



# China-IFAD South-South and Triangular Cooperation Facility

Annual Progress Report 2021



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## Abbreviations and acronyms

AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
AWPB	Annual Work Plan and Budget
B2B	Business-to-Business
CRCV	Climate Resilient Value Chains
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IBRAF	Brazil Africa Institute
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IPRCC	International Poverty Reduction Center in China
IITA	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
MOF	PRC Ministry of Finance of the People's Republic of China
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
SSTC	South-South and Triangular Cooperation
PROCASUR	Programme for Rural Development Training
ProSCAWA	Promoting Sustainable Cage Aquaculture in West Africa
RBAs	Rome-based agencies
SSGE-ADFS	South-South Cooperation in Green Economy for Agricultural Development and Enhanced Food Security
SSCVC	South-South Cooperation for Scaling up Climate Resilient Value Chain Initiatives
STARLIT	Strengthening agricultural resilience through learning and innovation
WFP	World Food Programme

I.

# Overview

## China-IFAD SSTC Facility AT A GLANCE

1<sup>st</sup>

**Facility in IFAD**  
dedicated  
to SSTC



**US\$10 million**  
in total  
contribution



**Global coverage**  
5 regions,  
over 30  
countries



**3 calls  
for proposals**  
concluded



**17 projects**  
approved

- 1. Afghanistan
- 2. Argentina
- 3. Bangladesh
- 4. Bolivia (Plurinational State of)
- 5. Brazil
- 6. Cambodia
- 7. Cameroon
- 8. Chile
- 9. China
- 10. Colombia
- 11. Cuba
- 12. Costa Rica
- 13. Dominican Republic
- 14. Ecuador
- 15. El Salvador
- 16. Ethiopia
- 17. Ghana
- 18. Guatemala
- 19. Haiti
- 20. Honduras
- 21. Kenya
- 22. Lao People's Democratic Republic
- 23. Madagascar
- 24. Mexico
- 25. Nicaragua
- 26. Nigeria
- 27. Pakistan
- 28. Panama
- 29. Paraguay
- 30. Peru
- 31. Republic of Congo
- 32. Rwanda
- 33. Tajikistan
- 34. Trinidad and Tobago
- 35. United Republic of Tanzania
- 36. Uruguay
- 37. Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
- 38. Viet Nam



1.

**Background.** The China-IFAD SSTC Facility was established in March 2018 following a contribution of USD 10 million in Supplementary Funds from the People's Republic of China (PRC) to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). As the first Facility specifically dedicated to SSTC in IFAD, it has been a key driver of IFAD's corporate agenda in SSTC; supporting investment in the mainstreaming themes of the organisation and complementing the Fund's response to global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Now in its fourth year of implementation, the Facility is covering all the five geographic regions where IFAD operates; with interventions reaching more than 30 countries through a portfolio of 17 approved projects.

2.

**Objective.** The Facility contributes to IFAD's mandate by placing a particular focus on rural development. The funded projects mobilize knowledge, technologies and resources from the Global South to accelerate rural poverty alleviation, enhance rural productivity and advance rural transformation. As such, the Facility invests in diverse thematic areas: agricultural productivity, value chain development, agri-business-to-business linkages, rural youth empowerment, climate change adaptation, and latterly, support to COVID-19 response and recovery.

3.

**Priorities.** The Strategic Priorities of the Facility are to:

- a) Promote innovations in strengthening the productive, managerial, financial and marketing capacities of rural people;
- b) Pilot inclusive production and business models which generate higher incomes for rural people in agricultural and non-agricultural rural activities;
- c) Promote investments and trade between developing countries that provide services or markets to rural people.

The types of priority activities include enabling South-South knowledge exchange, establishing South-South technical cooperation, and promoting South-South rural investments.

4.

**Linkages to IFAD's SSTC Strategy.** IFAD adopted a new SSTC strategy in December 2021. The Strategy emphasizes increased mainstreaming of SSTC in the Fund's operations to support partnership building, policy engagement, innovation and knowledge generation for rural transformation. The Facility fully aligns with this reinforced role of SSTC. The calls for proposals define priority areas that reflect IFAD's engagement in development initiatives thus ensuring complementarity with the Fund's programme of loans and grants and facilitate SSTC integration within on-going operations.

As an example of this alignment, the third call was repurposed toward the COVID-19 crisis response, reflecting IFAD's own initiatives to mitigate the effects of the pandemic.

5.

**Calls for proposals.** Since its establishment in 2018, the Facility has concluded three calls for proposals. The calls follow the principles outlined in the Implementation Guidelines and the Strategic Guidance Note (SGN). The SGN is updated annually to provide directions for the development and submission of the proposals. It also includes information on the selection process and reporting requirements.

6.

The calls received broad interest with the number of submissions almost doubling between the first and the second call - from 27 to 55 proposals. A wide range of applicants including multilateral organisations, governments, research institutions, non-government organizations, private sector companies collaborated with IFAD regional divisions to develop the proposals. Under the first two calls, 13 projects were selected for financing - eight in the first and five in the second - amounting to USD 5.8 million in funds allocated. Four new projects were approved in the third call to support IFAD's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

7.

**Extension of the Facility.** For the continued implementation of activities and fulfilment of objectives of the Facility funded projects, a three-year extension of the completion date of the Supplementary Funds Agreement was approved in March 2021. Accordingly, the end date of the Agreement was amended to 31 December 2024.

8.

**Financial Status.** As of 31 December 2021, the committed funds under the Facility amounted to USD 6,810,671. These figures include financing of 13 projects, the secondment of staff from China as well as Facility management fees. Available resources at the same date was USD 3,294,312. These figures do not include the four projects approved under the third call, as disbursements had not been started for any of them in the period covered by this report.

9.

**Fourth Progress report.** This fourth progress report highlights the achievements of the Facility over the past year (2021). It provides an overview of the portfolio of projects and highlights the work of the Facility Secretariat, which includes conclusion of the third call for proposals, launch of a fourth call, continued monitoring of the funded projects, increased outreach and communication activities. The report also highlights lessons learned and implementation plans for the future.



# Portfolio of projects



10.

**Overview.** In 2021, among 17 approved projects, five projects reached their completion dates and have entered the three-month closing stage. One project was cancelled<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, 11 projects will be taken forward into 2022.

11.

**Thematic Distribution.** The Facility supports activities and schemes to share, apply and adapt development solutions to similar country contexts, incubate technology innovation and transfer, build business-to-business linkages and private-public partnerships, and catalyse South-South trade and investments to promote rural transformation and enhance food security.

12.

The projects cover a broad range of thematic areas, such as productivity improvement, value chain upgrade, climate resilience enhancement, rural youth employment, nutrition improvement, exchange of rural solutions, rural investment promotion, and more. Productivity improvement and rural solution exchanges accounted for the largest proportion of funding requests followed by the strengthening of value chains, climate resilience enhancement and nutrition security.

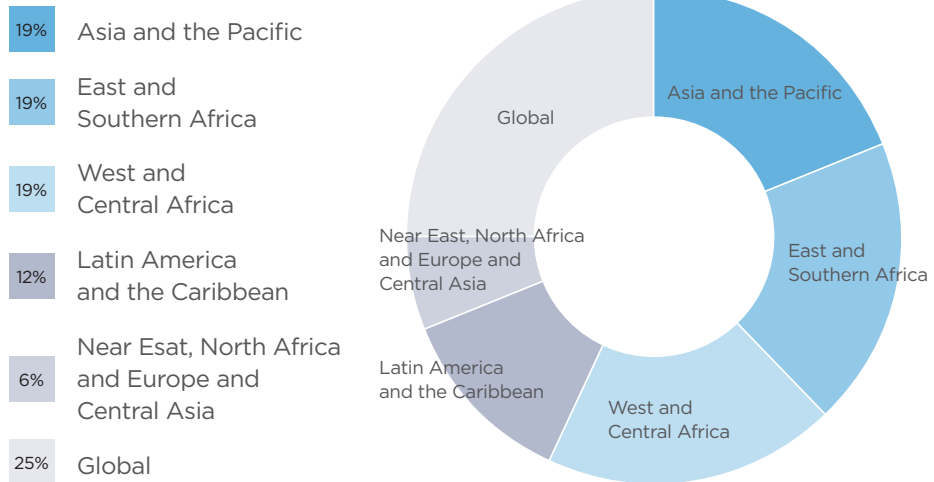
13.

**Geographic Distribution.** With the coming on board of the four new projects at the end of the third call, the Facility reach has extended to four additional countries: Afghanistan, Cuba, Rwanda and Tajikistan. However, with the cancellation of one project, the total number of countries covered by the Facility stands at 38. The geographic distribution by region in 2021 was as follows: three in the Asia and the Pacific region; three in the East and Southern Africa region; two in Latin America and the Caribbean; 1 in the Near East, North Africa and Europe region; three in the West and Central Africa region and four implemented at a global level.

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<sup>1</sup> Due to implementation challenges, the South-South Cooperation in Green Economy for Agricultural Development and Enhanced Food Security (SSGE-ADFS) was cancelled.

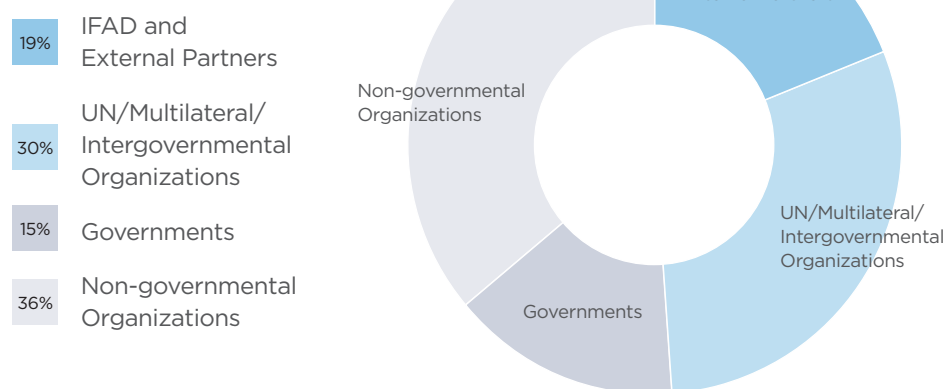
### Geographic Distribution



14.

**Profile of grant recipients.** Calls are open to government organizations, non-profit organizations, business organizations, UN organizations and multilateral organizations. Currently, the highest number of recipients are multilateral and non-governmental organisations (NGOs); representing 30% and 36% respectively of committed funds. They are followed by projects implemented by IFAD Divisions in collaboration with external partners such as the Brazil Africa Institute (IBRAF), the International Poverty Reduction Center in China (IPRCC), which received 19% of the committed funds; whilst those coordinated by governments stand at 15%.

### Recipient Distribution



15.

**Portfolio Performance.** On the average across 16 projects, less than half of the committed funds were disbursed at the time of the reporting, largely due to the pandemic outbreak in 2020, which coincided with the start of implementation of the grants approved under the first two calls. Nonetheless, the projects achieved notable results in line with the overall Facility objectives.

16.

In terms of South-South knowledge cooperation, seven projects developed knowledge and information products for dissemination, thereby enhancing the access to rural solutions by a wide spectrum of stakeholders. Ten organized knowledge-sharing events to showcase and promote innovations around technologies and methodologies, catalyzing uptake of appropriate rural solutions. Five projects facilitated capacity building and experience exchange involving experts from China and other developing countries to support implementation of appropriate policies that empower rural communities.

17.

Three projects facilitated technology transfer from southern development partners. For example, with support from China, the *South-South and Triangular Cooperation for the Inter-Africa Bamboo Smallholder Farmers Livelihood Development Programme* enabled the transfer of dozens of bamboo technologies among Cameroon, Ghana, Ethiopia and Madagascar; contributing to the improvement of local value chains. As part of the implementation of the *Promoting Sustainable Cage Aquaculture in West Africa (ProSCAWA)* grant, the offloading and construction of imported cages from China created employment opportunities for the local communities in the project areas in both Ghana and Nigeria.

18.

The projects also pursued collaboration with the private sector. Under the *Rural Youth Innovation Award*, 17 private sector companies pledged to provide more than USD 200,000 in-kind and cash contributions to sponsor the winning initiatives (cash prizes, products and services, internship and scholarship opportunities, seed money, immersion, acceleration and mentorship programs, among others). Business-to-business linkages were also explored in the framework of two projects: the *Local Production of Fortified Cassava Flour in Bouenza Department in the Republic of Congo initiative* and the *Strengthening business-to-business linkages and investment opportunities through IFAD's SSTC and Knowledge Centres* grant. Despite the limited successes due to COVID-related constraints, documents were produced on best practices and B2B development methodologies to support future interventions.

## Facility Project Portfolio 2021

No.	Title	Project implementation location
<b>ON-GOING PROJECTS</b>		
1	South-South Triangular Cooperation for the Inter-Africa Bamboo Smallholder Farmers Livelihood Development Programme	Cameroon, Ghana, Ethiopia and Madagascar
2	Promoting Water Conservation and Irrigation Water Use Efficiency in Ethiopia	Ethiopia and Kenya
3	Local production of fortified cassava flour in Bouenza department in the Republic of Congo	Republic of the Congo
4	Small scale dryers for post-harvest management enterprises in Africa	Ghana
5	Effective South-South Cooperation in Agriculture to Unleash Transformative Power of Agriculture Sector for Inclusive Development in Pakistan	Pakistan
6	Promoting Sustainable Cage Aquaculture in West Africa (ProSCAWA)	Ghana and Nigeria
7	Learning from SSTC in project design for better results and greater sustainability	IFAD HQ, Global
<b>START-UP PROJECTS</b>		
8	Supporting the recovery of priority food crop value chains from the effects of COVID-19 to strengthen community resilience, markets and trade development in Tanzania	Tanzania
9	STARLIT: Strengthening Agricultural Resilience through Learning and Innovation	Rwanda and Kenya
10	Supporting local solutions towards a more resilient food system in Cuba	Cuba
11	Promoting Inclusive, Resilient and Sustainable Livelihood Opportunities in Rural Mountainous Areas through Upgrading Cashgora Value Chains	Tajikistan and Afghanistan

No.	Title	Project implementation location
<b>COMPLETED/CLOSED PROJECTS</b>		
12	Inclusive agriculture and agro-industrial value chain development as an enabler of poverty reduction in Bangladesh	Bangladesh
13	South-South Cooperation for Scaling up Climate Resilient Value Chain Initiatives (SSCVC)	Vietnam, China, Laos, and Cambodia
14	Rural Youth Innovation Award	Latin America and the Caribbean
15	Strengthening the Rural Solutions Portal and IFAD's IT tracking systems to increase the uptake of rural development solutions	IFAD HQ, Global
16	Strengthening business-to-business linkages and investment opportunities through IFAD's SSTC and Knowledge Centres	IFAD HQ, Global
<b>CANCELLED PROJECTS</b>		
17	South-South Cooperation In Green Economy For Agricultural Development And Enhanced Food Security (SSGE-ADFS)	Algeria, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, and Uzbekistan

# III. Facility operations

A.

## Conclusion of the third call for proposals

20.

**Review and final approval.** The third call of the Facility was officially launched on 28 August 2020 to fund projects aiming to improve the food security and resilience of poor rural communities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The thematic areas of focus were:

- a) Strengthening the capacities of smallholder farmers and their organizations to enhance resilience against disasters;
- b) Facilitating access to markets in conditions of specific barriers in a given context;
- c) Delivering up-to-date agriculture-related information to smallholder producers through digital services; and,
- d) Building trade capacities to enable smallholder producers to meet quality and sanitary standards of overseas markets.

21.

23 received proposals were carefully reviewed in four sequential steps: (i) an external evaluation involving two senior consultants; (ii) a review by IFAD internal Technical Group; (iii) an assessment by the Facility's Advisory Panel (AP), which included senior representatives from both IFAD and MOF PRC; and (iv) quality assurance by IFAD's Quality Assurance Group (QAG). Four proposals were approved by MOF PRC. The evaluation criteria focused on strategic alignment and country ownership, effectiveness and impact, value for money, knowledge and innovation and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

22.

The four approved projects are:

- 1) Supporting the recovery of priority food crop value chains from the effects of COVID-19 to strengthen community resilience, markets and trade Development in Tanzania;
- 2) Strengthening agricultural resilience through learning and innovation (STARLIT);
- 3) Supporting local solutions towards a more resilient and sustainable Food System in Cuba;
- 4) Promoting Inclusive, resilient and sustainable livelihood opportunities in rural mountainous areas through upgrading cashgora value chains.

**23.**

These projects will pilot the latest agricultural innovations to reach the most vulnerable rural poor through diversified forms of SSTC including digital platforms and tools for quick dissemination of knowledge and information; establishment of partnerships along value chains; innovative leasing and asset financing models for post-harvest and irrigation equipment; strengthened social protection programmes for healthy diets; and upgraded facilities for improved incomes in the local value chains. More details of these projects are provided in Section IV.

**24.**

**Start-up preparation.** The Facility Secretariat communicated the results to the project leaders and to the financial and legal departments for the clearance process per standard IFAD practice. The Secretariat assisted with the preparation of the grant agreements to ensure their alignment with the Facility's requirements on project implementation, supervision and reporting. In December 2021, the Grant Agreements for all four approved projects were finalised and signed.

**25.**

In coordination with the Secretariat, the grant recipients are preparing the required documents for their first disbursements. A particular focus is placed on the Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) of each project to ensure consistency with the approved proposals.



**B.**

## Redesign of the fourth call for proposals

**26.**

To prepare the fourth call for proposals, the Facility Secretariat reviewed the process of the previous three calls and their implementation. In terms of the overall application process, the open placement for proposals resulted in high numbers of applications for each call. This reduced the certainty of approval for applicants. In addition, the approval process was seen as rather long, affecting planning and effective integration of the requested funds into country programmes. Project Leaders are thus not incentivised to invest adequate time and effort to design quality proposals.

**27.**

In addition, several operational lessons have also been learned: 1) it would appear that project supervision and monitoring requirements during project implementation impose an extra burden on project leaders; linked to this issue, 2) project implementation mostly lags behind the original schedule; this has led to requests for extensions on project duration; 3) projects tend to focus on the activities level (research, training and workshops), with a relative lack of commitment to deliver on concrete development outcomes.

**28.**

Based on the lessons learned and feedback from the project teams, a restricted call for proposals was launched in November 2021. It adopted features and processes that sought to address the issues highlighted in the review of the earlier projects. The proposals were required to be either directly built into an IFAD loan or grant under design, as co-financing; or to be an add-on SSTC project and directly built into an IFAD loan or grant under implementation. This was meant to ensure effective implementation, supervision and successful delivery of project results.

**29.**

Additionally, the activities of the proposed projects were to focus on concrete cooperation on the ground such as capacity building, transfer of applicable technology and small farming tools and equipment, business-to-business linkages with other developing countries, piloting of innovative solutions/project, etc. This focus was to ensure the interventions would directly benefit the target communities, limiting activities such as research, trainings and workshops.

**C.**

## Continued monitoring and supervision

**30.**

**Midterm review.** As is required in the Supplementary Funds Agreement, at the mid-term and before the completion of the Facility, an independent review of the Facility was carried out. The midterm review was thus commissioned with the following objectives:

- a) Document results achieved with respect to the expected outcomes of the individual projects within the framework of the stated priorities of the Facility in particular and IFAD's approach on SSTC in general;
- b) Assess the actual impact of ten projects on direct and indirect beneficiaries with reference to the results measurement framework/objectives of the projects;
- c) Examine the start-up and implementation progress of the project funded under the Facility to highlight lessons learned;
- d) Recommend measures to speed-up project implementation and ensure the achievement of project objectives;
- e) Recommend ways to improve future project design and implementation to strengthen their SSTC nature and impact, as well as innovativeness and sustainability for rural development.

**31.**

Based on a desk review of ten project proposals and the progress reports, the evaluator designed a methodology to conduct the review, including data collection, virtual consultation and on-site review. Ten virtual interviews were organized by the Facility Secretariat with the interactive involvement of project teams, implementation partners and beneficiaries for an in-depth understanding of the projects. A field visit was organised in Ghana to review and assess the physical progress of three on-going projects.

**32.**

With the completion of the review in August 2021, recommendations were made, including to:

- 1) Translate theories of change into robust logical frameworks/results frameworks to guide implementation and results tracking;
- 2) Implement innovations around ICT mediated engagement platforms and processes as an imperative in response to COVID-19 impact on the projects;
- 3) Include viable business models that confer widespread benefits to rural communities;
- 4) Establish a process intra-project monitoring and peer learning processes.

**33.**

**Regular monitoring, supervision and reporting.** For all funded projects, the Facility Secretariat ensured monitoring, supervision and reporting mechanisms remained operational. Periodic meetings were organised to review progress; and recommendations were made to address challenges arising, particularly with regards to curtailment of in-person activities due to COVID, disbursement rates and budget re-allocation. For example, in the case of the ProSCAWA project, the Secretariat supported the decision to transfer project management from the WorldFish office in Egypt to the WorldFish office in Nigeria, in order to improve project monitoring and enable better implementation oversight.

**34.**

**Cancelled project.** After long period of no project activities, discussions with the project leader concluded with the agreement that the recipient for the *South-South Cooperation in Green Economy for Agricultural Development and Enhanced Food Security (SSGE-ADFS)* project lacked the capacity to implement the project in accordance with the agreed objectives and deliverables. Accordingly, the project was cancelled.

## Communication and outreach

35

Visibility of the Facility increased as projects progressed or became operational. The Facility was showcased in international events, via social media and blogs. In addition, close collaboration, consultation and coordination were maintained with relevant IFAD divisions, the SSTC and Knowledge Centres and the country offices.

36

**The first comprehensive Facility annual report<sup>2</sup>** was designed and submitted to the MOF PRC and published on the Facility's IFAD webpage. The report provided a comprehensive picture of the Facility and funded projects, with updates on operations of the Facility, the project portfolio, as well as next steps; supported with info graphics, tables and pictures from the field.

37

**The first video dedicated to the Facility<sup>3</sup>** was designed, produced and published on the Facility webpage. Featuring interviews with project leaders, implementing partners and beneficiaries, combined with project pictures and videos from the field, the production showcased the impact of the Facility in enhancing local capacity, facilitating peer learning, promoting innovation and enabling sustainability across all the regions in which IFAD operates.

38

### **Success stories, knowledge products, brochures and flyers.**

The Facility Secretariat worked with project teams to capture success stories<sup>4</sup>, knowledge products and research findings for greater outreach and impact; and provided recommendations on how to enhance knowledge management and dissemination during project implementation. In addition, an SSTC good practice report template for scaling-up innovations after project completion was designed and shared with project leaders. Other outreach efforts included newsletters<sup>5</sup>, social media posts<sup>6</sup>, op-eds, webinars, forums, podcasts, interviews and speeches.

2 Facility Annual Report for 2020 published on IFAD webpage: <https://www.ifad.org/fr/web/knowledge/-/china-ifad%C2%A0south-south-and-triangular%C2%A0cooperation-facility-%C2%A0annual-progress-report-2020>

3 Video available on Facility webpage: <https://www.ifad.org/fr/sstcf>

4 Photo stories of the innovations captured under the Rural Youth Innovation Award Grant: <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/latest/-/photo/youth-leaders-working-towards-transformative-rural-development>

5 Publication on the Congo project on a national news page: <https://www.adiac-congo.com/content/filiere-manioc-280-millions-fcfa-pour-appuyer-les-petits-producteurs-dans-la-bouenza-120621>

6 Facebook page of the SSCVC project: <https://web.facebook.com/SSVCVCPROJECT>

During the Global Rural Development Forum held in September 2021, IFAD representatives – the Country Director and the Chief Partnership Officer – referenced the Facility, highlighting its role in IFAD’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its contributions to global poverty alleviation.

39

**The database for institutions engaged in SSTC** was officially launched as part of the *Strengthening the Rural Solutions Portal and IFAD’s IT tracking systems to increase the uptake of rural development solutions* grant. Around 30 SSTC institutions in the Asia and Pacific Region were piloted for presentation, 15 additional institutions from the Latin America and Caribbean region were identified and documented, and more institutions from other regions will be added.

40

A template was designed to capture the profiles of these institutions with information on the identity of the organisations, their fields of expertise, operating countries, types of cooperation undertaken and examples of their SSTC engagement. A partners’ section was added to IFAD Rural Solutions Portal<sup>7</sup>, with search filters to facilitate match-making of demand and supply among stakeholders.

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7 A section was added to the Rural Solutions Portal: <https://ruralsolutionsportal.org/en/partners>

# IV. Summary of projects



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



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





**A.**

## **Completed projects (As of December 2021)**

**A.1**

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

**A.2**

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

**A.3**

**Rural Youth  
Innovation Award**

**A.4**

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

**A.5**

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

## A.1

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

APPROVED VALUE (USD)

**500,000**

The Inclusive agriculture and agro-industrial value chain development project aimed to identify value chain upgrading opportunities and carry out the pilot implementation of selected upgrading models and strategies, to support the inclusive and sustainable development of dairy and beef value chains in the south-western region of Bangladesh, particularly for the benefit of smallholder producers and agro-entrepreneurs, and through knowledge and experience exchanges.

The project reached its completion date in July 2021. Due to the pandemic, a number of activities were not implemented before completion but despite the challenges, extensive work was carried out, and various results were achieved through teleworking, telecommunications, and virtual meetings and collaborations:

1. A feasibility study was completed, identifying value chain upgrading opportunities, models, strategies and capacity-development activities;
2. Bangladesh researchers developed technical and training materials on alfalfa and corn silage production based on best practices documented from China;
3. Case studies on livestock value chain development in China, with relevance to dairy and beef value chains in Bangladesh, were developed through collaboration of research institutions from both countries.

The project contributed to the development of sustainable innovative farms, agribusinesses and related services to operate along the dairy and beef value chains. It is expected that this will contribute to enhancing food security and nutrition, as well as to generating employment and income for a growing population in the country, particularly for young men and women.

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

APPROVED VALUE  
(USD)

**500,000**

The Scaling up Climate Resilient Value Chain Initiatives (SSCVC) project aimed at generating structured learning around climate change adaptation in the agribusiness sector across four countries - China, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Viet Nam, which share similar cultural, natural, and socio-economic conditions. The objectives of the project were to: (i) facilitate the identification and development of climate resilient value chain initiatives among farmer groups, processing units; and (ii) build capacity and develop knowledge on successful climate smart value chain good practices for future use, replication and scaling up by all stakeholders involved.

The project reached its completion date in December 2021 and provided substantial knowledge in Climate Resilient Value Chains practices:

1. 96 best practices related to climate smart agricultural production, climate tolerant processing and preservation technologies were documented and packaged as different knowledge products, such as handbook, posters, leaflet and flyers, and videos;
2. Three training of trainers sessions and five workshops were organised on Climate Resilient Value Chains (CRVC) technologies and practices;
3. Four national institutions from the participating countries - Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Viet Nam received capacity building to implement CRVC innovations;
4. 50 government staff increased their capacity for effective policy and operational support of CRVC;
5. 4,043 smallholder farmers were provided CRVC techniques and technologies resulting in increased income.

The practices, lessons and innovations that were identified and packaged can be disseminated not only to other IFAD funded projects but also among other development practitioners for uptake. Additionally, the capacity building methodology established in the framework of this project, to guides trainers when delivering courses on climate resilient value chains can also be leveraged to support the design or implementation of other IFAD projects and external development initiatives.

## Rural Youth Innovation Award

APPROVED VALUE  
(USD)

**450,000**

The Rural Youth Innovation Award was launched to give visibility to and strengthen the capacities of the youth in the Latin America and the Caribbean regions (LAC). Its main objective was to support and promote opportunities for young entrepreneurs by connecting them with other initiatives, rural markets and stakeholders in the region, exchange ideas and strengthen their knowledge.

The project reached its completion date in July 2021. Some of the achievements include:

1. Selection of 19 youth-led innovative solutions for rural development in Latin America and the Caribbean;
2. Organisation of a virtual immersion programme consisting of ten sessions on topics related to business development, marketing and communication, agile methodologies and scaling-up innovative solutions;
3. 3 Side Events held on Organic Fertilization, Mainstreaming Gender in business and Carbon Credits;
4. 2 publications showcasing the winning innovations;
5. Establishment of 44 institutional partnership (private sector, universities, NGOs, Government institutions, international organizations)
6. USD 44,890 approved in additional co-financing.

Several partners such as PROCASUR and Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) have been and still are showing interest in continuing the Award initiative, which demonstrates its coherence and capacity to build synergies and future partnerships that will be valuable for the sustainability of project results. The IFAD Brazil team will follow up on these conversations to establish new alliances to promote visibility around the winning initiative and develop activities to replicate and share knowledge in LAC and other regions.

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

APPROVED VALUE  
(USD)

**400,000**

The overall objective of the project was to strengthen the Rural Solutions Portal as well as IFAD's South-South and Triangular Cooperation tracking systems, with a view to increasing the uptake of rural development solutions and facilitate peer-to-peer learning, cross-fertilization and partnership brokerage among organizations and partners in developing countries.

The project reached its completion date in December 2021 and achieved the following results:

1. Two institutional contracts were concluded with IPRCC and IBRAF to source solutions, populate the database of institutions working in SSTC, promote the uptake of solutions and strengthen their exchange
2. Through the institutional grants over 100 solutions were sourced, more than 50 SSTC institutional partners mapped and 20 knowledge products in the form of policy briefs and videos developed
3. Multiple promotion events were co-organised to showcase the Rural Solutions Portal and the documented solutions.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which has severely curtailed physical movement within and across international borders, has highlighted the importance of virtual platforms like the Rural Solutions Portal in becoming a highly relevant tool to provide targeted, evidence based good practices to support rural development.

The rural solutions identified on the Portal will thus support the provision of evidence-based documentation and the key factors required for adaptation and replication in different contexts. The core method for ensuring sustainability and relevance of this project is to increase the ways in which SSTC can be utilised to inform governments and other development actors on how they can implement, use and replicate rural development solutions to increase production and productivity for agriculture and rural development, food security, nutrition and income generation.

## A.5

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

APPROVED VALUE  
(USD)

**250,000**

In order to focus greater attention to SSTC and knowledge activities, and as part of the ongoing organizational decentralization, IFAD established, in 2018, three sub-regional SSTC and Knowledge Centres located in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), Brasilia (Brazil) and Beijing (China).

As more and more southern countries transition to middle-income economies, they are in a position to contribute to the economic development of lower income countries by, for instance, providing foreign direct investment, establishing trade agreements, as well as by helping through financing and technical expertise. The proposal therefore sought to build on the benefits of having the SSTC and Knowledge Centers in the respective regions to identify and promote opportunities for middle income countries (MICs) to finance development interventions in other MICs and low-income countries (LICs).

Recognising the increasingly important role of the private sector as the engine of growth and development, the project also aimed at linking private sector companies across countries and facilitating knowledge exchanges and match-making opportunities. It reached its completion in August 2021 and achieved the following results:

1. A horizon scanning and needs assessment of B2B opportunities for the private sector and farmers' organizations; and match making opportunities was carried out;
2. A number of private sector entities have been identified for further follow up and engagement. For example, in South Africa, AFGRI Group Holdings, an investment holding company with interests in food, agriculture and financial services, in the Asia and Pacific Region the Ant Group and National Geographic, in Latin America Danone Brazil and Pro Natura.

The overall lessons learned have been that engagement with the private sector and the establishment of B2B linkages requires constant follow-up, nurturing of relationships, resources and correct timing. It is clearly context specific, and needs a pragmatic knowledge of the terrain. It also needs all actors in the organisation to be involved to ensure buy in and the intentional exploration of entry points in the project cycle.





Rural Youth  
Innovation Award



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



Promoting Sustainable  
Cage Aquaculture  
in West Africa  
(ProSCaWA)

China-IFAD South-South  
and Triangular Cooperation Facility



**B.**

## Summary of the projects under the third call

**B.1**

Supporting the recovery of priority food crop value chains from the effects of COVID 19 to strengthen community resilience, markets and trade development in Tanzania

**B.2**

Strengthening Agricultural Resilience through Learning and Innovation (STARLIT)

**B.3**

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

**B.4**

Promoting inclusive, resilient and sustainable livelihood opportunities in rural mountainous areas through upgrading cashgora value chains



**Supporting the recovery of priority food crop value chains from the effects of COVID 19 to strengthen community resilience, markets and trade development in Tanzania**

TOTAL VALUE (USD)  
629,417

FACILITY GRANT FUNDING (USD)  
**489,417**

RECIPIENT  
International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)

BENEFICIARIES  
**20,000 smallholder-farmers (50% women and 30% youth) in five regions; 10 SME traders/ agro-processors and 100 suppliers of inputs and technologies**

DURATION  
December 2021 – June 2024

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted the agricultural sector in Tanzania, particularly affected by the disruption of inputs supply from China and India. For instance, fertilizers and seed became less available and more expensive for farmers. In addition, reduced demand from Covid-19 affected markets for Tanzania exports such as cotton, for which prices dropped by 30% has affected rural livelihoods.

The main objective of the project is to restore and increase the productivity and profitability of key food and oilseed crops, and enhance market access for rural women and young farmers in Tanzania to mitigate the impact of the pandemic and enhance resilience. This intervention will strengthen prioritized value chains - beans, cassava, and sunflower - which have huge potential for domestic and export markets, and can help achieve gender and youth inclusive outcomes.

The project will catalyze a large-scale transformation in production, processing and marketing opportunities for thousands of farmers in target regions of Tanzania. It will focus on women and youth at all intervention levels, from farm-level production to processing and marketing with SMEs. Five main innovations will be delivered: sunflower oil processing units; streamlined networks to deliver quality seed of new varieties; aggregation businesses to improve marketing efficiency; and novel digital tools.

South-south cooperation will be strengthened between China and Tanzania by working with Henan (production of sunflower processing units) and DarCanton (exporting dry cassava chips from Tanzania to China).



B.2

## Strengthening Agricultural Resilience through Learning and Innovation (STARLIT)

TOTAL VALUE (USD)  
546,618

FACILITY GRANT  
FUNDING (USD)  
**483,470**

RECIPIENT  
CORDAID

BENEFICIARIES  
**2,800 smallholder farmers (45% women, 40% youth) working in cereal value chains in Rwanda and Kenya**

DURATION  
December 2021 –  
December 2024

As a consequence of the COVID-19 crisis, farmers in the cereal value chain in Kenya and Rwanda are faced with decreasing incomes and food insecurity. The Strengthening Agricultural Resilience through Learning and Innovation (STARLIT) project aims to improve the resilience of farmers for prolonged disaster and support their recovery from the impact of the pandemic. It will facilitate access to innovative financial and non-financial services that will enhance farmers' productivity and (re)establish their access to markets.

STARLIT will apply a market development system, cooperating with private partners to produce and roll out innovative agricultural solutions. The solutions will facilitate access to agricultural mechanization, agricultural information and agricultural finance.

The main expected outputs are: 1) improved capacity of smallholder farmers to access and use small and affordable post-harvest, farming and irrigation equipment 2) improved capacity of smallholder farmers and agribusiness to access digital information (e.g. training materials, market info, weather information) to increase productivity, sustainable agricultural practices and market access; 3) improved capacity of Microfinance Institutions to assure access to financial services (e.g. agricultural loans, saving products, asset finance).

South-South knowledge exchange is a key element of the project. STARLIT will facilitate targeted knowledge exchange activities between Rwanda and Kenya. These activities focus on sharing lessons on the implementation of innovative agricultural solutions in Rwanda, applying findings in the context of Kenya. The knowledge exchange will benefit all project stakeholders including smallholder farmers, farmers' organizations, processors, MFIs as well as private sector partners.



**B.3**

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

TOTAL VALUE (USD)  
610,568

FACILITY GRANT FUNDING (USD)  
**481,098**

RECIPIENT  
World Food Programme (WFP)

BENEFICIARIES  
**4,000 direct beneficiaries and 71,500 indirect beneficiaries**

DURATION  
December 2021 – June 2024

Pre COVID-19, Cuba has been importing 70 percent of its food needs mainly for social protection programmes. Food systems were seriously damaged by hurricanes and drought, economic and financial embargo and fuel shortages. The situation was aggravated in 2020 by the pandemic, causing a sharp decrease of national and households' income sources (especially tourism), private sector and family remittances, and further scarcity of food/basic supplies in local markets.

The project will contribute to the efficiency, resilience and nutrition-sensitive approach of food systems in Cuba based on local solutions implemented in Gibara – a high priority municipality in the national efforts to confront the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic. It will serve as a scaling-up platform to expand and disseminate the results achieved locally to other municipalities, informing national policies and programmes and benefiting a wider population.

Particular focus will be given to increasing yields, diversification, quality and risk-management capacities and the resilience of the local food system to climate change/disasters. The direct linkages and better articulation of smallholder farmers and their cooperatives with social protection programmes will be strengthened, emphasising school feeding and promoting locally-produced nutritious diets, access to markets, and autonomy at municipal level.

Cuba-China technical cooperation will be at the core of the initiative. WFP's Centre of Excellence in Beijing will facilitate sharing of technology and technical assistance from China, in collaboration with IFAD. Furthermore, exchanges will be fostered with countries in Central America on decentralized school feeding management models from local production.



B.4

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**Promoting inclusive, resilient and sustainable livelihood opportunities in rural mountainous areas through upgrading cashgora value chains**

TOTAL VALUE (USD)  
610,568

FACILITY GRANT FUNDING (USD)  
**446,440**

RECIPIENT  
Aga Khan Foundation (AKF)

BENEFICIARIES  
**4,225 direct beneficiaries, 3,600 Indirect beneficiaries**

DURATION  
December 2021 – June 2024

As one of the most remittance-dependent countries in the world, Tajikistan was particularly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Travel restrictions imposed on migrant workers had an adverse impact on incomes, particularly affecting rural households - the main recipient of labour remittances. In addition, rise in food prices due to limited import of major food commodities during the crisis has increased the country vulnerability to food insecurity.

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

Cashgora goat breeding and fibre processing have received increasing interest of the regional and global textile markets for importing handmade, organic, and eco-friendly fibres. The project will support the establishment and scale up of a dehairing facility to improve the productivity and manufacturing capacities of local communities in remote mountainous areas of Tajikistan. It will also provide capacity building training and extension services to farmers and cashgora value chain actors on managing fibre processing and waste recycling, safety and security as well as organizational, financial and product marketing management.

The project will benefit from the support of Chinese counterparts through exchange of knowledge and technology transfer in areas of business construction and development, improvement of extension services, and gender and youth empowerment. In specific, the project will seek to learn more from the Chinese approaches to female entrepreneurship and the Chinese Village Based Development Model.



# v. Way forward

**41.**

The COVID-19 pandemic caused significant disruption to the performance of the projects. Due to restrictions on travel and physical interactions, the primary engagement modalities of the interventions were rendered invalid. Virtual convening, especially for policy dialogue and knowledge sharing emerged as a work-around alternative and projects under the Facility have gained a much-needed implementation traction since its adoption.

**42.**

Going forward. The Facility Secretariat and project teams will review the outstanding activity plans for all projects and agree on mitigation measures for realistic viable deliverables. Closer monitoring and review meetings involving all stakeholders will be arranged to ensure the delivery of project results as planned at the design stage.

**43.**

The mid-term review has recommended possible revision of suite of activities including complete repurposing in some cases, based on the circumstances of each project. By way of example, instead of field visits, additional investments could be dedicated to produce quality and relevant digital contents on the documented solutions and practices for knowledge exchange. In addition, adapted methods can be developed for effective service delivery to the target beneficiaries.

**44.**

In addition to the conclusion of the fourth call for proposals, the Facility Secretariat will also explore new funding models to support SSTC in IFAD operations. In line with the new SSTC strategy, linkages will be sought at the regional and country levels to support planned and on-going interventions aligned with country priorities. With SSTC increasingly recognized as a prominent instrument to promote sustainable development, the China-IFAD SSTC Facility will be leveraged to accelerate South-South and Triangular Cooperation institutionalisation and mainstreaming.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

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