



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

South-South and Triangular Cooperation in FAO

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS TO ACHIEVE
THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



HIGHLIGHTS¹

FAO HAS A RICH HISTORY IN SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION (SSTC)

FAO has over 40 years of experience as a leading promotor and facilitator of SSTC in agriculture, food security and nutrition. The adoption of South-South cooperation (SSC) in the work of FAO began in 1979 with the establishment of a focal point to promote, coordinate and integrate Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries (TCDC) in all activities of the Organization. During the two decades that followed, SSC in FAO largely took the form of technical exchanges, in the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) programme in the early 1990s and later in the Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries and Countries in Transition (TCDC/TCCT) programme.

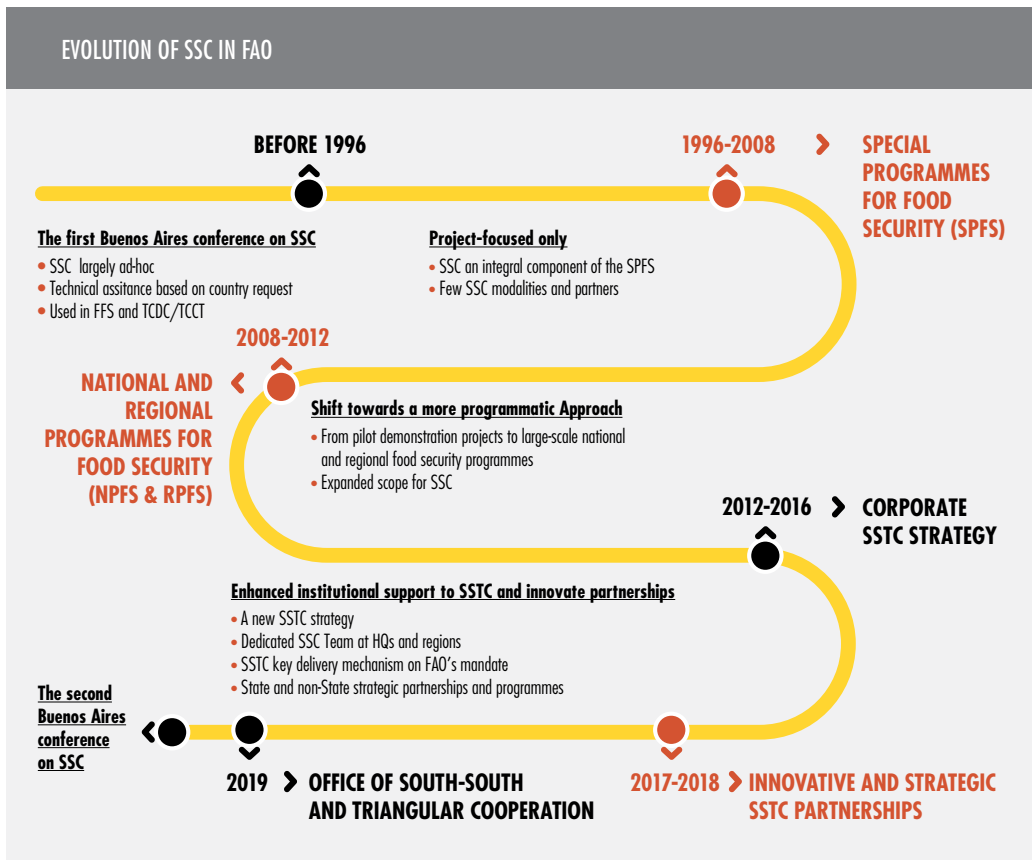
SSTC became more formalized and institutionalized in FAO with the launch of the Special Programme for Food Security (SPFS) in 1994. The programme was implemented mainly for the support of low-income food deficit-countries (LIFDCs) to improve their national food security

through increased productivity and sustainable food production. As an important scheme within the SPFS, SSC has enabled countries to benefit from the experience and expertise of other developing countries, largely through the deployment of experts from provider countries to work directly with farmers in rural communities of recipient countries.

FAO continued to promote SSC in the National Programme for Food Security (NPFS) as the main modality for the exchange of knowledge and experience on good agricultural practices and the transfer of technology among developing countries.

FAO HAS A RICH HISTORY IN SSC WHICH BEGAN IN 1979. TODAY, SSTC IS INTEGRATED IN ALL ITS PROGRAMMES OF WORK AND IS A KEY DELIVERY MECHANISM ON ITS MANDATE.

¹ Drawn from the report *South-South and Triangular Cooperation in FAO: Strengthening Partnerships to Achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*.



EXPANDED SCOPE AND DIVERSIFIED ACTORS IN FAO'S SSTC

The SSC strategy has expanded the scope and modalities of FAO's SSTC. Some examples of FAO's recent SSTC initiatives include:

- Parliamentarian-to-parliamentarian exchanges
- Producer organizations and parliamentarians
- Farmer-to-Farmer exchanges
- City-to-City collaboration

The large-scale and multi-component nature of these programmes, including the provision of secure funding from partners and national governments, expanded the scope of South-South exchanges into many sectors and activities that address food security as well as other objectives.

FAO has scaled-up its support to SSTC since 2012, beginning with the creation of a dedicated SSC unit to ensure stronger institutional support to SSTC. To further bolster its institutional support and enhance visibility of its work in this area, the SSC unit became a full-fledged Office of South-South and Triangular Cooperation in 2019. To respond to the growing demand for SSTC and to mainstream this area of work across the Organization, FAO developed its first SSC corporate strategy in 2013. The strategy has expanded the scope and strategic engagements of FAO in SSTC well beyond its initial endeavors that were limited to facilitating knowledge exchange on good agricultural practices and technology on the ground. Three features of FAO's recent approaches to SSTC include: 1) upstream policy engagements and the facilitation of policy dialogues and exchanges; 2) active engagement in SSTC with non-State actors including parliamentarians, local governments, private sector, academia, NGOs, cooperatives, and farmer associations, and 3) a decentralized approach to involve local actors, municipalities and cities in SSTC.

FAO has adopted an innovative approach to resource mobilization (both financial and technical) to implement SSTC initiatives. While middle-income Southern countries such as Brazil and China have played a key role in the past, other Southern countries and TrC partners, including Japan, Mexico, Morocco, the Republic of Korea, Turkey and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) have become important providers of technical and financial support for SSTC. Southern governments, including those of Nigeria and Angola have also contributed financially to the cost of implementing SSTC in their respective countries by establishing unilateral trust funds (UTFs).

FAO actively pursues collaboration on SSTC with other United Nations agencies and multilateral organizations. In particular, FAO and the other Rome-based agencies (RBAs) namely the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP), collaborate on SSTC to deliver on their individual and shared mandates to improve access to and adequate supply of nutritious food. FAO also partners with other sister organizations such as the United Nations Office for South-South cooperation (UNOSSC) in a number of SSTC activities.

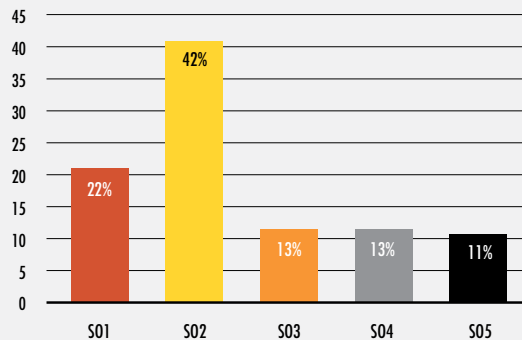
TO BOLSTER ITS INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT TO SSTC, FAO CREATED A FULL-FLEDGED OFFICE OF SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION IN 2019.

SSTC IN NUMBERS²

FAO HAS A DIVERSIFIED SSTC PORTFOLIO IMPLEMENTED ACROSS ITS STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS AND CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

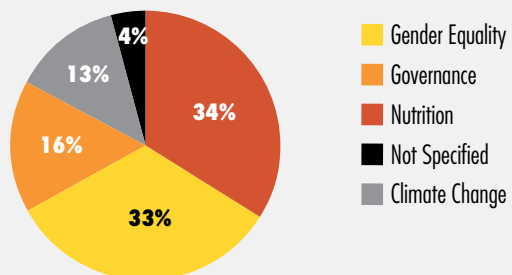
SSTC PROJECTS BY STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

SSTC initiatives are implemented across all strategic objectives in FAO namely: (SO1) eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition; (SO2) productive and sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries; (SO3) reduction of rural poverty; (SO4) inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems; and (SO5) increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises.



SSTC PROJECTS BY CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

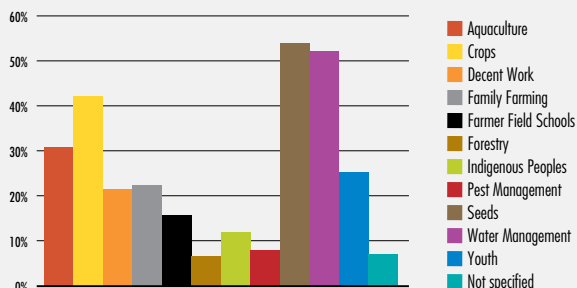
Cross-cutting themes, including climate change, gender equality, governance and nutrition are mainstreamed in SSTC initiatives in FAO.



² Based on a review of more than 100 SSTC projects implemented in FAO during 1996-2017.

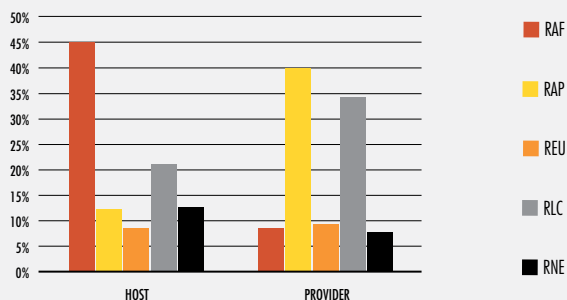
SSTC PROJECTS BY MAJOR THEMES

SSTC initiatives cover a wide range of sectors and traditional areas of work in FAO such as crop production, seed development, water management, and aquaculture development. Other areas that are receiving priority in FAO's SSTC work include family farming, decent work, youth and indigenous people.



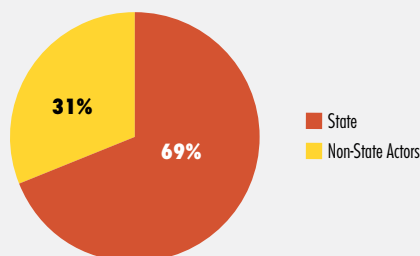
SSTC PROJECTS BY HOST AND PROVIDER

Regions are both hosts and providers of SSTC. The Africa region is a home to the lion's share of SSTC projects followed by Latin America and the Caribbean. Asia Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean are the main provider regions reflecting the key role of China and Brazil in SSC in the two regions.



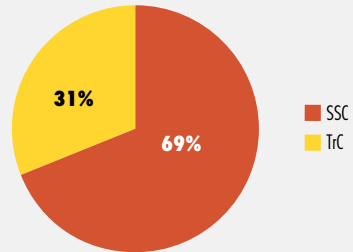
ACTORS IN SSTC INITIATIVES

Two-thirds of the players in FAO's SSTC initiatives are State actors while the remaining are non-State actors.



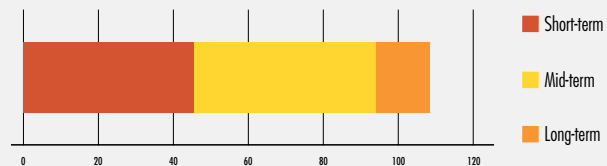
SSC VS TrC

A large majority of the SSC initiatives in FAO are SSC largely supported by Brazil, China, Mexico, Morocco, Turkey, the Republic of Korea and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). TrC initiatives are largely financed by countries such as Belgium, Japan and Spain, regional entities (such as the European Union/European Commission) and regional development banks (such as the African Development Bank and Inter America Development Bank).



SSTC PROJECTS BY DURATION AND BY SIZE

Most of the SSTC initiatives are small-scale (less than 5 million USD), implemented over a short-to-medium time-frame of less than 6 years.

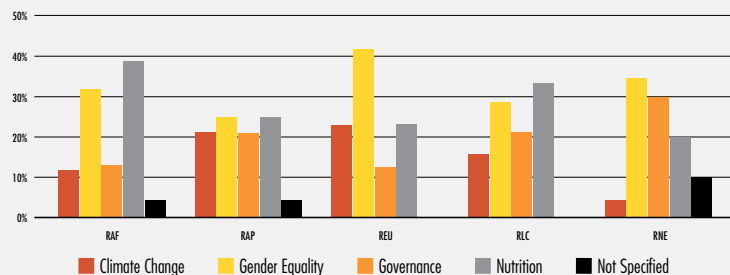


HOW BIG ARE OUR 111 PROJECTS























CROSS-CUTTING THEMES BY REGIONS

Overall, nutrition and gender equality issues received more emphasis than the other cross-cutting themes across all regions in FAO's SSTC portfolio.



FAO'S STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND THE SDGs

FAO's Strategic Framework provides the overarching direction employed by the Organization to achieve its vision and global goals through the articulation of five Strategic Objectives that represent the main areas of FAO's work. The Strategic Objectives are linked with the SDGs and FAO's work contributes to the achievement of these goals through implementation of the Strategic Objective programmes. Currently, FAO is custodian of 21 SDG indicators and contributes to another four.

FAO'S SOS AND THE SDGs ³						
Strategic Objective 1: Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition	 2 ZERO HUNGER	 3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING				
Strategic Objective 2: Make agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable	 2 ZERO HUNGER	 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	 14 LIFE BELOW WATER	 15 LIFE ON LAND		
Strategic Objective 3: Reduce rural poverty	 1 NO POVERTY	 2 ZERO HUNGER	 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES	 13 CLIMATE ACTION	
Strategic Objective 4: Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural food systems	 2 ZERO HUNGER	 12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS			
Strategic Objective 5: Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises	 1 NO POVERTY	 2 ZERO HUNGER	 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	 13 CLIMATE ACTION	 15 LIFE ON LAND	 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

3 FAO, Medium Term Plan 2018-21 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2020-21, C 2019/3. www.fao.org/3/my734en/my734en.pdf

Eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition

The SSTC initiatives in FAO contribute to raising the profile of food security and nutrition (FSN), high on national and regional political agendas. Through SSTC initiatives, FAO facilitates policy dialogue and learning events to promote the development of FSN policies, investments and legislation. SSTC initiatives also foster multi-stakeholder platforms, including parliamentary forums and city networks, which have directly contributed to the improvement of FSN governance in various contexts. Furthermore, the exchange of technical expertise enhances the institutional capacities of countries to make evidence-based decisions, inform relevant FSN plans and support their effective implementation.

SSTC HAS BEEN A KEY MECHANISM FOR THE REALIZATION OF FAO'S STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SDGS.

Productive and sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries

FAO employs SSTC approaches as an effective delivery mechanism to highlight best practices, share knowledge, experience and technology, while leveraging resources to promote more access to nutritious food and sustainable agricultural production. At policy level, SSTC initiatives contribute to enhanced national and regional capacities in the formulation of sectoral and cross-sectoral policies. At the practical level, SSTC initiatives support the adoption of practical, field-level and hands-on solutions on sustainable practices in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries.

Reduce rural poverty

FAO's support to countries through SSTC contributes to the formulation of policies and actions that empower the rural poor, including through capacity development activities that enable rural communities to gain better access to knowledge, inputs, finance, technology, and markets thereby contributing to their economic empowerment. SSTC initiatives also contribute to enhanced capacities of Southern countries in the formulation of social protection schemes, income and employment generating activities that improve the well-being and economic empowerment of rural communities.

Inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems

FAO leverages SSTC focused on capacity development through technical knowledge exchanges in the area of inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems. SSTC initiatives

contribute to the design and implementation of policies, regulatory frameworks and institutional arrangements that support more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems. SSTC projects also enhance the technical and managerial capacity of actors in food and agriculture value chains, including small farmers and small-scale producers and agribusinesses. Furthermore, SSTC projects are catalytic in spurring food-related public investments and trade.

Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises

FAO effectively leverages SSTC approaches in its resilience work. On the one hand, FAO facilitates mutual learning through knowledge exchange in areas such as disaster risk reduction and crisis management. On the other, through regional programmes, FAO fosters collective action against transboundary threats (animal diseases, natural disasters, and food value chain crisis) that individual countries cannot tackle single-handedly.

SOME LESSONS LEARNED FROM IMPLEMENTATION OF SSTC INITIATIVES IN FAO

- National leadership and ownership in South-South exchanges
- Flexibility in SSTC modalities within and across countries
- Building institutional capacities for uptake of Southern knowledge, experience and technologies
- A regional approach to SSC with national and sub-national focus
- Strategic engagement with diverse group of actors

THE WAY FORWARD

The vast experience and the lessons learnt from the implementation of SSTC during the past 40 years coupled with the current challenges of the new development architecture and the implementation of the 2030 Development Agenda call for a new action plan laid out in a new SSTC vision and strategy. The new strategy will articulate FAO's more proactive and catalytic role in SSTC in support of Members towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It will elaborate a new direction and approach for further engagement with middle-income countries, triangular partners, and the private sector, as well as innovative funding arrangements such as blended finance.

In the strategy, a greater emphasis will be put on leveraging SSTC to increase finance and investment to implement the SDGs, especially no poverty (SDG1) and zero hunger (SDG2). Addressing challenges related to sustainable agricultural development requires a renewed global partnership to ensure adequate financing from various sources, including SSTC. There is a global call for action that requires mobilization of resources (both financial and in-kind contributions), not only from governments, triangular and southern partners, UN agencies and civil society, but also from a diverse range of actors in the private sector.

FAO recognizes the role the private sector could play in the fight against food insecurity, malnutrition and rural poverty, and acknowledges the potential that better coordination and collaboration between public and private sectors can offer in increasing the delivery of FAO's Strategic Objectives and the SDGs. In this context, private investments and financial institutions that are key to agricultural development will enable FAO to optimize the benefits from closer collaboration, including through dialogue, exchange of information and knowledge, funding initiatives and joint activities with the aim to scale-up the impact of SSTC.

South-South and Triangular Cooperation in FAO

STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS
TO ACHIEVE THE SDGS

The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for strengthened partnerships in the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including North-South, South-South, and triangular partnerships.

The report *South-South and Triangular Cooperation in FAO: Strengthening Partnerships to Achieve Sustainable Development Goals* illustrates how South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) can be leveraged to enhance agricultural productivity and improve food security and nutrition in the developing world. It aims to deepen understanding of the role and contribution of SSTC to agricultural development, food security, and nutrition.

The report also offers practical lessons on how SSTC could be further strengthened and scaled-up in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda with the support of the United Nations system, multilateral organizations and other development partners.