scale farmers with 9825 head of milking cows. The emphasis has been on interactive dialogue between all stakeholders to provide practical solutions to the problems of dairy farmers via the cooperatives. All activities have been integrated to provide one-stop service at dairy cooperatives in order to deliver better services for dairy farmers. The project has supported the co-ops and individual farms through various activities: compilation and analysis of data on individual farm production; farm income and expenditure; milk cost; branding fresh milk products; a study on how to minimize production costs; etc.

In Bangladesh, farmers, mostly women, have been organized in the form of Village Groups. These village groups are being supervised by the Grameen Motsho O Pashusampad Foundation (GMPF). The project has worked with these women groups by training them in dairy husbandry, feeding management, recording, accounts keeping and basic business management.

In Myanmar, some small-scale dairy farmers were organized into communities organized by the National Dairy Development Board. Mya Sein Yaung Dairy Cooperative was formed in 2013 in Nay Pyi Taw Council. The project provided support in terms of training and provision of learning material for improving management practices.

Innovation

The cooperative and village group members have been introduced to a new forage cultivar, cv. Pakchong 1, of a hybrid of Napier grass (*Pennisetum* sp.) for dairy animal feed, and provided training in use of forage, total mixed rations (TMR), etc. The TMR technique was used in Thailand. In Bangladesh, Myanmar and Thailand, the farmers received training in planting, harvesting and feeding forages, and finding the right mix of forage and concentrate feed. The training involved local producer organizations and cooperatives.

Outcomes

Training has resulted in increased human capital, as well as higher milk productivity and household incomes. Approximately 1000 farmers also linked to primary cooperative societies for improved access to milk markets.

Methodology

A midterm review of the project was held in 2013. The review report noted that there is solid evidence the project has made good progress in implementing the activities planned for implementation so far. As of the end of second project year, eight activities (31 percent), mainly concerning project management (component 4), are completed. All the others are ongoing, except Activity 3.6 (Evaluation and exit). During Project Year (PY) 1 and PY2 the implementing teams focused on: (i) SDDP mobilization, including planning, coordination and awareness raising; (ii) coaching and mentoring the three country teams; and (iii) priority field activities. As a result there is compelling evidence of strong ownership of the SDDP across all three countries and along the entire dairy value chain where the SDDP intervenes.

The review also noted that the MTR team places on record that the hard work and dedication of the country teams is the main factor in the good progress of the SDDP to date, which augers well for its lasting impact.

Issues to be resolved

Political strikes and disturbances and rigid bureaucratic structures in Myanmar have affected the implementation of some of the activities. However, since these are beyond the control of project team, very little can be done except to have continual follow-ups and contingency planning.

Lessons learned

A lessons learned and good practices document is under preparation.

Good practices

A lessons learned and good practices document is under preparation.

Actions planned for 2015

The project is finishing in June 2015, so the activities planned include:

- completion of training events, study tours, etc.;
- documentation of lessons learned and good practices; and
- final survey for impact evaluation, and a dissemination workshop.

41 Promoting Integrated Pest Management in Afghanistan

Background

Project symbol	GCP/AFG/058/NOR
Geographical coverage	Afghanistan
LTU	AGP
Contact person	Ghulam Sarwar Haiderzada (National Plant Protection Officer)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Budget	US\$1 722 369 (2014)
Duration	5 years (2010-2015)
Web site	www.ipm-af.org

Description

The project provided training of farmers in agriculture production and protection through conducting Farmer Field Schools (FFS). Specifically, four Training of Trainer courses (TOTs) in Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for 116 Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) Officers (30 female and 86 male) were organized. So far, 555 FFS in wheat, melon, potato, rice and vegetables were conducted, and more than 12 000 households were trained. Of 24 MAIL staff went for higher education to India to pursue MSc programmes in IPM, 18 returned back and 6 were supposed to return by February 2015.

The project introduced new technologies to farmers through FFS for improving wheat, rice, melon and potato production. The project considered weeds a big challenge in wheat production because of seeding by broadcasting, which makes weed control difficult. Line sowing and weeding approaches were introduced, using 2 or 3 passes with a weeder. This system was more effective in weed control, so production increased. For the rice crop, the Rice Intensification System (SRI) was introduced, and in melon, bagging methods were introduced to avoid melon fly damage, together with mulching to conserve moisture and control melon fly. For wheat FFS, 104 sets of tools (rack, drum seeder and weeder) were distributed for 104 farmers in 14 provinces country. To strengthen the capacity of MAIL facilitators, more workshops and training was organized. Facilitators and provincial Plant Protection Directors attended the workshops and training events.

Innovation

Tools and approaches were developed that increased crop production using low inputs. SRI is a good opportunity to increase rice production in both highland and lowland areas. SRI will help farmers to grow rice despite limited water because of alternate drying and watering. SRI does not need inputs (chemical fertilizers, pesticide) because plant growth is strong due to mulching with the rotary weeder, mixing soil with weeds to provide organic fertilizer.

Weeds are a big problem in wheat production in Afghanistan. It has been observed that some crops are half weed and half wheat. To reduce the weed problem, the project introduced System of Wheat Intensification (SWI), sowing in rows and weeding 2-3 times with a rotary weeder. To make proper lines and drop seeds properly in rows, rack and drum seeders were developed. Farmers applied the approaches, which have gained popularity and been adopted in huge areas.

Outcomes

FFS approaches were introduced to the farmer community. The aim was to build the capacity of farmers and increase their skills in crop production and protection strategies.

FFS on wheat, melon, rice, potato and vegetables reached 8325 farm households, an average of 15 farmers per FFS having been trained.

As a result of FFS training, crop yields of farmers practising the new method have increased by 42 percent in wheat, 48 percent in rice, 51 percent in melon and 26 percent in potato. Net returns have increased because of large savings in production costs. Chemical pesticides use was eliminated because of better plant growth. Chemical fertilizer use was significantly reduced because of use of animal manure and compost, Indigenous Micro-organism (IMO), use of rotary weeder for weeding and increased aeration of the soil, changing water management practices from flooding to alternate drying (in rice) and use of mulch (in melon).

To strengthen mainstream gender aspects, FFS for female farmers were introduced to improve their capacity, as their roles are equally important to facilitate agriculture and rural development in Afghanistan. The Project trained 30 female MAIL officers in a six-week TOT course. These female facilitators are now conducting FFS on homestead agriculture.

Methodology

The IPM through FFS methodology has already been adopted in many areas where FFS has been introduced. In 2014, adoption of technology was higher in many areas. From the context, it seems that the new technology is spreading among farmers because of the combination of low inputs and increased crop productivity. Further, the Project has developed a combined machine that simultaneously makes lines, drop seeds and levels the land. By the using of the cultivator, farmers in Takhar, Mazar and eastern provinces have sown wheat in a SWI system, which is a good example of the adaptation of the technologies.

Issues to be resolved

Security constraints are a big issue in project implementation. Distribution of free inputs to farmers by NGOs and even government is another big challenge for implementation and making the programme sustainable.

There are still problems concerning provision of suitable qualified tools.

Lessons learned

In order to make a programme sustainable, delivering free inputs will not solve the problem in the long term. To bring changes in the attitude of farmers to change their agriculture practices beyond traditional methods, new technologies and methods of production should be introduced to farmers. It is very important to compare the new methods with farmers' traditional methods, and demonstrate the result.

What has been learnt from IPM project implementation is to provide learning facilities for farmers and help them to learn by doing. At the same time, explore new technologies, then introduce them to farmers to practice. Distributing free inputs will never solve problems of farmers in the long term. If you give a farmer a bag of flour, it will be finished within a month; but if you give him knowledge of how to produce healthy crops and increase yield, it supports them forever.

Good practices

Training of farmers through conducting FFS and introducing new technologies in FFS. To facilitate FFS, trained facilitators are needed. The project organized four season-long ToT courses and trained 116 MAIL Officers. These facilitators have learnt all the practices and

methods needed for crop management and growing healthy crops. Facilitators practice learning methodology alongside farmers in FFS.

Recommendations

- Extend the second phase of the IPM project to generalize the programme all over Afghanistan.
- Conduct more TOT, for both male and female officers of MAIL.
- Organize exposure trips, training and workshops.
- Re-instate MSc graduate who studied IPM.
- Scale-up IPM programme.
- Stop free distribution of inputs to farmers.

Actions planned for 2015

The main activity will be ensure a smooth handover of the project and joint planning with Plant Protection & Quarantine Directorate/Programme Management Units (PPQD/PMU).

42 Dairy Scheme Development in Nangarhar

Background

Project symbol	UTF/AFG/060/AFG
Geographical coverage	Afghanistan
LTU	RAP (AGS)
Contact persons	Lutfullah Rlung (National Professional Officer) Moeen Ud Din Siraj (Operations Officer)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Support to enabling environment
Budget	US\$943 869 (2014)
Duration	6 years (2010-2016)
Web site	www.fao/word/Afghanistan

Description

The project has been implemented from May 2010 in Nangarhar Province. The Project is expected to be completed by April 2016, with a total project cost of US\$6.07 million. Under the project, 17 primary milk producer cooperatives at village level have been set up. Five district-level (secondary-level) cooperatives and one apex enterprise – the Khatiz Dairy Union (KhDU) – were established. The current total membership is 1 510 farmers. All cooperatives are registered as per Afghan law and audited regularly. The Union has also established 18 milk collection centres, a network of retail outlets and a self-sustaining milk collection business. It also provides a range of input services, such as for animal health, feed and fodder. More households (HHs) now obtain an income from selling fodder seeds, and incidence of tick-borne diseases is reduced (both cases exceed 85 percent of cumulative target set). HHs makes use of the artificial insemination and animal health services offered by KhDU on payment of a fee, and there has been an increasing trend of buying feed produced by the recently opened feed mill established at KhDU compound, being managed by KhDU. In general, the dairy cows and young stock are in good condition and production levels have witnessed marked improvement.

Innovation

Dairy development (i.e. collection of farmer's surplus milk, processing and marketing) is a new business in Afghanistan, not familiar to rural farmers. Eighty percent of farmers are illiterate, and therefore there is a need to increase their capacities, especially for women, through training, workshops and study tours, to enable them to produce and deliver high-quality milk. Capacity development for cooperative management staff and for executive and monitoring committees is crucial in order to increase their skills in quality control and business management.

Outcomes

Main project outcomes include:

- Quantity of milk produced by cooperative members increased through breeding, extension of improved fodder seeds and standard concentrate feed, installation of modern machinery for milk processing, and production of different kinds of dairy products.
- Quality of milk and dairy products is improved through increasing the capacity of cooperative members.
- Income generated for women farmers is increased by selling their surplus milk.
- Social capacity increased by training.
- Women's inclusion in decision-making and leadership of cooperatives as well as in workshops and international study tours.
- Jobs created for youth as milk collectors, transporters, processors and sellers. Broadly speaking, the economic and social situation of cooperative members is changed, and, based on that, more girls and boys attend school.
- Rural women take ownership of around 80 percent of the regular cash income earned from milk sales, and they have full decision-making authority on how the income is spent.

Methodology

The project has been developed through:

- Community Feed Mills (CFMs) provide affordable, reliable quality, supplementary animal feed.
- Improved fodder crop seed supply to milk producer cooperative societies at village level for feeding their animals and cultivating own land to grow feed.
- Community Dairy Enterprises in the form of milk collection centres, milk cooling centres, and milk processing units.
- Dairy food chain equipment supplying affordable, hygienic milk collection, processing and marketing equipment and supplying the local market with high quality dairy products.

Issues to be resolved

The project is not yet economically viable after only a year and a half of practical, managerial and operational experience. It is still in need of additional support to ensure its sustainability. It is estimated that within another two production seasons, the Dairy Union should be economically viable and operationally and managerially sustainable, provided they receive the needed interim support.

Lessons learned

The Integrated Dairy Scheme (IDS) model consists of a number of integrated dairy chain components or best practices, as indicated below. Each link in the chain adds value and is profitable. The model can be put into practice as a whole or in parts.

Success factors are:

- The participatory approach encouraged community participation, which led to setting up of cooperatives and unions by the communities themselves.
- Close coordination of activities with the relevant departments of the MAIL.
- Use of efficient and suitable technology, in terms of machinery and processing, such as milk processing and animal feed processing.
- Establishment of the Milk Collecting Centres was a key facility to encourage beneficiaries to bring milk on a daily basis.
- Hiring dedicated and committed staff at the managerial and professional levels also positively contributed to the project successful result.

Good practices

Through the establishment of income-generating activities like milk collection centres and processing and value-adding facilities like dairy plants, feed mills, etc., cooperatives are able to hire operating staff, supervisors and managers whose salaries are paid from the income and benefit derived from the business, implying it is sustainable. Thus, if support is provided in a package, the project could be transferable and potentially sustainable elsewhere.

Recommendations

- There has been great interest generated both in MAIL and within the beneficiary farming community. Now the time is ripe to develop a national plan for dairy industry development by MAIL, possibly with donor technical assistance, if needed.
- Dairy unions need further support for the formation and organization of a national dairy federation.
- Cooperative laws need periodic amendments. The formation of a district level dairy union created a problem, deserving review and amendment to address the problems that are encountered while implementing at the grassroots level.
- Beside cooperative owned dairy businesses, the private sector should be encouraged to enter the dairy industry in the country.

Actions planned for 2015

The following major activities will be undertaken in 2015 (July-December):

- Milk collection and dairy products processing.
 - Train 20 staff of KhDU, MAIL counterparts and project staff by Nikos company in dairy products processing and plant operation.
 - Train and advise female members of cooperatives on hygienic milk production.
 - Monitor the results of the artificial insemination activities and advise and assist the farmers for proper management and feeding of the pregnant cows.
 - Monitoring and control of the dairy cattle of the member farmers for zoonoses.
 - Provide regular vaccination for the cattle of member farmers in the dairy schemes.
 - Monitor reproductive performance of the cows and provide veterinary services.
 - Training of men and women farmers in preventive measures for animal health.
- Continue support for the animal feed production and marketing activities.

43 Support to Extension System Household Food and Livelihoods Security (HFLS), Phase II

Background

Project symbol	GCP/AFG/072/LUX
Geographical coverage	Afghanistan
LTU	NRDDD
Contact person	Khalil Ur Rahman (National Field Manager and Operations Officer)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Food and livelihoods security; Market linkages
Budget	US\$2 370 135 (total)
Duration	3 years (1 August 2013 to 31 July 2016)

Description

The Project was established at national, provincial and district levels, and awareness was raised on the project's establishment. The team was set up at national, provincial and district levels. The capacity of the district unit service providers was developed. Farmer common interest groups were formed and household information was gathered in a participatory manner for better planning and monitoring of the process. Project clients were identified and they were supported to develop their annual work plan and proposals by providing inputs on a cost-recovery basis. The inputs provided to the group are free, but within the group they are selling the inputs at group-agreed prices, and income re-invested in the group. Groups are also supported by capacity building (managerial and technical). Some groups are also linked with other initiatives and the market.

Innovation

For better demand-driven planning at household level, a database was developed. Data were digitalized for usage by other stakeholders, in such a way that it become much easier for the district unit/government to select clients. Farmers' common interest groups were also developed. This is a new idea, based on establishing between those farmers who have a common, interest and it is the basis for establishing single-purpose cooperatives.

Outcomes

An efficient demand-driven extension service in two targeted districts is in place, with a view to replication to the rest of the country.

The collaboration between Government, NGOs and farmer organizations has been enhanced.

The livelihood situation of the food insecure and vulnerable farming families in project-targeted areas has been improved.

Methodology

The critical success factors of the project activities derive from staff team work and working attitudes. The question came about of how to channel the needed support to people in real need, and how to develop real demand-driven extension. After brain-storming among the project staff and counterparts, a check list survey format was developed and tested in the field. Through the data collection, it was possible to gather household information and digitize the data. Identifying project clients became easy, facilitating targeting of the real poor and food insecure farming households. These households were organized into Common Interest Groups, as extension informal classes.

Issues to be resolved

Challenges faced during project implementation include the adverse security situation; policy changes; lack of civil servant female officers at district level for working with female clients; insufficient time allowed for working with resource-poor farmers, as it needs more time and effort; and fund availability.

Lessons learned

The main lessons learned are :

- the project developed farmer's Common Interest Groups and provided them with suitable inputs to meet group demands;
- the project provided the groups with training, but family mobilization requires more time and effort;
- in a donor-driven context, the government might not be able to continue the best practices, since supporting women groups takes time and government is not able to hire women extension workers at district level to support them; and
- use of the revolving fund by the CIGs in a sustainable manner needs more time and support.

Good practices

The Project has good practices, as such national ownership (execution and implementation); the team was established at national, provincial and district levels; household information collection and assessment was useful for planning purposes; digitized information became available to all stakeholders; development of farmer's Common Interest Groups; extension unit capacity building and farmer groups capacity building; support to farmer groups to develop their need based on demand-driven proposals; participatory assessment; planning implementation and monitoring; establishing of joint bank accounts for CIGs; revolving funds; and institutionalization of the project's activities within the Ministry structure.

Recommendations

- Replicate the project in other districts.
- Hire female staff by government at district level.
- Continue the technical support to CIGs.
- Support the groups to decide whether to be registered as cooperative associations or to remain as CIGs.
- Link the groups with other initiatives, marketing, credit organizations, etc.

Actions planned for 2015

Main actions planned include:

- Find ways for registration of the farmer's CIGs.
- Capacity development for the groups.
- Conduct FFS training.
- Link the CIGs to the market and credit organizations.
- Find ways to use the revolving fund.
- Support groups in value adding activities.
- Scaling up of project to other district.

44 Bangladesh Integrated Agricultural Productivity Project (IAPP) – Technical Assistance Component

Background

Project symbol	UTF/BGD/044/BGD
Geographical coverage	Bangladesh
LTU	TCI
Contact person	Md. Mahmud Hossain (National Team Leader)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing
Budget	US\$850 000 (2014)
Duration	4 years (2012-2016)
Web site	www.iappta.fao.org

Description

A variety of capacity development (CD) activities were carried out during 2014, including on-site and off-site mentoring to the informal Farmer Organization (FO) network, Sara Bangla Krishak Jote [All Bangladesh Farmers Alliance].

In March, a Technical Assistant team launched the report Farmers' Organizations in Bangladesh: A Mapping and Capacity Assessment at an interactive event. The launch ceremony brought together officials from line ministries, agricultural extension departments, international and national NGOs, Local Consultative Groups (LCGs), the private sector, and, most importantly, 24 POs from across the country. This report was considered a great step forward by all stakeholders involved and has become a very useful piece of public good.

In March, 24 mature PO leaders participated in a two-day sharing workshop to exchange experiences and further develop their network and interact with government and development partners (DPs) to sensitize them to accommodate POs in decision-making processes for investment in agriculture.

From June to December, nine sharing workshops were held on building strong farmer organizations, where PO leaders were invited as principal actors and share their experiences with the Sub-Assistant Agriculture Officers (field-level revenue extension agents) of the project area (north and south regions of Bangladesh).

In August, a design and develop concept note was produced for developing 54 seed villages within the investment component of the IAPP. The aim was to ensure quality of the farmer-to-farmer transacted seed (farmer's retained seeds), as well as to develop strong bonding among members through sensitizing community investment and entrepreneurship in seed businesses and to ensure village-level seed security.

Continuous dialogue with the Bangladesh Technical Education Board (BTEB) and Department of Agricultural Extension to improve the syllabus of Agricultural Training Institute (ATIs) in line with participatory approaches (bottom-up) for building strong producer cooperatives. The ATIs are offering four-year diploma courses in agriculture and a significant number of students joined with government extension agencies and the NGOs who are primarily responsible for producer group formation.

From August to December, a study circle module on government policies and citizen charters was designed and developed for PO network leaders.

In November, an exposure visit was organized for 12 Bangladeshi Seed Producer farmers to visit an Indian Seed Village Scheme (SVS). The main purpose of this visit was

to familiarize selected seed village farmer leaders with Indian model seed villages and the process of community-led seed production programmes. After returning home, seed village farmers could apply acquired knowledge and best practices in their own field and emerge as a strong community-based seed producer organization.

Innovation

The project mainly introduced institutional innovations. At various events, PO leaders of Sara Bangla Krishak Jote often noticed that most of them have no idea about the participation process with government, and lack access to government information owing to lack of education and awareness. The Technical Assistants (TA) also recognized this dilemma in flow of information. At the demand end, illiteracy prevents farmers from accessing information, while at the supply end, most of the policies are in English and so out of reach. Although most of the policies endorsed that all extension agencies should work with groups of all kinds, but these resources are of no use until translated into native language (Bengali). Almost all organizations have their citizen charters, but lack departments ready to provide all the services mentioned in the charter, while the small-scale and marginal farmers lack access to read and teach their members to get the services from these agencies. Against this backdrop, the IAPP-TA translates most of the policies and charters into the native language so that PO leaders could understand how government endorsed the issue of participation of POs in investment programmes through their policies and charters. IAPP-TA has already developed a module for conducting a “study circle on agricultural policies and citizen charters” for PO leaders. The TA will organize 5-day FO leader study circles, one in each region (north and south) with a blend of producer groups, livelihood field school groups, and seed village groups. It is expected that after participating in this study circle, the PO leaders will gain clearer understanding of policies and charters relevant to farmers (with special focus on mechanisms for participation of FOs in government processes).

Another IAPP-TA innovation is to promote the of Seed Village concept among the POs engaged in seed production. The TA realized that to mobilize farmers into groups there is a need for common issues to be addressed. In several participatory discussions with farmers, IAPP-TA identified that seed is one of the important issues to be dealt with. As crop lands in Bangladesh are fragmented, one alone cannot produce good quality seed. In Bangladesh, the seed replacement rate is only 15-20 percent, meaning that 80 percent of seeds are farmer's retained seeds. To ensure quality of this huge volume, a community-based seed production system is an obvious solution. The Seed Village concept has diversified benefits:

- It supports seed and food security for small and marginal producers, particularly those with less access to the formal seed sector.
- It increases bondage among members, as POs will ensure either access to basic seeds (foundation and breeder seed) and other government services for seed production, processing, storage and legal right to market certified seed, or investing in community-based seed production and processing. All these will facilitate the growth of small-scale entrepreneurs.
- It facilitates quick dissemination and adoption of various cultivars having different location-specific traits (e.g. stress or saline tolerance)
- It establishes community seed enterprises through enhancing a farmer's capacity in managing community seed enterprises, developing business proposals and community marketing.

Outcomes

Outcomes achieved through project activities are obvious in the Social Capital sector.

Increased bonding social capital is one of the significant outcomes of different CDs. All POs in the informal network now have member profiles with demography of farmer households, total land, cropping pattern of owned and leased land, inputs demand, and major challenges in access to inputs, natural resources, markets and information. This endeavour enhanced leaders' capacity to assess individual member needs, and apply economy of scale (bulk buying of inputs), which helps to build a strong bond among members. Most of the POs now working with private sector entities as members, have agreed to buy inputs collectively. In addition, some significant ideas that were shared during workshops and adopted by the POs are members' savings (saving a handful of rice each day) and a savings mobilization strategy, formation of social audit committees for transparency, registration, creating local service providers, value addition, community seed beds, member-owned agricultural machinery and rental services, empowering women and youth in all decision-making process of the PO, etc.

Increased bridging social capital comes through farmer-to-farmer sharing workshops, as PO leaders shared their challenges with other mature, federated POs or farmer cooperatives, seeking advice on how to meet such challenges. The sharing workshops with government field-level extension agents have two outcomes. On the one hand, at the extension agent end, they understood the basic concepts, principles and processes of developing an effective and sustainable FO, as well as the value of networking and federating, and rapport was developed with representatives of strong, sustainable FOs in their nearby districts. Most importantly, it gives them awareness that farmers have knowledge to share: they are not just a beneficiary. On the other hand, the facilitator FO leaders have overcome inertia and developed their skill to dialogue with government policy-makers, developing their confidence in communication and linkage with local-level extension agents.

Methodology

The Bangladesh Integrated Agricultural Productivity Project Technical Assistance Component (IAPP-TA) aims to strengthen organizational and institutional capacities to deliver more effective, inclusive and country-owned investment programmes in agriculture, food security and nutrition. One area of project work seeks to enhance capacities of key stakeholders, including FOs, to participate in investment project design and implementation processes. Throughout the first half of the project, IAPP-TA worked closely with an informal network of autonomous FOs on a variety of activities. During the second half of the project, IAPP-TA wants to enhance the capacity of FOs to initiate and sustain successful FO-government advocacy dialogues at the local, district and regional levels.

The project has worked closely with the FO network, which is now in a nascent stage, with the approach that the project will provide key support as farmer leaders familiarize themselves with relevant Government of Bangladesh processes, policies and charters; learn to assess and prioritize their group and network needs; match key needs with existing processes to identify actionable advocacy issues; and initiate constructive dialogues with the Government of Bangladesh at many levels. These dialogues could have various goals: securing a specific service or input for a group; lobbying for enforcement of policies or rules and charters related to services, inputs, markets, land, water, etc.; securing FO involvement in various planning and oversight bodies; bringing key problems or injustices to light; etc. This process will hopefully give farmers a growing voice in

agricultural planning and governance at local levels and higher as the FO network takes more concrete shape.

Issues to be resolved

Some key challenges remain in facilitating the newly formed FO Network, Sara Bangla Krishak Jote, to create an enabling environment for participation of POs in the decision-making process of investment programmes. This needs sensitization activities to build consensus and openness within the government cadre to work with POs as partners. Moreover, the multiplicity of POs in the network have a weak common voice, though with the network this is improving. There is an absence of federated farmer organizations at the national level to make their voice heard, and lack of capacity to engage in policy and investment dialogue. There is a pressing need for further CD, beyond the limited capacity of the project itself. A need to achieve some sustainable results by the end of the project is another key issue to be resolved.

Lessons learned

A main lesson learned throughout CD activities with FOs is that existing PO leaders should be actively involved in the informal network for developing a clearly structured network that can articulate a mission, vision, intended scope of work and structure at local, regional and national levels. This should ultimately lead into the development of a constitution for the network. On the basis of the draft constitution, FO leaders could mobilize a standing committee and necessary local- and regional-level committees. The holistic CD activities will support this process by covering the mechanics and benefits of network development and organizational strengthening, as well as bringing farmer leaders together. IAPP-TA will provide whatever additional resources and expertise they can as requested, but the impetus for the development of the network, constitution and committees must come from POs themselves, not imposed by the project. This process must be organic and as such will be ongoing.

Actions planned for 2015

The IAPP-TA has planned its CD activities based on a needs assessment with PO leaders, of which key assumptions are: FO leaders themselves need CD in organization management, leadership and delivering appropriate business services to develop a strong membership base (bonding); FOs need enhanced networking and advocacy skills (bridging and linkage); and government decision-makers need sensitization on the importance of the participation of FOs in decision-making processes of agricultural, rural development and food security projects. Recognizing these needs, IAPP-TA proposes the following holistic CD activities for facilitating an FO networking and advocacy consultation process: (i) Regional Study Circle on government processes and policies; (ii) training in organization strengthening and networking; (iii) training in farmer leadership; (iv) training on needs identification, advocacy, and business services; (v) pilot mentoring programme for IAPP Seed Villages; and (vi) facilitation of initial advocacy dialogues.

After the study circle and holistic CD activities, farmers will work with their groups and local networks to match their challenges and needs with Government of Bangladesh processes and policies, identify opportunities and gaps, and prepare an inventory of actionable advocacy issues to be discussed at different levels with relevant agencies. A uniform agenda may help facilitate a productive dialogue, but it is not necessary (i.e. individual groups can start a dialogue on specific local or district issues before a national federation is fully established and active).

IAPP-TA will host five national-level exchange visits between model FOs and less developed groups to facilitate peer mentoring. Two of these visits will involve advocacy activities. IAPP-TA will facilitate two union-level dialogues with a host FO and other “observer” FO representatives (some support from IAPP-TA like a troubleshooting event may be needed to outline and finalize advocacy strategies). This will help FOs to observe well-prepared advocacy and to articulate a common agenda. After these dialogues, the observer FOs can start dialogues in their own unions, and potentially at the district or regional levels. Based on the development of the FO network and the outcome of union-, district- and regional-level dialogues, national-level dialogues with higher-level government officials could be organized by the FO network, with support from IAPP-TA.

Once a good number of dialogues have been initiated, a handbook will be prepared, to include success stories, challenges and best practices. This process documentation will be prepared in both Bengali and English so that during subsequent round, FOs can independently continue this networking and advocacy consultation process on their own.

45 Supporting school feeding programme through Farm to School (FS)

Background

Project symbol	TFD-11/BHU/001-003
Geographical coverage	Bhutan
LTU	RAP
Contact person	Chadho Tenzin (Assistant FAO Representative)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Market linkages
Budget	US\$29 507
Duration	1 year (2014)

Description

FAO Bhutan is implementing Farm to School (F2S) projects under Telefood funding. Each project is worth US\$10 000 and lasts one year. Main activities are formation of farmer groups (FGs) based on their interests. The project helps FGs to grow vegetables and supply to local schools. The Project supplies inputs: seeds, greenhouse construction materials, farm tools, fencing materials, etc. Another type of project under F2S involves an integrated approach where a project provides two cows each to members of FGs, provides materials for construction of cowsheds and biogas plants, and links to vegetable production.

Innovation

Rural farmers with small surpluses can now sell them at local schools, and schools do not have to purchase vegetables from distant markets. Farmer groups and schools are linked under farm to school (F2S) projects.

Further, dairy-biogas-vegetable production linkages are new. This integrated approach helps in income generation, nutrition intake, health and hygiene of rural farmers. Thus, F2S is sustainable and a holistic approach to help farmers.

Outcomes

The main outcomes achieved by the project are as follows:

- New and increased income as FGs earn increased income from the sale of vegetables and livestock products to schools; schools are an assured market for rural FGs.

- Increased bonding social capital as there is an increased bond among members of FGs and bonding between FGs and local schools. FGs increasingly take a lead role in school feeding programmes.
- Increased food security of members and their families as the small-scale farmers working in groups have helped improve economy of scale. Increased cash income has helped in accessing other necessary food items that farmers cannot produce by themselves.

Methodology

The Farm-to-School (F2S) approach is explained to both FGs and schools together, and implemented only if both parties are comfortable and willing. Prices of food items that FGs will supply to schools are discussed and agreed by both parties. It is for one year and changes are accommodated with mutual consent. The Project will support FGs to improve efficiency in production so that cost of production is reduced and made affordable to schools.

Issues to be resolved

Improvement in mainstreaming F2S interventions in the sub-national annual and five-year plans.

Lessons learned

- The FG should not be too big to avoid difficult coordination and management problems.
- Members of FGs must be comfortable among themselves to work together. If any member has major differences with the rest of the members, they must be encouraged to leave the group.
- Production must be at individual level, and group work could be more on marketing of farm products to markets and purchasing of inputs, saving on transportation by a group.

Good practices

- Formation of farmer groups and working in groups.
- Produce and supply food items in both variety and quantity as needed, and build market confidence.
- Respect group by-laws.

Recommendations

The current school feeding programme does not engage local farmers or producers, and this has raised sustainability issues. Rather than the schools trying to produce vegetables themselves, the schools should consider focusing on science and technology rather than going for mass production and competing with local farmers. The present school feeding programme may be a case of loss-loss: schools do not have enough time for academics and may be contributing to a poor quality of education; and rural farmers cannot earn income as markets are too far. Thus, F2S is a win-win approach for adoption as a policy and programme.

Actions planned for 2015

F2S will continue with more FGs and schools. Due to funding limitation, three to four projects are planned every year.

46 Improving food security and market linkages for small-scale producers (MALIS) in Oddar Meanchey and Preah Vihear

Background

Project symbol	OSRO/CMB/101/EC
Geographical coverage	Cambodia
LTU	AGP
Contact person	Ilean Russell (Project Manager MALIS)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Knowledge generation and sharing; Market linkages
Budget	Euro 4 million (total)
Duration	3.5 years (1 January 2012 to 30 June 2015)

Description

The project conducts analyses and participatory actions to engage target communities identified in FFS, farmer business schools, nutrition education sessions, strengthening of farmer groups, and disaster risk reduction activities. These activities are aimed at increasing productivity of small-scale farming, diversification of farming activities, risk reduction, post-harvest loss reduction, nutrition education, promoting gender equity, and improving market linkages and livelihoods to ensure food and nutrition security. The various activities are matched to target areas according to the needs and priorities of communities, and channelled through existing farmer groups. There is a strong emphasis on capacity building (training of trainers, FFS, business schools, nutrition education and group strengthening) and on enterprise development. Agricultural inputs and cooking equipment were provided through input credit and trade fairs, with repayments collected by the farmer groups for re-investment.

Innovation

The most innovative aspect of the project has been the operation of an input credit mechanism, whereby 60 percent of the value of inputs is recovered by the farmer organizations and retained for re-investment. Each farmer group is required to maintain financial records, secure cash assets and produce a written plan for re-investment. This credit scheme was combined with a highly successful round of input trade fairs, whereby 3700 households participated in fairs, accessing over US\$535 000 for inputs, and making repayments after harvest with 98.2 percent success. The farmer groups showed remarkable commitment in recovering credit for re-investment. The farmer business schools were the foundation for piloting the credit scheme and the main basis for improving the management of groups. Farmers were able to choose from a wide range of inputs and kitchen equipment at the fairs to meet their individual needs.

Outcomes

- The project will reach a total of over 7500 small-scale farming families in the target districts. Members had access to over US\$1 million in inputs and equipment.
- Input credit was provided for approximately US\$700 000 of the total investment in inputs and equipment in three rounds of credit, and the farmer groups will retain US\$450 000 for re-investment in credit schemes after project closure.
- More than 3500 farmers have been given training in farming, enterprise development and improved family feeding. Networks have been created for 49 farmer groups, with

total membership of over 4000 households, and these links also extend to traders, input suppliers, processors, NGOs and government agencies.

- Members have reported increased food stocks, and reduced food insecurity has been recorded on the household food insecurity access scale.
- The leadership of the 49 farmer groups has been strengthened in terms of accountability to members, financial management and reporting, security of assets, enterprise planning, decision-making, and negotiation and conflict management skills.
- Over 7500 members have improved access to markets for either inputs or produce, including for the sale of organic rice for export.
- Women have been strong participants in all project activities, with women making up over 70 percent of participants in most activities and as much as 99 percent in the improved complementary feeding programmes.

Methodology

The methodology has been participatory, using a combination of technical expertise (for the conduct of analysis and in training), input credit and process skills to improve productivity and diversity in farming and reduce food insecurity. The power of groups has been harnessed for the management of input credit and stimulation of enterprise, working through the agricultural cooperatives and other community-based organizations. Partnerships between civil society organizations, government and international development agencies have been critical to success.

Issues to be resolved

- The conduct of the farmer field schools needs to be improved and limitations in terms of capacity of facilitators and trainers addressed.
- Business skills and enterprise planning are little understood in Cambodia and progress requires a transformation of the agricultural education and extension systems.
- The management of agricultural cooperatives requires further strengthening for improved transparency and accountability, and better standards of management to meet the challenges of commercially oriented, new-style cooperatives.
- Village- and district-level support for improved nutrition needs substantial investment in capacity building.
- Initial successes of farmer groups with new modes of operation need continuing support. Nutrition education remains relatively high cost, and has not yet achieved the practice change that was intended in the project.

Lessons learned

Input credit and voucher systems involving agricultural trade fairs can be used to greatly improve satisfaction with input delivery and the sustainability of input distribution. The success of these innovative systems depends on building the capacity of the stakeholders and providing specific guidelines for conduct of the activities. FAO staff also have much to learn about innovative ways of working and simplifying operating and administrative systems. New style cooperatives can be successful as a focus for development efforts and for creating more responsive, market oriented agricultural supply chains.

Good practices

Save and Grow FFS, farmer business schools and input trade fairs worked in combination with targeted group strengthening can substantially increase achievement of project outcomes and sustainability of results.

Recommendations

Invest in cooperatives; invest in capacity building; focus on consultation with stakeholders; and reward success and good performance with access to further investment

Actions planned for 2015

The project will close in June 2015, so the current emphasis is one of completion of the field work, continuing recovery and re-investment of credit, and the collection and dissemination of lessons learned. The farmer groups will be rated for their performance and given recommendations for use with other development partners and investors.

47 Disseminating the model of Hongshan citrus growers cooperative
Background

Project symbol	n.a.
Geographical coverage	People's Republic of China
LTU	EST
Contact person	Shangnan Shui (Economist)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment
Duration	One week

Description

In 2014, working with the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture and the Hunan Provincial Agricultural Department, the Inter-governmental Group on Citrus held a workshop in Xiangxi, Hunan, to introduce the citrus grower cooperative as a sustainable model for citrus growing.

Outcomes

There were 75 participants attending the workshop, representing local governments, research institutes, extension stations and grower cooperatives from Hunan's 38 citrus producing counties.

Methodology

A presentation on "Citrus Growers Cooperative and Sustainable Developments in Citrus Production and Marketing" was made. All workshop participant also visited the Hongshan Citrus Cooperative promoted by the Inter-governmental Group on Citrus and Chinese Ministry of Agriculture to become acquainted with the new roles of the cooperatives.

Issues to be resolved

A model to follow.

Lessons learned

The real model has greater power for capacity building.

48 Enhancing Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Capacity of Nepalese Ginger Exports through Public Private Partnerships

Background

Project symbol	MTF/NEP/068-STF/OPS
Geographical coverage	Nepal
LTU	AGN
Contact person	Binod Saha (Assistant FAO Representative)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Knowledge generation and sharing; Market linkages
Budget	US\$554 366 (total)
Duration	3 years (7 June 2012 to 6 June 2015)

Description

The main objective of the project is to develop the ginger value chain in Nepal, which has been identified by the Government of Nepal and development partners as a high-potential sector for export, value addition, employment and income generation.

Outputs envisaged by the project are as follows:

- Ginger washing and processing facility designed, constructed and operationalized, and producer organizations strengthened.
- Materials developed and training on Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), post-harvest handling and SPS requirements organized.
- Supply of quality ginger rhizomes (seed) made available.
- Study conducted of regional and international markets (Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) requirements) for fresh and processed Nepalese ginger.
- Capacity of Government of Nepal to negotiate and demonstrate compliance with import requirements (SPS) of trading partners improved.

Activities undertaken relative to the outputs include:

- Design ginger washing and processing facilities, carry out preparatory environmental impact (Initial Environmental Evaluation) and other assessments as needed, obtain permits and produce business plan for the establishment and operation of ginger washing and processing facilities, with auction yard for the Jhapa corridor.
- Build ginger washing and processing facilities for the Jhapa corridor.
- Deliver hands-on training (including financial and business management, record-keeping, etc.) and set up systems required for the effective management and operation of the facilities.
- Develop ginger growing manual and other training materials (print, video, etc.) on GAPs for ginger cultivation, post-harvest handling of ginger, SPS requirements, etc., suitable for target audiences.
- Train trainers, and deliver training for farmers and other value chain actors (on GAPs, post-harvest management, grading, control of post-harvest rots, etc.).
- Establish ginger demonstration and multiplication plots at Jhapa hubs, and use these plots for field training courses in GAPs and post-harvest management.
- Devise and implement system for provision of post-harvest management measures.
- Obtain improved (marketable) cultivars from other parts of Nepal and further afield.
- Prepare a detailed study on regional and international markets for fresh and processed ginger and market (SPS) requirements.

- Traceability (labelling of product with contact information of the producer) and reducing frequency of need for pesticide residue testing.
- Bilateral meetings and contacts between the Nepalese and the Indian National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) to discuss SPS issues related to fresh ginger exports from Nepal to India, and reach agreement on SPS import requirements.

Innovation

- 1) A ginger washing facility is designed and established in the project area to improve product quality so as to meet SPS standards imposed by ginger importing countries. With incorporation of training packages and necessary institutional arrangements, Nepal Ginger Producers and Traders' Association (NGPTA) is capable of operating the facilities.
- 2) Training packages developed and implemented for different actors in the ginger value chain, such as farmers, traders and training facilitators, with a focus on GAPs, crop protection, post-harvest management, grading, control of post-harvest rots, marketing, and SPS management. Ginger farmers are trained through a season-long FFS approach for two consecutive years, including group-operated demonstrations, seed multiplication and technology verification studies in the group's common plots. With development of training materials such as GAP-based FFS operation manual and guidelines, covering a ginger growing manual (handbook), a ginger cultivation farm inventory and training curriculum, and their publication, ginger producers and traders' groups are informed of new innovations (GAPs, ginger cultivation techniques, post-harvest handling, SPS requirements, etc.) and technologies.
- 3) The groups are supported with ginger planting materials (seed), including introduction of different cultivars. With provision of necessary inputs in operation of the season-long FFS and in view of product quality enhancement, the farmers' groups are (through training, demonstrations and participatory learning) guided to safer crop protection, selection of marketable cultivars, production of quality seed, and safe storage of the seed for next season.
- 4) Devise and implement a system for provision of post-harvest management measures.
- 5) A study on regional and international markets for fresh and processed ginger (market and SPS requirements) is under way for the project beneficiaries, as a necessary preparation for ginger export promotion.
- 6) In line with the improvement on product quality (SPS standards), the producer groups are guided to maintain farm records and, based on them, produce group certification for a reduction in pesticide residue testing and traceability of their products in ginger markets. At the same time, relevant state agencies are supported to organize Indo-Nepali bilateral meetings to discuss on SPS issues related to fresh ginger exports from Nepal to India.

Outcomes

Main outcomes achieved by the project are:

- More than 2000 ginger farmers (>60 percent women) trained.
- Training materials produced and shared.
- New cultivars adopted by farmers.
- Over 160 ha brought into seed production.
- Production, productivity and product quality improved through improved seed quality and cultivation practices.

- Skill in ginger cultivation, rhizome rot management, safe crop protection and post-harvest product management shared with producers and traders.
- A 6 t/hour capacity washing facility established since the business plan of the facility justifies it as a highly profitable business.
- NGPTA will own the ginger washing facility, and its chapters extended to project districts and the farmers' groups and traders linked to it.

Methodology

FAO Nepal is implementing the project in collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce and Supply (MoCS); the Ministry of Agricultural Development (MoAD), including its subsidiary departments, directorates, programmes and District Agriculture Development Offices relevant to the project; and the Agro-Enterprises Centre (AEC) of the Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The project partners would work closely with the Enhanced Integrated Framework National Implementation Unit (NIU) in MoCS. The NIU coordinator in MoCS represents the NIU in the Project Steering Committee, and has a direct role in project supervision. A participatory approach is adopted and an action-oriented partnership and collaboration between the public and private sectors is anticipated during implementation and monitoring of project activities.

FAO Nepal, in accordance with its rules and procedures, receives, disburses and manages funds for the implementation of project activities. It is working in close coordination with MoAD and AEC to implement particular activities that supports local capacity building and enhances sustainability of the project. Hence, based on comparative advantages and a clearly written memorandum of understanding regarding expected roles, responsibilities, budget and deliverables, FAO has sub-contracted part(s) of project activities, such as training of farmers and other ginger value-chain actors, to MoAD and AEC as appropriate.

Issues to be resolved

Some factors, such as the large number of stakeholders, different capacities and interests among the stakeholders, lack of perfect information, and time required in arranging consultations among the stakeholders to reach consensus in connection with elements of project activities have resulted in coordination related difficulties and delays in implementation of project activities. For the same reasons, in general, the decision process is time consuming as the consensus reached at one level could be challenged when brought to a higher level for ratification. Sometimes, stakeholders may change their minds!

Lessons learned

Implementation of a multi-stakeholder-based participatory development intervention is very difficult due to conflicting and sometime hidden interests among the stakeholders or their representative. This requires awareness and careful analysis so that the necessary arrangements can be incorporated right from project planning.

So far as the scope of the project is concerned, ginger has a high cash generating potential for small-scale farmers. However, rhizome fly and rhizome rot have been major problems. The problems at producer level can be resolved successfully if practised with due care, with proper land selection and management, provision of good drainage and partial shade, seed treatment with biocides, discouragement of mother rhizome harvesting, and artificial fertilizer replaced with organic manure.

Good practices

Learning as described above transfer good practices in the ginger production business.

Recommendations

Further interventions are suggested in the ginger value chain, built on the experiences of this project implementation.

Actions planned for 2015

Outputs and activities planned for 2015 include:

- Processing facilities designed, constructed and operationalized and producers' organizations strengthened, involving designing facilities and carrying out preparatory assessments and permits; building a washing and processing facility and set up systems required for the effective management and operation of the facilities; and delivering hands-on training (including financial and business management, and record-keeping).
- Material development and training on GAPs, post-harvest handling and SPS requirement. This implies: developing ginger growing manual and other training materials on GAPs for ginger cultivation, post-harvest handling of ginger, SPS requirements, etc.; training master trainers (30) and delivering training to farmers (2000) and other value chain actors (200) (on GAPs, post-harvest management, grading, and control of post-harvest rots); and establishing ginger demonstration and multiplication plots.
- Supply of good quality ginger rhizomes (seed) made available, by both devising and implementing a system for provision of post-harvest management measures; and obtaining improved (marketable) cultivars from other parts of Nepal and further afield.
- Market study to prepare a detailed study on regional and international markets for fresh and processed ginger, and market (SPS) requirements.
- Improving capacity of Government of Nepal departments (Department of Food Technology and Quality Control, and NPPO) to negotiate import requirements for ginger and demonstrate compliance with SPS requirements of importing countries. this will involve improving traceability and reducing frequency of requirement for pesticide residue testing; and supporting bilateral meetings and contacts between the relevant Nepalese and Indian regulatory authorities to discuss SPS issues related to fresh ginger exports from Nepal to India, and reaching agreement on SPS import requirements for ginger.

49 Technical Assistance (TA) to Agriculture and Food Security Project (AFSP)

Background

Project symbol	UTF/NEP/073/NEP
Geographical coverage	Nepal
LTU	Programme
Contact person	Binod Saha (Assistant FAO Representative)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing; Market linkages
Budget	US\$1.5 million (2014)
Duration	Five years (2013/14-2017/18)

Description

The Government of Nepal submitted an investment proposal to the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme to comprehensively address the funding gap in the area of agriculture and food security issues. The Government of Nepal was awarded a grant of US\$46.5 million in June 2011. The Government of Nepal designed AFSP to be implemented from fiscal year 2013/14 for five years.

FAO is providing required technical assistance to achieve outputs and outcomes set forth by the AFSP. FAO has bundled packages of services to be delivered at the central, district and Village Development Committee levels in line with the project design. These services cover technical issues on: nutrition; seed replacement; support services (including skills and knowledge improvement) through the FFS approach; importation of livestock, germplasm and fodder seed; and monitoring and evaluation services. Furthermore, FAO will assist in the arrangements for international study tours, development of training materials, implementation of specific training, drafting Terms of References for various consultant services and studies, as well as monitoring of the same.

The beneficiaries of the project will be crop farmers (estimated direct beneficiaries 50 000), livestock farmers (32 500), women engaged in household and kitchen garden production (35 000), and households with pregnant and nursing (with children 6-24 months) women (45 000).

Innovation

Past experience has showed the effectiveness of forming and supporting farmer groups as a cost-effective method for: project implementation; maximizing information flow; generating and sharing knowledge; developing capacity; increasing economies of scale by aggregation of small-scale farmer producers and their produce; accessing markets; improving local governance; facilitating access to public resources; etc. Hence, the TA has taken FFS as its major initiative to achieve all these.

Outcomes

FAO TA for AFSP has four outputs:

- Output 1: Supply of genetic materials and assistance provided to Nepal Agricultural Research Council (NARC) to develop improved crop and livestock technology for the selected locations of targeted district.
- Output 2: Enhanced knowledge and skill base of targeted beneficiaries to adopt improved technologies and management practices for crop and livestock in selected locations of targeted districts.
- Output 3: Increased adoption of appropriate feeding practices by pregnant and nursing mothers and children between 6 and 24 months of age in the selected locations of targeted districts.
- Output 4: Efficient and effective monitoring and quality assurance system established and operationalized for tracking results of project intervention.

The progress of FAO TA during the second half of the start year (July 2014 – December 2014) against the outputs and the targeted activities are:

- Output 1: NARC has been assisted in conducting field trials of newly developed crop varieties and technologies in FFS sites of project districts. A total of 5710 doses of Boer and Saanen goat semen have been imported and delivered to Animal Breeding Division, NARC. An additional 1790 doses of frozen semen were to be imported by

the end of March 2015. Import of 130 live pure breed Boer and Saanen goats is in progress, with 50 Saanen goats and 80 Boer goats due to arrive in Kathmandu in January 2015. Similarly, technical specifications for the importation of forage seeds (lucerne, red clover, fescue, etc.) have been prepared and approved by Government of Nepal.

- Output 2: TA was provided to prepare an Integrated Work Plan for crops, livestock and nutrition. Two batches of Master Training of Trainers (MTOT) for Junior Technicians (JTs) and Assistant Junior Technicians (JTAs) and eight batches of Training of Farmer Facilitators (ToF) were conducted. Five satellite FFS were conducted in each MTOT, based on the autumn potato crop, involving 129 farmers (78 percent women) in Dadeldhura and 130 farmers (81 percent women) in Surkhet MTOT satellite FFS. Related activities were planned for July 2015.
- Output 3: TA provided technical inputs to Department of Food Technology and Quality Control to finalize a report on cooking practices and nutritive value analysis of locally available foods to serve as input to develop Behaviour Change Communication strategy. Training materials were provided for training of 1700 mother and women groups at village level. Data collection methodology was developed. The Food Safety Study report was reviewed.
- Output 4: Activities addressed an Environment Management Plan for importation of genetic material; Environmental and Social Safeguard (ESS) requirements; ToR of Project Environment and Social Management Committee (PESMC). Orientation was provided for Government of Nepal district officials about the need of PESMC and District Environment and Social Management Committee for addressing environmental and social safeguard issues.

Methodology

FAO TA has adopted FFS as its main methodology to implement project activities. FAO TA helps farmers organize into FFS groups. The farmers learn about new technology and the technical experts work as facilitators. This has several benefits, as noted earlier under Innovation.

Issues to be resolved

Delays in budget revision for the additional training (MTOT, TOF, and refresher training for FFS facilitation skill) and import of genetic materials affected implementation.

Non-availability of transport facilities and computers has seriously affected the timely delivery of services such as data reporting, field support and monitoring.

Lessons learned

FAO TA is at its initial stage of implementation, so it is too early to report lessons learnt.

Good practices

FAO TA is at its initial stage of implementation, so it is too early to identify good practices.

Recommendations

FAO TA is at its initial stage of implementation, so it is too early to identify recommendations.

Actions planned for 2015

- Output 1: Import pure-bred live goats (75 Boer does, 50 Boer bucks, 30 Saanen does and 20 Saneen bucks), goat semen in delivery doses, and improved forage seed (lucerne, red clover, fescue, etc.).
- Output 2: Assist the District Agriculture Development Office (DADO) to run FFS and provide follow-up support; establish and operate Village Model Farm; form and run seed FFS; conduct FFS demonstrations in seed production; implement adoption support; assist Project Management Unit (PMU)/DADO in the implementation of small and micro-irrigation activities; and to prepare radio scripts and newspaper articles on crop-related technical matters.
 - Prepare crop-specific technical manuals for FFS, including FFS learning materials (flex poster, leaflets, booklets and flicharts); FFS guidelines and manuals for poultry and dairy.
 - Conduct JT/JTA level MTOT (crop-season long) for 20 JT/JTA; ToF for FFS Farmer Facilitators; refresher training for farmer facilitators and JT/JTA facilitators.
 - Conduct officer level MTOT (livestock), JT/JTA level MTOT (livestock), refresher training for JT/JTA (livestock), Training of Farmer Facilitators (livestock), refresher training for livestock farmer facilitators
 - Support livestock FFS (128 for poultry, 294 for oat and 28 for dairy).
 - Small Grant programme.
 - Provide support in goat group formation, technical backstopping, monitoring and follow-up support for goat promotion activities.
 - Provide technical backstopping, monitoring and follow-up support for dairy promotion activities and rural poultry promotion activities.
 - Assist District Livestock Service Offices (DLSOs) in the formation of dairy farmer groups and poultry farmer groups in specified project districts.
 - Assist DLSOs to liaise concerning hatchery and supply centres for the supply of chicks to farmers.
 - Revise and update training tool kits (guidelines, manuals, curricula) for goats, poultry, etc.
- Output 3:
 - Review and provide technical input on the draft grain bank guideline for approval.
 - Assist PMU to establish and operationalize Community Grain Banks.
 - Organize training and advocacy fot district-level personnel.
 - Conduct ToT for District Technical Officers and district nutrition focal persons, and training for Project Facilitators.
 - Assist in training to women's group.
 - Support Child Health Division of Ministry of Health and Population in operationalizing of Behaviour Change Communication taskforce.
 - Organize MTOT for Behaviour Change Communication.
 - Development of guideline for nutrition exhibition and food demonstration and healthy baby competition.
 - Prepare Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Framework.
 - Organize or facilitate consultative meetings for different activities.
 - Prepare training toolkit for GESI of the AFSP project.

50 Balochistan Agriculture Project

Background

Project symbol	GCP/PAK/113/USA
Geographical coverage	Pakistan (Balochistan province)
LTU	FAOPAK
Contact persons	Rob Erskine-Smith (Business Development Consultant) Muhammad Iqbal (Post Harvest Adviser)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing
Budget	US\$25.4 million (total)
Duration	8 years (1 Jan 2009 to 31 December 2016)
Web site	http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1871/BAP.pdf

Description

Aimed at raising incomes through increased production and higher prices from market initiatives, the project has adopted a reform approach to Value Chains, and facilitated the formation of 48 POs that are called Farmer Marketing Collectives (FMCs). These are made up of members of community organizations who are self-motivated. Learning from the failures of cooperatives of the past, FMCs adopted a model following self-reliance with no credit permitted, and empowerment through improved marketing techniques. These small-scale farmers undertake group marketing, thereby offering higher volumes and improved bargaining power.

To do this has required many capacity building events over the past couple of years, and a series of handbooks and modules covering various aspects have been produced, which are retained by FMC members. Some FMCs will develop into Mutual Marketing Organizations (MMOs), which are registered as Cooperatives. The more advanced reporting and compliance requirements required restrict this move to the more advanced FMCs. MMOs networks market functions with a number of FMCs and may be involved with export of horticultural products. There are expected to be 8 to 10 MMOs.

The FMCs have undertaken pre- and post-sale visits to the markets where their produce is sold, and they have established links with wholesalers and others, and obtained premium prices for their higher quality and volume, and improved packaging and reduced damage through better transport arrangements, such as use of small, fast-moving trucks.

The project has also produced a policy paper for the Government of Balochistan giving some recommendations regarding marketing and the enabling environment, and input into new legislation governing marketing in the Province has provided advances in market regulation.

As for activities on knowledge generation and sharing, technical reports based on best practices were developed and circulated. Also, FMCs shared their experiences to learn from each other's failures and successes. The information contains business volumes, target markets, prices, marketing costs, constraints, lessons learned and recommendations for moving forward. As the project insists on increasing levels of cost-sharing for these FMCs (from 25 percent all the way to fully funded), the issue of confidential access to 'commercial in-confidence' information is important (i.e. only with the permission of those who have paid for access to particular information, such as market specifications, can that information be divulged to third parties who otherwise would have to spend their own resources to discover this information).

Market linkages have been established and the arrangements are made for seasonal supply prior to the beginning of delivery. Bargaining power is considerably enhanced by the increased scale of the product through aggregation by the FMC, and the processing, packaging, grading, temperature management and transport improvements bring better prices.

Innovation

The reform approach to Value Chains implies determining opportunities and identifying problems and applying solutions. To do this FMC members are involved in the process and actually 'walk the chain' and report back to members on their conclusions in these areas. This innovation, together with appropriate capacity building and the group structure enables a cohesive group response whereby the FMC seizes the opportunities for economic advantage, and as the group takes ownership of their business plan, builds both economic and social resources.

The failure of cooperatives in the past through the use of credit and subsequent default has led to the distinctive factor that only member capital is mobilized. This has led to increased ownership and commitment of members, and pride in their achievements and social capital growth. The project stressed from the outset that 'business is not for free' and costs are involved. Again this has consolidated ownership and commitment.

The use of Business Support Service Providers (BSSP) is another distinctive that has benefited members. The BSSP are recruited from within the local area and given training, and they provide support and know-how to the FMCs on a user-pays basis. This has proved to be useful in integrating semi-literate farmers into business planning, financial management and organizational governance.

The project experience shows that improvement in the 'bit-in-the-middle' (i.e. harvesting and post-harvest management leading to a reduction in post-harvest losses in fresh produce, which generally ranged from 25 to 40 percent) results directly in improving sales and building confidence of farmer marketing groups in self-marketing.

Marketing trials to adopt improved packaging – including returnable plastic crates (for tomatoes, melons and apples), cardboard cartons (for apples, apricots and melons) and net sacks for onions – revealed financial gains from packaging alone ranging from a minimum of 16 percent to a maximum of 39 percent.

The Balochistan province of Pakistan mostly represents a conservative society where women's role is confined to activities inside the house. Respecting the social taboos and culture, the project ensured women's participation in economic activities involving household poultry and kitchen gardening. In addition, four wool FMCs were organized and focused on an activity led by women. The feedback revealed that household poultry and kitchen gardening directly helped in ensuring food security and nutrition within the household, while the wool activity generated commercial income. Financial results showed a gain of 60 to 70 percent. The cumulative effect of these interventions was also reported in improved children's access to health, education and other social amenities, females in particular.

The project subsidizes some items, such as purchase of harvest aids, but at least 50 percent must be paid by the FMC members. There are no cash grants. Finance comes from mobilizing member's own savings.

Non-transparency and weak control of financial resources has been directly contributing to the failure of producer groups. Therefore, a community audit system is a requirement for the FMC, which is supplemented by third-party annual performance audits. This will continue in the post-project period and later taken over by local audit teams.

Outcomes

Outcomes achieved by the project are:

- Increased member access to productive resources. FMC members income accruing from sales increased on an average of 25 percent, ranging from 7 percent (wheat) to 58 percent (apples), with wool attracting a 70 percent higher price. This obviously improved member's financial health and improved access to productive resources. Since this is an early stage of commercial operation, it is difficult to quantify longer-term impact;
- Increased member access to financial capital. Other agriculture cooperatives in Balochistan were prompted by credit, which they never repaid, and the cooperatives failed, The FMC's by-laws strictly prohibit borrowings. Instead, 10 percent of sales are contributed towards a pool fund to raise capital.
- Increased member human capital results from a focus on capacity building, mainly entailing transfer of best practices, knowledge and skills. Financial gains are the result of applying best practices.
- Increased bonding social capital, particularly the growing trust as the members take ownership of the model and their own capital growth. Working together also increased bonding social capital, but impact cannot be quantified at this stage.
- Increased bridging social capital. Informal bridging social capital has increased, while formal social capital should increase as MMOs are formed.
- Increased food security of members and their families is a direct contribution from increased production.
- Increased women's economic empowerment. As mentioned earlier, the role of rural women in Balochistan is restricted to activities inside the house. Increased women's participation in wool- and poultry-based income generating activities is resulting in significant financial gains and women's control of it. This results in women's economic empowerment and improved social status.
- Increased participation in policy dialogue and decision-making processes should increase at the level of MMO, a corporate entity.
- Increased leadership empowerment as the capacity building training includes leadership training and financial and managerial skills, and thus it helps increase leadership empowerment.
- Increased access to markets: The main objective of the FMCs is to increase small-scale farmers' market access. Of 48 FMCs, four (wool) are led by women. FMC members include youth as well.

Impressive financial results are due to market diversification, farmers' market power through information and bulking up supply and experience sharing, reduced post-harvest losses and improved quality of produce delivered into the market. Incremental financial benefits of improved packaging alone varied from a minimum of 16 percent to a maximum of 39 percent. Similarly, improved wool shearing, grading, baling and spooling yielded 60 to 70 percent incremental financial benefits.

Methodology

The project's focus is building the capacity of the FMCs to enable them to successfully respond to market opportunities. The process starts with the establishment of community organizations to pursue participatory development. Community organization members are assisted to increase production to the stage where they create surpluses. These

surpluses are then used to introduce marketing concepts to individuals, and community organizations are helped to undertake collective marketing, but still with a social organization model. Over time, individuals from neighbouring community organizations who have an interest in diversifying into market-oriented agriculture are assisted to develop into another organizational model based on business principles, the FMC, eventually evolving into a fully registered cooperative business, the MMO. This leads to both organizational capacity and motivation to undertake commercial transactions successfully. Farmers who are generally weak in doing commercial business, had their capacity built in value chain analysis to understand marketing dynamics and identify constraints; business planning; negotiation skills; selection of business partners; product preparation; market intelligence; record keeping; and financial management (no external borrowing). This was followed by pre-season missions to establish business linkages and undertake commercial transactions, and post-season missions to learn from their trading partners what they did well and what needed improvement.

A cadre of business services providers was developed to offer paid services to FMCs, which was particularly important in helping semi-literate farmers to understand accounts and records in order to prevent fraud. The project is also working on a Balochistan agriculture policy that will address policy issues with respect to promoting collective marketing, thereby facilitating small-scale farmers to establish effective linkages with the markets. In this regard, FMCs had to forge partnerships with all the trading partners including members, traders (e.g. wholesalers, retailers and commission agents), input suppliers, and logistics and other service providers, which are critical for success.

Issues to be resolved

To bring individual small-scale semi-subsistence farmers to a stage where they are operating as owner-members of a group marketing business is a culture shift that is often underestimated. To achieve a culture shift that is permanent takes time. Some groups build the trust and social cohesion quickly, and learn the business, financial and technical skills and implement them in fairly short order. Other groups take longer. But the issue is that it takes time. To have a solid foundation for a sustainable FMC, one needs to have a couple of years with the group operating as a community development organization, which builds social cohesion and produces social capital before moving to economic activity. Time is needed before the changes concerned are consolidated and become sustainable. The time left in the project life is minimal for some FMCs which are planned to begin in 2015. The move to cooperatives that will occur this year has been long planned. It is expected that there will be MMOs and FMCs that will take the step to be registered and gain the advantages of becoming a legally recognized entity. But this will require conforming to regulatory control by Government, and the powers of Government Inspectors. In many countries there is a long history of rent-seeking behaviour from cooperatives inspectors, and it is to be hoped that this will not be experienced in Balochistan. The formation of MMOs with networking capacity among FMCs will provide a significant level of representation of the interests of FMC members. And the fact that they are cohesive groups before coming into the ambit of cooperatives also suggests retention of independent managerial control.

The newest FMCs need adequate capacity building, starting from basic to advanced training. This will be undertaken over the next two years. The FMCs that have completed at least one year of operation and those set up earlier will also require capacity building in specific areas like record keeping and accounting, based on findings of the third-party performance audit.

The women's FMCs, especially in kitchen gardens (poultry and eggs) will require customized a simple record keeping and accounting system, which will be developed, and women FMCs trained in its adoption accordingly. Similarly, necessary BSSP support will be created to cater to their specific needs.

Low cost solar drying tunnel technology was demonstrated for value-added processed products like dried apricots, apples, mulberries, raisins, onion and tomatoes, which produced good results. It needs to be expanded a 50 percent cost share basis in the case of males, and 25 percent in the case of female FMCs.

Access to reliable market information is critical to marketing decisions. The existing price reporting system of the provincial Government is confined to the fruits and vegetables wholesale market, while most of the produce is sold in markets outside the province. This needs to be addressed.

Lessons learned

The prohibition of external credit along with the mobilization of member savings as the source of capital has shown positive results in building social capital, commitment and pride in the achievements of the FMCs. The additional ownership engendered also augurs well for long-term sustainability. This has been learned from the history of failed cooperatives in Balochistan, due to the credit and default cycle of the earlier model.

The use of self-financed BSSP to support the FMCs in the transfer of business skills, and in aspects such as governance and market arrangements, has proved to be valuable.

The high quality and substantial number of capacity building events has shown dividends and benefits in the transfer of skills. This is a critical factor for success. Equally, the 'learning-by-doing' activities such as 'walking the chain' have proved the worth of this approach once again. This has also been shown in the visits to markets.

The cost share modality has resulted in increased ownership and control of FMCs and ensured sustainability of the development interventions.

The annual performance audit by a third party has resulted in business transparency and strengthened members' confidence in FMC affairs and its management.

Innovative practices like animal pre-wash, mechanical shearing, grading, baling and spooling has added tremendous value to wool, which was considered a low value by-product, and has significantly improved the socio-economic conditions of rural households, females in particular. Similarly, kitchen garden and household poultry significantly improved social and nutritional status of the communities, especially the females and children.

Good practices

The FMCs have initially been confined to marketing only one commodity to enable achievement in marketing and business skills before moving to multiple commodities. Best practices were developed and circulated. Also, FMCs shared their experiences to learn from each other's failures and successes. The information contains business volumes, target markets, prices, marketing costs, constraints, lessons learned and recommendations for moving forward. As the project insists on increasing levels of cost-sharing from these FMCs (from 25 percent all the way to fully funded), the issue of confidential access to 'commercial in-confidence' information is important (i.e. only with the permission of those who have paid for access to particular information, such as market specifications, can that information be divulged to third parties who otherwise would have to spend their own resources to discover this information).

The improved practices in the form of technology and materials like harvesting aids and packaging were introduced through a process of demonstration, followed by 50 percent cost share and finally fully paid, which ensured ownership and sustainability of the interventions. The 50 percent condition was relaxed to 25 percent in case of women in order to encourage their increased participation in a conservative, resource-poor society. An independent third-party performance audit improved transparency, and in turn member confidence in FMC management.

Recommendations

It is recommended that economic opportunities be created by creating market linkages and by empowering POs to avail themselves of those opportunities.

Actions planned for 2015

The high demand for additional FMCs in the project area, and for inclusion in membership of existing FMCs is to be accommodated to the extent possible in 2015. The number of FMCs is planned to nearly double to 90, and membership of consolidated FMCs will be expanded where the present members agree.

The transition of up to eight FMCs to MMOs and the registration of those and other FMCs with sufficient rankings on the maturity index will confer the benefits of becoming a legal entity to those organizations, such as ability to enter into contracts, own property and employ staff.

Some of the FMCs who have shown they are able to run their affairs without support will be released to do so. Support will be gradually withdrawn by the project. In other cases where new FMCs are commencing, use will be made of the consolidated FMC members to provide role models and training for the new FMCs.

A series of training events will be delivered to the various categories of FMCs and new training materials are being prepared where required.

Village kitchen garden groups will be formed and given simple cash book training to assist them with sales of vegetables and poultry sales at village and local market level.

Mechanized shearing teams with mobile shearing sheds will be commissioned and after some capacity building, will undertake shearing by contract with villages through the project areas.

51 Food security in the Northern Province

Background

Project symbol	OSRO/SRL/301/NOR
Geographical coverage	Sri Lanka
LTU	AGS
Contact persons	Beth Crawford (FAO Sri Lanka Representative) Parthipan Santhiralingam (Project Manager)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Market linkages
Budget	US\$750 000 (total)
Duration	14 months (23 October 2013 to 31 December 2014)

Description

Improvement of common groundnut production in two northern districts of the country, namely Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu, was the main objective of the project. Activities were targeted to enhancing commercial production of groundnut (through selected POs), production of certified and commercial seed of groundnut within these two districts (through organization of seed producer groups) and linking the groundnut producers with appropriate markets through value addition.

A market linkage event was organized and conducted through the project in collaboration with the Department of Agriculture (Extension) and the Chamber of Commerce for the producer organizations, collectors, semi-processors and processors.

Three POs in Mullaitivu district and two POs in Kilinochchi district were identified and were provided with training in processing techniques, and value-addition equipment, to promote value-added groundnut production.

Innovation

POs were provided with new machinery (de-sheller, roaster, skin removing machine, salt adding machine, splitting machine, fire stove, vacuum packing machine) to strengthen their capacity in processing of groundnuts and to improve the quality of products.

Outcomes

This assistance created employment opportunities for unemployed youth and women-headed families, and ensured income and job security in the targeted districts. The potential markets and market linkages for value-added groundnut products were identified.

Sustainable strategies and mechanisms to link potential markets and community-based groundnut producers to market value-added groundnut products were developed.

Methodology

Partnership was developed between farmers and POs.

Issues to be resolved

The project lasted only for one full season, and even during that season the prevailing drought situation limited activities in some locations. The Integrated Farmers Thrift and Credit Cooperative Society (IFTCC) was the main cooperative society active in the project area, and initially considerable awareness creation and building of trust between POs and IFTCC was required in establishing links.

Lessons learned

Identifying the real needs of the commercial producers, seed growers, processors and marketing networks was crucial in establishing links with these partners. The project managed to conduct these through an external survey and after identifying the needs it was quite important to fill the gaps at every link. Fortunately, the project had resources to provide inputs where necessary in filling these gaps.

Good practices

The project managed to develop a common platform comprising producers (both commercial groundnut and certified seed), collectors, and processors where these different partners could meet, discuss and resolve their problems directly. Also, the project facilitated the assistance of the Department of Agriculture technical officers in areas where assistance

was needed. Managing the IFTCC while working closely with the producers in the area identified the real difficulties and challenges faced by the producers, which facilitated establishment of strong understanding between these two key players of the industry.

Recommendations

Proper understanding of real issues, gaps and challenges of each and every actor (service providers, producers, collectors, processors and the market) of the industry is crucial in establishing a sustainable groundnut production programme in the area.

Actions planned for 2015

Project activities were completed by 31st December 2014.

52 Small-Scale Piggery – Fietokoni piggery group

Background

Project symbol	TFD-11/TON/010
Geographical coverage	Tonga
LTU	SAP
Contact person	Anuilagi Tyrell (Programme Assistant)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Knowledge generation and sharing
Budget	US\$10 000
Duration	1 year (30 June 2013 to 30 June 2014)

Description

The project aimed at increasing food security and income generating activity for the farmer group. Project activities include members and youths establishing a piggery and sharing ideas of how to use the available resources to sustain the project, and moreover discussing engaging in modern management techniques of how to raise pigs.

Innovation

The input of pig feeds has introduced a balanced diet for the pigs. The use of proper water troughs provide drinking water instead of using plastic containers. Regular veterinary health checks.

Outcomes

A well-managed communal piggery with improved nutrition and health of the animals produced improved quality pigs for the group and the community. The members and families have access to a reliable supply of meat, which they can also sell to local markets for income. The youths have developed skills and techniques of how to take care of pigs for sustainability of the project. They have improved food production and food security and also availability of meat for traditional activities. Relations between neighbours also improved as they work together and take turns to clean and maintain the piggery.

Methodology

The establishment of the piggery project has improved food security for the group of Fietokoni as well as the community. Not only they have a good supply of meat for food, but also able to generate income from the sale of the meat at local markets.

Issues to be resolved

The only issue was the delay in procurement due to the availability of housing materials and the water troughs required for the project.

Lessons learned

The group has learned to maintain this activity as a source for food security as well as income. New ideas in weaning of piglets and also how and when to apply veterinary drugs, how to produce a balanced diet from pig feeds provided for the animals, and also ways to maintain the piggery.

Good practices

The group was formed so they can work together in the project. The families had to buy their own meat from other suppliers, which was costly. The project was a way for them to produce such a rare activity where they themselves can work together in the piggery for food and for income. The project made the youths use their time wisely in working in the piggery and they also built good relationships and learnt new ideas of how to take care of pigs. The piggery provided food security, which was previously lacking and it is a good source of income which did not exist before.

Recommendations

This is another way to reduce food insecurity in communities. Providing initial funding leads to local groups being able to begin a useful activity that can help with food security and rural poverty.

Actions planned for 2015

Activities planned for 2015 include capacity development on how to produce, maintain and sustain the project.

53 Yam Production

Background

Project symbol	TFD-11/TON/011
Geographical coverage	Tonga
LTU	FAOSAP
Contact person	Anuilagi Tyrell (Programme Assistant)
Principal actions	Capacity development; knowledge generation and sharing
Budget	US\$9 980 (total)
Duration	18 months (December 2013 to June 2015)

Description

The Feofaaki Group has come together to establish a project for growing root-crop yams to provide sufficient food surplus for families. They first cultivated plots of lands for the yam project. They allocated plots for each participating family and yams for planting in the early season.

Innovation

The group has introduced the use of pesticides and spraying equipment in order to maintain and increase productivity.

Outcomes

The group aimed at planting 4 acres of land in the main season with yams intercropped with other crops, such as swamp taro, giant taro and okra. Each family had a plot consisting of each crop and this provided enough for food supply and fulfilling social obligations, and the sale of surplus yields generated income for the family members. The families also have enough for the next planting season. Furthermore the project has created employment for youth.

Methodology

By promoting farmers to work collectively, the project has supported food security and also generated income for the group. It has been a success for local growers to be able to have access to the small funds that enable them to fund, procure items for this project for food security, and generation of minor sources of income for daily survival.

Issues to be resolved

The main issue is related to the difficulty of members to fully engage in the group's activities.

Lessons learned

The group has learnt that the establishment of the project has indeed provided for food security and income generation of the group.

Good practices

The project has focused on getting farmers together fortnightly to discuss project matters, to raise funds and to save planting materials for the following season. This helps ensure they are not dependent on external assistance.

Recommendations

For project sustainability it is necessary for members to take full responsibility for the success of production cycles.

Actions planned for 2015

The group is aiming to planting for the upcoming season.

54 Establishment of rice seed production hub in Hoa Tien Commune, Hoa Vang Distric, Da Nang City

Background

Project symbol	UNFA/VIE/048/UND
Geographical coverage	Viet Nam
LTU	FAO Viet Nam
Contact person	Mr Nguyen Song Ha (Assistant FAO Representative)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Budget	US\$130 000 (2014)
Duration	2 years (October 2012 to October 2014)

Description

The main objectives of the project were to:

- Preserve the land for agriculture production by maximizing farmers' income for further re-investment in Hoa Tien commune, Hoa Vang district, Da Nang city.
- Convert the commune into a high quality rice seed hub, supported by an efficient quality control and certification system, and networked with the country's seed market and seed production system, with emphasis on markets in Central and Highland areas and some provinces in the Red River Delta.
- Help the commune to become a seed buffer for the purposes of preparedness and resilience in the face of natural disaster risks, and for seed and food security of Da Nang city, as well as neighbouring provinces in Central coastal area, Highland and some in the Red River delta of Viet Nam.

Innovation

The project has fully supported rice seed production along the value chain, from seed variety improvements, storage, processing, testing, to marketing. Women's groups were targeted as key beneficiaries in the project life.

Outcomes

Main outcomes reported are in terms of Increased members' human capital; Increased bridging social capital; Increased leadership empowerment; Increased access to markets.

Methodology

Employing a holistic approach, the project adopted the following methodology:

- 'Learning by doing', aiming at enhancing individual farmer capacity.
- Establishment of a seed quality control and certification system prior to distribution to the markets, which is mandatory to comply with the State Ordinance on Seed and Seedlings.
- Enhancement of trading and marketing capacity through a modular training course.

Issues to be resolved

- The marketing component should be further strengthened with the active involvement of private sector.
- ISO certification is needed to ensure that the products can be marketed at the national level and beyond.

Lessons learned

- With the realization that both Viet Nam Metrology Institute (VMI) and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) certifications are required before licensing, the process is taking more time than planned because this is out of the control of the Department of Crop Production (DCP) and Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD). Local government and MARD should therefore place emphasis on completing the profile and submitting the documentation to the concerned authorities by April 2015.
- The authorities should continue paying attention to maintenance and sustainable use of the laboratory, as well as the two warehouses at Hoa Tien 1 and Hoa Tien 2 cooperatives.
- The authorities and beneficiaries should translate the marketing strategy, which contains the issues of business capacity, seed marketing, market development, trade name orientation, into practice.

Good practices

Good practices resulting from the project are:

- combine technical solutions with hardware improvements;
- combine primary production with capacity building for marketing; and
- facilitate PPP in seed testing.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- South-South Cooperation should be more focused on technical areas that have potential to inform and improve policy dialogues;
- while the State may be effective in some research and development activities, the private sector is a key player to sustaining the outputs and outcomes of market-driven initiatives; and
- while participation is important in a general sense, leadership is crucial in any community or cooperative development plan.



Europe and Central Asia

Initiatives reported in this region regard technical advice, projects and workshops. Two of them (one project and one workshop) were carried out at regional level; the remaining three initiatives here documented were carried out at country level. All of them implemented capacity development actions; 60 percent produced new knowledge materials; 40 percent contributed to supporting the enabling environment; and finally one initiative supported POs and cooperatives' voice and participation and implemented actions to develop market linkages. Almost all of them (80 percent) contributed to SO3; 60 percent to SO4; 40 percent to SO1 and SO2; and none to SO5.

Regional projects in Europe and Central Asia

55 Regional Workshop on Strengthening Cooperation and Collaboration among Fisher Organizations in Central Asia

Background

Project symbol	GCP/RER/031/TUR
Geographical coverage	Central Asia
LTU	FAOSEC
Contact persons	Haydar Fersey (Consultant) Susana V. Siar (Fishery Industry Officer)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Duration	7-9 April, 2014

Description

The Regional Workshop on Strengthening Cooperation and Collaboration among Fisher Organizations in Central Asia was held in Baku, Azerbaijan. It was a follow-up activity to the 2010 Izmir Regional Workshop on Promoting and Strengthening Fisheries and Aquaculture Organizations in Central Asia. The workshop was attended by representatives from government fisheries agencies and fisher organizations from Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey and Uzbekistan.

Methodology

The workshop was conducted using a combination of presentations from resource persons and participants, working group sessions and plenary discussion. One of the presentations was an introduction to gender in fisheries.

Recommendations

The regional workshop recommended the following actions:

- Promote the establishment and effective functioning of local-level associations representing the common interests of fishers and fish farmers.
- Encourage the establishment of national-level association and umbrella organizations.
- Conduct awareness-raising campaigns for key stakeholders regarding the importance and promotion of fisher and fish farmer organizations.
- Promote the review and update of the legislation for the establishment, recognition and empowerment of fisher and fish farmer organizations at different levels (local, national, regional), including their participation in decision-making.

- Encourage the formulation and development of national strategies and associated technical and operational guidelines for establishing effective and sustainable fisher and fish farmer organizations, based on sectoral needs assessment.
- Encourage the establishment of national and regional networking and information systems of fisher and fish farmer organizations, including information regarding their members.
- Encourage the establishment of a mechanism for communication between fisher and fish farmer associations and government.
- Provide regular capacity development, training and education for leaders and members of fisher and fish farmer organizations.
- Promote better management practices based on experiences from other countries and own experiences.
- Promote the development of aquaculture and provide support to fish farmers equal to the support given to the agriculture sector.
- Address the need of aquaculture for land and aquatic resources within an integrated land and water resources management policy.

Actions planned for 2015

The Recommendations put forward by the workshop are being integrated into the formulation of a project document on a supplementary programme by the Central Asia Regional Programme for Fisheries and Aquaculture Development (FishDev Central Asia).

56 Cattle production improvement in Central Asia countries

Background

Project symbol	GCP/SEC/001/TUR
Geographical coverage	Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan
LTU	AGAS via SEC Livestock Officer (LTO)
Contact person	Aslihan Denge Akbas (Junior Technical Officer)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Knowledge generation and sharing
Budget	US\$600 000 (total)
Duration	3 years (11 October 2011 to 31 December 2014)

Description

Through the project, a cattle producer association has been established in each of the three countries, and used for local training. Within these associations, milk collecting systems have been also generated. Milk storage and cooling tanks and milk analysing equipment were purchased for each association. Demonstration plots for forage production were established in each country.

Training workshops on cattle husbandry practices were conducted in all three countries for farmers and for local technical staff. A study tour to Bursa and Balıkesir, Turkey, was organized in order to bring together farmers and local technical staff from participating countries and to share experiences on cattle husbandry practices.

Modern forage production systems were demonstrated for the breeder associations. These systems are more productive than the current ones and contribute substantially to livestock productivity. Producers' farm management skills were improved through training on improving housing, herd health and preventive medicine, milking practices, feeding, breeding and marketing. The need for formal milk marketing associations for producers

was assessed. They have been setting up in order to improve the supply of essential inputs and services, and enhance association members' negotiating powers.

Innovation

Women and children are important stakeholders in this project because they are usually directly involved in small-scale livestock production. They have the knowledge about livestock production and health problems and traditional methods of dealing with these problems. The project has ensured women's involvement at all stages, including project assessment and implementation, as well as their active participation in producer associations. In most of the household farming, women directly manage the small stock and processing and marketing of products for household consumption, and receive income from the sale of surplus; women are therefore direct beneficiaries of this project.

Outcomes

The main outcome of the project is establishing functioning cattle and milk producer associations, livestock forage and concentrate feeding, and modern husbandry management systems in one high-priority district in each of the three partner countries.

Cattle producer associations have been established. The Cattle Producers Association is a centre for training, extension, information gathering and analysis and service delivery. An adequate but modest office and training facilities are being used in one high-potential pilot district in each country. The systems essential for livestock productivity improvement and commodity marketing will be centred and operated out of district offices.

Forage demonstrations were established in each district. Priority high-potential varieties of forages were grown in demonstration plots (at least five per district) for 131 farmers. Advice on harvesting, preserving and feeding were developed for extension to farmers and livestock owners. Livestock husbandry and management practices improved. Farm management skills of the Cattle Producers Association (CPA) members were improved through training on housing, herd health and preventive medicine, milking practices, feeding, breeding and marketing. One private module farm was assisted as a demonstration for learning best practices for livestock husbandry in each district. Within the Cattle Producers Association, Milk Collecting Systems have been developed.

Methodology

Form breeders' associations, and register purebred cattle.

Issues to be resolved

Since the project has been completed, there are no issues to be resolved.

Lessons learned

With regard to lessons learned, it is noticed that the strategic approach of this sub-regional project is to start small. One district-based Cattle Producers Association office and training centre was set up in each country. Early components of the project focused on expertise and systems for improving forage quality and quantity, restoring concentrate animal feed milling, improving livestock husbandry practices and improving milk marketing.

Good practices

The project aims to improve livestock productivity through: establishing district-based cattle producer associations for training and service delivery; accessing better feeds, both

quality forages and compound feeds; disseminating modern livestock farm husbandry and management practices, such as preventive health treatment and milk sanitation; providing support in animal registration and identification; and supporting modern milk marketing associations in order to organize milk producers.

Recommendations

With regards to recommendations, it is noted that these systems require neither significant investment nor operating support from by governments over the long term as they will be maintained within the private sector. National livestock stakeholders build their capacity to operate in their countries as far as district-based cattle producers and milk marketing associations are formed; concentrate feed and improved forages become more available; and national stakeholders are trained in modern livestock husbandry and management practices.

Actions planned for 2015

Project activities finished in December 2014, with formal closure of the project, with completion of all documentation, is underway.

Country projects in Europe and Central Asia

57 Capacity Development of the Ministry of Agriculture of Georgia

Background

Project symbol	GCP/GEO/001/EC
Geographical coverage	Georgia
LTU	REU
Contact person	Gia Bibileishvili (National Consultant on Farmer Organizations)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Budget	Euro 2 000 000 (total)
Duration	3 years (15 June 2013 to 14 June 2016)

Description

Provision of technical assistance in different managerial, programmatic and legislative thematic areas related to producer groups and cooperatives, organization of workshop and training support; and facilitation in matchmaking activities with stakeholders.

In 2014 the support was mainly addressed to the newly established Agricultural Cooperatives' Development Agency (ACDA). ACDA was supported to establish and manage an effective cooperation with the European Neighborhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD)'s implementing partners, as well as farmers and groups interested in establishing cooperatives.

Innovation

Assistance was provided in enhancing managerial and administrative practices within the agency Innovative analytic tools have been developed for the divisions of the agency, which will help them better assess data obtained and, based on it, improve the decision-making process. Stakeholder coordination platforms have been created which did not exist before FAO involvement. Gender mainstreaming activities initiated included holding the first two-day training events for the members of the agency and registered cooperatives.

Outcomes

Increased awareness of agency staff in necessary managerial practices, enhanced analytic capabilities, improved decision-making and policy-making processes, and enhanced coordination with stakeholders.

Methodology

Standard managerial practices and analytical tools have been proposed for the agency, through implementation of this assistance. Success factors are determined based on the overall strategy and needs of the agency, which are taken as baseline indicators for success measurement for implemented activities, as well as determined from the best international practices, such as facilitating adoption of gender- or youth-oriented policies, etc.

Lessons learned

The agriculture cooperative formation turned out to be ongoing process rather than a one-time intervention event, due to several factors, namely: relatively short history of exiting agriculture cooperative movement (only recently endorsed legislation, governmental agency, process of registering cooperatives) and lack of experience and legacy in private cooperative systems, which is frequently confused by farmers with the Soviet era Kolkhoz (collective farming) movement. The change in the mindset of farmers is occurring gradually and an established agency (ACDA) is putting significant efforts in public outreach campaign to raise awareness of the cooperative movement benefits among Georgian farmers. Largely due to these factors, it is not easy to identify existing constraints since the process is in flux and for this reason many normative and regulative as well as policy-making practices need to be constantly adjusted to the changing circumstances.

Good practices

These included close day-to-day collaboration with the agency management, joint planning of activities and areas of potential assistance. A flexible format of cooperation has proven to be efficient, viable and highly productive in terms of better addressing the needs of the partners and beneficiaries.

Recommendations

Maintain close collaboration with partner organizations at every stage of project implementation, starting from analytical assessment of the situation and ending with actual implementation steps. Openness and readiness is needed for adjustments in the work plan in accordance with changing needs and requirements of partner organizations.

Actions planned for 2015

- Provision of expert assistance to ACDA for strategy direction and financial schemes development, and drafting tax and legislative amendments.
- Continuation of support provision to the agency in capacity building through organization of trainings, workshops and conferences.;
- Creation of a platform for coordination meetings among key governmental, non-governmental and registered cooperatives, which will help synergize activities of different actors pertaining to agriculture cooperatives.

58 International Year of Family Farming

Background

Project symbol	n.a.
Geographical coverage	Turkey
Contact person	Aslihan Denge Akbas (Junior Technical Officer)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing;
Duration	1 year (2014)

Description

Within the framework of the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) celebrations, a number of activities have been put in place in Turkey that also involved farmers and their organizations.

Nine family farming workshops and symposiums have been organized at national level in various Turkish cities, initiated by the FAO country team and managed by Ministry of Food, Livestock and Agriculture of Turkey.

During a four-day fair (21-25 May 2014, Izmir, Turkey), in cooperation with Garanti Bank, FAO Representation in Turkey launched small workshops for participant farmers with the purpose of introducing integrated pest management (IPM) methods and the FFS approach. The workshops were delivered by two FAO consultants who have worked on the project “Promotion of Integrated Crop and Pest Management in vegetables, fruit orchards and grapes in Turkey”. Up until now, this project has reached seven provinces in Turkey, including 51 counties and 4000 growers.

The official celebration of World Food Day in Turkey took place in collaboration with the Turkish Food and Beverage Industry Employers Association (TUGIS) on 16 October in Istanbul with the high-level participation of Mehdi Eker, Minister of Food, Livestock and Agriculture of Turkey.

In three Turkish cities, Antalya, Adana and Nevsehir, World Food Day events were organized, with a special focus on acknowledging the role of local producers and their vital contribution to food security.

The YOREX Local Products Fair in Antalya brought together private sector representatives, civil society organizations and local producers, giving them the opportunity to form partnerships and source new markets.

Innovation

A Turkish bank, Sekerbank, has used an advertisement on TV that honours family farmers. Sekerbank was established more than a half-century ago to support rural development and local agricultural production in Turkey. Now privately owned, the bank offers “Family Farming Banking” or loans for family farms seeking to consolidate their land holdings, adopt modern agricultural practices, and educate the next generation of family farmers. (see <http://www.fao.org/europe/news/detail-news/en/c/270889/>)

Outcomes

Increased knowledge, communication and public awareness

Methodology

- Support the development of policies conducive to sustainable family farming by encouraging government to establish the enabling environment (conducive policies, adequate legislation, participatory planning for a policy dialogue, investments) for the sustainable development of family farming.
- Increase knowledge, communication and public awareness by increasing public awareness of family farming, small-scale farming and fisheries, and their contributions (both actual and potential or untapped) to food security, improved nutrition, poverty alleviation, economic growth, employment generation and livelihood improvement, territorial development, sustainable -use of natural resources, particularly of resource-poor farmers and fishers and fish workers. Increase public awareness and knowledge of the diversity and the complexity of production and consumption systems in family farming, small-scale farming and fisheries. Enhance international dialogue and cooperation. Increase public awareness and knowledge of family farming, small-scale farming and fisheries, and current trends in policies and investments, highlighting “success stories”, good policies and best practices. Increase opportunities for dialogue, participation and access to information for small-scale producers and their associations.
- Attain better understanding of family farming needs, potential and constraints, and ensure technical support. Identify, capitalize and promote technical support for capacity development actions, including policies. Reach out to non-agricultural actors (financial institutions, development banks, decision-makers, etc.) in order to increase their awareness and knowledge of the potential of family and small-scale agriculture in sustainable development. Encourage actions at global, regional, national and community levels. Monitor how family farms and policies related to family and small-scale farming evolve.
- Create synergies for sustainability. Promote the inclusion of the IYFF vision along international processes and committees. Ensure that longer-term actions related to family farming are reflected in the international agenda. Promote synergies with other International Years, in particular Cooperatives.

Issues to be resolved

n.a. as the activity has been completed.

Lessons learned

Family farming is the predominant form of agriculture in both developed and developing countries. Family farmers are an important part of the solution for a world free from poverty and hunger. Family farming supports sustainable development

Good practices

A photograph captured by Istanbul photographer Hakan Yayla, took first prize in its category in the International Year of Family Farming photo competition. The photo is available on <http://www.fao.org/europe/news/detail-news/en/c/271796/>.

Actions planned for 2015

In 2015 thanks to the results of regional workshops, the Ministry of Food Agriculture and Livestock is preparing to explain an action plan for supporting, revising and innovating family farming policies in the agricultural agenda of Turkey.



Latin America and the Caribbean

Among contributions received about initiatives in support of POs and cooperatives carried out in Latin America and Caribbean, 80 percent of them were implemented at country level and 20 percent at regional level. They were about 14 projects, 1 publication, 2 technical advice and 3 workshops.

On the whole, 75 percent of them implemented capacity development actions; 60 percent generated knowledge outputs; 40 percent supported the enabling environment as well as POs and cooperatives to increase their voice and participation in policy dialogue; and finally a similar percentage of initiatives contributed to develop market linkages. Of such initiatives 70 percent contributed to SO3; 45 percent to SO2; 40 percent to SO4; 35 percent to SO1; and 15 percent to SO5.

Regional Projects in Latin America and the Caribbean

59 Family farming cooperatives in MERCOSUR: current status and a proposal for their promotion and development

Background

Title

Project symbol	GCP/RLA/173/BRA
Geographical coverage	MERCOSUR
LTU	FAORLC
Contact person	Dulclair Sternadt (Partnership Focal Point for RLC)
Principal actions	Knowledge generation and sharing
Budget	US\$8 000
Duration	4 months
Web site	http://www.rlc.fao.org/es/programabrasilfao/

Description

The initiative aimed to prepare a comprehensive publication that provides an analysis of the current situation of family farming cooperatives in MERCOSUR countries. It also identifies recommendations for a regional action plan with the aim of promoting exchange and cooperation to improve the economic integration of family farming cooperatives and their participation in rural development and food security policies. The publication is still under review.

Innovation

The publication aimed to provide new knowledge in the field.

The MERCOSUR region has been going through an intense process of economic and social change boosted by policies which promoted achievements in terms food security and family farming strengthening.

At the same time, the experience of sub-regional coordination has been enhanced by combining policy dialogue on integration and on rural development policies, as is the case of the specialized meeting on family farming in MERCOSUR. This framework has highlighted the issue of the economic organization of family farming and its potential to increase intra-regional food trade and to participate in public programmes of food procurement.

However, there is no systematic information on family farming cooperatives, related legal and institutional frameworks, and public programmes for this sector. Therefore, this publication aimed to raise awareness about family farming cooperatives in the region.

Outcomes

This publication aimed to come up with an in-depth analysis of the situation of family farming cooperatives in Mercosur countries and recommendations for action. This is in order to develop a regional plan for cooperation, to enhance the economic integration of family farming cooperatives and their active participation in policy dialogue.

Methodology

The adopted methodology includes a number of steps.

- 1) Review of secondary data, such as papers, official statistics, press releases, official government bulletins, law publications and regulations, project reports, etc. This review was aimed at collecting information on countries that have been implementing public procurement from the family farming sector. Particular attention was given to MERCOSUR countries.
- 2) Collection of primary data involved the FAO Regional Office and the Special Meeting on Family Farming (REAF) Technical Secretariat, who facilitated contacts so that the consultant could interview public and private actors involved in the cooperative movement and in the family farming sector of the countries under investigation.
- 3) Elements addressed were:
 - Quantitative and qualitative analysis and description of the family farming cooperatives (number of active cooperatives, number of members, key services provided, etc.). Description of second-level cooperatives, trade associations, universities and non-governmental organizations related to the family farming cooperative movement.
 - Description and analysis of legal and institutional frameworks governing family farming cooperatives in the MERCOSUR countries, and governmental tools made available to them.
 - Description of the regulatory framework, which allows women's participation in cooperatives, as well as incentive mechanisms for their participation and inclusion.
 - Identification of experiences of family farming cooperatives' participation in public policies, such as trade promotion, public food procurement, etc.
 - Highlighting experiences of women-led cooperatives or producer groups, and their integration in mixed cooperatives.
 - Identification of issues and actions that can make up an agenda for regional exchange and cooperation aimed to strengthen family farming cooperatives and their participation in public policies for promoting rural development and food security.
- 4) Preparation of the final publication.
- 5) Presentation of the main findings to the FAO Regional Office and REAF Technical Secretary.

Issues to be resolved

The lack of official information on family farming cooperatives in some member countries of MERCOSUR.

Good practices

Leaders of the cooperative movements have been involved in the preparation of this publication.

Recommendations

In order to come up with a comprehensive picture of the Latin America Region, it is recommended to replicate this investigation for the other countries that are not part of MERCOSUR.

Actions planned for 2015

The publication is the basis for the development of a programme aimed to promote and improve cooperative movements in the REAF countries, especially in order to integrate them with the family farming movement.

60 International Workshop on “Cultural Diversity, Food Systems and Traditional Life Strategies”

Background

Project symbol	n.a.
Geographical coverage	Latin America Region (hosted by Peru)
LTU	RLC
Contact person	Aitor Las (Consultant)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Knowledge generation and sharing
Budget	US\$70 000
Duration	5 days
Web site	http://www.fao.org/americas/eventos/ver/es/c/243317/

Description

A knowledge sharing event on Traditional Livelihood Strategies of Indigenous People was organized, responding to the petition made by the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples. Presentations were made by Indigenous People representatives from different countries and regions on their approach to agriculture and food security, regarding post-2015 development agenda discussion.

Innovation

Main elements of innovation were the direct participation of indigenous people representatives, and the interaction among them on the subjects, as well as the elaboration of a common position on the post-2015 global development agenda (Cusco Declaration).

Outcomes

The main outcomes reported are in terms of increased bridging social capital and increased participation in policy dialogue and decision-making processes.

The first outcome has been achieved by strengthening relations between indigenous people organization networks and experience sharing. Then, the common elaboration of the Cusco Declaration enabled an active participation of indigenous people organizations in the debate on the post-2015 development agenda with governments and FAO.

Methodology

Presentations were made and discussion forums were held among indigenous people representatives from different regions and countries, addressing different productive activities (agriculture, fisheries, forest management, herding, pottery). A field trip to the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) Project areas was made in order to show its results.

Issues to be resolved

Geographical representation could be improved, as the Latin America and the Caribbean Region (RLC) was largely over-represented, while Asia, Oceania and Africa were poorly represented.

Administrative procedures affected the attendance of a few guest participants and resulted in difficulties on Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) reception. The field trip to GIAHS could not be completed as scheduled. Difficulties on the assumption of costs by host government.

Lessons learned

Need for planning and completion in advance of administrative tasks regarding travel, accommodation and services to be contracted; scheduling of field trips, considering security limitations and mobilization of large groups.

Good practices

Quality presentations made by indigenous people representatives.

Recommendations

- Adequate and representative identification of participants and activities.
- Maximization of advance preparation of administrative tasks.
- Prior elaboration and discussion of working documents.

Actions planned for 2015

As the event was uniquely held in Peru in 2014, no similar activities have been planned. However, contact with the Ministry of Culture has been maintained through the Inter-Agency Group for Interculture in order to continue this line of action.

61 Programa de Operación de Unidades Demostrativas Agroacuícolas en el marco del Proyecto de Consolidación de la Red de Acuicultura de las Américas

Background

Project symbol	GCP/RLA/190/BRA
Geographical coverage	Guatemala, Colombia, Costa Rica, Antigua and Barbuda and Paraguay
LTU	RLC
Contact person	Alejandro Flores Nava (Senior Fisheries and Aquaculture officer)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Knowledge generation and sharing; Market linkages
Budget	US\$250 000 (2014)
Duration	4.5 years (01 January 2011 to 30 May 2015)
Web site	www.racua.org

Description

A number of demonstration agri-aquaculture production units were constructed and operated, in agreement with local authorities and farmer organizations. Their objectives were to strengthen technical capacities, as well as managerial skills and marketing of aquaculture products, using family-owned or farmer organizations' farms. The programme included setting up a demonstration fish processing plant operated by a women's farmer organization. A regional experience exchange meeting was organized among farmers.

Innovation

Integration of agriculture, livestock and aquaculture in territories where the programme was implemented was an innovation. A mobile processing plant for small-scale farmers is also an innovation. In most cases where the demonstration farms were introduced, productivity and family income increased substantially (more than 500 percent in some cases). A new association of producers was formed in Paraguay, derived from these actions, and food and nutrition security was substantially strengthened in all cases.

Outcomes

Food production increased in all of communities where farms have been operated. Family income has been substantially increased by higher productivity of fish and agriculture goods, thus having a multiplying effect in countries such as Colombia and Paraguay. Women have been empowered by providing them with knowledge and seed capital. In two cases, the POs have been able to acquire land and a bank account, which enables them to be eligible for development programmes that require matching funds.

Methodology

A common denominator has been the alliances with government and civil society organizations, which have been essential partners in accompanying the process. Examples of this include partnering with the Competitiveness Center of the Province of Tolima, Colombia, which has been instrumental in helping a women's group to re-organize and formalize its association. In Costa Rica, the National Fisheries Institute has been an essential partner, as has been the Vice-ministry of Livestock and the Rural Association of Paraguay in that country.

Issues to be resolved

In some cases, the national official counterparts of the programme do not have the resources for close follow-up, and thus deviations can occur. It is important that there is a commitment by the local authorities to provide resources to their technicians or development agencies so that farmers do not feel abandoned after the initial steps.

It is also important to articulate with other local development entities and authorities so that synergies can be developed and differential policies (i.e. environmental licensing) are implemented to facilitate processes and sustainability.

Lessons learned

Some important lessons that have been learned include the fact that selection of the right organization of producers is a crucial factor for success. Also, that every action or intervention in a community has to be agreed in advance with the community. Another lesson learned is that the approach in any intervention has to be both bottom-up attending to farmers' needs, as well as utilizing the self-aid approach to build capacities

for self sustainability. In this regard, farmers have to contribute to their project either in kind or in cash.

Good practices

Multisectoral dialogue that fosters local development, beyond aquaculture production.

Recommendations

Increase resource allocation for extension services in rural aquaculture communities.

Actions planned for 2015

A new project sponsored by the government of Brazil has been signed. The main components are:

- continue capacity development of producer organizations (aquaculture) of LAC countries through field schools and other mechanisms;
- develop regional and national strategies to increase aquaculture fish consumption, particularly in animal-protein-deficient rural communities; and
- strengthen capacities of Small-Scale Aquaculture (SSA) operators for value adding to aquaculture products, as well as creation of collective trade brands.

62 Improving agri-food chain efficiency and food quality and safety standards in Central America: El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua

Background

Project symbol	GTFS/RLA/176/ITA
Geographical coverage	El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua
LTU	AGS
Contact persons	Pilar Santacoloma (Agri-food Systems Officer) Xenia de Moran (Project Coordinator)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Market linkages
Budget	US\$5 908 419 (total)
Duration	4 years (01 Jul 2011 to 30 June 2015)
Web site	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5LFWPjeqPa8

Description

The project aimed to achieve four main outputs: (1) value-added production; (2) certification, quality and safety standards; (3) business partnerships; and (4) capacity building and institutional strengthening.

The main activities implemented are:

- Supporting 45 farmer's organizations in areas related to quality management along the value chain, such as good agricultural practices, good manufacturing practices and good entrepreneurial practices.
- Technical assisting, developing capacity and coaching to local and regional technicians.
- Enhancing negotiation's skills of POs and SMEs in negotiation with buyers.
- Promoting upgrade of value chains through stakeholder partnerships and partnership alliances.

Specifically in El Salvador, the project provided technical assistance in order to produce, to process and to market high quality and safe products. With the support of national institutions, the project also aimed to strengthen producers' business management capacities in order to foster business partnerships for fresh and transformed food. In addition the project facilitated access to other services such as financial services. The institutional strengthening of the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) has been implemented through capacity development of technical staff. Training has been provided for agri-food chain management, as well as on the development of a proposal for coordinating the management of food chain production programmes and the connection with industry and trade of the family farming programme in the MAG.

Innovation

In terms of product and process innovation, the project has promoted the introduction of best practices by producers, POs and SMEs. In El Salvador, agronomic practices have been improved, and the production has been reorganized to connect it to markets in a sustainable way. Good agricultural practices (GAP) have been implemented through FFS facilitated by MAG and CENTA (National Agricultural Technology Centre). Innovation has also been introduced in post-harvest management, safety and quality control through GAPs and quality sheets obtained for selected products in food chains.

Concerning institutional innovation, the following achievements are reported:

- Establishing Stakeholder Roundtables in potato value chain in Guatemala, beans value chain in Honduras, cassava value chain in Nicaragua and *jocote* value chain in El Salvador.
- Establishing and supporting inter-institutional partnership between Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Economy in El Salvador to design territorial development strategy.
- Supporting commercial alliances between POs and SMEs with regional buyers like Walmart.

In terms of social innovation, organizational changes happened in the POs since a generational change has occurred in the leadership as a way forward to improve its services to members. Nowadays young people are leading these organizations, positioning themselves as CEOs, managers and chairpersons of technical committees in the areas of production, marketing and quality and safety control. Jobs for women have been created in the processing plants. The project generated important intangible changes that are usually difficult to achieve, such as improving self-esteem, mentality change and professionalization. POs have changed their mindsets and now they are regarded as true commercial enterprises. They learned how to establish new business partnerships and to access new markets. They have been considered as important players in their communities and as relevant interlocutors for public institutions, which now indeed listen to them and facilitate their participation in national platforms.

Outcomes

More than 10 000 families organised in 45 POs are formally linked to markets through improved managerial, organizational and agricultural skills. In El Salvador, 10 POs and 5 SMEs have added value to their products through improved managerial and organizational skills that allow them to export their products to nostalgic markets in USA. Technical and commercial alliances were created between Walmart, CENTA and MAG with support

from FAO to enhance business opportunities in the banana value chain in El Salvador. Here, productive capacities have been strengthened and GAPs have been implemented, through technical assistance and FFS implemented by CENTA.

In Guatemala, 16 POs have improved their GAPs and GMPs in potato and bean, and managed to participate in national markets. A platform for cooperation and institutional coordination for the potato value chain was established in Guatemala. In Honduras, 5 POs applied ITC technologies in their business relationships. SMEs have improved quality management skills through application of Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points (HACCP) and GMP. A National Platform for bean value chain coordination was created, led by SAG in Honduras. In Nicaragua, 13 POs were strengthened and enabled to participate in local and regional markets for cassava products. In all the countries, female participation was between 30 and 40 percent.

Methodology

The methodology adopted was a value chain development approach. This methodology considers actors and their roles and interactions, as well as technical and business development services needed for chain development. Technicians from the public extension system or research institutions were involved to build local capabilities. Strategic alliances with commercial actors were supported. National or local stakeholder platforms were encouraged and supported to discuss value chain issues.

This model applies the value chain approach to family farming, as an alternative to actions taken by isolated individuals. It takes into account how actors relate to each other, and being an appropriate coordination between them, it is able to reduce risks and costs, thus generating higher earnings.

This is a two-stage intervention strategy. Firstly there is a preparatory stage for dialogue that promotes changes in attitude among actors. Then the second stage is developing dialogue and fostering key stakeholders participation in solving problems and generating competitiveness.

Issues to be resolved

Changes in the public sector counterparts affected project implementation, particularly in Guatemala. Similarly, the national project coordinator changed four times during project implementation, occasioning delays in the planned activities.

In El Salvador, the selection of agro-food chains should have been implemented by the government as a priority from the beginning of the project. In fact, initially, counterpart participation and support for technical assistance in the areas of intervention of the project was very low. However, as project implementation progressed, the counterpart became more involved and the more the agro-food chain method was being applied, the more the government began taking active part and getting involved in the project dynamic.

Lessons learned

Good project design is a key success factor. Resources should be planned and scheduled to gather information at country level, and discuss preliminary proposals and strategies with key actors before starting implementation.

Involvement of national institutions for research and extension as partners is another critical factor for success.

The management of relations with governmental counterparts should be defined from the beginning of the project in order to optimize resources, increase expected impacts and

ensure greater sustainability. It must focus on both policies and project implementation on the ground.

Access to resources by small-scale producers is a constraint to development. Therefore tools and policies to enable access to resources through bank loans, seed capital and revolving funds should be identified as a priority for the next projects.

Good practices

One best practice is the production of tools that establish marketing relations between POs and business companies. This ensures bargaining sustainability as well as player formality. Technical sheets have been produced to harmonize quality standard requirements for supply chain products between companies and POs. Generating record monitoring sheets, which enabled POs keeping records to be better aware of trends in production as well as the impact of income levels within the organization and for each producer. A further good practice was economic and technical feasibility studies to select organizations as partners for co-investing in the construction of storage facilities, as well as to search out other players that could join the effort.

Recommendations

Smallholders and their organizations require enhancement of a plethora of skills: agricultural, processing, entrepreneurial, organizational and advocacy. Therefore a project should facilitate multidisciplinary interventions.

Facilitating dialogue among value-chain actors is very much needed to accomplish the project targets. For full and satisfactory results, the skills of small-scale producers and their organizations should be enhanced in advance of these dialogues.

Co-financing for infrastructure development, rather than giving grants or subsidies, is essential to avoid passive dependency on aid, and to ensure the success of the PO's business.

Projects with limited resources should avoid dispersion, and target a limited number of groups to achieve demonstrable short-term results.

The territorial concentration of a production chain and the identification of an area with one or more products is also essential for the motivation and professionalism of POs and SMEs.

The indicator design should be made according to critical success factors, both tangible (e.g. cultivation, productivity, price/earnings, sales, etc.) and intangible (e.g. cultural changes, social capital, empowerment, etc.).

Actions planned for 2015

This, the last year of the project, has actions focusing on closing activities and implementing the exit strategy. The exit strategy implies facilitating inter-institutional coordination between ministries of agriculture and of economy in order to adopt the value chain development approach in the countries.

Country projects in Latin America and the Caribbean

63 Project for the promotion of biomass energy

Background

Project symbol	UTF/ARG/020/ARG
Geographical coverage	Argentina
LTU	FOE
Contact person	Hugo Orestes Zilocchi (Technical Adviser)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Knowledge generation and sharing
Budget	US\$1 061 599 (2014)
Duration	4 years (01 July 2012 to 31 December 2015)
Web site	www.probiomasa.gob.ar

Description

The objective of the project is to increase the production of electrical and thermal energy from biomass at local, provincial and national level. It aims at ensuring an increasing provision of clean, reliable and competitive energy, as well as generating new agroforestry opportunities, promoting regional development and contributing to climate change mitigation. The project includes a specific component for training and raising awareness. Beneficiaries are small-scale producers who are supported to build capacity and knowledge of how energy can be generated from biomass that they have or produce.

Outcomes

Main outcomes of the project are:

- 1) Dissemination materials:
 - monthly electronic newsletter that informs on advantages and opportunities of biomass energy;
 - informative materials on biomass energy, as well as on the institutional framework and objectives of the PROBIOMASA project;
 - printing and distribution of Technical Sheets: Sheet 1 “Biomass as renewable energy”; Sheet 2 “Dendroenergy: Woody Residues”; and Sheet 3 “Renewable Future: Biogas as an energy source” (All are available at www.probiomasa.gob.ar/biblioteca.php);
 - educational booklet for girls and boys, aiming to raise children’s awareness on what is biomass, where it is, how it is transformed into energy, and what are the advantages and social, economic and environmental benefits of this renewable energy; and
 - audiovisual productions (3 and 6 minutes), photographic archive and technical interviews.
- 2) Training:
 - theoretical and practical workshops on organic waste usage to produce biogas and fertilizers. 700 people participated and 250 scholarships were granted in 8 Argentinean provinces; and
 - distance learning courses. One course was on the use of different types of biomass for thermal and electrical energy. Over 1000 participants, including from other Spanish-speaking countries. Another course focused on “How to build a business plan: Introduction to a general model using biomass to generate thermal and electrical energy”.

Methodology

The adopted methodology was to plan and implement capacity development actions by hiring experts in relevant topics.

Issues to be resolved

A need for more human resources was identified.

Lessons learned

Products should be adapted to the needs and characteristics of each region.

Actions planned for 2015

More comprehensive studies on type, quantity and technology of existing biodigesters in Argentina will be carried out. Theoretical and practical workshops on the usage of organic waste to produce biogas and fertilizers will also be held in 2015, but with updated content. Finally, the FAO Regional Capacity development team was contacted to request budget and general conditions related to the development and implementation of a course on the energy use of dry biomass in Argentina.

64 Institutional Development for Investment

Background

Project symbol	UTF /ARG/017/ARG
Geographical coverage	Argentina
LTU	TCR/RLC
Contact person	Alejandra Mussano (Capacity Development Officer)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Budget	US\$1 484 125 (2014)
Duration	4 years (01 January 2011 to 31 December 2014)
Web site	http://www.fao.org/americas/eventos/vii-taller-irrigacion-argentina/es/

Description

The Technical Assistance Agreement between FAO and the Programme of Provincial Agricultural Services (PROSAP), "Institutional Development for Investment", aims to improve the livelihood conditions of small- and medium-scale producers, through increased agricultural investments. This is expected to be achieved by implementing key projects that contribute to rural and regional development. The specific objectives of the project are:

- Prepare investment subprojects at executive project level.
- Conduct sectoral studies that contribute to the generation or adjustment of public policies and to identify priority areas of provincial and national investment.
- Increase and strengthen public and private investment capacities in the agricultural and rural sector in various technical fields, by developing training and technical assistance to producer groups on topics such as irrigation water management through cooperatives and user associations.
- Ensure a participatory and gender balanced Technical Assistance Project.

Innovation

Innovative elements introduced by the project are in terms of:

- new criteria for administrative, management and control processes of organizations;
- identification and transfer of appropriate technologies for value-added food products and for new service provision; and
- introduction of irrigation consortia aimed to complement the irrigation service with new alternative and diversified productive models.

Outcomes

Main outcomes achieved through capacity development and technical assistance are:

- awareness raised among the irrigation consortium members on better management of water resources;
- skills and capacities to manage the irrigation consortia improved;
- better access to information, with technical capacity development; and
- empowered organizations.

Methodology

Technical assistance adopts a participatory diagnosis methodology. Workshops and seminars adopt participatory methodologies, whereby members actively participate, as well as promoting gender equality, and youth participation in organizations is encouraged.

Issues to be resolved

- Expansion of networks of associations and cooperatives in the area covered by the Project.
- Improved communication systems at inter-institutional and provincial level among organizations and provincial public authorities.

Lessons learned

Main lessons learned are:

- through the project, producers raised their awareness of advantages of POs and cooperatives and increased their active participation; and
- in the areas covered by the project (Calchaquies valleys: provinces of Salta, Tucuman and Catamarca), the project itself improved its visibility at institutional level.

Good practices

- Project ownership by beneficiaries.
- Better use of water was achieved in irrigation consortia by adopting new technologies
- Capacity development workshops enabled the establishment of rich experience sharing and knowledge integration by doing.

Actions planned for 2015

Main actions planned for 2015 include:

- Continuing the conduct of capacity development and technical assistance aimed at strengthening organizational capacities of producers by introducing new tools for management, administration and control.
- Intensifying technology transfer, taking into account the specific knowledge of communities and recovering local practices.

65 New production and social organization of Brazilian family farming – a need

Background

Project symbol	UTF/BRA/083/BRA
Geographical coverage	Brazil
LTU	RLC
Contact person	Gustavo Chianca (Assistant FAOR)
Principal actions	Support to enabling environment
Budget	US\$1 965 444 (2014)
Duration	5 years (21 December 2010 to 16 December 2015)

Description

The project is intended to incorporate new management practices for production development in family farming that meets the needs of sectors with low production capacity. The project also aims to develop methodology for the analysis of organizational, production, technology and trade processes of producer groups with low production.

Innovation

The project has carried out qualitative and quantitative studies to evaluate the achievements and identify guidelines to improve rural development policies, such as the National Policy of Technical Assistance and Rural Extension (PNATER) and the National Programme for Strengthening of Family Farming (PRONAF). The project has been carrying out surveys, analyses and studies on land administration and land market evolution, in order to propose qualification tools to land governance in Brazil.

Outcomes

This project provides technical and methodological support to qualifying instruments of execution and access to public marketing policies for rural women, such as research to evaluate the participation of women in the policies developed by the Ministry of Agrarian Development (Food Acquisition Programme- PAA, Credit, Technical Assistance and Rural Extension- ATER, development policies and documentation).

Methodology

The project analysed the participation of women in PRONAF (a credit line) and PRONAF WOMEN in order to evaluate results achieved and specify guidelines for increasing the participation of women and their economic organizations in the production of financing policy.

Issues to be resolved

Despite some initial delays in implementation, this project has complied with the approved work plan. A project review is under negotiation to extend the not-to exceed (NTE) date.

Lessons learned

Studies carried out by this project have contributed to the improvement of formulation, implementation and monitoring of public policies by the Ministry of Agrarian Development (MDA).

Good practices

The project has contributed to support the assessment and adjustment of family farming's public policies, thus strengthening government's capacity to implement them.

Recommendations

The dissemination of studies on relevant issues will facilitate activities in support of rural development and family farming policies.

Actions planned for 2015

The project intends to continue developing methodologies for analysis of organizational processes, production, technology and marketing of groups with low productive presence, with the 2015 Work Plan being prepared by MDA.

66 Role of the State for the promotion of agricultural and fishery cooperatives in Chile

Background

Project symbol	n.a.
Geographical coverage	Chile
LTU	OPC
Contact person	Fabiola Aránguiz (JPO)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Support to enabling environment
Budget	US\$1 650
Duration	1 day
Web site	http://www.fao.org/americas/eventos/ver/es/c/274141/

Description

This seminar was designed for public decision-makers in the agricultural (family farming) and fishery sectors (small-scale fisheries or artisanal fishery and aquaculture of limited resources). Senior officials from public institutions involved with the agro-food sector in the country were invited to participate. Public institutions included the Ministry of Agriculture, INDAP (Institution of Agriculture and Livestock's Development), ODEPA (Agriculture's Studies and Policies Office), FIA (Foundation of Agrarian innovation), INIA (National Institution of Agriculture Investigation), Ministry of Economy, Undersecretariat of Economy, Undersecretariat of Tourism, CORFO (Promotion Corporation), SERCOTEC (Technical Cooperation Service), SERNAPESCA (National Service of Fishery), SUBPESCA (Undersecretary of Fishery and Aquaculture), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, PROCHILE (Promotion of Chile's Exportations).

The objectives of the workshop were to:

- Raise awareness of public decision-makers concerning the social and economic role of cooperatives and to highlight their potential as organizational models for family farming and artisanal fishery or aquaculture of limited resources.
- Show achievements obtained in other states of the region in terms of modern state actions for fostering, promoting and supporting cooperatives.
- Show that the state can foster policies to promote agricultural and fishery cooperatives in the country.

- Assemble social economy rules and regulations and involve the institutions of agricultural and fisheries sector in this process; this also implies the production of tools for promoting agricultural and fishery cooperatives in the sector of social economy.

Outcomes

The main achievements of this workshop are in terms of acquiring information from the Chilean governmental institutions regarding their commitments in the near future to strengthen and implement programmes to promote agricultural and fishery cooperatives. Moreover, the institutions of agricultural and fishery sector were involved in the social economy work agenda led by the Ministry of Economy (which is responsible for the Chilean Cooperatives Act).

Methodology

Regarding the adopted methodology, a workshop with 18 senior officials from governmental institutions in the agriculture, fishery and industry sectors, as well as leaders of agricultural and fishery cooperatives. The workshop started with presentations to define what a cooperative is and to introduce the national context. Then successful cooperative experiences at national and international level were illustrated. Finally the event ended with a panel on the future of farming and fishery cooperatives. The panel comprised representatives from the government and the Chilean cooperative movement, and moderated by FAO.

This methodology helped strengthen Chilean agricultural and fishery cooperatives. This was achieved by illustrating what a cooperative is in order to make the scope of its definition clear to all participants; by showing best practices in Chile as well as in Latin America; and by promoting a debate on what commitments governmental and cooperative representatives should take on this important subject.

Lessons learned

The lesson learned in the implementation of this workshop was related to the importance of involving FAO as an institution that has an expertise in raising awareness of institutions in the social economy and in implementing results achieved in the International Year of Cooperatives.

Good practices

Good practices gained from this workshop were
to bring together all governmental institutions involved with family farming, artisanal fisheries and social economy. In such a way they could share information about their organizations, programmes, objectives and future actions with regard to agricultural and fishery cooperatives; and
to illustrate international cooperative experiences and to establish linkages between representative cooperative organizations and sectoral public institutions.

Recommendations

Main recommendations are:

- Prepare a medium-term work plan to meet the needs expressed by sectoral institutions to manage tools for the development and promotion of agricultural and fishery cooperatives in the country.
- Review the implementation of the Cooperatives Act and its use towards the promotion of agricultural and fishery cooperatives in the country.

Actions planned for 2015

Actions planned for 2015 include:

- Working with the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Agriculture in developing the medium-term work plan to incorporate appropriate tools for the development of agricultural and fishery cooperatives.
- Organize the support of FAO headquarter in Rome to the FAO Office in Chile with regard to POs and cooperatives.

67 Convenio de cooperación técnica para la atención de demandas tecnológicas para la intensificación sostenible de la producción agropecuaria en apoyo a la seguridad alimentaria, en el contexto de un clima cambiante

Background

Project symbol	UTF /COL/043/COL
Geographical coverage	Colombia
LTU	FAOCO
Contact person	Alfredo Brugés Lomanto (Programme Assistant)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Knowledge generation and sharing
Budget	US\$3 583 813 (total)
Duration	27 months (01 January 2013 to 30 April 2015)
Web site	www.fao.org/colombia/es

Description

Through participatory methodologies of agricultural extension, 14 POs of variously potato, peach palm, plantain, cocoa, agro-ecological products and silvopastoral systems were strengthened.

Innovation

Elements of product and process innovation were introduced in the project through participatory methodologies for technology transfer, whose main principle is “learning by doing” and where local knowledge is valued.

Outcomes

Approximately 1100 producers from 14 POs have strengthened their capacities. These processes have been built from the communities and for the communities. The empowerment of these processes was a mechanism to improve producers’ livelihoods.

Methodology

The implementation of participatory methodologies promotes relations and the generation of trust that strengthen the achievement of results and their sustainability.

Issues to be resolved

In the state of Guaviare, the project actions were stopped a few days by armed conflict.

Lessons learned

The importance of participatory methodologies in working with communities and organizations.

Good practices

The development of participatory methodologies based on the principle of learning by doing.

Recommendations

Main recommendations are :

- Implement participatory methodologies for communitarian processes.
- Ensure uptake and correct analysis of information.
- Systematize the process.

Actions planned for 2015

Actions planned for 2015 are:

- To support the dialogue for adjustment of the Family Farming programme in the country where issues of partnerships and organizational strengthening are discussed.
- To develop a systematization document for policy recommendations in support of rural producer organizations.
- To finalize the communication elements of the project (5 videos and 3 technical documents).
- To prepare and hold an international workshop on Sustainable Intensification of Agricultural Production.

68 Contribución a la seguridad alimentaria de familias vulnerables de Antioquia

Background

Project symbol	UTF/COL/044/COL
Geographical coverage	Colombia
LTU	FAOCO
Contact person	Alfredo Bruges Lomanto (Programme Assistant)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Knowledge generation and sharing; Market linkages; Food and Nutrition Security
Budget	US\$5 994 549 (total)
Duration	32 months (29 April 2013 to 28 December 2015)
Web site	www.fao.org/colombia/es

Description

FAO has supported 29 producer organizations through processes of institutional strengthening at social-economic level by improving their linkage to markets. These ventures were developed in: compost, seeds and seedlings, and production under GAPs on tomato, beans, rice and vegetables.

Innovation

Institutional innovation has been implemented through conducting an organizational diagnosis and generating recommendations for strengthening the institutional capabilities of these organizations, at the level of administrative processes and also at productive level.

Approximately 7000 families have improved capacities to produce their own food, increasing their Food and Nutrition Security.

Outcomes

Four of the productive enterprises in production under GAPs were certified. In addition, 2 projects in composting are pending approval by the responsible government agencies.

Methodology

The support of local authorities has led to the project's success. Similarly, the agreements made with different organizations and their coordination with other regional actors has generated significant local networks for the development of the area.

Issues to be resolved

The coordinator of the productive ventures component quit one year after the start of the project.

Lessons learned

The generation of organizational diagnostics is the first step for strengthening organizational capacities.

Good practices

The application of a baseline and periodic measurements.

Recommendations

Main recommendations are :

- Implement participatory methodologies for communitarian processes.
- The use of Information and communication technologies by the field technicians

Actions planned for 2015

Actions planned for 2015 are:

- To obtain government certification in GAPs for the other 25 productive enterprises.
- To end the Supply Plan for the Department of Antioquia.
- To finalize the processes of productive enterprises and chain markets.
- To promote capacity development and productive strengthening of producer organizations.
- To design a methodology to facilitate the linkage of family farming organizations with public and private purchasers in the country.
- To give technical support to the POs.

69 Fortalecimiento de la Seguridad Alimentaria y de la capacidad de generar ingresos a través de proyectos de innovación en las Zonas de Reserva Campesina

Background

Project symbol	UTF/COL/050/COL
Geographical coverage	Colombia
LTU	FAOCO
Contact person	Alfredo Bruges Lomanto (Programme Assistant)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Knowledge generation and sharing; Food and Nutrition Security
Budget	US\$1 710 402 (total)
Duration	20 months (1 October 2013 to 30 April 2015)
Web site	www.fao.org/colombia/es

Description

Six grassroots producer organizations were supported, one in each of the six Peasant Reserve Zones legally constituted in Colombia, through the assessment, adjustment and participatory validation of agribusiness projects with potential in each area. The projects have been developed in cane, rice, dairy products and fruits. Although the processes of implementation of these projects started in 2014, implementation will be complete in 2015.

Innovation

Elements of product and process innovation were introduced through the development of three local workshops in agro-ecology, using the methodology of farmer-to-farmer training. Institutional innovation has been implemented through the development of agro-industrial projects that have served to improve production processes of the organizations selected at local level.

Outcomes

Six agribusiness projects have been reviewed and adjusted in a participatory manner, in order to increase revenue opportunities and better linkage to markets through promoting quality in processes and products.

Twenty-five small-scale producer families have the capacities to produce their own food, increasing their availability of food.

Methodology

Having allies within communities that serve as multipliers of information and knowledge helps to promote motivation of organizations and their producers, which eventually become favourable conditions for achieving results.

Issues to be resolved

As many of the projects aimed to improve or develop facilities, some of the legal procedures for this purpose were long.

Lessons learned

The importance of participatory methodologies in working with communities and organizations.

Good practices

To have a community leader as part of the project team who works as a multiplier-*cum*-facilitator in the field.

Recommendations

Main recommendations are:

- Implement participatory methodologies for community-oriented processes.
- Improve uptake and correct analysis of information.
- Identify community leaders that build trust and give sustainability to the results achieved

Actions planned for 2015

Actions planned for 2015 are:

- Promote capacity development and productive strengthening of producer organizations.
- Finish the implementation of agro-industrial projects in Peasant Reserve zones with the support of the communities.
- Finish a document with the step-by-step description of the development of the methodology of the Training Demonstrative Centres in Agro-ecology.

70 VI Congress of the Dominican Cooperative Movement; III International Congress on Cooperatives; II International Latin American Convention on Cooperatives; I International Convention on agricultural cooperatives “Cooperatives for economic growth and social development”

Background

Project symbol	n.a.
Geographical coverage	Dominican Republic
LTU	FAODO
Contact person	Hector Mata (Assistant FAOR)
Principal actions	Voice and Participation; Capacity Development
Duration	2014

Description

Main actions implemented in 2014 include:

- Participation in the VI Congress of the Dominican Cooperative Movement and in the III International Congress on Cooperatives, with a presentation on food security and cooperatives.
- Participation in the II International Latin American Convention on Cooperatives and in the I International Convention on agricultural cooperatives titled “Cooperatives for economic growth and social development”, with a presentation on Family Farming and Food Security.

In both presentations the importance of family farms and cooperatives in contributing to food security was discussed. In addition, the work done by FAO in the country to help strengthen producer organizations and to contribute to food security and nutrition was illustrated.

Innovation

The important role of youth and women in food production and for the proper functioning of cooperatives was highlighted through the presentations.

Outcomes

The presentations provided a stimulus for cooperative members to keep their motivation of joining cooperatives high, and to strengthen their capacities for increasing their businesses' production and productivity.

Methodology

The adopted methodology was to make a presentation of about one hour each and then to continue the debate with the active participation of cooperative members and exhibitors. This allowed better analysis of the proposed topics.

Issues to be resolved

As noted during the presentations, time available for FAO to effectively convey its message was too short.

Lessons learned

The good reputation of FAO in the field of producer organizations and cooperatives in the Dominican Republic helped participants in each event to keep being motivated to work further and strengthen their skills continually.

Good practices

Although FAO participated only as a speaker and motivator in both activities, it can be said that through the presentation and discussion with participants it has made a good connection. Participants committed themselves to keep on strengthening capacities of their organizations and associations.

Recommendations

These activities were carried out by members of cooperatives, with a minimum support from authorities. Therefore it is recommended that events like these should be further supported by the government and the private sector to promote producer organizations and cooperatives.

Actions planned for 2015

In 2015 it is expected to work with two projects that were approved in 2014 but where the activities in support of POs and cooperatives will be implemented in 2015. These projects are:

- TCP/DOM/3402. To increase the level of productivity and market access of family milk producers in the Dominican Republic.
- TCP/DOM/3501. Facility (Baby 2) Technical assistance for the territorial expansion of the agricultural extension and innovation programme (Preia) in five provinces of the Dominican Republic.

71 Apoyo al Subprograma de Producción de Alimentos y Generación de Ingresos del Plan de Agricultura Familiar (Support to the subprogramme on food production and income generation of the Family Farming Plan)

Background

Project symbol	UTF/ELS/011/ELS
Geographical coverage	El Salvador
LTU	SLM
Contact person	Emilia González (Oficial de Operaciones Estrategicas)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Knowledge generation and sharing
Duration	3 years (15 July 2011 to 31 December 2014)
Web site	http://sime.mag.gob.sv/san

Description

Main activities implemented by the project include:

- 1) Generation of methodologies for horizontal transfer of knowledge and technology. A process of methodology design and elaboration along with support materials was developed. These methodologies and support materials were subsequently standardized, with the aim of strengthening counterpart technical team capacities. Training includes topics such as: organizations and associations, FFS, health and nutrition, Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA), and incentive mechanisms.
- 2) Based on the Family Farming – Food Security and Nutrition Plan (PAF-SAN), intervention tools were promoted, such as:
 - “Plan de Finca Hogar” Through this tool a new extension approach was promoted, being more family farming oriented, involving the concept of Food Security and Nutrition (SAN). This tool was adopted for decision-making process at field and household level.
 - Record book. This tool enabled the PAF-SAN extension team to get data and generate information about benefits and results obtained through activities implemented with demonstrator families (FD) and “*Familias irradiadas*” (FI) in the process of technology and knowledge transfer, and associated with incentive provision.
 - Information System of Monitoring and Evaluation (SIME) (<http://sime.mag.gob.sv>). The SIME was developed as a tool to monitor families participating in the FD and FI methodology. This tool facilitated the decision-making process, report generation and monitoring of participating families. Prepared materials can be downloaded at: <https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0B4D7UDGpzqaLdGdqTWtWUG54NVU&usp=sharing>

Innovation

A process of the PAF-SAN standardization at the national level was generated, by reporting and disseminating the strategy, the methodology and materials, with the aim of harmonizing implementation by all involved in the PAF-SAN.

The PAF-SAN involved both men and women in all areas of intervention through the demonstrator and IF methodology, which requires the participation of both partners. Women’s involvement was encouraged in all activities, such as training, application of new technologies, incentive provision, entrepreneurial participation, and leadership’s relations with local authorities.

At the beginning, both men beneficiaries and the technical staff believed that actions on food security and nutrition were exclusively for women. However, by raising awareness and sensitizing, it was possible to increase the interest and involvement of men in these key activities.

Another contribution of this methodology is to re-think domestic work burden distribution, and to promote greater equity in communication and more inclusive and interpersonal relationships.

Young couples were involved as demonstrator and *Familias irradiadas* in order to promote generational balance. By involving this population sector, the project aimed to reduce violence and crimes, as well as to strengthen the agricultural sector.

Outcomes

Improved poultry species have been provided. This enabled an increase in egg production, used 90 percent for domestic consumption and 10 percent for selling to other families in the community. This improved access to high quality protein-based food, such as eggs and poultry meat.

Families have diversified their production system by growing vegetables in plots. Families also improved diversification into production as they cultivated irrigated vegetables, generating on average US\$890 of household revenues each productive cycle.

Furthermore, families were trained in FFS, thereby enhancing the development of their skills, abilities and knowledge on better management of production systems, including entrepreneurship and producer organizations. Thus, families were empowered regarding nutrition and food security. This framework also allowed the development interest groups on production with a focus food security and nutrition.

Methodology

The adoption by families of the concept of food security and nutrition allowed implementation of knowledge in practice and strengthening of production systems at household level, in terms of both food production and income generation.

Issues to be resolved

The main issue is to maintain efforts to ensure that Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) officers adopt the Family Agriculture Plan (PAF) in the processes of planning, development and evaluation. This would contribute to: successfully implementing methodologies; connecting with other programmes or projects developed by different offices; providing complementary services to families that benefit from the PAF; and harmonizing processes and products.

Lessons learned

A main lesson learned was the importance of directing financial and technical resources to strengthen production systems at household level, helping them to adapt to climate change by promoting them as fundamental pillars of the efficient use of natural resources.

Good practices

One best practice was to evaluate and strengthen the process of technology transfer through the organizational model of Demonstrator Families. This is considered a useful, culturally acceptable and highly efficient method, which puts families at the heart of development dynamics, thereby they become agents of change. It also creates opportunities for women to access extension services as well, as it strengthens participatory community leadership.

Another best practice was to include, in the capacity development processes, local development actors such as local authority officers; ADESCOS staff; state, church and school officers; and ONG personnel. In such a way it was possible to share knowledge, to promote a process of common efforts and to consolidate available resources.

Recommendations

The MAG should continue to promote coordinated and multisectoral work, starting from the planning process, in order to contribute to achieve food security and nutrition from a holistic perspective. This could be also done by developing partnerships which involve gender issues and nutrition in order to boost the sustainable development of families that benefit from its services.

Put the capacity development of leadership and organizational strengthening as the basis for training addressed to Demonstration Families. This would enable people to be more empowered while playing their role. This would eventually promote a sustainable and favourable environment in communities.

To develop the planning process of PAF implementation in a perspective of the human right to access adequate food, consider human beings as the end of every intervention. Indeed, the ultimate goal is that people have permanent access to resources that enable them to produce, obtain or buy adequate food for their health and well-being.

72 Technical assistance to the process of sustainable system development of basic grain seeds in support of family farming in Salvador

Background

Project symbol	TCP/ELS/3403-Semillas
Geographical coverage	El Salvador (Similar TCP projects have been implementing in Honduras and Nicaragua)
LTU	AGP
Contact person	Jose Walter Torres (National Project Coordinator)
Actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing
Duration	1 year (2014)

Description

The general objective of the project is to contribute to availability, sustainability and access to good quality bean seed for small producers, in the framework of food and nutritional security (SAN) and family farming. The specific objectives of the project are:

- to ensure bean production and productivity at national level, and especially to promote the use of certified and good quality seeds among family farming producers;
- to improve the income of rural households engaged in the cultivation of wheat seeds now; or to buy these products for consumption at lower prices and unrestricted availability in the markets; and
- to achieve sustainable seed marketing enterprises and production networks in the country.

Innovation

Technical assistance was provided by the National Centre of Agricultural and Forestry Technology (CENTA), while FAO provided technical support on legal, organizational, business management and marketing issues, as well as providing equipment and machinery, through strategic alliances with the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG) and financial support from IFAD.

CENTA provided technical assistance through its technicians in the field, who developed capacities in crop production through field visits to producer plots. These visits occurred with different frequency, in some cases every 8-15 days, while in other cases the plots were visited only at the beginning of planting and at the end of harvesting. Beyond providing support through the team in charge of project implementation, FAO also hired a consulting firm to provide technical assistance and support in legal, managerial, administrative and accounting aspects, as well as on business planning. In this way, the enterprises could count on pre-investment studies, strategic and operational plans, internal control systems and business plans to contribute to their effective development.

Outcomes

The project aimed to support four enterprises involved in production and marketing of quality bean seeds, to help them develop their organizational and entrepreneurial skills. These enterprises were created by CENTA with the support of FAO. They are: (1) SEDEOCCI, S.C. de R.L. de C.V.; (2) AGRO-ZAPOTITAN S.A. DE C.V.; (3) ACOSEP S.A. de C.V.; and (4) PROCOMAO S.A. de C.V.

In the last harvest (2013-2014) the enterprises managed to supply 25 percent of seeds that the government gives to the poorest households in the country for the production of beans. It is expected to reach 50 percent in the next harvest (2014-2015).

Methodology

During project implementation it was necessary to make strategic alliances with various institutions and government programmes; IFAD; CENTA; The Project for Development and Rural Modernization of the Eastern Zone (PRODEMORO); The Project for Development and Rural Modernization of the Central Zone and Para-central (PRODEMOR CENTRAL); the Rural Territorial Competitiveness Programme (AMANECER RURAL); the Municipality of San Miguel; and the Interior Department of Cuscatlán.

The process of technical assistance to support farming families was coordinated through CENTA, with the appointment of 16 technicians at national level to support families that were members of the four quality bean seed marketing companies.

Through MAG-IFAD, PRODEMORO, AMANECER RURAL and PRODEMOR CENTRAL projects, resources were managed to build processing plants, obtaining the approval of three projects for the construction of such plants. Similarly through the Municipality of San Miguel, support was achieved for the installation of electrical energy in the community where the processing plant was built. Through the Departmental Government of Cuscatlán, support for cooperation with the Municipalities of the Department was achieved by developing collaborations with 7 Municipalities (Suchitoto, Santa Cruz Analquito, San Bartolomé Perulapia, Monte San Juan, El Carmen, Santa Cruz Michapa y San Martín). In this regard, the mayors expressed their interest in buying quality bean seed to distribute to producers of their Municipalities.

Important technical assistance was provided to the enterprises to boost their capacity to provide additional resources and strengthen themselves, beyond those financial resources managed through the institutions mentioned.

Issues to be resolved

To continue to strengthen capacities of producer and marketing enterprises in a changing and dynamic market, often subject to political decisions.

Lessons learned

The most important lessons are about the value of strategic alliances with local governments, and Specialized Agencies of the UN system (UNOPS, UNDP and IFAD).

Good practices

Agro-business organizations, strategic alliances, and advocacy.

Recommendations

Mechanisms of co-financing and multisectoral interventions (e.g. Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) and Ministry of Economy (MINEC)).

Actions planned for 2015

Strengthening capacities of the four enterprises in adopting accounting software to manage its financial operations.

73 Coatan – Suchiate project
Background

Project symbol	UNJP/GUA/022/UNJ
Geographical coverage	Guatemala
LTU	FOMC
Contact person	Norma Pérez Ixchop (Project Manager)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing; Market linkages
Budget	US\$222 476 (2014)
Duration	4 years (November 2010 to December 2014)

Description

Improving the marketing of products is the process of increasing agricultural production, product quality and sale volumes. In this regard, technical assistance and capacity development from the beginning of the project have been focused on: (i) identification of agro-production options with market opportunity; (ii) identification and organization of production through economies of scale; (iii) linkages with supply chains (partnership with stakeholders); (iv) development of business plans and business development; and (v) implementation of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) and Good Entrepreneurial Practices (GEPs)

By providing training and technical assistance to producer organizations, some changes have been achieved: (i) implementation of good practices at agricultural, manufacturing and business levels; (ii) a better business vision by organizations and producers; (iii) collective action improved through producers and organizations' common objectives concerning products to be sold in the market; (iv) revenues have been improved for organizations and their members; (v) market production as a source of rural employment; (vi) knowledge sharing between experienced producers and new producers;

(vii) economy-of-scale criteria have been applied in the purchase of agricultural inputs and marketing; (viii) business partnerships have been implemented; and (ix) linkages with private enterprises and supply chains have been developed.

Innovation

Elements of product and process innovation have been introduced. Three agricultural and aquaculture demonstration farms have been implemented whereby, in the Family Farming framework, the integration of agricultural, aquaculture, livestock and natural resource management subsystems has been promoted.

New technologies that were appropriate for the production of cut flowers have been introduced through specialized technical assistance.

Use of agricultural insurance by three POs for the production of sweet pea.

GLOBAL GAP certification was obtained by 21 producers of sweet pea.

Outcomes

The project implemented monitoring and evaluation processes during project execution. The results achieved at the end of project showed the contribution of FAO in support of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food (MAGA) to strengthening family farming. It is reflected at the outcome level, where FAO jointly with MAGA measured the level of food security (percent household food secure) based on the Latin American and Caribbean food security scale (ELCSA). In this survey, 15 questions were asked directly to the head of the household in order to get the household perception of food insecurity (mildly insecure, moderately insecure and severely insecure) and the number of food insecure households.

Of households participating in the survey, 18.39 percent were categorized as food secure, an increase of 99 percent from 2012. Therefore improvements have been achieved in terms of household food security, household income, and territory management.

The project lasted four years, active from November 2010 to December 2014. During this period, the following results were achieved: (i) 1719 households participated in the project (relative to the goal achieved in 2008), with consumption increases of 43.12 percent in vegetables; 42 percent of eggs; and 51 percent of fruits; (ii) out of the total, 887 households included at least 2 new self-produced products in their family diet; (iii) 1697 households increased by 33 percent months of corn reserve, its subsistence production increased by 29 percent and 745 households increased by 27 percent their bean production; (iv) 486 households generated income for nearly US\$197 000 by selling their agricultural and livestock production; (v) 2608 households in 56 communities were provided with technical assistance and capacity development, out of which 1695 were identified as indigenous, 1501 women and 1107 men; and (vi) women have been more involved in decision-making processes and improved their self-esteem and technical capabilities.

In terms of POs, 6 producer organizations (3 involved in agricultural activities and 3 in non-agricultural activities) have been involved in sustainable planning and management of resources in the micro-basins. Four POs improved the marketing of their products, generating nearly US\$107 500 of revenue, while 5 small businesses (groups involved in non-agricultural activities) generated nearly US\$69 500 of revenues from the sale of their products.

Methodology

Adopted methodology included:

- 1) Identification and selection of POs and other partner organizations.
- 2) Identification of productive options with marketing potential (including research and validation).
- 3) Partnership with other organizations in the supply chain.
- 4) Organizing production by adopting economies of scale.
- 5) Business Planning.
- 6) Production applying GAPs and GMPs.
- 7) Adoption of GEPs for business management.
- 8) Capitalization of incentives provided to organizations.
- 9) Income monitoring by organizations and gender.

Issues to be resolved

Main issues reported include:

- 1) The fact that the project ended in December 2014, but organizations require further support, especially at socio-entrepreneurial level.
- 2) Producers' means of production are limited.
- 3) The development of an entrepreneurial vision takes time.
- 4) Climate vulnerability.

Lessons learned

Specialized technical assistance (as for productive activity) is fundamental to increase production and productivity and to achieve intensive production. Indeed, the specialized technical assistance that FAO provided to strengthen farmer organizations and groups involved in non-agricultural activities enabled knowing more in depth the process complexity. This kind of assistance was required when POs were involved in more advanced activities and the ordinary technical assistance was not enough, and more specific expertise was needed.

Providing capacity development and assistance to local extension trainers, in order to specialize them in aspects of production with high potential, has proved to be a good option to ensure technical services to POs. In such a way, this contributes to productive process sustainability.

Good practices

The analysis of project indicators with key stakeholders (MAGA extension service providers and promoters) was important to gain a vision of actions implemented through the project. This helped to understand that strategic aspects of the project have to be analysed as a whole and they have to be shared in order to improve action implementation.

During project implementation, participating families, POs, as well as municipal and local authorities, expressed and demonstrated at all times their interest in activities and processes implemented. This was reflected in results obtained in terms of food production and consumption, as well as in the improvement of production and marketing of POs and in processes at territorial level.

Training activities were important in order to transfer knowledge, methodologies and technologies. They were focused on developing and strengthening capacities and skills, and ultimately on achieving a change of attitudes that could lead to an improvement in people's quality of life. This is reflected in results achieved by the project.

Continued technical assistance provided by the MAGA extension service team enabled greater involvement of families and promoters. This shows that constant support to families and promoters motivates them to participate and believe in these processes. This also meant that the institutional presence of the MAGA in the field was recognized and that promoters could feel that they were being supported in their work with families.

Specialized technical assistance implemented by the project to strengthen POs, groups carrying out non-agricultural entrepreneurial activities and families, has allowed learning more about the complexity that is involved at every step of the process and which requires constant support. The specialized technical assistance was required when organizations have already achieved a certain level of development, and general technical assistance was not enough. More specialized support was needed.

The “basin approach” is recognized as a system in which all components are related to each other, and it is the planning and impact assessment unit as well as the production unit. This system has an anthropocentric approach, where families are at the heart of the basin management for disaster prevention. In this framework, the project strengthened the basin approach in the area, by implementing the 12 principles of the FAO new basin programmes and projects, thus generating experiences that can contribute to the formulation and implementation of projects with this approach.

Recommendations

Main recommendations include:

- Continue providing rural extension services (capacity development and technical assistance) to participating families in 56 communities, in order to strengthen and consolidate the process with families themselves, promoters and POs.
- Through DIPESCA, continue providing technical assistance on trout breeding to COPAS organizations and to “Vegas del Volcan” organizations, as well as to individual producers. It should be particularly focused on the implementation of good aquaculture practice.
- Replicate the experience in the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation system carried out with rural extension agencies in the area of project implementation, emphasizing the importance of monitoring tools.
- In coordination with the Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology (ICTA), continue implementing the participatory maize breeding process and the native feed grasses production process.
- Develop linkages with local authorities in the socio-entrepreneurial strengthening process to consolidate productive processes and continue strategic partnerships with POs.
- Continue improving risk management processes in agricultural business and access agricultural insurance as a tool to reduce and minimize the damage caused by climatic factors.

74 Support for strengthening the national system of production and marketing of good quality seeds and planting material for small-scale Haitian farmers and introduction of horizontal cooperation.

Background

Project symbol	OSRO/HAI/302/BRA
Geographical coverage	Haiti
LTU	FLHAI
Contact person	Nizigiyimana Aloys (Seed and plant breeding expert)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Market linkages
Budget	US\$300 000
Duration	1 year (1 November 2013 to 31 October 2014)

Description

The project objective was threefold: (1) technical assistance to the National Seed Service for quality control of seeds and seed producers training; (2) technical and financial support of 20 artisanal seed producer groups for the production and marketing of quality declared seed (QDS); and (3) the improvement of access of small-scale farmers to QDS by providing subsidized vouchers.

Innovation

Elements of product and process innovation were introduced in the project. The 20 artisanal seed producer groups received training and were supported by FAO and the National Seed Service for the production of QDS. They received the pre-basic seeds from the specialized agencies. In addition, the project gave them material and equipment for packaging and storage.

Outcomes

In 2 growing seasons, the 20 seed producer groups produced a total of 261.5 t of QDS: 68.5 t of beans, 32.5 t of pigeon pea, 160 t of maize and 0.5 t of sorghum. After harvest and packaging of seeds, a part of the seeds produced was sold and another part retained for the next growing season.

Methodology

Members of management committees have received training in the management of a farm business, the use of accounting tools and marketing. Training in QDS production techniques was provided for 15 members of each group. The knowledge gained in training is shared with other members of the groups by the FFS approach. The same approach is used for participatory selection of new varieties. The groups are also equipped with storage silos and material for seed packaging (bags, tarpaulins for seed drying, grain moisture tester, etc.). Small-scale family farmers receive subsidized vouchers to buy QDS produced by seed producer groups supported by FAO.

Issues to be resolved

Haiti does not have a seed policy or specialized agencies in varietal selection and production of pre-basic seeds. Thus, the seed producer groups have no local source of pre-basic seed to renew their production. In addition, most cultivated varieties have been selected by foreign countries and at risk of not adapting to climate change affecting the country.

Moreover, most small-scale farmers cannot distinguish between the poor quality seeds sold on local markets from the good quality seeds produced by the seed producer groups.

Lessons learned

The use of QDS increases farmers' production by 30 percent compared to the use of dubious quality seed. The land problem is an obstacle to the improvement of the production of quality seed because a significant number of farmers grow on leased plots.

Good practices

Seed producers are accustomed to inspections of their production plots and seed quality controls made by the national Seed Service staff. In addition, in the action areas of the project, farmers were already accustomed to buy QDS. Seed producer groups store seeds to sell them at the planting period. International organizations and the government no longer need to buy seeds outside of the country. They purchase good quality seed produced by the seed producer groups supported by FAO.

Recommendations

Main recommendations include: (1) formulate policy and seed legislation; (2) set up an agricultural research institution; (3) establish a national budget line to support agricultural research and develop a national investment plan in the seed sector; and (4) strengthen seed producer groups in all departments of the country.

Actions planned for 2015

A project for formulation of a seed policy has been signed between the Government of Haiti and FAO. In addition, the capacity building of seed producer groups will continue. As seed production is a transverse activity, other FAO projects also have a component of capacity building for seed producer groups in their zone of action: GCP/HAI/027/LDF for 12 groups of in the southeast; OSRO/HAI/402/USA for 8 groups of the northwest; and OSRO/HAI/403/UK for 11 groups of Grande Anse. Missions for exchange of experience between staff of the National Seed Service of Haiti and Senegal are expected.

75 Appui à la Filière Lait et à la Sécurité Alimentaire des Ménages

Background

Project symbol	OSRO/HAI/023/BRA
Geographical coverage	Haiti
LTU	AGA/FAOSLC
Contact person	Mauricio Pereira Neves Pretto (Chief Technical Advisor – CTA)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Budget	US\$2.5 million (total)
Duration	3.5 years (October 2011 to June 2015)

Description

The project was conceived to increase milk production and to stimulate local purchase of milk by school canteens. In a joint action with WFP, the project has been supporting family farmers and dairies to improve production while WFP bought the milk to distribute through the National School Feeding Programme. The project is financing forage banks and breeding

stations, while training is given with the technical support of the Cuban cooperation based in Haiti. Through this training, homemade nutritional blocks and other setups to improve milk production, especially during the dry season, are under development.

Innovation

The lines of the project were defined through consultation with the beneficiaries. The focus on cattle production, with animal health and feeding practices, specially homemade production of nutritional blocks, is innovative in Haiti.

Outcomes

The main outcomes are not only a better production but also a different relationship established among the beneficiaries and technical assistance. In Haiti, technical assistance is traditionally vertical, and the project is stimulating horizontal relationships. The access to forage banks and homemade blocks will help to support the cows during the dry season, and also could become a source of revenue when selling to other producers. The structuring of the technical assistance has been done in a way to help ensure post-project continuation.

Methodology

The methodology was to make an initial diagnosis of each producer in each region. Then the regional steering committees were established and the needs of the beneficiaries became the main activities of the project. During execution, a technical assistance system was established through veterinary agents to help the farmers, while the vets visited all farmers and trained the agents in basic animal health and nutrition.

Issues to be resolved

One of the most difficult issues was to introduce new cattle geermlasm into the country. There are no facilities for AI and embryo transfer, while the introduction of imported animals can generate trouble with the sanitary system. It is also very difficult to find suppliers with technical capacity when it comes to rural construction, such as fencing. Besides that, the culture of consulting the beneficiaries is still an issue.

Lessons learned

The first lesson is that it takes time to build a trust relationship with the national staff, because of an initial distrust of foreign technicians. At the same time, even though the beneficiaries were involved, one can see that the local technicians influenced their vision for what they thought would be better. The dialogue among technical assistance and producers has to be more horizontal, and it is recommended to have it as a component for future actions.

Good practices

In terms of project management, the diagnosis and the discussions with the beneficiaries was very good. Most of the management supported government decisions, unless their propositions were not feasible. The working together with the Cuban cooperation, monthly meetings with the technical staff based in the field, and the continuous exchange among staff, broke the initial barriers of distrust. A gradual increase in responsibility by national staff is a way to build capacity among the national staff.

Recommendations

Milk production is one of the few activities that can reduce charcoal production, which is one of the major reasons for Haitian huge deforestation. For future projects, it would be advantageous to obtain support from the government to new initiatives, to improve technical development and to develop a rural extension system.

Actions planned for 2015

The project is about to finish, and the main plan is to finish the forage banks, to give some support for water to the site at the mountains, and to buy bulls for the breeding stations. Alongside this, maintain the training sessions with the veterinary agents to improve their capacity.

76 Mexican Network for Family Farming

Background

Project symbol	n.a.
Geographical coverage	Mexico
LTU	FAOMX
Contact person	Pablo Andres Ramirez (Consultant on Right to Food and Governance)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing; Market linkages
Budget	US\$30 000
Duration	1 year (November 2013 to December 2014)
Web site	http://aiaf2014mexico.blogspot.mx/

Description

In November 2014 the “Mexican Network for Family Farming” (*Red*) was created under the leadership of FAO. A number of activities and initiatives were developed by the Red, covering different areas of interest for small-scale farmers, such as commercialization, funding, technical cooperation, communication, involvement in public policy, and gender equality. The main goal was to place family farming on a top level of the public agenda (a political role) and at the same time assisting family farmers in accessing existing programmes in a better way, increasing their own capabilities through organization and partnership.

Innovation

Through these workshops, Red contributed to enhance association among farmers, increasing synergic relations and improving processes. In this sense, these activities promoted social innovation in terms that the organizations learned how better to conduct current processes, sharing knowledge with each other. Also, the way these organizations are connected with governmental institutions was improved, enhancing institutional innovation.

Outcomes

Outcomes included: (1) new social networks created; (2) links and associations strengthened; (3) family farmers gaining more access to public support (funding, technical support, etc.); and (4) more awareness of decision-makers about the importance of family farming to attain food security and foster productivity.

Methodology

The Red was launched in November 2013 under the leadership of FAO Mexico. It was conceived from the beginning as a project that had to be managed with allies and partners. In this sense, during 2014, the Red was useful to enhance links with institutions such as government, other international organizations, NGOs, universities, congress members (Parliamentary Front against Hunger) and small-scale farming associations. The methodology had a simple structure, comprising a National Committee with the main organizations participating in the Red. This was supported by monthly assemblies, and workshops, conferences and public fairs.

Issues to be resolved

The Red grew during its first year. One issue to be resolved is a better way to organize the increasing number of organizations that are part of it. Also, to make those organizations participate in decisions and activities. In its political role, the Red has put the issue in the public agenda, with a proposal presented to high-level stakeholders and decision-makers. However, it is important to monitor the progress of these proposals, and find technical support for their sustainability.

Lessons learned

Partnership is fundamental. There are many organizations with capabilities and skills, and FAO can be the bridge to use these strengths to improve family farming. Even a wide range of social and political actors can work together, and FAO can promote this type of collaboration.

Good practices

Creating a simple but efficient structure for work. Communication mechanisms, using all available technology. In order to improve governance at a local level, the network has created state-level networks, the first of them in Jalisco (a southwest State).

Recommendations

Identify key areas for investment. Using participative methodologies, empower local organizations, linking different stakeholders in a horizontal and vertical way from small-scale farmers to decision-makers, and from local to national level.

Actions planned for 2015

For 2015 the main concept will be “Towards a National Extension System for Family Farming in Mexico”, taking into account not only technology transfer, but also funding, commercialization, and considering the differences between region, population and production. In this context, the Red has 5 areas of work: (1) influencing the public policy-making process; (2) establishing links between research centres and universities with the production sector; (3) communication and awareness raising concerning family farming; (4) commercialization of family farming products; and (5) strengthening of local systems and decentralization.

77 Project in support to AGRORURAL institutional restructuring

Background

Project symbol	TCP/PER/3403
Geographical coverage	Peru
LTU	FAOPE
Contact person	Alberto Garcia (Strategic Advisor)
Principal actions	Voice and Participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment
Budget	US\$65 000 (2014)
Duration	2 years (1 June 2013 to 31 May 2015)

Description

Technical assistance was provided to the Multisectoral Commission on Family Farming, where second- and third-level producer organizations took part in the formulation of Peruvian Family Farming, as well as in the elaboration of the features for the Family Farming Promotion Policy up to 2021.

Innovation

During the formulation process for the Family Farming Policy, producer organizations actively participated, handling their proposals related to their own difficulties, both at functional and territorial levels. They have been incorporated in the Family Farming Policy strategy. The proposal for the National Strategy for Family Farming includes a participative management approach for its implementation. This was translated into the institutionalization of the Multisectoral Commission for the celebration of the International Year of Family Farming, which includes representatives of producer organizations. This Commission would be in charge for the monitoring and evaluation of the National Strategy achievements, as well as for supporting the creation of regional strategies on Family Farming.

Outcomes

Producer organizations' participation in policy dialogues has consolidated, together with decision-making in the ministries in charge of agriculture, fisheries, environment and social development.

Methodology

The critical success factor was the openness of public institutions to include producer organizations in policy dialogues that concern them (i.e. Family Farming).

Issues to be resolved

The approval of the National Strategy was not completed. Therefore, the institutional framework for its implementation depends on its approval.

Lessons learned

In the face of changing government priorities, project adaptation was required, focusing on supporting the Multisectoral Commission on Family Farming.

Good practices

A participatory approved policy has higher sustainability.

Recommendations

Contribute to the approval of the National Strategy and advocacy for the elaboration and approval of an adequate legal framework for family farming.

Actions planned for 2015

Training on Voluntary Guidelines on Responsible Governance on Tenure to be organized in March 2015.



North Africa and Near East

Contributions have been received on 14 projects and activities in support of POs and cooperatives implemented in the North Africa and Near East Region. They were 13 projects (12 at country level and 1 at regional level) and one workshop initiative implemented in the Maghreb region.

All of them implemented capacity development actions; 22 percent contributed to the development of market linkages; 15 percent produced knowledge generation materials; and a similar percentage contributed to supporting the enabling environment as well as POs and cooperatives' voice and participation.

Among these, 82 percent of initiatives contributed to SO3; 73 percent to SO1; around 20 percent to SO2 and SO5; and none to SO4.

Regional projects in North Africa and Near East

78 Renforcement du rôle des réseaux d'organisations professionnelles dans la sécurité alimentaire au Maghreb

Background

Project symbol	TCP/SNE/3403
Geographical coverage	Maghreb region
LTU	OPCP
Contact persons	Mohammed Bengoumi (Animal Production and Health Officer) Malek Hayder (Consultant)
Principal actions	Voice and participation; Capacity development; Support to enabling environment; Knowledge generation and sharing;
Budget	US\$185 000 (total)
Duration	December 2013 to June 2015

Description

A number of major actions were implemented by the project.

- Study on the PO legislative framework in Maghreb
Under this programme aimed at strengthening the role of agricultural and fishery POs, FAO launched a regional study focused on the legislative framework related to POs. This study mainly focused on a critical analysis and evaluation of such legislative frameworks. It also focused on the dynamics between agriculture administration, professionals, farmers and public-private partnerships in the framework of current laws. The study started in December 2013 and ended in September 2014.
- Training of trainers (ToT) on PO governance
Under the LOA with UPA-DI, FAO SNE organized a ToT on "the elaboration of a common vision to strengthen the performance, equity, governance and management of POs". The ToT took place on 27-30 May 2014 in Hammamet, Tunisia, with 38 participants.
- Training on "Strengthening dialogue mechanisms and negotiation between key stakeholders"
The training was organized in October 2014 in Rabat, Morocco, in close collaboration with UPA-DI (under the same LOA), with around 30 participants.

- Training on “Livestock Breeding Management in Maghreb countries”
A consultation was launched within this activity in order to prepare a course and a guide on sheep management in Maghreb. The training took place in October 2014 in Rabat, Morocco, for some 20 participants.
- Training on “Beekeeping management in Maghreb”
A consultation was launched to prepare a course and a guide on beekeeping management in Maghreb. The training was held in Rabat, Morocco, in October 2014 for about 15 participants.
- Training on “Artisanal fisheries management and roles of fishery POs in Maghreb countries”
A consultation was launched within this activity to prepare a course and a guide on artisanal fisheries in Maghreb countries. The training was held in Rabat, Morocco, in October 2014 with about 20 participants.
- e-learning platform
For the first time within an FAO technical department, the SNE Animal Production and Health programme launched an e-learning platform for POs in technical topics (such as Animal Production and Health, Plant Production and Protection, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Forestry, Land and Water) as well as on cross-cutting topics (such as extension services and technical advice, gender, communication, project management, negotiation, governance, management) that are relevant to FAO competencies. The first certified training through this platform is on extension and targets mainly POs.

Innovation

An e-learning platform for POs was launched under this project

Outcomes

Study on the legislative framework of POs in North African countries.

Main results of this study were presented and discussed with relevant partners in Rabat in October 2014 in a sub-regional workshop titled “Towards a legislative and institutional framework conducive to PO development”. The workshop showed the existence of various legislative frameworks and financial incentives, and highlighted the lack of strategic vision, communication, coordination and effective mechanisms for an enabling environment for PO development.

- Training of trainers (ToT) in PO governance.
The training aimed to develop a common vision of POs and to define their performance. It also strengthened the managerial capacities of POs by improving participants' knowledge on many cross-cutting topics, ranging from equity and equality within POs to PO performance analysis (weakness and strengths) and factors that influence the implementation of PO participatory action plans.
- Training in “Strengthening dialogue mechanisms and policy dialogue between key stakeholders”.
The training strengthened capacities of POs and relevant public institutions (ministries of agriculture), thus enabling them to contribute to galvanizing the ongoing policy dialogue process between POs and government. The training also developed components for the elaboration of a policy dialogue strategy with government.
- Training in “Livestock Breeding Management in Maghreb countries”.
The training event enabled a review of the situation of sheep farming in Maghreb countries, specifically on issues related to effective and efficient sheep management.

Specific attention was devoted to: optimal food management; genetic management; reproduction management; health management; quality of sheep products; and optimization and intensification of sheep production.

- Training in “Beekeeping management in Maghreb”.

The training facilitated discussion on the various bee production systems in the Maghreb countries and the importance of biological, environmental and economic points of view for beekeeping in the region. Training sessions were mainly focused on technical aspects of how to improve beekeeping management.

- Training in “Artisanal fisheries management and roles of fishery POs in Maghreb countries”.

The training facilitated discussion on technical issues related to sustainable management improvement of artisanal fisheries along the whole value chain. Topics included approaches and techniques for planning and participatory management; strengthening of production system organization; responsible techniques and practices; sea safety conditions; handling and preserving fish quality; and the voluntary guidelines and the role of POs in their implementation.

- e-learning platform.

The platform is currently under construction, with the showcase developed and the agricultural extension course scripted. A pilot training course should be launched in 2015. FAO SNE aims to upload all its training courses in order to:

- allow the largest number of POs technicians and public sector to benefit from the expertise of FAO and its partners; and
- reduce training costs as on-line preliminary training in a specific subject reduces the days on duty travel.

Methodology

Participatory approach

Issues to be resolved

Harmonizing legislative frameworks for POs; and improving collaboration between public institutions and POs (public-private partnership).

Good practices

e-learning

Recommendations

The various activities each led to a number of recommendations.

- Study on the PO Legislative framework in Maghreb.
- Update the legislative framework on POs using a participatory approach.
- Implement an awareness raising programme on POs’ duties and rights as identified in the legislative framework.
- Organize national workshops on the analysis of the institutional and legislative framework for an environment conducive to POs.
- Review PO by-laws for better governance.
- Implement partnership programmes between POs and government as well as among POs.
- Training of trainers (ToT) on PO governance.

- Importance to follow up with the grassroots level.
- Include the possibility of intersectoral exchanges.
- Include new communication techniques in the next training events.
- Consider using two levels of training: first, ToT (in order to replicate the training with POs in their own country), and second, adoption of the process and implementation in the POs of participants.
- Ensure draft guidelines on “Elaboration of a common vision to strengthen POs’ performance, equity, governance and management” are distributed to participants for their comments and improvements at the end of the training session.
- Training on “Strengthening dialogue mechanisms and policy dialogue between key stakeholders”.
- The main recommendation can be summarized as stressing the importance of strengthening POs’ capacities for communication and negotiation.
- Training on “Livestock Breeding Management in Maghreb countries”.
- Strengthen POs’ technical, managerial and institutional capacities.
- Undertake a livestock census.
- Strengthen national campaigns for vaccinations against infectious diseases.
- Promote food based on local products.
- Enhance by-products and not conventional food to reduce production costs.
- Promote animal selection to increase productivity.
- Training in “Beekeeping management in Maghreb”
- Characterize subspecies of bees in the Maghreb.
- Develop a communication system for “Union Maghrébine de l’Apiculture” (UMAPI)
- Organize a regional workshop in Tunis on the role of UMAPI for beekeeping development in the Maghreb, during which the vision, the strategy and the action plan of UMAPI would be finalized.
- Training in “Artisanal fisheries management and roles of fishery POs in Maghreb countries”
- Organize workshops and specific awareness raising sessions on the voluntary guidelines for sustainable fisheries (SSF-VG) and implement a Code of Conduct for responsible fisheries.
- Strengthen technical and managerial capacities of cooperative unions, associations and federations of artisanal fisheries in order to protect natural resources and defend artisanal fisheries’ interests in a responsible manner.
- Enhance women’s participation in fishery activities by promoting specific training and awareness raising sessions.
- Support the organization of a regional fair to enhance artisanal fish products, particularly those that embed traditional knowledge.

Actions planned for 2015

Develop two e-learning courses: one on Small Ruminants production, and one on honey bee production.

79 Programme on Animal Production and Health

Background

Project symbol	n.a.
Geographical coverage	Maghreb region
LTU	SNE
Contact persons	Mohammed Bengoumi (Animal Production and Health Officer) Malek Hayder (Consultant)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Duration	2014

Description

In 2014, SNE organized three workshops for capacity development of POs, addressing small ruminants, the dairy sector and beekeeping.

These workshops were organized in conjunction with the 9th International Agriculture Show in Morocco, which took place in April 2014. They were organized respectively in collaboration with:

- The “Union Maghrébine Ovine et Caprine” (UMAOC) through its Moroccan member.
- The “Union Maghrébine des Eleveurs de Bovins” (UMAEB) through its Moroccan member.
- The “Union Maghrébine de l’Apiculture” (UMAPI) through its Moroccan member.
- The main objective of these workshops was to showcase the major role of POs for improving family farming productivity and rural development.

Innovation

Activities were organized in collaboration with Unions of Producer Organizations, based on a participatory approach.

Outcomes

Analysis and review of the role of POs (in the small ruminants, dairy and beekeeping sectors) for improving family farming productivity.

Methodology

Use of a participatory approach.

Issues to be resolved

Support POs and strengthen their collaboration with public institutions.

Good practices

Improve collaboration and strengthen cooperation and exchange of experiences between national POs of Maghreb countries.

Recommendations

Main recommendations from these workshops were to:

- support the “Union Maghrébine des Associations Ovines et Caprines” to analyze the typologies of production systems and the role of livestock in the fight against poverty; and
- strengthen the “Union Maghrébine des Associations Apicoles” concerning the resilience of beekeeping production systems and enhancement of apiary products.

Actions planned for 2015

Continue to support POs through projects and the regular programme.

Organize 3 workshops in conjunction with the 10th International Agricultural Show in Morocco, under the topic of "Role of POs in sustainable development and new jobs opportunities in agriculture".

Country projects in North Africa and Near East

80 Recovery and rehabilitation of the dairy sector in Bekâa Valley and Hermel Akkar Uplands – Phase II

Background

Project symbol	OSRO/LEB/201/UNJ
Geographical coverage	Lebanon
LTU	AGAS
Contact person	Solange Matta-Saade (A/FAOR-Programme)
Principal actions	Capacity development; Market linkages
Budget	US\$1 562 727 (total)
Duration	3 years (01 September 2012 to 31 December 2014)
Web site	http://mptf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00083004

Description

The project has achieved its purpose of increasing milk production and hygiene, with improved dairy farm incomes and living standards, especially for the poor small-scale dairy holders. Through various interventions, guidance, capacity building and other forms of assistance and support, sustainability of the dairy sector in Lebanon was strengthened, with emphasis on improving the quality and hygienic standards of milk and dairy products to give the farmer more added-value and increase their income as well as maintain food safety standards and safeguard consumer health. In general, the direct impacts of the project on the conditions and standards of living of the farmers were noticeable. The 28 cooperatives established by the project gave farmers security and stability by grouping dairy farmers and producers of neighbouring villages. Thus through cooperatives, farmers empowered themselves and improved their abilities for better marketing and bargaining in order to increase their revenues from milk production and sales. The project also established 32 village milk collection and refrigeration centres fully equipped with milk cooling tanks, stainless steel milk storage tanks, laboratory equipment, and milk transportation trucks. This helped improve milk quality and safety standards..

Innovation

This project has successfully taken the initial steps to start sustainable milk production and improvement in the food safety standards of the dairy industry in Lebanon. Major emphasis has been placed on improving the quality and hygienic standards of milk and dairy products to safeguard the Lebanese consumer, and to improve the milk prices. It is considered by the Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture as an excellent example of recovery and rehabilitation projects in Lebanon in terms of planning, implementing activities, sustainability, improving food safety standards, and helping to generate income for poor rural farmers.

Outcomes

Through the project, 28 village dairy producer associations have been established, covering 300 villages and 2900 farmers throughout the project areas. Small-scale farmers have been empowered to negotiate with suppliers and with dairy processing plants to improve their revenues from milk production and sales. The organization of small-scale dairy farmers has been strengthened by including cooled milk storage tanks, selecting members to participate in training events, organizing the purchase of farm inputs and assisting members to secure public subsidies. Support to farmers was provided at all levels of the dairy value chain, from fodder production through to the marketing of milk and dairy products, including the organization of milk collection and control, livestock health and production management. The synergy created by the close follow-up and monitoring of the project team helped to boost the value chain and added value to farmers' efforts. Furthermore, the investment in the sector – whether in-kind or human resources – gave the project the basis to motivate the farmers to join.

Methodology

The experience of creating successful associations and cooperatives helped provide a positive example in a context and environment that formerly was very negative towards cooperatives and associations.

The two FAO projects (Phases I and II) have established 34 Village Dairy Producers' Associations (VDPAs), with 77 effective primary village collection centre networks at strategic locations, where the farmers of each area have easy access for milk marketing with improved milk hygiene standards. The project procured 61 cooling tanks with necessary equipment and milk testing laboratories, supported by 9 insulated milk transportation trucks. The total quantity of milk handled and refrigerated is 100 t/day (collected from 1500 to 2000 farmers). These milk collection centres were very essential in simultaneously solving several problems. They ensured fast cooling for the raw milk and short trips from farm to cooler. They ensured fast testing of the milk before adding to the rest of the milk. They could use the milk transportation trucks to take the milk hygienically to the processing plants. All in all, they assured better milk quality and safety. The direct effect of these primary village milk collection and cooling centres is better quality of milk and lower detected acidity, and therefore a significant increase in milk price, together with using milk transport trucks.

The VDPA's together with milk collection centres and the trucks provided dairy small-scale producers a stronger position in negotiating for better prices and deals in selling their milk. They are no longer at the mercy of milk dealers and dairy processing plants. The direct impact is the improvement of milk hygiene standards, resulting in the significant increase in the milk prices paid to producers (Lebanese pounds 100-200 more per kg).

Issues to be resolved

The restricted budgets of the two phases of the project limited the number of beneficiaries that could be selected, so many of the very small-scale dairy farmers could not participate. A scale-up of this project would be needed in the future in order to cover all the small-scale livestock keepers, including in the remaining geographical regions of the country.

Lessons learned

The involvement of all actors in the early stage of the process can help to clarify the objectives and the benefits for all stakeholders from the beginning.

Good practices

One of the main good practices of this project was the integrated approach, namely approaching the value chain as a whole, and tackling all its problems. In Lebanon, the milk quality problem is old and critical. It has been associated with serious health hazards and diseases, in addition to other troubles such as adulteration. One of the most important goals of this FAO project is the general improvement of raw milk quality at the different milk chain levels.

Recommendations

It is recommended to invest more in such successful initiatives, especially in a subsector with high potential. A scale-up of this project would be needed in the future in order to cover the totality of the small-scale livestock keepers, including in the remaining geographical regions of the country.

Actions planned for 2015

The project was operationally closed at the end of 2014. Therefore, the main activity for 2015 within this framework is the economic impact assessment of the project and fundraising for extending the project.

81 Telefood projects with cooperatives and associations

Background

Project symbol(s)	TFD-12/LEB/001, 002, 005, 006, 007, 008, 009, 010
Geographical coverage	Lebanon
LTU	RNE
Contact person	Marie-Louise Hayek (Programme Assistant)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Budget	About US\$40 000 (total)
Duration	1 year (2013-2014)

Description

The Telefood programme in 2014 allocated US\$40 000 to finance eight grassroots-level micro-projects in Lebanon, with the aim of improving the livelihood of poor families by enhancing agricultural production and thereby allowing them better access to food. These eight projects were implemented with agricultural cooperatives or associations in different areas of the country and have provided inputs for different categories of production: vegetables, lambs, honey, poultry and agro-food processing.

Innovation

The inclusion of women in the Telefood programme being strongly emphasized, this programme has succeeded in highlighting the role of women in the small-scale production sector, and encouraged cooperatives and associations to include the gender issue in their projects.

Outcomes

The main outcome of the Telefood programme was an empowerment of the benefitting cooperatives or associations through increasing their production capacity. Some of the

projects were implemented with humanitarian associations who assist poor or marginalized groups of beneficiaries, with the aim of improving the food security of such groups.

Methodology

The selection of the beneficiaries was based on the sustainability of the proposed project, the women involvement when possible, and the food security status and vulnerability of the final group of beneficiaries.

Issues to be resolved

Telefood projects have direct positive impacts on the livelihood of vulnerable groups and thereby are worthy to be scaled up or replicated at the country level. Appropriate funding would be required.

Lessons learned

More importance should be given to the selection of the beneficiaries and more involvement should be obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture in order to ensure better sustainability of the Telefood projects. At the same time, the visibility of the Telefood programme should be enhanced.

Good practices

Partnership between the Ministry of Agriculture, FAO and the agricultural cooperatives benefitting from the Telefood projects can be considered as good practice in managing and operating the programme.

Recommendations

Similar methodology is recommended for adoption elsewhere in small-scale agricultural projects.

Actions planned for 2015

Some projects are planned, to be prepared and implemented in 2015 with the small remaining funds available, and fund raising for Telefood programme may be explored at the country level.

82 Hydroponic units

Background

Project symbol	OSRO/GAZ/202/CAN
Geographical coverage	West Bank and Gaza Strip (WBGS)
LTU	AGAS
Contact person	Intissar Eshtayah (Programme Support Associate)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Budget	US\$225 000 (2014)
Duration	2 years (29 March 2012 to 30 April 2014)

Description

Unfavourable conditions due to overarching Israeli restrictions have contributed to the fragility of local production systems for herders in the West Bank. A minor deterioration

in terms of trade can have a devastating impact on those who derive their livelihood from herding in Area C, and the difficult context gives little margin for herding households to cope with such shocks. The recurrence of economic, climatic and man-made shocks (i.e. demolitions of livelihood structures) is increasing the vulnerability of herding communities, with serious implications on their ability to recover. Herders are particularly exposed to the threat of trans-boundary and common animal diseases, drought, irregular rainfall patterns and sudden price fluctuations, all of which they have experienced over the last three years, threatening their food security and livelihoods.

Herders are badly in need of a high quality, low cost source of green fodder available throughout the year. This intervention is designed to minimize the devastating effects of external shocks (price hikes, drought, demolition of infrastructure, etc.), while a longer-term developmental approach tackling the root causes of vulnerability to shocks is still under development. FAO's experience clearly indicates that if farming households are forced to sell their farm assets to buy fodder, it would be almost impossible for them to later re-establish their farming activities and will face the risk of falling into the food-aid-dependent category; this applies especially for women and female-headed households due to the limited alternatives available to them.

As fodder is the largest expense (70 percent of costs) needed to sustain herder's livelihoods, this activity also stops negative coping mechanisms, such as selling productive assets (land, animals, etc.), setting herders on a vicious cycle until they have no assets left and are forced to take on casual labour.

To combat the erosion of productive capacities and asset base of marginalized livestock holding families in the West Bank, while supporting the productivity and profitability of their trade, hydroponic fodder production units were distributed to 15 herders' associations throughout the West Bank. These production units provide high quality green fodder all year around to herders who are affected by unstable fodder prices and reduced grazing areas due to Israeli land restrictions. As this practice is in its early stages, we consider it to be an "up-and-coming" good practice which is very promising in its potential due to innovation and results thus far; however, there has been insufficient experience so far to recommend it unreservedly.

Innovation

Existing livestock cooperatives were selected based on their capacity. They were asked for a business plan or proposal to receive a hydroponic unit, laying out their budgeting and distribution plans to ensure implementation. Each of the 15 selected herder cooperatives has roughly 50 members, totaling 750 beneficiary herders who benefited from the new practice.

Female herding households are some of the most vulnerable households because of their beneficiaries. This means they are affected to a greater extent by the hardships affecting many herders. Many herder cooperatives have female members in their constituency, allowing them access to this practice.

The Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) engineers participated in the design of the hydroponic units by adapting the standard international design to the geographical and climatic context of the West Bank.

Outcomes

The herders using these hydroponic fodder production units report that it costs them nearly US\$0.10 per kg to produce green vegetation. For a flock of 10 sheep, this costs a

herder roughly US\$1 per day. Combined with the extra expenditure that the farmer must pay for cereal to add in the fodder mix, a herder saves up to 30 percent by using fresh, green barley grown in the hydroponic unit, as opposed to buying dry barley from the market.

If a herder buys the standard cereal and hay fodder for the same 10 animals, it costs roughly US\$4. per day (. Because livestock feed is usually a mix of cereal and barley (either fresh or dry), farmers are experimenting with the appropriate mix of fodder manufactured from the units.

A research project is under development to quantify the advantages regarding milk and meat production resulting from using alternative fodder produced with hydroponics under another FAO project, in coordination with the MoA National Agriculture Research Centre. Also, farmers are experimenting with feed ratios as a result of this, mixing the hydroponic green barley with other feed items, such as vetch, lentils and maize to augment the protein.

As 90 percent of fodder is imported from outside the West Bank, usually cereals, the follow-on economic benefits of utilizing an indigenous fodder obvious in this practice.

Methodology

The need was defined based on that fact that the WBGS imports most of its animal fodder (around 500 000 t/yr), which makes the country highly sensitive to price fluctuations in the international markets, hence increasing the vulnerability of the already poor livestock herders.

Fodder prices in the WBGS are considered among the highest in the world, and hence increasing local fodder production has been identified as one of the top strategic objectives, as reflected in the national Agriculture Sector Strategy, 2011-2013, and now for 2014-2016.

FAO has been cooperating with the MoA and the all partners of the Food Security Sector (FSS) to develop the first national Livestock Subsector Strategy 2015-2019, where increasing local fodder production remains the top priority for this sector, considering the fact that more than 80 percent of livestock production costs are to cover fodder needs.

Based on lessons learned and intensive consultations with the livestock herders, NGOs, and MoA, FAO has identified main focal topics to increase local fodder production in the WBGS. Using hydroponic technology to produce green fodder all year is one of these areas.

The practice fully integrates and complements interventions to merge strategic vision with innovative solutions. This practice was identified and implemented following a continuous participatory and engagement approach with local herders and their cooperatives, village councils, local grassroots associations and NGOs, in close cooperation and joint work with MoA and its local directorates. The implementation itself is designed to ensure maximum participation and involvement of the beneficiaries themselves, while using the local private sector to provide needed services and goods when applicable.

The hydroponic method of alternative fodder production constitutes a low cost and high quality source of fodder for herders who are in need of just that. The fodder is fresh barley, available all year long, containing roughly 16-18 percent protein.

A study is currently ongoing to confirm the protein amount and its cost effectiveness. Since the context here is different from other areas around the world where hydroponic fodder is used, this study is to compare with existing findings. The Palestinian MoA Agricultural Research Centre is scheduled to carry out the study under another FAO project, due to begin in October 2014.

Issues to be resolved

The project faces a significant gender challenge, reflected by enormous disparity in employment and asset ownership.

Lessons learned

Additional follow up should be provided for the alternative fodder units in terms of maintenance, upgrading and further dissemination of the idea of alternative fodder.

The quality of seed used in hydroponic fodder production is also very important. Imported seeds can vary greatly in quality compared with local seed, as they are processed and bought in bulk and sometimes arrive dusty and damaged, causing problems during germination. To avoid this, local seed suppliers should be utilized; however, the limited seed market in the West Bank is a constraint.

To conserve resources as much as possible, recycling water from one growth cycle to the next was experimented with, but was found to be problematic because of micro-organisms that accumulated in the water during the growth cycle. To avoid this, infrared filtering could be utilized to rid the water of these impurities which will spread if re-used.

Another technical lesson learned was the modification in terms of not using glass in the design to cut down on heat transfer to avoid increased cooling costs.

Good practices

The practice, though in its early stages, has succeeded in fulfilling its originally stated goal of creating an innovative, efficient and cost-effective solution to the unique challenges facing herders in the West Bank. The practice has shown itself to be effective and relevant, as evident from the beneficiaries' feedback and from post-activity monitoring. Further, it meets herders' needs without compromising the ecosystem, and has minimal environmental impact. It has shown itself to be adaptable to the local context, with successful implementation. It is run on a participatory basis by the herders' cooperatives. Alternative fodder production has the potential for replication and FAO's experience with it thus far in the West Bank has shown that the production unit design can be modified to adjust to geographical and climatic variations. Scaling up of this practice has to do largely with access to seed of desirable varieties, as the rest of the inputs used (water and electricity to run the production units) are easily accessible.

One of the most important aspects of this practice is its ability to enhance the resilience of herders in the face of disaster or shocks. Herders in the West Bank are subject to a range of shocks, including drought, volatile fodder prices and Israeli restrictions on access to their land and resources. This practice allows herders to access animal feed at a better price and with better quality, letting them save capital, and re-allocate resources for other expenditures such as healthcare or education. Further, the improved animal health which comes as a result of using fodder from hydroponic units also cuts down on veterinary costs.

Recommendations

As this practice was piloted under the project "Protection of Farmers' Livelihoods" (OSRO/GAZ/202/CAN), it is at an early stage of being verified and replicated in additional projects. However, it is easily scalable if resources are available. Further, market constraints detailed above should be taken into account concerning seed supply. Also, climate conditions should also be taken into account in any type of scaling up or replication. The existing design of the hydroponic production unit is adaptable to local contexts (such as the removal of glass from the unit's design to account for a warmer climate, etc.).

Actions planned for 2015

The project faces a significant gender challenge, reflected by enormous disparity in employment and asset ownership among women and men. Despite the slight increase in women participation rates in the workforce, women's economic participation still remains one of the lowest in the world. Women-owned Micro- Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and cooperatives in Palestine lack the knowledge, skills and confidence to run their business efficiently and to be competitive. The Joint Programme (JP) will enhance the competitiveness of women owned and run MSMEs, including cooperatives and female entrepreneurs focusing on food production and processing, and manufacturing of cultural and traditional products, which will increase their access to the local, regional and international markets. The JP will target 20 cooperatives that will benefit from agricultural service provision and 45 MSMEs that will benefit from cultural service provision. The direct beneficiaries of the JP will be 245 women with very diverse socio-economic backgrounds and age range (25-65 years old) from both rural and urban areas and from multiple locations in the West Bank (Nablus, Jenin, Jericho, Hebron, Bethlehem and Ramallah, among others).

This JP envisions a new technical cooperation that builds and expands on what has already been achieved in the past by retaining the human capital trained earlier and further developing their capacities and products, in addition to new ones. It is within this context that discussions between UN Women, FAO and ITC took place, with a view to pooling efforts in support of the development of women owned or run Palestinian MSMEs, including cooperatives. While all three agencies have projects targeting the enterprise and trade facilitation sectors, the agreement was on pooling efforts and building on previous and current programmes for all three organizations, plus the JP of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ministry of National Economy and Ministry of Agriculture.

83 Marketing-oriented high value crops sector development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip vegetable production

Background

Project symbol	OSRO/GAZ/207/NET
Geographical coverage	West Bank and Gaza Strip (WBGS)
LTU	AGPM
Contact persons	Azzam Saleh (Head of the Programme) Intissar Eshtayah (Programme Support Associate)
Principal actions	Capacity development
Budget	US\$4 500 000 (2014)
Duration	3.5 years (1 January 2013 to 30 June 2016)

Description

The project's overall objective is to sustainably improve the capacities and self-reliance of small and medium scale producers of high value and export crops in the WBGS, so that their products can compete in national and international markets, through developing sound and sustainable commercial processing and marketing systems, on the basis of improved chains of production and enhanced capacities and involvement of all relevant stakeholders. Specific objectives are: (i) to enhance the high value crops sector in the WBGS in order to increase their share in the domestic market (import substitution) and

to increase the Palestinian share in international markets; (ii) to improve institutional performance and service delivery capacities of farmer's cooperatives through strengthening management and financial capabilities, improving planning and coordination skills, and enabling access to finance and knowledge resources; (iii) to reduce the detrimental impact to the environment of the high value crops production chain and optimize the use of scarce water and energy resources; and (iv) to increase women's involvement and participation in the high value crops value chain, through enhancing their institutional and personnel capacities through promoting their production and marketing activities.

The project has been working with 17 active high value crops farmer's cooperatives and 6 active rural women's associations in the WBGs. Main project activities are: (i) enhance the capacity of high value crops farmers to apply cost-efficient and product quality-based improved agricultural practices throughout the entire high value crop production chain; (ii) promote a sound and efficient high value and export crop extension system; (iii) diversify the portfolio of high value crops to enhance resilient marketing through introducing new feasible and high-demand crops and varieties; and (iv) promote Commercial Global Good and Agricultural Practice (GLOBALG.A.P) and product quality certification approaches.

Outcomes

The main reported outcomes are: (i) 18 farmer cooperatives, with 1329 farmers owning 3770 dunums and 3 nurseries, are certified in accordance with GLOBALG.A.P. standards (by 2016); (ii) 8220 t and 10 million flower stems of high value crops exported, while 16 370 t and 3 million flower stems marketed locally in season 2015/16; (iii) two High Value Crops (HVC) Producer Associations established, joining 18 HVC farmer cooperatives; and (iv) two HVC Producers Associations established, joining 18 HVC farmer cooperatives.

Lessons learned

Enhance the capacity of HVC farmers by applying cost-efficient and product-quality-based improved GAPs throughout the entire production chain.

Good practices

The international GLOBAL G.A.P. certification standard has been implemented to strengthen the capacities of farmer cooperatives to reduce production costs and ensure good quality and competitive HVC to be sold on local and international markets.

Recommendations

- Optimize the local marketing system for fresh fruits and vegetables, thus contributing strongly to improving the feasibility of agricultural production.
- Introduce new feasible crop varieties, but attention must be paid to replace part of the existing traditional crops rather than simply adding new ones, thus avoiding any potential increase in water demand.
- Enable the self-reliance of the targeted farmers and women cooperatives and efficient in-house funding and credit systems must be established by enabling these cooperatives to use their own financial resources effectively.

Activities for 2015

Capacity development.

Annex 2

Questionnaire

Welcome!

Thank you very much for answering this survey on FAO projects and activities in support of producer organizations (POs) and cooperatives.

The questionnaire aims to collect information on the project or activity in support of POs and cooperatives that your unit/office has implemented in 2014. Activities in support of POs and cooperatives that you may wish to report might include technical advice, agreements, meetings, workshops, or side events.

The questionnaire is made up of 8 main sections where you will be asked about:

- I. Respondent's details and background
- II. Type of actions undertaken
- III. Innovative elements
- IV. Outcomes
- V. Methodologies and success factors
- VI. Lessons learned, good practices and key recommendations
- VII. Actions planned for 2015
- VIII. Strategic Objectives that the project/activity has helped to achieve

If your unit/office has implemented more than one project/activity in support of POs and cooperatives in 2014, you may wish to fill in this questionnaire as many times as the number of projects/activities implemented.

Thank you very much for your collaboration!

Respondent's name

Respondent's position

Leading Technical Unit

Respondent's email

You are reporting on (Mark only one):

- ☐ Project
- ☐ Technical Advice
- ☐ Meeting
- ☐ Workshop
- ☐ Side event
- ☐ Publication
- ☐ Other (what?): _____

Title of the project/activity

Project Symbol

Related Web site Link

Duration

2014 Budget

Geographical area of intervention (Mark only one):

- ☐ Global
- ☐ Regional
- ☐ Country

Specify the Region and/or country(ies) where the project or activity has been implemented

Project/activity description

In this section please provide information on the type of action undertaken in the project/activity. If more than one type of action is undertaken, please tick the boxes as appropriate. Then please provide a short description of the project or activity (please avoid bullet points).

Type of action undertaken by the project/activity (Check all that apply):

- ☐ A. Voice and participation (e.g. Participation in policy dialogue processes by POs and cooperatives)
- ☐ B. Capacity development (e.g. Capacity development initiatives in technical, managerial and marketing skills along food value chains; workshops; development of strategic partnerships that strengthen the overall capacity of POs and cooperatives; etc.)
- ☐ C. Support to enabling environment (e.g. Legislative and policy assistance to governments; design of incentives programmes; support to the development of consultation frameworks for policy related dialogues between governments and various stakeholders including POs and cooperatives; etc.)
- ☐ D. Knowledge generation and sharing (e.g. Publications; issue papers; normative guidelines; elearning tools; technical learning resources; knowledge platforms for PO capacity

development; software products; good practices database; policy briefs; workshop/conference proceedings; etc.)

- ☐ E. Market linkages (e.g. The development of strategic partnerships or other actions to support POs and cooperatives to establish market linkages at local, national and international level; etc.)

☐ Other: _____

Description of actions undertaken by the project/activity

Please provide a short description (no more than 500 words) of the actions undertaken by the project/activity. Please also provide the link to any tool/publication that has been produced.

Innovative elements introduced by the project/activity

In this section please provide information on the innovative elements for POs and cooperatives introduced by the project/activity. If more than one type of innovation is introduced, please tick the boxes as appropriate.

Types of innovative elements introduced by the project/activity (Check all that apply):

- ☐ A. Product and process innovation (e.g. adoption of new technologies leading to increased productivity, improved quality, etc.)
- ☐ B. Institutional innovation (e.g. any changes in terms of workplace organization, governance, services provided by the organization, partnerships/external relations with social, political and economic actors, etc.)
- ☐ C. Social innovation (e.g. women and youth inclusion or any changes addressed to meet social needs of members)
- ☐ Other: _____

Description of the types of innovation implemented by the project/activity

Please describe the type of innovation implemented by the project/activity. Briefly explain how the project/activity exemplifies such innovative elements for POs and cooperatives. You may wish to compare the prior context and mechanisms put in place to enhance rural institutions' sustainability and performance. Please do not exceed 300 words.

Outcomes of the project/activity

In this section please provide information on the outcomes of the project/activity on livelihoods of members and on POs and cooperatives. If more than one outcome is identified, please tick the boxes as appropriate.

Types of outcomes of the project/activity (Check all that apply):

- ☐ A. Increased members' access to productive resources (e.g. access to land, water, inputs, etc.)
- ☐ B. Increased members' access to financial capital (e.g. access to credit, new and increased incomes, diversification, etc.)
- ☐ C. Increased members' human capital (e.g. access to knowledge, information, training, skill development, etc.)
- ☐ D. Increased bonding social capital (e.g. trust and reciprocity within the cooperative/PO, etc.)
- ☐ E. Increased bridging social capital (e.g. networks with other cooperatives/POs, development agencies, etc.)
- ☐ F. Increased food security of members and their families
- ☐ G. Increased participation in policy dialogue and decision making processes
- ☐ H. Increased leadership empowerment (e.g. through training and capacity development targeting leaders, networking of organizations, strengthening of capacities such as agricultural, financial and managerial skills, etc.)
- ☐ I. Increased access to markets (e.g. development of linkages among organizations to better secure access to markets, development of inclusive and equal trading system, i.e. for women and youth, access to certifications, etc.)
- ☐ Other: _____

Description of main outcomes

Please describe outcomes achieved by the project/activity. Please specify whether the project/activity had any specific impact in terms of gender equality, youth inclusion, and other marginalized groups. If possible, provide quantitative evidence. Please do not exceed 500 words and kindly avoid bullet points.

Methodologies and success factors of the project/activity

In this section please provide information on the success factors of the project/activity where the performance of POs and cooperatives has improved. If more than one success factor is identified, please tick the boxes as appropriate. Then you are also asked to describe any methodology adopted in the project/activity. You may wish to explain whether and how it contributed to strengthening POs and cooperatives supported by the project/activity.

Critical success factors of the project/activity (Check all that apply):

- ☐ A. Internal factors (e.g. organizational capacity, organizational motivation, leadership, champions, etc.)
- ☐ B. Networking factors (e.g. partnerships/alliances between POs/cooperatives and/or with development agencies, civil society organizations, other stakeholders, etc.)
- ☐ C. External factors (e.g. administrative and legal system, policy and institutional framework, economic environment, sociocultural norms, participatory mechanism)
- ☐ Other: _____

Description of adopted methodology

Please provide a brief description of the methodology adopted in the project/activity. The paragraph should not exceed 300 words.

Lessons learned, good practices and recommendations

Issues to be resolved

Please describe any issues in the project/activity that need to be resolved as well as any factor(s) that may have affected implementation of the project/activity. Please do not exceed 300 words.

Lessons learned

Briefly describe the lessons learned from the project/activity. Please do not use bullet points and do not exceed 300 words.

Good practices

Please indicate and briefly describe the good practices that emerged from the project/activity. The paragraph should not exceed 300 words.

Key recommendations

Please illustrate measures to be recommended to other stakeholders (i.e. policy makers, donors, international development agencies, civil society organizations, private sector) for replicating/ scaling up of the activity/project. Please do not exceed 300 words.

Actions planned for 2015

In this section please provide information on the actions planned for 2015 in support of producer organizations and cooperatives. If more than one action is planned, please tick the boxes as appropriate. Then use the box to describe the planned actions in detail.

Actions planned for 2015 (Check all that apply):

- ☐ A. Voice and participation (e.g. Participation in policy dialogue processes by POs and cooperatives)
- ☐ B. Capacity development (e.g. Capacity development initiatives in technical, managerial and marketing skills along food value chains; workshops; development of strategic partnerships that strengthen the overall capacity of POs and cooperatives; etc.)
- ☐ C. Support to enabling environment (e.g. Legislative and policy assistance to governments; design of incentives programmes; support to the development of consultation frameworks for policy related dialogues between governments and various stakeholders including POs and cooperatives; etc.)
- ☐ D. Knowledge generation and sharing (e.g. Publications; issue papers; normative guidelines; elearning tools; technical learning resources; knowledge platforms for PO capacity development; software products; good practices database; policy briefs; workshop/ conference proceedings; etc.)
- ☐ E. Market linkages (e.g. The development of strategic partnerships or other actions to support POs and cooperatives to establish market linkages at local, national and international level; etc.)
- ☐ Other: _____

Description of actions planned for 2015

Please describe actions of projects/activities in support of POs and cooperatives planned for 2015 (no more than 300 words).

FAO strategic objectives

This is the last section of the survey. Please identify which Strategic Objective(s) the project has helped to achieve. Please tick the box(es) as appropriate.

FAO Strategic Objectives (Check all that apply):

- ☐ SO 1 "Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition"
- ☐ SO 2 "Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner"
- ☐ SO 3 "Reduce rural poverty"
- ☐ SO 4 "Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems at local, national, and international level"
- ☐ SO 5 "Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises"

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Producer organizations and cooperatives are important partners for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to achieve its mandate of ending hunger. The new FAO Strategic Framework incorporates their fundamental role in contributing to rural poverty reduction and enabling more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems at local, national and international levels.

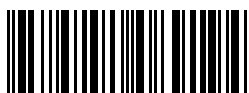
This 2014 Annual Report, a joint undertaking of FAO with the Department of Economics of Roma Tre University, provides evidence of how FAO supported producer organizations and cooperatives during the year. It serves as a useful tool for policy-makers, development practitioners and academics to acquire wider knowledge about FAO's work in this field and highlights the great potential of these organizations in helping to achieve food security and sustainable development worldwide.



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