



# STRENGTHENING FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION IN SOUTH ASIA

Large numbers of people in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) region suffer from hunger and malnutrition, with recent estimates indicating that 14.9 percent of the people in the region suffer from hunger or undernourishment. There is also a continued high incidence of malnutrition. In the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, new strategies are required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG2) of eliminating hunger and malnutrition by 2030. It was realized that a SAARC-level regional framework and plan of action would help to enhance and complement national-level efforts in this field. A new regional vision for food and nutrition security, as well as a new set of strategies and programmes consistent with SDG2, needed to be developed. There was also a need to build the institutional and human resource capacity of the SAARC Secretariat and SAC to develop, coordinate, monitor and evaluate high-priority regional programmes and projects on food and nutrition security. The project assisted the region to achieve long-term food and nutrition security by developing effective regional food and nutrition security frameworks and their delivery mechanisms.



## WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

The project had two main objectives. The first was to develop the SAARC Food and Nutrition Security Framework (SFNSF) and an associated Strategic Plan of Action. The second was to strengthen the institutional mechanism and capacity of the SAARC Secretariat and SAC to develop, implement and coordinate regional programmes for enhancing FNS in the region. Both objectives were achieved. Following consultation with SAARC member countries and experts, a regional framework was developed and a plan of action formulated. An assessment of institutional capacity within the SAARC Secretariat identified areas in which capacity-building was required, and training was provided in these areas to 20 participants. Training was also provided in the development of project proposals and five proposals were formulated for future projects in the region.

## IMPACT

The project created a core of skilled technical expertise at SAC to monitor food and nutrition status at regional level. The concept notes developed are expected to continue to strengthen this capacity over time. The project also encouraged strong national ownership of the project and feedback, in addition to helping to strengthen linkages between national partners and SAC.

## KEY FACTS

### Contribution

USD 474 000

### Duration

June 2015 – December 2017

### Resource Partner

FAO

### Partners

SAARC Secretariat and SAARC Agricultural Centre (SAC)

### Beneficiaries

SAARC, SAC, ministries of agriculture of participating countries (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka), development partners

# ACTIVITIES

- Regional inception meeting held for representatives of SAARC member countries and experts.
- On the basis of vision defined at inception meeting, regional food and nutrition security framework developed and endorsed.
- Strategic Plan of Action consistent with SFNSF formulated.
- Assessment made of institutional capacity of SAARC for development of food and nutrition security strategy, programmes and projects.
- Training in food and nutrition security concepts provided for 20 SAARC Secretariat and SAC staff members.
- Training in project planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation organized for 30 participants.
- Five project proposals developed to address agricultural priorities in South Asia.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



**Project Code**  
TCP/RAS/3508

**Project Title**  
Strengthening the Capacity of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in the Development, Coordination and Monitoring of a Regional Food Security and Nutrition Framework, Strategies and Programmes

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