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Investing in rural people

Progress Report on South-South and Triangular Cooperation 2019-2020

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AGRA	Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa
BAPA+40	United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation
COSOP	country strategic opportunities programme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GPR	Global Engagement, Partnership and Resource Mobilization Division
IFAD10	Tenth Replenishment of IFAD's Resources
KM Centre	Knowledge Management Centre
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean Division
M&E	monitoring and evaluation
NEN	Near East, North Africa and Europe Division
RBAs	Rome-based agencies
RSP	Rural Solutions Portal
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SSTC	South-South and Triangular Cooperation
UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
WFP	World Food Programme

Progress Report on South-South and Triangular Cooperation 2019-2020

I. Background

1. South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) is a key development instrument within IFAD's business model for furthering the mandate of achieving sustainable and inclusive rural transformation. IFAD's commitment to SSTC is enshrined in the Fund's Strategic Framework 2016-2025 and IFAD's Approach to South-South and Triangular Cooperation strategy,¹ reviewed by the Executive Board in December 2016. In addition, SSTC was a key priority agreed with Member States in the Tenth (2015-2018) and Eleventh (2019-2021) Replenishments of IFAD's Resources (IFAD10 and IFAD11, respectively).
2. Particular attention has been devoted to SSTC in 2019 and 2020. From a global perspective, the United Nations has increased its efforts in supporting countries through SSTC. In fact, the second high-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation in 2019 (known as BAPA+40) urged the United Nations development system "to enhance, within existing resources, its support to South-South and Triangular Cooperation, inter alia in the areas of promoting capacity-building, regional integration, interregional linkages, infrastructure interconnectivity and the development of national productive capacities through policy coordination, exchanges of knowledge, technological innovations and technology transfer".²
3. Following the recommendation of the United Nations Secretary-General and the outcomes of the BAPA+40 Conference, a new United Nations system-wide SSTC strategy has been actively discussed among United Nations agencies and recently developed, to enable the United Nations development system as a whole to effectively respond to the growing demand to support SSTC at all levels.
4. At the same time, reform of the United Nations development system requires concerted efforts if we want to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the time frame set out. These efforts are even more important in light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, which is still affecting the greater part of the world, in particular impacting developing countries and their rural poor people, who are facing additional disruptions to food systems. Within this context, SSTC plays a particular role in supporting the exchange of knowledge and innovations around the way that countries are addressing the effects of the pandemic on their rural populations.
5. From an IFAD perspective, during the IFAD12 Consultations, Member States have requested that the Fund continue to strengthen its efforts in supporting SSTC, especially in seeing SSTC as a cooperation modality to enhance country-level programmes and expand partnerships with a broader set of actors.
6. The main purpose of this report is therefore to address the issues above and to brief the Executive Board on IFAD's SSTC activities since the completion of the last progress report in December 2018. The present report also highlights key results, lessons and the way forward in implementing SSTC activities.

II. IFAD's institutional architecture for SSTC

7. As part of IFAD's organizational reform and restructuring, on 1 July 2019 two divisions were merged into the new Global Engagement, Partnership and Resource Mobilization Division (GPR), and the three regional SSTC and Knowledge Management (KM) Centres were established – in Brazil (Brasilia), China (Beijing)

¹ <https://webapps.ifad.org/members/eb/119/docs/EB-2016-119-R-6.pdf>.

² United Nations (2019). *Buenos Aires outcome document of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (A/RES/73/291)*. Buenos Aires, United Nations.

and Ethiopia (Addis Ababa) – to increase the Fund’s engagement in and support for SSTC in the respective regions.

8. Within this context, IFAD’s implementation of SSTC has also seen a significant shift from the operational point of view. SSTC is being utilized as a tool to promote sustainable development, across IFAD’s operations and across countries. In this, it is aided by increased clarity in roles and responsibilities and by increased synergies between regions and divisions. GPR is tasked with the overall lead on the SSTC corporate agenda, focusing on global activities such as partnership-building, resource mobilization and engagement in global events. The three SSTC and KM Centres, together with the regional hubs and IFAD Country Offices, lead in implementation of SSTC activities on the ground. To coordinate the different activities, and to ensure cross-fertilization and exchange of knowledge, the interdepartmental working group on SSTC serves as a platform for sharing knowledge and coordinating SSTC activities.

III. Implementation progress

9. During the 2019/20 period, IFAD’s corporate SSTC agenda has focused on four main priorities:
 - (i) Mainstreaming SSTC in operations;
 - (ii) Promoting knowledge exchange around IFAD’s four main themes;
 - (iii) Strengthening and broadening SSTC partnerships; and
 - (iv) Improving tracking and monitoring of the contribution of SSTC to development results.

A. Mainstreaming SSTC in operations

10. **Development of articulated SSTC narratives in country strategic opportunities programmes (COSOPs).** During the IFAD11 period, IFAD agreed to include an articulated SSTC narrative in 66 per cent of new COSOPs. In 2019, IFAD developed specific guidelines to assist and facilitate the work of country directors in incorporating SSTC elements within the COSOP preparation processes. These guidelines have now been fully integrated into the Operational Procedures and Guidelines for Country Strategies, which also encompass the IFAD11 target. Based on an assessment of the COSOPs approved in the period under consideration, IFAD has achieved or even surpassed the IFAD11 commitment. Out of the 25 COSOPs presented up to the 130th Executive Board session, 23 include an articulated narrative on SSTC. This is a demonstration that the regional divisions are increasingly developing their approach to SSTC, by identifying specific focus areas of action in new COSOPs, ranging from knowledge exchange and capacity-building to policy engagement and investment promotion activities, and by identifying key partners within government and in NGOs.
11. **Regional engagement.** Significant progress has been made by all five regional divisions in implementation of SSTC activities on the ground, catalysed additionally by establishment of the SSTC and KM Centres in Addis Ababa, Beijing and Brasilia.
12. At project level, the new design of the Agriculture and Fisheries Development Programme for the United Republic of Tanzania, which will be discussed during the 131st session of the Executive Board, incorporates opportunities for the implementation of SSTC activities in the seed production industry, through situational analyses in Botswana, China, India, Kenya, South Africa and Zimbabwe, looking to improve retailing, the performance of cultivators and policy design. Another example is the recently approved Commercialization, Agricultural Production and Nutrition Project, designed for Sao Tome and Principe, which includes several SSTC activities in support of nutrition, pepper and cocoa production, processing and marketing, fisheries and horticulture.

13. On a similar note, the grant for the Agricultural Development: Atlas Mountains Rural Development Project, implemented by the Near East, North Africa and Europe Division (NEN), aims at fostering technical cooperation between Morocco and three sub-Saharan African countries, namely Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar and the United Republic of Tanzania, which have not benefited from earlier SSTC exchanges with Morocco. The project connects with key partners in ongoing IFAD projects in the three countries, with the aim of scaling up good practices from the successful experience of the Green Morocco Plan.³ In addition, to increase the use of SSTC as a tool to support IFAD's mainstreaming areas, NEN will aim at selecting SSTC as its preferred implementation modality to deliver on IFAD's rural youth employment agenda.
14. The regional divisions are also planning ahead in terms of new SSTC activities to be implemented through their projects, not only by including such activities in the design of COSOPs and country strategy notes, but also by expanding the partnership base and by embedding SSTC within new loans and grants. For example, as part of development of the country strategy note for Afghanistan, the Asia and the Pacific Division is working together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to explore potential collaboration with China and Indonesia to support Afghanistan in livestock production and greenhouse technologies.
15. In the implementation of SSTC activities, IFAD Country Offices have taken advantage of the numerous partnerships that they have already established, and created new ones as well. For example, the Latin America and the Caribbean Division (LAC) is implementing their grants in collaboration with a strong network of partners that include the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation, the Foundation for Development in Justice and Peace, Procasur, and the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture. The East and Southern Africa Division has established a formal engagement with WorldFish, while the West and Central Africa Division is working on an SSTC Facility-funded grant with the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan. The Asia and the Pacific Division has been collaborating with Alibaba to expose the staff of the Promoting Agricultural Commercialization and Enterprises Project to e-commerce practices for potential replication in Bangladesh, while NEN has four large ongoing regional projects focused on cross-regional technical cooperation and knowledge exchanges. These are being implemented by recipients of varying kinds, including United Nations agencies (United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation [UNOSSC]), governmental institutions (National Institute for Agronomic Research of Algeria), international research centres (International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas) and NGOs (National Federation of Agricultural Producers from Moldova).
16. These are only a few highlights from the work that IFAD's regional divisions are carrying out to promote SSTC activities on the ground; other examples and achievements can be found in the next section.

B. Promoting knowledge exchange around the four main themes

17. Looking to achievement of IFAD's corporate objectives, SSTC is receiving increased attention as a support to IFAD's mainstreaming agenda in the four thematic areas (gender, youth, climate change and nutrition). To this end, SSTC is used as a means to increase the sharing of knowledge around these thematic areas, through the exchange of solutions, innovations and best practices during global and regional events, as well as other platforms, thus supporting the overarching goal of the Fund of poverty reduction and rural transformation.

³ For more information about the plan, please visit the official website: <https://www.maroc.ma/en/content/green-morocco-plan>.

18. **Rural Solutions Portal.** The Rural Solutions Portal (RSP)⁴ aims to capture and scale up innovative and proven solutions for improved rural transformation. It currently hosts 53 solutions on a variety of topics, deriving from IFAD-funded activities as well as those of its partners. The solutions available cover different thematic areas such as **gender balance, youth employment, climate change issues and malnutrition**. A results framework for the portal has also been developed, with clear indicators and targets to allow IFAD to more systematically monitor, assess and report on the portal's results in relation to the replication of solutions. Following an initial assessment, several targets are on track, including: the number of solutions published per year; the number of knowledge products developed; and the number of showcasing events and regional sessions around the RSP.⁵ It is planned for more efforts to be invested in promoting the uptake of solutions contained in the portal, in order to fully realize its potential and objectives. In addition, the portal will also be used to provide appropriate information for new COSOPs, IFAD-funded projects and grant activities.
19. As part of a bid to leverage the RSP in the establishment of additional partnerships, IFAD participated in a training session organized by the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas in June 2020, in the context of the grant project financed by IFAD entitled "Strengthening knowledge management for greater development effectiveness in the Near East, North Africa, Central Asia and Europe". The training targeted officers of partner institutions and focused on the use of the portal as a tool for the exchange of knowledge, innovations and technologies across countries. Following this training, a number of solutions are being prepared by the project's partner organizations around agricultural services, youth engagement and gender, which are to be uploaded onto the RSP.
20. **Sharing experiences through global and regional events.** IFAD has organized or participated in a series of international and regional conferences to share knowledge, lessons and experiences around **technological innovations**, new partnership models, poverty reduction and **private sector engagement** through SSTC, and to showcase solutions published on the RSP.⁶ The participation of IFAD in these conferences contributed to the overall increase in its visibility, generated common policy issues for actions, and sought convergence between several partners to improve their development investments through SSTC for greater impact.
21. An example of SSTC activity in support of combating **climate change** is the December 2019 seminar entitled "Pakistan-China experience-sharing on building climate resilience and sustainable reforestation", organized by IFAD in Islamabad, which saw the participation of development professionals, academics and government officials from China and Pakistan. The seminar introduced and discussed the two countries' best climate-resilient agricultural practices, with a focus on addressing deforestation, desertification and water management.
22. In conjunction with the Cameroonian Government, IFAD organized the Youth Agropastoral Entrepreneurship Summit in Yaoundé and Obala, Cameroon, from 28 February to 3 March 2019. Aimed at facilitation of a global dialogue and knowledge-sharing between **youth** and public and private sector entities, the summit saw adoption of the Yaoundé declaration on youth agropastoral

⁴ www.ruralsolutionsportal.org.

⁵ For more information on the status of each target, see annex III.

⁶ The following are the major events that IFAD has organized, co-organized or participated in: (i) the international Seminar on Global Poverty Reduction Partnerships, held in May 2019 in Rome, co-organized with FAO, the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Poverty Reduction Centre in China, and the China Internet Information Centre; (ii) the Africa- China Poverty Reduction and Development Conference at the Tenth Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, held in November 2019 in Kampala, Uganda, in collaboration with the Rome-based agencies (RBAs) and the Chinese Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development; (iii) the first Forum on China-Africa Cooperation in Agriculture, held in Sanya, China, in December 2019, where a side event was organized with the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and the International Food Policy Research Institute; and (iv) the African Green Revolution Forum, held virtually in September 2020, during which a side event was organized with AGRA.

entrepreneurship, which advocates the setting up of a world council of young agropastoral entrepreneurs. In enhancing strategic partnerships, especially through SSTC, IFAD's advocacy and initiatives in the promotion of agropastoral entrepreneurship and youth employment were welcomed and included within the declaration.

23. In July 2019, the Thai Government and IFAD jointly organized the Mekong Knowledge and Learning Fair in Bangkok on "Promoting partnerships: smallholder producers with private agribusiness and financial institutions". The fair, attended by over 150 development professionals, private sector partners, farmers' representatives and government officials from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam, proved to be an excellent platform for learning and developing solutions and **innovations** that serve the interests of both rural producers and agrifood enterprises in the region.
24. **Project knowledge exchange activities.** Through a regional grant implemented by the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture, countries in Central America are increasing national institutional capacities by promoting knowledge exchanges on policies and strategy development for **climate change** adaptation and mitigation. In addition, in late 2019 representatives from the Central American Dry Corridor (El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras) participated in a technical exchange with Brazil on dryland agriculture, water management and access to markets. Another exchange was supported by IFAD between Brazil and Mexico, on agroforestry and agroecology.
25. Within the Financial Access for Rural Markets, Smallholders and Enterprise Programme being implemented in Malawi, a rural finance innovations symposium was organized in December 2019, in partnership with several Malawian government and public and private sector entities, on "Leveraging digital technology to deliver financial services for rural markets". With its focus on providing a platform for raising awareness and sharing experiences on innovations, technologies and best practices for delivering **financial services** to rural markets, the symposium also saw the participation of several women delegates from Kenya and Zambia.
26. In Zambia, IFAD is working together with the Government on implementing the Enhanced Soya Bean Production and Processing Project, which is benefiting from the funding received through the India, Brazil and South Africa Facility managed by UNOSSC. With the aim of reducing poverty and increasing the food security and **nutrition** of targeted households in the country, the project focuses on increasing the production of soya beans, enhancing value chains and improving the incomes of rural households. As a result, an outgrower scheme has been implemented providing market access for more than 1,000 farmers, leading to a 50 per cent increase in yields for supported farmers.
27. A series of exchange visits took place between Burundi and Mali, which have a relatively similar portfolio in terms of focus. For example, a woman farmer leader heading an apex women farmers' group travelled to Burundi from March to August 2020 to promote **gender** equality and women's engagement, training farmers' groups and youth and women small and medium-sized enterprises on value addition for vegetable and fruits and on family fish farming. As a result, IFAD-funded projects in Burundi are piloting family fish farms, with potential to be scaled up due to the positive implementation results.

C. Strengthening and broadening SSTC partnerships

28. **China-IFAD SSTC Facility.** The China-IFAD SSTC Facility is the first facility in IFAD dedicated to SSTC. It will be completing its third year of implementation at the end of 2020. To date, two calls for proposals have been completed, with a total of 15 projects and an amount of US\$6.7 million approved for funding. The projects under the two calls deploy SSTC as an important instrument to promote rural

transformation and enhance food security. These projects cover all five IFAD operations regions and a broad range of thematic areas, such as value chain enhancement, aquaculture productivity improvement, the climate-smart business model, rural employment for youth, nutrition improvement, and rural investment promotion. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the facility has designated the funds under the third call, launched on 28 August 2020, for improving food security and resilience for poor rural people affected by COVID-19.

29. Despite the impact of COVID-19, there is evidence of positive progress in project implementation and initial results on the ground. These include: the launching of the competition for a youth innovation award on rural development solutions; the completion of feasibility studies on local value chains and business models; the organization of training events, workshops and field visits for mutual learning and sharing; and the establishment of partnerships to support market access. The LAC Rural Youth Innovation Award project received 576 proposals from the LAC region, out of which 10 winning initiatives were selected and funds awarded in July 2020. Currently the project team is promoting the winning initiatives throughout the region.
30. **Partnerships with Member States.** IFAD is actively exploring partnerships on SSTC in an increasing number of countries. In 2019 and 2020, IFAD and Brazil continued implementation of the letter of intent signed in 2017, with activities planned to take place in three countries (Mozambique, Paraguay and Rwanda). This is in addition to a series of global and regional-level initiatives, such as joint visibility at the annual meetings of the Specialized Meeting on Family Farming of the Common Market of the South. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted implementation of the SSTC activities on the ground, resulting in their temporary suspension.
31. **The Brazil Africa Forum.** In line with the partnership between IFAD and Brazil, IFAD is an active participant in the annual Brazil Africa Forum. The 2019 edition took place on 12 and 13 November in São Paulo, Brazil, with a focus of "Food security: Path to economic growth". IFAD participated in the high-level discussions, sharing ideas, experiences and opportunities for rural youth in Brazil and Africa, particularly from the rural development perspective. The 2020 edition, in which IFAD's President has been invited to participate, will take place virtually on 3 and 4 November. It will focus on the challenges that the current pandemic is posing to the developing world, and how development institutions can support the efforts to overcome them.
32. While partnerships with developing countries show satisfactory progress overall, those with List A countries and the private sector have yet to be fully developed. It is important that these partnerships be actively explored, so that SSTC gets established as a broad-based IFAD agenda that covers all Member State Lists and that actively engages with the private sector. To this end, initial discussions have been held with some countries and private sector entities. Some preliminary progress has been made in this regard, within the context of the China-IFAD SSTC Facility grant on "Strengthening business-to-business linkages and investment opportunities through IFAD's SSTC and KM Centres". Activities under the grant have resulted in a number of initiatives to engage private sector entities, in collaboration within IFAD SSTC projects in Brazil, China and Ethiopia.
33. **Partnership with the RBAs.** SSTC is an increasingly important agenda for the RBAs, and cooperation is taking place in different forms and activities. Indeed collaboration on this topic is included as an explicit work stream in the RBA collaboration action plan for 2019-2020.
34. The RBAs have been working closely on several events and initiatives. For example, since 2017 they have jointly celebrated United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation. The commemoration is an opportunity for FAO, IFAD and WFP to share their experiences around implementation of SSTC activities at the global,

regional and country levels. In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 celebration was hosted virtually by IFAD, and focused on the role that SSTC and the RBAs can play in the transformation of food systems as impacted by the pandemic. In 2019, the event was held at WFP headquarters and focused on the contribution of the RBAs to SDG 2 through SSTC and how they plan to implement the BAPA+40 outcome document. It called for collaboration of the RBAs to explore pilot projects in the field. In both editions, the event featured the active participation of Member State representatives, project specialists and the RBAs, who shared concrete examples and opportunities for reaching the most vulnerable people in their respective countries through SSTC.

35. As part of the joint collaboration on the ground, the three agencies are piloting the grant for "Local production of fortified cassava flour in Bouenza Department in Congo", financed through the China-IFAD SSTC Facility. In this first such collaboration, the RBAs are leveraging their respective competencies and comparative advantages to develop national standards for cassava, and to establish a framework and evidence-based business plan for the production of fortified cassava flour and its sale throughout national and regional markets.
36. The RBAs are also continuing their collaboration in development of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) methodology, aimed at promoting a qualitative and quantitative assessment of SSTC and its contribution to development results in agriculture, rural development, food security and nutrition. It will be used to monitor, assess and report on the results of SSTC, and to identify lessons learned and good practices.
37. Further opportunities are being explored to increase the synergies between the China-IFAD SSTC Facility and the FAO-China South-South Cooperation Programme as well as between the WFP Centres of Excellences (Brazil, China and Côte d'Ivoire) and the IFAD SSTC and KM Centres. These opportunities will be incorporated into the revised joint road map aimed at strengthening RBA collaboration on SSTC. To this end, IFAD participated in a joint webinar in September 2020 co-organized by the WFP Centre of Excellence in Côte d'Ivoire and the African Union, with a focus on sharing good practices around the fight against hunger and malnutrition.
38. **Collaboration with the United Nations system.** IFAD has been a member of the working group led by the UNOSSC, for development of the United Nations system-wide South-South Cooperation Strategy, with a specific contribution to the section dedicated to "Partnership, joint programming and funding mechanisms". The strategy was recently approved by the Executive Committee of the Secretary-General and is aimed at achieving a more coherent and coordinated support by the United Nations system for SSTC activities. IFAD is currently involved in the preparation of an action plan for its implementation.
39. **BAPA+40 Conference.** IFAD took part in the BAPA+40 Conference in Buenos Aires, Argentina on 20-22 March 2019. Leading up to the conference, IFAD produced a paper that was disseminated at the conference entitled "BAPA+50: Achieving rural transformation through South-South and Triangular Cooperation",⁷ which focused on IFAD's vision on the evolution of SSTC up to 2030. IFAD's participation in the event helped increase the Fund's visibility and highlighted its role in the international development community as an organization that leverages SSTC as an instrument for meeting the SDGs, in particular SDG 2. The event also provided the opportunity for RBA collaboration, which was very well coordinated and yielded good results in ensuring that agriculture, food security and nutrition were well featured in the final outcome declaration.
40. In February 2020, IFAD participated in an interactive dialogue on SSTC for transforming agriculture, organized by UNOSSC. During the session, IFAD was able to share its experience around the role of SSTC in facilitating knowledge-sharing

⁷ <https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/publication/asset/41117175>.

and knowledge-building and around how investments can be channelled towards agriculture and food systems to combat hunger.

D. Improving the tracking and monitoring of the contribution of SSTC to development results

41. **M&E methodology.** As mentioned above, this methodology will be used by IFAD and other development practitioners to monitor, assess and report on the results of SSTC, and to identify lessons learned and good practices. At the time of writing this report, the RBA working group had completed a comparative review of methods and processes used to track and monitor SSTC in the RBAs, other United Nations agencies and selected multilateral development banks. In addition, interviews have been conducted within the working group and with other selected institutions, to validate the comparative review and lay the foundations for the drafting of the methodology, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2020.
42. **SSTC database.** There is at present no corporate database on SSTC, which significantly constrains institutional monitoring, reporting and undertaking of analytic work on IFAD's SSTC activities. GPR and other IFAD divisions are working together to design the necessary changes to ensure that SSTC activities and related funding are properly tracked through the existing information systems, such as the Operational Results Management System, the Grants and Investment Projects System and the Quality Assurance Archiving System, without increasing the workload of staff from the regional divisions. Implementation of the project will start at the beginning of 2021.

IV. Performance, lessons and the way forward

43. In June 2019, a report was produced on the self-assessment of IFAD's SSTC strategy and the way forward, to: (i) provide a comprehensive and robust self-assessment of IFAD's SSTC activities, based on the IFAD SSTC strategy; and (ii) discuss the way forward for IFAD.

A. Performance of IFAD's SSTC

44. The self-assessment provided a succinct appraisal of IFAD's SSTC strategy, based on four universal evaluation criteria: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability.
45. In terms of **relevance**, the assessment concluded that the objectives of the strategy⁸ continue to be relevant in today's evolving development context for IFAD. In particular, the focus on knowledge-sharing, promotion of technical assistance and investment, and the development of partnerships is critical to furthering the main objectives of the IFAD Strategic Framework 2016-2025 and its renewed business model for improved sustainable and inclusive rural transformation.
46. In terms of **efficiency**, the self-assessment concluded that all of the principal initiatives conducted thus far have been delivered well within the expected time frames. The same conclusions were drawn regarding internal and external coordination and on the consistency of the SSTC agenda with IFAD policies, which are key areas to be considered for measuring efficiency.
47. In terms of **effectiveness**, with regard to the first objective the self-assessment concluded that many valuable efforts have been made in sharing solutions and knowledge. Just a few examples of IFAD's efforts to share solutions and knowledge are the RSP, the SSTC publications, participation in multiple country-level, regional and global events, and the organizing of exchange visits across countries between projects. However, progress in promoting investments among developing countries has been weak. This is due to limited experience in the SSTC team in this area, but

⁸ The two objectives of the 2016 SSTC strategy were to: (i) share relevant rural development solutions and knowledge, and promote investments among developing countries; and (ii) establish and support partnerships and other forms of collaboration for improved rural livelihoods.

also because it was essential during the initial period of strategy implementation to build an SSTC agenda and culture within IFAD and focus on sharing relevant rural development solutions and knowledge. On the second objective, there is ample evidence that it is being met satisfactorily, for example with key activity areas such as the China-IFAD SSTC Facility, formalization of an agreement with Brazil on SSTC, and enhanced cooperation with the RBAs and UNOSSC.

48. Finally, as regards **sustainability**, the assessment found that IFAD has put in place the required organizational architecture to ensure the sustainability of the SSTC agenda. For instance, the creation of GPR and establishment of the SSTC and KM Centres, as well as the interdepartmental working group on SSTC, have been found to be key components in the promotion of long-term sustainability in IFAD. However, the self-assessment refrained from providing a specific rating on sustainability, given the insufficient evaluative evidence available at this stage to make a credible judgment.

B. Key lessons

49. According to the self-assessment, four important lessons can be drawn from implementation of the strategy in the period under review:
- (i) Synergies between country, regional and global SSTC activities need to be strengthened.
 - (ii) There is a need to establish a corporate repository on SSTC, to better track SSTC activities and the funding attached to them.
 - (iii) The establishment of a results framework and M&E methodology for SSTC will support assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of SSTC activities.
 - (iv) The partnership base should be expanded to include a broader set of stakeholders.

C. The way forward

50. **Developing a new SSTC strategy.** Considering the evolution of the global development landscape and the increasing demand by Member States for IFAD to increase its engagement around SSTC, the Fund is working on the development of a new SSTC corporate strategy. It is being prepared four years after the first strategy, and will take into account the lessons learned and the main aspects arising from the self-assessment. The new strategy will focus on achievement of the following three objectives: (i) leveraging and promoting the exchange of knowledge, technologies and solutions to address rural poverty and transformation; (ii) enhancing the countries' capacity by engaging with a broad set of partners, including the private sector, to promote investments; and (iii) promoting SSTC as a key development tool in IFAD's transformational country programmes.
51. **Strengthening institutional capacity.** SSTC is a tool that supports the achievement of IFAD's mandate. It is embedded in IFAD's corporate agenda, and as such, requires corporate efforts as well as close collaboration and coordination across divisions and departments. Capitalizing on its People, Processes and Technology Plan, and looking to enhance its proximity to operations, IFAD will further strengthen the institutional framework of SSTC. This will be done by: mainstreaming and fully integrating SSTC into its business model; equipping staff with the right skills and knowledge around SSTC; introducing innovative ways of motivating staff; and ensuring that SSTC activities are well funded, tracked and monitored, to confirm their relevance and value for money. To ensure that the SSTC agenda is properly funded and to broaden and diversify the financial base, IFAD is exploring options for establishing a multi-donor financing mechanism, with seed funding from IFAD, interested Member States and/or partner organizations. The new financing mechanism will be dedicated to the implementation of SSTC activities and the promotion of investments across developing countries.

Regional overview of SSTC activities

	<i>Asia and the Pacific Division</i>	<i>East and Southern Africa Division</i>	<i>Latin America and the Caribbean Division</i>	<i>Near East, North Africa and Europe Division</i>	<i>West and Central Africa Division</i>
Thematic areas of focus of the SSTC activities implemented	Sustainable agricultural and rural development; inclusive rural finance; climate change resilience; value chain development; e-commerce; advisory services; and public-private-producer partnerships.	Natural resource management; water harvesting and pressurized irrigation; marketing techniques; capacity-building for farmers' associations; private sector investments; youth; knowledge management; livestock; access to markets; access to technology; post-harvest and processing; agribusiness; rural finance and policy; and M&E.	Water management; dryland agriculture; agroecology; agroforestry; livestock/small ruminants; rural youth; innovation; climate-smart agriculture; entrepreneurship; access to land; indigenous peoples; M&E; cooperativism; etc.	Sustainable green economy and green investments; partnership mobilizations; water irrigation management; livestock breeding; and capacity-building and knowledge-sharing.	Youth entrepreneurship; innovative technologies; and commercialization.
Number of projects with SSTC components or activities	All projects envisage SSTC activities, embedded in certain project components as appropriate	8 ongoing; 2 approved	14 (the majority of LAC loans benefited from SSTC activities and exchanges supported by regional grants)	5	1
Number of SSTC activities implemented	14	6	27	10	3
Number of beneficiaries reached/trained with the SSTC activities implemented	155	1 416	465	>2 000	604 people in total
Number of SSTC policy dialogues convened	6	2	2	2	1
Number of SSTC knowledge-sharing and capacity-building workshops held	4	8	14	4	3
Number of South-South technical cooperation initiatives facilitated	1	3	9	6	n/a
Amount (in United States dollars) of South-South investments promoted	N/A	US\$6 650 000	N/A	>US\$6 million	About US\$100 000
Number of partnerships established for advancing SSTC	4	19	21	6	1
Number of SSTC regional/subregional or interregional events/initiatives supported	3	4	16	7	2

Overview of ongoing projects under the China-IFAD SSTC Facility

No.	Project title	Project implementation location	Approved value (United States dollars)
1	Inclusive Agriculture and Agro-industrial Value Chain Development as an Enabler of Poverty Reduction in Bangladesh	Bangladesh	US\$500 000
2	South-South Cooperation for Scaling Up Climate-resilient Value Chain Initiatives	Viet Nam, China, Laos and Cambodia	US\$500 000
3	Promoting Water Conservation and Irrigation Water Use Efficiency in Ethiopia	Ethiopia and Kenya	US\$499 905
4	Rural Youth Innovation Award	LAC	US\$450 000
5	South-South Cooperation in Green Economy for Agricultural Development and Enhanced Food Security	Algeria, Hungary, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey and Uzbekistan	US\$459 000
6	South-South and Triangular Cooperation for the Inter-Africa Bamboo Smallholder Farmers Livelihood Development Programme	Cameroon, Ghana, Ethiopia and Madagascar	US\$500 000
7	Strengthening the Rural Solutions Portal and IFAD's IT Tracking Systems to Increase the Uptake of Rural Development Solutions	IFAD	US\$400 000
8	Strengthening Business-to-Business Linkages and Investment Opportunities through IFAD's SSTC and Knowledge Centres	IFAD	US\$250 000
9	Effective South-South Cooperation in Agriculture to Unleash the Transformative Power of the Agriculture Sector for Inclusive Development in Pakistan	Pakistan	US\$500 000
10	Local Production of Fortified Cassava Flour in Bouenza Department in Congo	Congo	US\$492 438
11	Small-scale dryers for post-harvest management enterprises in Africa	Ghana, Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania	US\$500 000
12	Promoting Sustainable Cage Aquaculture in West Africa	Ghana and Nigeria	US\$500 000
13 ⁹	Learning from SSTC in Project Design for Better Results and Greater Sustainability	IFAD	US\$250 000

⁹ Two of the approved projects were withdrawn from Facility funding.

Results measurement framework for the Rural Solutions Portal (2019-2021)

Objectives	Outcomes	Outputs	Indicators	Targets	Means of verification
Objective 1: Promote match-making mechanisms and knowledge-sharing on innovative rural development solutions, as a contribution to reducing poverty in rural areas.	Awareness-raising – Awareness is raised on innovative rural solutions through the production and strategic distribution of knowledge products and communication materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New solutions designed - New communications and knowledge products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of solutions designed and developed - Number of communications and knowledge products designed and developed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least 15 solutions per year (<i>10 published, with at least 20 more to be published by the end of 2020</i>) - At least 10 communication or knowledge products (<i>five developed</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RSP (including special “smart” hit counters) - Project reports - Biennial client survey
	Match-making – Solution seekers and providers are connected through new features in the RSP that facilitate matching between demand and supply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New dedicated sections/modules on the RSP - Database of institutions and organizations in developing countries supporting SSTC - Success stories on the China-IFAD SSTC Facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New section/module on match-making developed and deployed - Database of institutions and organizations available - Success stories from the projects financed by the SSTC Facility developed and made available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One section on match-making (<i>in progress</i>) - One database with at least 30 institutions per region mapped (three regions should be mapped during the biennium) (<i>in progress</i>) - At least 10 success stories developed over the biennium (<i>in progress</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RSP - Project reports - Annual client survey
Objective 2: Foster the uptake and adoption of innovative and successful rural development solutions across developing countries.	Uptake – Development practitioners adopt tested rural development solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Special showcasing events on rural solutions - Special sessions dedicated to rural solutions presented at IFAD regional workshops and retreats - New partnership agreements with country institutions for promoting uptake of solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of solutions adopted in IFAD-supported projects - Number of solutions adopted in other development contexts by other institutions - Number of dedicated showcasing events - Number of sessions organized at IFAD workshops and regional retreats - Number of partnership agreements signed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At least three solutions adopted (<i>one adopted</i>) - At least one event for showcasing solutions, organized in one of the regions where IFAD operates (<i>three events organized</i>) - At least one session for each region where IFAD operates (<i>two sessions organized</i>) - At least one partnership agreement per region where IFAD operates (<i>in progress</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Event reports - Project reports - Partnership agreements
	Knowledge-sharing – Rural solutions are promoted among a diverse range of development actors (government representatives, development practitioners, international organizations and NGOs, as well as rural youth representatives and the private sector) through global showcasing and solution-sharing events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge fairs and solution-sharing events - Knowledge products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number of solution-sharing events - Number of knowledge products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One global solutions-sharing event (<i>one organized – African Green Revolution Forum</i>) - At least one knowledge product developed for each solution showcased (<i>in progress</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Event reports - Project reports - RSP - Annual client survey

Institutional strengthening – Institutions are strengthened through the exchange of knowledge and the cross-fertilization of best practices.

- Solutions exchanges across web portals of selected organizations and institutions
- Special exchange seminars organized to raise awareness of institutions on the uptake of solutions

- Number of solutions exchanged across web portals
- Number of exchange seminars

- At least 30 solutions exchanged across the web portals over the biennium (*in progress*)
- At least one exchange seminar per region (*in progress*)

- RSP
 - Other partner portals
 - Project and event reports
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