



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

## FOSTERING SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE FOR FOOD SECURITY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

The Integrated Approach Program on Food Security (IAP-FS) in sub-Saharan Africa comprises three integrated approach pilots that were agreed as part of the sixth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) on sustainable cities, deforestation and food security. The IAP-FS targets agroecological systems in the drylands of sub-Saharan Africa, where the need to enhance food security is directly linked to opportunities for generating local and global environmental benefits. Against this background, this cross-cutting regional hub project aimed to strengthen overall the delivery of the IAP-FS in a coherent and consistent manner, in order to maximize the potential for transformational change beyond what was possible through the separate country projects, covering all agroecological areas targeted by the program. The project targeted 12 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa: Burkina Faso, Burundi, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, the Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Eswatini, Uganda, and the United Republic of Tanzania.



### WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

The project leveraged support at subregional level through existing agricultural advisory services platforms, to facilitate adaptation, uptake and scaling-up of diverse agricultural and integrated natural resources management (INRM) best practices in IAP countries and beyond. FAO support to country projects included capacity development and technical assistance for strengthening agricultural advisory services, study tours and experience exchanges. Some of the key achievements included the setting up and expansion of the Global Farmer Field School (FFS) Platform and regional FFS platforms, and the development of e-learning materials and modules and publications of FFS experiences over the years. Capacity development was delivered in a number of ways. This included providing advanced regional training to various FFS practitioners, enhancing their skills and introducing novel technical and agricultural methods. The training activities also fostered stronger professional networks among participants, translating the acquired expertise into the implementation of national projects within the IAP-FS, benefiting project actors and collaborators. The project provided technical and operational guidance to aid the development of local value chains for sustainable products. Technical support extended to developing a comprehensive methodology for evaluating environmental, social and economic impacts, including assistance in conducting national impact studies in projects involving FFS components. In addition, the pilot implemented in Malawi resulted in the development of a real-time Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system to support FFS, adopted at national level. Close collaboration emerged with CARE USA, supporting the implementation of FFS monitoring and evaluation through the development of a global strategy based on the MEL framework and toolkit developed during the project.

### IMPACT

In terms of natural resources conservation and sustainable management, the project contributed significantly to strengthening organizational and institutional capacities, governance analysis, and to improving access to technologies and markets. The project placed a strong emphasis on family farming, aiming to enhance the sustainable management of farming systems and promote landscape restoration, benefiting a large number of family farmers. It also prioritized gender balance, with a focus on women and youth, supporting gender-sensitive practices, female representation in decision-making, and gender-disaggregated measures of food security and global environmental benefits. The project was also fully aligned with FAO's work on climate change, aiding smallholder farmers in building resilience to climate change and facilitating dialogue on climate change, rural development, agriculture, and food security.

### KEY FACTS

**Latest Approved Budget**

USD 2 203 688

**Duration**

April 2018-June 2023

**Resource Partner**

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

**Partners**

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), Bioversity International, Conservation International

**Beneficiaries**

Ministries of Environment, Agriculture and Forestry in the participating countries

# ACTIVITIES

- 45 people (policy-makers, decision-makers) from 12 participating countries, and five European Union Land Governance Programme countries participated in awareness and capacity development on Responsible Governance of Tenure for achieving Land Degradation Neutrality.
- Nine best practices on inclusive evidence-based policy processes identified and documented as case studies in tailored Stakeholder Approach to Risk-informed and Evidence-based Decision-making (SHARED) toolkit (case studies from Burkina Faso, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania).
- Nine key policy gaps identified as well as first analysis of requests for policy support from science and policy interfaces. The identified and analysed gaps were reported in “Strategy Report. Regional Hub. Component 1. Science and Policy Interface.”
- Support provided in establishing and strengthening multistakeholder platforms to Uganda as training of trainers ([ToT] 14 participants); and ToT for multistakeholder platforms establishment shared with Nigeria.
- Training activities organized for 3 600+ participants to strengthen agricultural advisory service delivery to better integrate participatory approaches for sustainable upscaling of INRM and agricultural intensification in smallholder agriculture.
- Guide, “Bringing climate change adaptation into Farmer Field Schools”, published in November 2021.
- Handbook, “Enabling Sustainable Food Systems: Innovators”, highlighting how to develop local initiatives for sustainable food systems and local sustainable value chains, published in English, French and Spanish.
- Partner network set up on FFS platform, including 19 partners, comprising development agencies, non-governmental organizations, private sector, and research organizations.
- 2 000+ participants of Global FFS Platform received technical information, guidance, advice and access to new events on FFS and participatory approaches to sustainable land management, sustainable agriculture and agroecology.
- Series of official FAO e-learning courses on FFS developed in collaboration with FAO eLearning Academy.
- An MEL framework and toolkit document was developed, published and launched through a webinar in 2021.
- Stocktaking on the use of community-based/non-formal education approaches and FFS in sustainable and community based forestry was completed.
- Three documents were produced as a result of 2020-2021 stocktaking on FFS on forestry and agroforestry carried out by the Global FFS Platform. The results of the stocktaking were shared during a global conference on forest education (September 2021), and two technical side events of the Committee on Forestry (November 2021).
- Francophone West Africa network of FFS practitioners was formalized in 2023. In parallel, communications were established with African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) national and subregional FAO offices and national governments to organize a regional virtual meeting to discuss the set-up of a subregional network for Anglophone West Africa, including FFS practitioners from all Anglophone West African countries.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

## Project Title

Cross Cutting Capacity Building, Knowledge Service and Coordination project for the Food Security Integrated Approach Pilot Program - GEF project 9140

## Project Code

FAO: GCP/RAF/511/IFA  
Donor: 2000001325

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