



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



IFAD
Investing in rural people



World Food
Programme

Country Experiences in South-South and Triangular Cooperation Enabled by the United Nations Rome-based Agencies

*2019 RBA Celebration of the
UN Day for South-South Cooperation*



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Introduction

The successful Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (or BAPA+40), which took place in March this year in Buenos Aires, confirmed the great contribution that South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) is making to strengthen country capacities for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One of the key messages highlighted during this Conference by the UN Secretary-General was the need to strive towards more inclusive and equitable development.

Additionally, in line with the theme of this year's High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, held in July in New York, there is a need to employ all means possible, including SSTC, to ensure that the 820+million food insecure and malnourished people, are not left behind in benefitting from development and humanitarian initiatives.

The Rome-based Agencies (RBAs), namely the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), are addressing this need through their work at different levels, building on their respective mandates and strengths. Examples include efforts to jointly promote SSTC in supporting family farming, creating opportunities for the rural youth, and empowering rural women for better access to markets.

This brochure has been jointly developed to showcase concrete examples of how the RBAs promote South-South initiatives at the country level. Focusing on the theme of the joint celebration of the 2019 UN Day for South-South Cooperation, leaving no one behind in achieving SDG 2, the cases highlight opportunities to enhance collaboration in the fight against hunger and malnutrition to realize zero hunger by 2030.



Case study 1

Mesoamerica Hunger Free Programme: institutional frameworks for eradicating hunger and promoting development opportunities in vulnerable rural areas

Partners:



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Quick facts

Eradicating hunger in Mesoamerica is an achievable goal that requires strong political commitment, sound institutional frameworks and effective public policies based on validated development solutions. The SSTC initiative, led by FAO and the Mexican Agency of International Cooperation for Development (AMEXCID), targets Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and the Dominican Republic.

Support is provided in designing, implementing and scaling up policies and legal frameworks on zero hunger, poverty reduction and rural development, especially in areas vulnerable to weather events and with high rate of migration.

Challenge

Food insecurity and poverty in Mesoamerica are mainly rural phenomena and socioeconomic indicators of rural territories are lagging behind national averages. This is due to the lack of economic growth and productive investments, deterioration of natural resources and natural disasters, such as droughts and floods. Consequently, these territories are also often points of origin of migrants.

Rural areas face institutional deficiencies and a limited coverage of public policies and programmes designed to meet their needs. Smallholder farmers, often indigenous people and Afro-descendants, have no access to markets, technology, infrastructure, financing and technical assistance.

Approach

The Programme focuses on:

- ❖ Ensuring political commitment in the fight against hunger and rural poverty as well as raising public awareness.
- ❖ Strengthening institutional capacities to formulate, implement and monitor effective and adequately funded public policies and legal frameworks, in specific vulnerable rural areas.
- ❖ Designing and validating technological solutions and methodologies to be scaled up and integrated in public policies and legal frameworks.
- ❖ Facilitating dialogue, technical assistance, study tours and peer learning among Mesoamerican officials and farmers, through short-term projects focused on addressing technical gaps.

The Programme also pays attention to the establishment of alliances and collaborative frameworks in order to find synergies. Strategic partners include: Latin American and Caribbean Parliament, Parliamentary Front against Hunger in Latin America and the Caribbean, Central American Integration System, Hunger Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative, and Mesoamerica Integration and Development Project.

Opportunities and results

Mexico and the beneficiary countries share cultural roots and common challenges, providing an opportunity to exchange knowledge, not only at institutional level but also among family farmers (e.g. Mexican lobster harvesters shared their fishing techniques with Nicaragua, leading to a decrease in injuries and deaths).

Collaboration with decision-makers has demonstrated to be the key to strengthening political commitment and to elaborating more effective policies and regulatory frameworks focused on the needs of vulnerable populations (e.g. School Feeding Law in Guatemala, with public purchases from family farmers).

Additionally, increased awareness has encouraged higher investments on food security and family farming at local level (as in El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala).

Reaching the most vulnerable to leave no one behind

Clean water is indispensable for the health and well-being of rural populations as well as for efficient agricultural production. The Central American Dry Corridor is suffering from prolonged droughts, which jeopardize local farmers' food security. However, when rain arrives, water is often wasted due to inefficient water management.

The Rainwater Harvesting System allows remote communities to collect wasted water to be used for human consumption and agricultural production, benefitting children and adults' health. Moreover, women, who are usually responsible for collecting water from wells and rivers, have more time to engage in income-generating activities.

Thanks to the Mesoamerica Hunger Free Programme, 20 Rainwater Harvesting Systems were constructed in schools and community centres in six beneficiary countries. The experience has been very successful and is currently being replicated through SSTC with different actors and communities.



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Case study 2

+Cotton Project: working for the sustainable development of Caribbean and Latin American cotton

Partners:



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IBA Instituto
Brasileiro
do Algodão

ALGODÓN

Quick facts

SSTC represents an opportunity for the exchange of knowledge and experiences, generating innovation in terms of technology and management of the cotton sector in the countries involved in the +Cotton Project. Through the +Cotton Project, a regional network of more than 70 public and private sector actors is mobilized in the partner countries, joining efforts to turn the cotton value chain competitive.

More than USD 14 million invested to expand Government's technical and management capacities towards a sustainable cotton sector in Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Haiti, Paraguay and Peru where 80 percent of cotton production is in the hands of family farming or small-scale agriculture.

Challenge

Foreseen challenges in establishing a diverse cotton sector in a regional network include:

- ❖ Positioning cotton as a strategic crop in partner Government's political agenda, contributing to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, fighting against hunger, enhancing food security, and overcoming poverty in rural territories.

- ❖ Promoting the adoption of innovations by cotton farming families, research and extension institutions for the implementation of sustainable and diversified cotton production systems.
- ❖ Articulating the cotton value chain from production to marketing, in a competitive and inclusive manner, strengthening producer organizations, incorporating industry, financing entities, research, and technical assistance institutions.

Demonstrating that cotton contributes to the sustainable development of rural territories, as an income generating option for farmers and their families.

Approach

The cooperation in the +Cotton Project takes place through the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC/MRE) and its Brazilian cooperating institutions (Embrapa, Abrapa, Empaer-PB, Asbraer, Solidarity Economy Organizations and universities) in conjunction with FAO and the Governments of seven partner countries. The +Cotton cooperation aims at consolidating production systems in cotton territories, adapting them to different types of producers as well as agroclimatic and technological contexts. The project is based on four conceptual axes: Sustainable technologies; Strategic Alliances; Social innovation; Inclusive Markets, while crosscutting issues include Gender, Rural youth and Indigenous peoples, and Climate change.

Opportunities and results

- ❖ Income generation: Cotton as an integrated crop in a diversified production system plays an important role in income generation, with potential by-products and new uses in the value chain. There are 36 demonstration and validation best practices in cotton production.
- ❖ Capacity development: Provide more than 70 public institutions in partner countries with new capacities, knowledge and levels of public and public/private coordination to support the development and organization of the cotton value chain.
- ❖ Agricultural techniques: Under the perspective of good agricultural practices, efficient use of inputs and mechanization as well as development of the first prototype of a one-line cotton-harvesting machine for small areas, in collaboration with EMBRAPA.
- ❖ Strengthen biodiversity: Rescue the ancestral identity of countries, their indigenous, rural and artisan communities, through the recovery of cotton varieties, training in production and processing, value addition, management and sale.
- ❖ Access to market: Connecting production to the market by expanding certification alternatives for fibre and its processed products, taking advantage of the diversity of cotton in the region.

Reaching the most vulnerable to leave no one behind

In the last 20 years, the project partner countries have faced a decrease in the cotton production, affecting the potential of thousands of farming families to generate income. In this sense, recovering cotton production systems on sustainable bases has a social connotation that adds to the economic and environmental perspective. As a crop resistant to climatic adversities, it can be planted in dry and arid zones, reducing the vulnerability of families to climate change, turning it into an alternative for communities that inhabit indigenous territories, communities displaced by conflicts, and where there is a high level of rural poverty.

Through the SSTC mechanism, the +Cotton Project promotes sustainable and inclusive production systems with greater participation of rural women, with decentralized governance and adaptive management of local food systems, contributing to poverty reduction, social development and environmental sustainability as well as creating opportunities for new generations.



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Case study 3

Boosting food security through multi-national innovation ‘corridors’

Partners:



Quick Facts

Through collaborative ‘exchange corridors,’ countries with similar environmental and social profiles could exchange innovative resource-management solutions, build food security, and improve opportunities for women and youth. The project created a boost in resilience and self-organization among women and young people and provided concrete scalable technical innovations to be adopted across the target countries.

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https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_4364

