

Climate change and small-scale farming: The Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP)



Today the world is on the verge of a series of major political, institutional and financial shifts, in the global approach to climate change adaptation. Adapting to and mitigating climate change are both essential if the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are to be achieved.

IFAD's Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP) is the largest multi-donor global fund specifically dedicated to enabling smallholder farmers to adapt and build their resilience to climate change. It channels climate financing and expertise to rural populations who have little access to such support and takes advantage of IFAD's unique role and experience in working in the most fragile and remote areas.

ASAP led to improved adaptation capacity for five million small-scale farmers in 41 countries. Ten countries are currently scaling up activities and lessons learned from the original ASAP investments.

Only a small share of global climate finance flows is focused on the adaptation needs of small-scale producers. ASAP has paved the way to reverse this trend. Established in 2012, it was a pioneering effort to build resilience among highly vulnerable populations.

ASAP provides grants blended with IFAD loans, both providing the means and creating incentives for activities related to climate change. This approach led to new projects with clear processes for scaling up and increased budgets for climate change-related activities.

ASAP FOSTERS THREE ACTIONS TO MAINSTREAM CLIMATE CHANGE IN IFAD OPERATIONS:

ACTION 1 ASSESSING CLIMATE TRENDS AND RISKS

The analysis of climate trends and related shocks and stressors is a part of the project's overall risk analysis. This is key to building farmers' resilience in short and long term.

EXAMPLE

The NICADAPTA project in Nicaragua was built around a risk analysis indicating that climate change would lead to lower coffee yields. The project promoted the adoption of agroforestry techniques such as the planting of shade trees and the promotion of permanent soil cover to create a cooler micro-climate. This led to a 25 percent yield increase.

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

42 ASAP grants
totaling US\$298 million

Improved adaptation capacity for five million small-scale farmers in 41 countries

Introduction of climate-resilient land management approaches to 900,000 hectares

Climate risk management involving 13,000 community groups

Ten countries are currently scaling up activities and lessons learned from original ASAP investments.

A target of carbon sequestration of 60 million tons of CO₂ equivalent, over a period of 20 years, through the promotion of techniques restoring soils and the use of renewable energy technologies.

ACTION 2

PROMOTING INNOVATIONS WITH MULTIPLE BENEFITS

The large-scale deployment of innovations to cope with climate change is key to enhancing the resilience of rural livelihoods to climate risks. These approaches generate multiple benefits including for food security, biodiversity and carbon sequestration, providing support for sustainable rural transformation in a number of mutually reinforcing ways.

EXAMPLE

The PROSUL project in Mozambique promotes innovations to adapt to climate change for the cassava, red meat and horticulture value chains in the dry south of the country. Multi-purpose boreholes provide water to both livestock and people throughout the year. After 6 years of implementation, cassava yields have increased from 6 to 20 tons per hectare thanks to drought tolerant varieties and soil improvement. In horticulture, shade nets help protect nurseries at critical times during the production cycle. New groups of farmers have been fostered to spread these innovations.

ACTION 3

CONTRIBUTING TO AND IMPROVING NATIONAL POLICIES ON CLIMATE CHANGE

ASAP activities not only build the resilience of households and communities but also contribute to nationally determined contributions to the Paris Agreement and national policies, including on food security. ASAP activities are subsequently scaled up through new IFAD projects and national or other funding sources.

EXAMPLE

The ACCESSOS project in Bolivia involved vulnerable communities in local planning processes. Participatory risk assessments and adaptation investments identified through local competition for grants led to improved management of water resources. The project's success attracted new lenders such as the OPEC Fund for International Development. The tools promoted have also been included in nationwide guidance for local policy planning.

THE WAY FORWARD

We can expect multilateral development banks to expand their role in adaptation as estimated adaptation costs are higher than current levels of international public funding for adaptation.

To contribute to fill this gap, IFAD will launch a new phase of ASAP, named ASAP+, to expand activities related to smallholder adaptation. With a resource mobilization target of US\$500 million, ASAP+ will increase the climate resilience of 10 million vulnerable people, particularly women and youth.

ASAP+ will address:

- Adaptation and mitigation simultaneously
- Food insecurity and nutrition challenges, with a robust resilience monitoring system
- Smallholder farmers' needs to combat climate change in low income countries but also in pockets of food insecurity in other countries.




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