



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



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SUPPORT FOR ROPPA IN IMPLEMENTING THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF FAMILY FARMING (2019–2028)

March 2024

SDGs:



Country:

Subregional: West Africa

Project Code:

TCP/SFW/3803

FAO Contribution:

USD 183 000

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Implementing Partners

Network of Peasant and Producers' Organizations of West Africa (ROPPA).

Beneficiaries

National platforms of farmers' organizations and agricultural producers from 15 West African countries.

Country Programming Framework (CPF) Outputs

Contributing to implementing the Malabo commitments and regional and national policies for the development of the agro-silvo-pastoral sector in West Africa, particularly the guidelines and objectives related to the sustainable transformation of family farms, within the framework of the United Nations Decade of Family Farming (UNDF).



BACKGROUND

In West Africa, family farming employs around 62 percent of the workforce, supplying the bulk of agricultural (both unprocessed and processed) products to feed the population and satisfy the agrifood industry's requirements. However, despite its clear importance, the vital role of family farming in combating poverty and food insecurity is not sufficiently considered in national investment programmes. Hence, in December 2017, the United Nations declared a United Nations Decade of Family Farming (UNDF 2019–2028) to focus on family farming as a central global priority for ten years. A Global Action Plan was devised to implement the UNDF. This plan aims to develop practical, coordinated actions to tackle the challenges faced by family farmers, enhance their capacity to invest, and make full use of their contributions. It includes seven pillars designed to provide comprehensive guidance for all stakeholders, including the international community, regional entities, civil society organizations, the private sector, and farmers' organizations, such as the Network of Peasant and Producers' Organizations of West Africa (ROPPA).

This project sought to support ROPPA in formulating its regional action plan, providing essential assistance to national platforms across the 15 countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to develop their national action plans. This effort was conducted in collaboration with other key stakeholders, following the recommendations of UNDF's International Steering Committee, and was aligned with the seven pillars of the Global Action Plan.

IMPACT

The development and implementation of the UNDF's regional and national action plans will foster institutional and regulatory frameworks that support the sustainable development of family farming. This will enhance family farming's capacity to adapt to climate change, develop resilient agricultural practices that contribute to rural employment for women and men, promote sustainable food production, and safeguard ecosystems.

ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS

Adopting a participatory and inclusive approach, the project collated initiatives, good practices, and knowledge on adapting to climate change, fostering rural employment, and implementing agricultural laws into a compendium. The project also identified the needs of national stakeholders and subregional producer organizations, establishing an institutional mechanism for coordinating and monitoring/evaluating the implementation of the UNDF.

The project's primary goal was to promote the creation of national action plans and a regional plan for the UNDF. By the project's conclusion, only four national action plans had been completed: Togo and the Gambia, with draft versions in Sierra Leone and Mali. A regional action plan has yet to be drafted. However, processes have begun with a view to engaging stakeholders in developing and completing action plans, with details specified by country in the logical framework matrix.



IMPLEMENTATION OF WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

Security, food, political, and geopolitical crises impacted the participatory and inclusive process of developing national and regional plans. Despite efforts to engage national operators and a nine-month no-cost project extension, the project only partially achieved its expected outcomes.

FOLLOW-UP FOR GOVERNMENT ATTENTION

The ROPPA and its member countries will continue their ongoing initiatives to develop national action plans for the UNDF. The ROPPA will intensify efforts in awareness raising and dissemination of the action plans and will engage stakeholders not yet involved in the process. It will also help develop or complete action plans in countries where the process is already underway. Finally, the implementation of existing action plans in the respective countries should be monitored.

These monitoring activities will be conducted using the ROPPA's Observatory of Family Farming. The national platforms and their branches are the mainstays of the Observatory. They supply it with data from their various monitoring activities, including family farms, agricultural campaigns, and policy.

SUSTAINABILITY

1. Capacity development

The ROPPA, its national platforms, and its Farmers' University are central to formulating and implementing action plans. The project involved subregional organizations in the process. The project trained 719 ROPPA members, including 172 women. However, the ROPPA still requires assistance to complete the formulation and implementation of action plans. The institutional mechanism established to oversee and guarantee the success of the process includes the ROPPA's West African Women's Association (AFAO), the National Association of Nigerian Traders (NANTS), and the West African Cereal Producers' Network (ROAC). These organizations have asked to join the regional task force monitoring the UNDF in West Africa.

2. Gender equality

A gender equality lens was used in the processes relating to needs identification, capitalizing on good practices, and formulating action plans.

3. Environmental sustainability

The project promoted family farming, which helped foster an enabling environment for the implementation of the right to adequate food and decent employment.

4. Human Rights-based Approach (HRBA) – in particular Right to Food and Decent Work

Family farming, as advocated by the project, is an agricultural method that prioritizes the sound management of natural resources. It encompasses the use, conservation, and regeneration of soil, water, forests, biomass, fish, and animal resources.

5. Technological sustainability

The project has helped develop and share local knowledge by assembling and creating a compendium of good practices in family farming across West Africa.

6. Economic sustainability

The project has contributed to strengthening governance and organization around family farming as a sustainable economic activity that conserves resources over the long term. The basic socioeconomic unit in family farming is the family farm, which is grounded in agroecology. It is marked by a deep connection to the land, which is handed down from generation to generation by virtue of the historical process of acquiring the right to farm, leading to the sustainable management of land assets.



DOCUMENTS AND OUTREACH PRODUCTS

- ❑ ROPPA. 2023. *Compendium of capitalization of regional producer organization initiatives.*
- ❑ ROPPA. 2023. *Capitalization valuation strategy.*
- ❑ ROPPA. 2023. *Compendium of the capacity-building needs of regional producer organizations.*
- ❑ ROPPA. 2023. *Reports of completed training sessions.*
- ❑ ROPPA. 2023. *National summary of the implementation of the UNDF.*
- ❑ ROPPA. 2023. *Report on the establishment of the regional task force to monitor the UNDF.*

ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS - LOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Expected impact	Significant contribution to the implementation and scope of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Sustainable Development Goal 2 and other related goals and targets		
Outcome	ROPPA’s one regional and fifteen national action plans are prepared using a participatory and inclusive approach, aligning with the seven pillars of the Global Action Plan. They are also harmonized with national policies and strategies and regional agricultural policies (Economic Community of West Africa Agricultural Policy [ECOWAP], Agricultural Policy Unit [APU]) in the agro-silvo-pastoral and fisheries sectors		
	Indicator(s)	- National action plans are available. - The regional action plan has been prepared and is available as recommended by the UNDP in relation to the seven pillars of the Global Action Plan.	
	Baseline	- 0 - 0	
	End target	- 15 action plans issued by the ROPPA national platform. - A regional action plan.	
	Comments and follow-up action to be taken	Processes have been initiated in all countries and at the regional level to engage stakeholders in developing action plans. These multistakeholder processes are complex and have been disrupted by the major crises in the West African region in recent years, including security and food crises and political and geopolitical instability, among others. Four national action plans are available: Togo and Gambia have final versions, with drafts formulated for Sierra Leone and Mali. Currently, there are no regional action plans. Regarding follow-up measures, the ROPPA and its member countries are continuing to pursue the various initiatives already in progress to develop action plans. This will entail raising awareness of and disseminating the action plans, engaging stakeholders not yet involved in the process, and continuing to develop or finalize action plans in countries where they are already underway. Finally, the implementation of existing action plans in the respective countries should be monitored.	
Output 1	Capitalizing on initiatives, good practices, and knowledge in family farming, focusing on climate change adaptation, rural employment, and implementing agricultural legislation		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	A compendium of initiatives, good practices, and knowledge on the listed themes developed in Africa, particularly in West Africa, has been compiled.	A compendium.	Yes
Baseline	0		
Comments	A compendium of initiatives, good practices, and knowledge developed in Africa, particularly in West Africa, has been compiled.		
Activity 1.1	Inventory and capitalization on initiatives, good practices, and knowledge in the listed areas		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	Fourteen initiatives on good practices in family farming and farmers’ organizations were identified and capitalized on. No significant obstacles were faced while conducting this activity. Drawing on the experiences of producer organizations (POs), the initiatives documented fit seamlessly with the framework of the UNDP and have been summarized according to their contributions to the various pillars of the Global Action Plan for the Decade. These initiatives will be utilized in national and regional advocacy campaigns and at the high-level conference on the dynamics and innovations of family farms that the ROPPA plans to hold, aiming to help shape public agricultural and food policies and increase the effectiveness of their implementation.	

Output 2	A study of needs and a capacity-building plan were conducted for national stakeholders and subregional producer organizations to enhance their capabilities		
	Indicators	Target	Achieved
	- A regional overview of the needs of national stakeholders and subregional producer organizations. - A capacity-building programme for national stakeholders and subregional producer organizations.	- Report available. - Programme available.	Yes
Baseline	0		
Comments	A report that summarizes the capacity-building needs of stakeholders was produced through a series of consultations and is now available. A stakeholder capacity-building programme was developed and is currently being implemented through ROPPA's Farmers' University.		
Activity 2.1	Investigating the needs of national stakeholders and subregional producer organizations to establish an enabling policy environment, enhance capacity, cultivate knowledge, represent farmers, and deliver inclusive services to improve family farming in West Africa		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	A form for identifying stakeholders' needs was created, using existing tools from the Farmers' University for collecting capacity-building needs. A compendium of PO capacity-building needs was produced through a series of consultations with the ROPPA's various components and consultation forums, including youth, women, National Advisers on Farmers' Economic Initiatives (CNIEP), focal points, and the network's administrators. In 2023, ROPPA and the National Platforms (NPs) conducted training sessions on various issues, based on the modules of the compendium of members' capacity-building needs co-developed in 2022. The Burkina Faso Farmers' Confederation, the Togolese Coordination Body for Farmers' Organizations and Agricultural Producers, the Farmers' Platform of Niger, the National Platform of Farmers' and Agricultural Producers' Organizations of Benin, and the ROPPA trained 719 members (including 172 women).	
Activity 2.2	Mobilizing regional stakeholders in the formulation of national and regional action plans		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	As part of its efforts to inform, raise awareness among, and mobilize its members and stakeholders in the region around the UNDF and its action plan, the ROPPA held several consultation meetings from 2019. The numerous existing consultation forums and frameworks were also used to promote the activities of the Decade. During its participation in the steering committee for the regional programmes implemented by ECOWAS, the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the network's administrators shared with the region's stakeholders the main challenges facing the UNDF and its involvement in implementing agro-sylvo-pastoral and fisheries policies. The ROPPA also engaged with value chain stakeholders through consultation frameworks, such as the Framework for Commitment and Advocacy of the Regional System for the Prevention and Management of Food Crises (PREGEC) and the Monitoring and Action Committee (CVA), to discuss the procedure for formulating the action plan for the Decade. It invited them to join the UNDF task force and to mobilize their members nationally to take part in national processes for drawing up the Decade's action plans through the National Committees of Family Farming (NCFF). The development of the regional action plan is currently ongoing.	

	Preparation of UNDF country action plans	
	Achieved	Partially
Activity 2.3	Comments	National action plans were completed in Togo and the Gambia, with drafts formulated for Sierra Leone and Mali. However, work is in progress across all countries to develop national action plans for the UNDF. These processes are at various stages of completion, as summarized by country below. The primary challenges faced stem from the complexity of the action plan processes involving multiple stakeholders. In addition, the various crises facing the region in recent years have disrupted current agendas and dissipated the efforts of organizations and decision-makers. However, the NCFs continue to monitor the processes and mobilize stakeholders. Togo Togo is in the process of implementing its plan. However, the plan has yet to be officially endorsed and launched (scheduled for 2024). Mali A draft action plan exists in Mali. The national validation workshop was postponed due to changes within the Ministry of Agriculture's departments stemming from the country's political situation. Senegal In early September 2023, the Minister of Agriculture, Rural Equipment, and Food Sovereignty issued an order to establish a technical committee tasked with developing the UNDF's national plan. This committee, made up of approximately 20 members, convened from 31 October to 3 November to formulate a draft plan and propose a roadmap. FAO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) supported the process. Burkina Faso The development of the action plan for the Decade has been temporarily put on hold because of organizational changes, but is still ongoing. The Gambia Stakeholders have been mobilized to create a National Coordination Committee to delve into the dynamics of family farming. The National Coordinating Organisation of Farmer Associations Gambia (NACOFAG) has led the process, culminating in an action plan for the Decade being adopted by the NCF. However, a review of the plan is under consideration. The process continues. Sierra Leone The NCF, FAO and the Ministry worked together to develop the plan, which the Government endorsed at a national workshop in July 2021. Just as in the Gambia, it is necessary to mobilize the stakeholders around this plan and launch it. Ghana The NCF was established, and a focal point designated within the Ministry of Agriculture. However, momentum was lost in mobilizing these stakeholders around the action plan. A concept note was drafted to implement the process. Resources are still being mobilized around this concept note. The need to strengthen the NCF with other public and private players has also emerged. Nigeria The NCF has devised a possible roadmap to present to the Government, FAO and IFAD. It was suggested that existing dialogue frameworks be utilized and current opportunities leveraged to tackle issues relevant to the UNDF. Cote d'Ivoire The roadmap for formulating the national plan was established during a multistakeholder workshop, which also led to the creation of a steering committee. The committee engages in consultations to develop an action plan grounded in consensus. Guinea-Bissau The mobilization of stakeholders around the UNDF is in progress, with meetings between FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture. Awareness-raising initiatives targeting value-chain stakeholders are underway. Niger An NCF has been established, and discussions have been conducted with the Ministry of Agriculture and FAO. The many crises confronting the country have impeded progress in crafting a roadmap for the action plan's development. Benin, Guinea, Cabo Verde, Liberia The process of raising awareness among stakeholders is underway.

Activity 2.4	Formulating the UNDDF regional action plan		
	Achieved	Partially	
	Comments	Various regional level actions have sought to engage stakeholders in support of the UNDDF’s regional action plan: - Raising awareness among African Heads of State at the Dakar 2 Summit within the framework of the “Feed Africa” initiative to ensure that the commitments to the UNDDF are taken into account. The ROPPA participated in the summit with a four-person delegation led by its Secretary-General. - Engaging decision-makers to commit to the UNDDF during continental and global dialogues with the African Union (AU), including the 5th AU–European Union (EU) Ministerial Conference on Agriculture in Rome in June 2023, focusing on food systems in the lead-up to the UN Food Systems Summit. - Adopting a unifying theme for the region’s commitments to the UNDDF. A gathering convened in Bamako in September 2023 by the Select Committee for Policy Analysis of the Framework for Commitment and Challenge on Crisis Prevention and Management Mechanisms, selected the advocacy issue “Input management mechanisms”. This issue is crucial for policy as well as timely, considering the impending reforms outlined in the ECOWAS declaration on fertilizers and soil health. In November 2023, an online policy dialogue was held on input management mechanisms in West Africa, culminating in the adoption of recommendations regarding these mechanisms in the region.	
Activity 2.5	Validation of national action plans and the UNDDF regional action plan		
	Achieved	Partially	
	Comments	Four action plans have been validated by non-state stakeholders. However, governments or intergovernmental authorities and organizations have not yet endorsed them.	
Output 3	An inclusive monitoring mechanism was established to coordinate the implementation of the national and regional plans among the relevant stakeholders		
	Indicators		Achieved
	An institutional coordination mechanism comprising a team with clearly defined operating rules was established to implement the UNDDF.		Yes
Baseline	0		
Comments	A regional task force was established to oversee the UNDDF in West Africa.		
Activity 3.1	Establishment of an institutional system for coordinating and monitoring/evaluating the implementation of the UNDDF		
	Achieved	Yes	
	Comments	The ROPPA invited CVA members involved in the UNDDF process to participate in establishing the regional task force. A meeting was held to provide participants with more detailed information on the UNDDF, its implementation in West Africa, the regional task force’s responsibilities, and the potential action strategies. The task force remains open to other POs and civil society organizations in West Africa. Future sessions are scheduled to officially approve the document clarifying the task force’s mission and its makeup. The United Nations Decade of Family Farming processes are evaluated through extensive consultations with value chain stakeholders at the regional level.	

Partnerships and Outreach

For more information, please contact: Reporting@fao.org

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