

South-South and triangular cooperation: changing lives through partnership



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The effective implementation of the 2030 Global Agenda will require innovation, new partnerships, knowledge-sharing and scaling up of proven approaches. One way to do this is through South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC). For IFAD, SSTC is a conduit for transferring knowledge, resources and technology. These are essential elements for the transformation of rural areas, the economic and social revitalization of communities, and the inclusive growth of countries of the South. Expanding the pool of available solutions and building on previous success stories and lessons can accelerate the pace of agricultural and rural development worldwide.

Effective, adaptable, affordable and workable solutions, and appropriate technologies should be embedded in the SSTC model. SSTC arrangements need to be based on the principles of respect for national sovereignty and ownership, inclusive growth, equality and mutual benefit. These are the fundamental principles of effective partnerships, which are at the heart of IFAD's way of working.

The IFAD business model is built on sharing knowledge, resources and technology. The Fund is itself a partnership of members from the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, other developing countries and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. They share a vision of an institution through which resources can be pooled and transferred to developing countries in a joint effort to tackle poverty and hunger by investing in agricultural and rural development.

Triangular cooperation involves the collaboration between two or more developing countries (emerging, middle-income or least-developed) that are supported financially by a donor in the north and/or an international organization. IFAD is already active in this role, and believes even more can be done to leverage the potential of these partnerships. With its extensive relationships with member countries and experience in knowledge-sharing, IFAD is well positioned to broker SSTC.

Collaboration with China on SSTC

Between 2011 and 2014, IFAD and the Government of China jointly funded a grant programme covering a broad spectrum of topics and geographic areas. One of the main outcomes was the establishment of a platform for learning and sharing among policymakers and development practitioners from both China and other developing countries. The focus of the sharing was on good practices, experiences and lessons learned specifically on rural development and poverty reduction. After project completion, the platform was then scaled up by the government.

Several policy workshops were organized to inform senior policymakers from different countries about evidence-based solutions drawn from China's experience in agricultural and rural development. At the operational level, exchange programmes were designed to immerse development practitioners in the "frontline" of implementing rural development programmes in China. Several bilateral exchanges also resulted from the collaboration between IFAD and China, including:

- Policymakers exchange between China and Argentina
- South African government officials visit to former IFAD project areas in Chongqing
- Learning shared on good practices in inclusive rural finance

In September 2016, the Chinese Ministry of Finance and IFAD co-organized the 2016 high-level SSTC policy workshop, together with the World Bank Group, the Chinese Ministry of Commerce and the Poverty Alleviation Leading Office of the State Council. The workshop was also connected with the second Investing in Africa Forum, which featured high-level representation by the Chinese Vice-Premier, heads of state of African countries and the World Bank Group President.

IFAD is engaged in SSTC at various levels:

- Integrating SSTC into country programmes (project design and implementation)
- Incorporating SSTC into regional initiatives (both intra- and interregional)
- Promoting direct knowledge exchange through grant-funded programmes
- Facilitating technology transfer and mobilizing expertise
- Partnership-building and resource mobilization
- Policy support, strategy and knowledge management

IFAD is well positioned to support SSTC, thanks to the global reach of its operations, its expanding in-country presence, its technical expertise in agricultural and rural development, and its capacity to advocate for smallholder agriculture through policy dialogue, both nationally and globally.

NEW METHODS, BETTER RESULTS

Facilitating learning and sharing can have direct results on the ground in terms of project design and community involvement. For example, when six rural development professionals from Rwanda visited the southern highlands of Peru in 2010, they observed that community competitions could strengthen local capacity and decentralize decision-making on development initiatives to communities, improving ownership by beneficiaries themselves. They watched a local resource allocation committee help community groups learn about business plans by competing for financial assistance. They realized the approach could be implemented in Rwanda as well. Local committees, known as Inteko y'Imihigo, were introduced.

In Rwanda, under the community competitions approach, cooperatives submit business plans and villages submit natural resource management plans for possible funding through the IFAD-financed Support Project for the Strategic Plan for the Transformation of Agriculture (PAPSTA) and the Kirehe Community-based Watershed Management Project (KWAMP). The Inteko y'Imihigo support the participating villages and cooperatives, and organize competitions. They strengthen the planning and management skills of participants, select the winners, and follow up on winning

Technology exchanges for climate change adaptation

In Africa, more than 85 per cent of rural communities rely on traditional fuels, such as firewood and charcoal for cooking and lighting. Women and children walk long distances every day in search of firewood, reducing time for income-generating activities and leisure. Additionally, the smoke inhaled from the combustion of firewood has damaging impacts such as chronic respiratory diseases and eye infections.

IFAD has piloted Flexi Biogas, a system consisting of a plastic digester bag housed in a greenhouse tunnel, as an integrated waste management and renewable energy technology solution. While demand for this technology is growing, Biogas International (BIL), a small private-sector enterprise based in Nairobi, faces challenges in obtaining loans for new products without a business history or track record. BIL also has difficulties meeting market demand. Under the Innovation Mainstreaming Initiative funded by the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, flexi biogas technology was piloted and tested with smallholder dairy farmers in order to gather data and lessons to be shared with investors, decision makers and farmers who might be interested in adopting the technology.

As a result, 10 flexi biogas systems were installed in smallholder dairy farms in Nakuru, Kenya, under the IFAD-funded Smallholder Dairy Commercialization Project. An additional 10 systems were piloted in Kirehe, Rwanda, under IFAD's Kirehe Community-Based Watershed Management Programme, and the system is currently being implemented in Cambodia, Mali, Swaziland and Viet Nam.

and losing proposals. Participating groups present their plans and proposals to a jury and winners receive grants. By April 2014, six districts had organized 13 competitions.

IFAD is also one of the leading development agencies applying innovative household methodologies (HHMs) to improve household gender relations, increase project engagement with poor households, and empower poor rural women and men to realize their development potential by creating stronger, more resilient and sustainable smallholder farms and other rural livelihood systems. Through SSTC this successful approach is being scaled up.

Working together with Oxfam Novib, an IFAD grant partner, two specific challenges have been addressed: how to develop a critical mass of expertise in HHMs and how to deliver HHMs at scale. IFAD has supported two approaches to delivering HHMs: the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) and household mentoring. SSTC has been an integral part of the strategy to promote these methodologies, particularly GALS.

GALS was piloted in Western Uganda by Oxfam Novib under the Women's Empowerment, Mainstreaming and Networking (WEMAN) programme, cofinanced by a small IFAD grant in 2009. Two years later, it was taken to scale in Nigeria, Rwanda and Uganda by Oxfam Novib, with cofinancing from a large IFAD grant. A critical mass of expertise and interest in HHM has been built up among staff from civil society organizations, IFAD-supported projects and implementing partners through a range of SSTC events. Participation in various learning events has resulted in the spontaneous adoption of GALS in the ongoing IFAD-supported project in Sierra Leone, and the design of new projects in Ghana, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Mozambique.

The household mentoring approach followed a different path. Originating in the 2000s, through a project funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) in Zambia, it has been adapted by the IFAD/World Bank-supported Irrigation, Rural Livelihoods and Agricultural Development Project (IRLADP) in Malawi and the District Livelihoods Support Programme (DLSP) in Uganda. The proximity of Malawi to Zambia enabled a team from IRLADP, together with staff from the Department of Agriculture Extension Services (DAES) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development, to visit the extension staff and mentored households in Zambia in 2008. This experience was so inspiring that DAES, with IRLADP support, immediately piloted household mentoring to address gender inequality and HIV/AIDS issues at the household level in three irrigation schemes. In Uganda, household

Africa and Latin America collaborate to re-launch the coffee industry

The coffee industry in Sao Tome and Principe has benefited from various exchanges and knowledge-sharing activities with Mexico and El Salvador under an ongoing IFAD-funded project. This type of exchange has helped the country revive its coffee tradition and provides an opportunity to understand how collaboration and partnerships are pivotal to the achievement of good results.

Sao Tome and Principe was losing its remarkable past experience in coffee production and processing. The establishment of a partnership in 2010 aimed to “re-launch” the coffee industry by bringing together several players: the local government (through the IFAD-funded Participatory Smallholder Agriculture and Artisanal Fisheries Development Programme (PAPAFPA), a French private coffee operator, Malongo, and a cooperative of local coffee smallholders (CECAFEB) established in the context of PAPAFPA.

The guidance provided by both Malongo and the French Development Agency (AFD), which supported IFAD in this undertaking, allowed CECAFEB to benefit from the support of the El Salvadoran training institute Sistema Empresarial de Meso America (SEM). SEM undertook a series of missions to identify the bottlenecks and develop solutions for the coffee industry in Sao Tome and Principe, and to establish a framework cooperation agreement between SEM and CECAFEB. The agreement included an action plan for 2012-2014 incorporating several activities:

- Rehabilitating coffee plantations
- Implementing a reforestation plan through the creation of nurseries
- Organizing smallholder growers into producer associations (for example, to meet fair trade certification requirements)
- Implementing an agro-industrial unit (wet-treatment unit) to process fresh supplies
- Supporting the production and trade of food security crops to complement incomes derived from coffee production

Among the various results, the cooperative is now managing to rehabilitate around 30 hectare/year, with most plots exhibiting better maintenance. Farmers are more committed to managing their production units. Following the advice of Mexican and Salvadoran technicians, CECAFEB has also increased its focus on selecting genetic material for replanting purposes.

mentoring was included in the revised design of DLSP in 2009 and, following training from Resource Projects – Kenya, has been implemented in close association with district community development staff.

The success of household mentoring has been widely recognized under DLSP as a mechanism for social inclusion, involving poorer households normally beyond the reach of conventional development activities. The Ministry of Local Government is planning to introduce household mentoring in district services and the Government has urged IFAD to give greater priority to this approach in its country portfolio. In Malawi, HHM has already been replicated by the African Development Bank (AfDB) and there is a commitment to mainstream the methodology in the curriculum for training community development workers.

TARGETING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

Unless rural areas provide opportunities for the next generation, young people will continue to migrate out of rural areas and out of agriculture. This has profound implications for food security and national development and political stability. SSTC has a role to play in addressing this challenge as well.

In the Near East and North Africa region, the youth unemployment rates are the highest globally – with 27.2 per cent in the Near East and 29 per cent in North Africa (2013). To combat the challenges of youth unemployment and gender disparities in rural areas, IFAD is working with



Data, knowledge and impact

In the context of the development of sustainable development goals, there is a need to improve the quality, coverage and availability of data to support the effectiveness of programmes. SSTC has a role to play here too.

For example, the Arab region is the most underresearched area in the world. Access to data is difficult and there is limited scope for improving evidence-based decision-making, as well as monitoring and evaluation of projects. SSTC can be a powerful tool to enhance institutional effectiveness and impact on the ground, including intergovernmental processes at regional and global levels. Together with the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), IFAD financed a grant in the Near East and North Africa region to build a knowledge platform known as Arab Spatial. It is the first open access interactive atlas and data repository for the Arab world, with over 150 socio-economic and biophysical indicators. Users can download, map and chart layers of these indicators for research, policy analysis and general information.

Making Cents International (MCI) to promote youth wage and self-employment by developing a series of financial products in the four transitional Arab countries: Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen. The grant-funded project will adapt approaches that have been successful with urban young people to extend the same opportunities to their rural counterparts. For example, the Al Barid national postal bank in Morocco is currently implementing a youth savings account initiative in urban and peri-urban areas, which involves financial literacy delivered by its frontline bank staff. With IFAD support, MCI will provide technical assistance to Al Barid to adapt this initiative to benefit rural young people. In Egypt, the First MicroFinance Foundation (FMF), a member of the Aga Khan Development Network, is developing youth loan products and tailored business development services for urban young people in Cairo. MCI will provide technical assistance to FMF to adapt its activities to rural areas of Aswan in Upper Egypt, with a particular focus on value chain financing, especially the horticulture value chain. In addition, FMF will deliver loans to rural enterprises that support key activities in rural value chains, including horticulture. The approach takes advantage of IFAD's experience with financial services and horticulture in Egypt and the successful value chain initiative in Armenia's Farmer Market Access Programme. Among the other activities under the grant, the Al-Amal Microfinance Bank, a youth-focused financial institution, will adapt and deliver its youth business loan, based on Islamic principles in rural Yemen.

Evolving partnerships

Indonesia is the largest economy in Southeast Asia and has progressed rapidly over the past decade to become a dynamic, competitive and decentralized electoral democracy with a rapidly growing middle class. However, food insecurity is especially acute among the 172 million people who live in rural and semi-rural areas throughout Indonesia; 60 per cent of the poorest Indonesians live on small farms and 80 per cent of persons in the bottom fifth of income earners reside in rural areas. Despite its importance and potential, the agriculture sector is underperforming – the level of food production is insufficient to meet household basic food security needs.

Indonesia has been at the forefront of SSTC as co-chair of the G20 Task Team on South-South Cooperation. A new IFAD-supported project, the Sustainable Economic Development through South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Indonesia, will build on the progress made in other IFAD projects in such areas as public and private partnerships and enterprise development. It also represents an important milestone in relation to IFAD's future engagement with Indonesia, reflecting a transformation of the relationship from donor-recipient to a development partnership.

POLICY DIALOGUE

Dialogue on regional and national policy is a critical aspect of South-South cooperation. These dialogues are effective to disseminate best practices and provide countries with an opportunity to learn from examples of successful agricultural and rural development.

In the Lao People's Democratic Republic, for example, the Agriculture and Rural Development Sector Working Group, co-chaired by IFAD, provides the main forum for policy dialogue between the Government and development partners working in this area. Over the last two decades, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has achieved an average annual economic growth rate of 7 per cent, and the national poverty rate dropped by 40 per cent. These achievements have occurred against a backdrop of challenges, however, including a multi-ethnic population scattered over a vast, often difficult to access terrain. Progress has benefited the population unevenly, and poverty has remained a predominantly rural phenomenon.

IFAD has responded to a request by the Government for help to develop an analytical basis for policy decisions by supporting the establishment of a policy think tank. This is expected to engage key government ministries and private-sector stakeholders in a dialogue and consensus-building exercise to address critical national policy issues. In addition, IFAD has cooperated with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) to support the National Assembly in the revision of the national land policy, which is key to ensure adequate access to land for the rural poor. This has included an initiative to make available to the National Assembly a number of best practices on participatory policy development processes developed by the Republic of Korea over the last 40 years. The Republic of Korea was selected as a model for good practice and lessons learned within the region, for its well-established institutional framework for policy formulation, public consultations on proposed policies and experiences as a developed democracy. This can help the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to develop policy processes that better take into account the views of different population groups. IFAD supported a seven-day learning route in the Republic of Korea in October 2014, through which officials from the Lao People's Democratic Republic met with public and private organizations with substantial experience in policy engagement. A follow-up workshop will be held to define the way forward in piloting the learning obtained during the exchange.

BRAZIL AND SSTC

Brazil's successes over several decades in implementing pro-poor agricultural development are an important model for programmes that give rural people the tools to escape poverty, within the Latin American region and beyond. Similarities of climate, ecosystems, agricultural practices and culture facilitate the sharing of knowledge and technological cooperation between Brazil



Supporting family farming in Latin America – REAF

IFAD is also facilitating regional cooperation among developing countries in the Latin America and Caribbean region to promote policy dialogue through South-South cooperation. For more than a decade IFAD has supported MERCOSUR (*Mercado Común del Sur*), the Common Market of the South, and the Specialized Meeting on Family Farming (REAF). This platform includes high-level government representatives and national farmers' representatives, and is intended to facilitate discussion of public policies concerning family farming at national and regional levels.

REAF emphasizes sustainable development and civil society commitment, focusing on themes such as access to markets, trade development and increased agricultural production. Its participatory approach, bringing together government officials with smallholder farmers and farmers' organizations to discuss pro-poor policies, has made it a model for policy dialogue that can be replicated across the globe. REAF fosters the capacity of social organizations regarding environmental policy, risk management, gender, youth, value chains and technological innovations, allowing these organizations to actively engage in policy discussions. REAF has contributed to the quantum shift in national public policies and investment programmes in support of family farming in the Southern Cone region. In addition, South-South agreements signed during REAF have supported the transfer of agricultural know-how and technology, as well as finance, to allow countries to support smallholder farming.

and other countries of the region. IFAD is supporting Brazil's agricultural research institution, Embrapa, in implementing an "innovation marketplace" (known as The MKTPlace) whose focus is on smallholder farmers. Other partners in this truly multinational and multi-institutional undertaking are the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), with support from the Ministry of Science and Technology (Brazil), World Bank, Brazilian Cooperation Agency of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (ABC/MRE), International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). This initiative is generating concrete and productive partnerships between agricultural research and development organizations in Latin America.



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Embrapa is also developing technical assistance projects with African countries, focused mainly on strengthening agriculture in the continent. IFAD has supported the Africa-Brazil Agricultural Innovation Marketplace, a programme designed to share knowledge between the two regions, along with other cofinanciers. Some of the benefits include sharing productivity-enhancing technologies, natural resource management practices, and policy and marketing initiatives between Brazil and Africa. The initiative is being led by Embrapa and the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), and aims to devise solutions to the challenges faced by African agriculture, rapidly, efficiently and at low cost. It goes beyond merely transferring technology and providing technical assistance, to engaging in a dialogue and joining skills to carry out adaptive studies of solutions already applied in Brazil, as well as innovative research of common interest.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

IFAD is continuing to explore new partnerships for SSTC. A recent grant-funded programme, being implemented by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, is designed to strengthen South-South cooperation at both programme and policy levels. The programme is aimed at young people and women working in agriculture in Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Turkey and Uzbekistan. Knowledge exchanges and other activities will enable farmers to share innovative solutions to saving water, cultivating water-efficient crops, breeding cattle and building resilience through agricultural cooperatives. Hungary will provide specific support in agricultural biotechnology. An inter-ministerial network supported by an online platform will enable countries to share lessons, including legislative analysis. National-level consultation boards will help scale up results in each country.

IFAD already has a rich experience as an SSTC supporter and facilitator. The next steps for IFAD will be to further mainstream SSTC in programme design, supervision and implementation support, as well as in partnership-building, resource mobilization and knowledge-sharing. In the IFAD10 period, it plans to strengthen its comparative advantage and expand both knowledge-based cooperation and promotion of investment through SSTC, which will increasingly be an integral part of country strategies. IFAD will promote the use of its own resources for SSTC while also seeking to mobilize resources to further expand the potential of SSTC for agricultural development and rural transformation.



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