

SAVING  
LIVES  
CHANGING  
LIVES



# LEVERAGING PROGRESS AGAINST HUNGER THROUGH SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION

Beyond the Annual Performance  
Report 2019 Series



June 2020

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---



|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>I. INTRODUCTION</b>   | <b>2</b>  |
| Background   | 3         |
| Exploring the role of South-South and Triangular Cooperation in global development       | 5         |
| <b>II. OVERVIEW OF WFP'S SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2019</b> | <b>8</b>  |
| Global highlights  | 9         |
| WFP Centres of Excellence  | 12        |
| Regional Bureaux highlights  | 14        |
| Rome-Based Agencies partnerships   | 15        |
| <b>III. COUNTRY EXAMPLES</b>   | <b>16</b> |
| <b>IV. LOOKING FORWARD</b>   | <b>20</b> |

# I. INTRODUCTION

---



## BACKGROUND

Over the last two decades, South-South Cooperation (SSC) has gained increasing recognition as a broad framework for collaboration among countries of the Global South in a range of political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and technical domains. There is no universally accepted definition for SSC, although the United Nations High Level Committee on South-South Cooperation has defined it broadly as “a process whereby two or more developing countries pursue their individual and/or shared national capacity development objectives through exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how, and through regional and interregional collective actions, including partnerships involving governments, regional organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector, for their individual and/or mutual benefit within and across regions.”<sup>1</sup>

International organizations have subsequently accentuated different aspects of SSC in their work, including the aspect of triangular cooperation. Triangular cooperation is defined by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) as “collaboration in which traditional donor countries and multilateral organizations facilitate South-South initiatives through the provision of funding, training, management and technological systems as well as other forms of support”.<sup>2</sup> As a triangular partner, WFP plays a facilitating role by brokering South-South partnerships, with a focus on SDG 2.

While, in the past, SSC consisted primarily of the sharing of knowledge, technical skills, solutions and experts, recent developments in South-South cooperation – as acknowledged at the 2019 High-level Meeting on South-South Cooperation in Buenos Aires, Argentina (“BAPA+40”) – have included increased South-South trade, South-South flows of foreign direct investment, movements towards regional integration, technology transfers and sharing of solutions and experts, and other forms of exchanges.<sup>3</sup>

In 2015, ambitious new targets were established in the world’s fight against poverty, hunger and inequality with the adoption of Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As the world’s leader in the provision of food assistance, the World Food Programme (WFP) embedded these goals – particularly SDG 2 to end hunger and SDG 17 to strengthen Agenda 2030 partnerships – into its strategies and operations. Under WFP’s mandate, activities are implemented in partnership with governments and organizations to address life-saving humanitarian goals and life-changing developmental objectives.

---

1 United Nations. 2012. Framework of Operational Guidelines on United Nations Support to South-South and Triangular Cooperation. High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation (SSC/17/3). New York.

2 Definition by UN Office for South-South Cooperation, NY; <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/about/about-sstc/>.

3 Source: UN Office for South-South Cooperation, NY; <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/about/about-sstc/>.

Today, an estimated 821 million people still live with hunger, while 149 million children under age five are stunted.<sup>4</sup> In order to reach these remaining vulnerable groups, WFP needs to expand its resource base and bring all partners onboard to strengthen the capacity of governments to achieve food security and nutrition. South-South cooperation is a promising framework which enables developing countries to “help each other” by mobilizing the expertise, technologies and financial resources “from the South for the South” in order to achieve SDG 2. The rationale for SSC is that many developing countries have made substantial economic and social progress by designing and using their own innovative, home-grown approaches. Their knowledge and experiences can be shared with other countries that have comparable situations and face similar issues. In fact, cooperation among developing countries has increased to over USD 26 billion<sup>5</sup>, while southern development institutions such as the New Development Bank<sup>6</sup> and other providers have flourished and complement the landscape of ‘Northern’ development institutions, such as the World Bank. Thus, SSC has enabled developing countries to be at the forefront of efforts towards zero hunger, and can complement “traditional” forms of North-South development assistance.

As an integral part of – and an effective means to achieve – international sustainable development efforts, SSC is influencing WFP’s operating environment (see Box 1). Governments increasingly request WFP’s support to facilitate South-South exchanges in order to tackle food security and nutrition challenges. Since 2011, WFP has increasingly helped to broker SSC in response to these government demands. Key thematic areas of WFP-facilitated SSC include school meals, value chains and market access, resilience building, nutrition, social protection, emergency preparedness, supply chain and food security analysis. All these topics are at the heart of advancing progress on SDG 2 at the country level.



SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION IS CRUCIAL TO REACH THE

**821 MILLION**

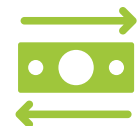
HUNGRY PEOPLE IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE.



IN 2019, WFP REACHED

**97.1 MILLION**

PEOPLE THROUGH FOOD AND CASH-BASED TRANSFERS



By facilitating South-South Cooperation, we enable developing countries to help each other and can reach many more people

## HOW?

By sharing their existing

**KNOWLEDGE**

**EXPERIENCES**

**TECHNOLOGIES**

**RESOURCES**

for progress to achieve SDG2

<sup>4</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Fund for Agricultural Development, United Nations Children’s Fund, WFP and World Health Organization. 2019. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2019: Safeguarding Against Economic Slowdowns and Downturns. <http://www.fao.org/3/ca5162en/ca5162en.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> See: [https://www.southcentre.int/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/RP88\\_Assessment-of-South-South-Cooperation-and-the-Global-Narrative-on-the-Eve-of-BAPA40\\_EN-2.pdf](https://www.southcentre.int/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/RP88_Assessment-of-South-South-Cooperation-and-the-Global-Narrative-on-the-Eve-of-BAPA40_EN-2.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> This multilateral development bank was formerly referred to as the BRICS Development Bank, established by the BRICS states comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

## EXPLORING THE ROLE OF SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION IN GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

As expressed in SDG 17, the knowledge and solutions from the Global South are increasingly relevant and demonstrate significant potential to accelerate country-led progress in achieving zero hunger by 2030. Specifically, SSTC:

- is recognized as an effective means for strengthening capacity in developing countries to support their efforts to achieve zero hunger (SDG 17.9);
- is a means to access the existing technology, expertise, knowledge and innovations in developing countries to tackle hunger and nutrition challenges elsewhere in the developing world (SDG 17.6); and
- contributes to brokering partnerships in order to mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries (SDG 17.3).

SSTC breaks up the traditional roles of 'providers' and 'recipients' of assistance and brings more countries on board as partners for advancing zero hunger. Through South-South exchanges, every country can become a provider of expertise and experiences, regardless of its size or stage of economic development.

This serves as an inspiration for countries to strengthen their ownership of, and prioritize, actions to achieve food security and nutrition. For example, developing countries may be more receptive to advocacy support from Brazil regarding its zero hunger experiences, such as in implementing home-grown school meals, as they may face similar food security and nutrition challenges.

SSTC is also central to collaboration between the Rome-Based Agencies (RBAs), which comprise the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and WFP. In 2017, the RBAs adopted the Joint Roadmap towards BAPA+40. Working with the RBAs and other partners such as the United Nations Children's Education Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), WFP leveraged its deep field presence and strong operational capacities to broker SSTC across its humanitarian and development portfolio. These partnerships aim to create benefits for the most vulnerable people who suffer from hunger and malnutrition and are at risk of being left behind.



Photo: WFP/Charles Hatch-Barnwell

## Figure 1: Major South-South and Triangular Cooperation Milestones/Events

UNOSSC was established to promote, coordinate and support SSTC.

The Nairobi outcome document established updated principles for SSTC and consolidated the roles of United Nations agencies as SSTC brokers.

A dedicated SSTC focal point was hired in HQ, Programme Division, to develop guidance for WFP country offices and implement WFP's policy. The RBAs created a SSTC working group to promote collaboration and share information.



Driven by rising country demand, WFP has stepped up its role in brokering South-South exchanges to expedite progress on SDG 2. As per WFP's 2015 Policy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, supporting countries to tap into South-South opportunities "is a strategic opportunity to reach more people in need". Key pillars of the policy are (1) providing regional bureaux and country offices with guidance and support on engaging in and facilitating South-South exchanges; (2) providing access to a platform for sharing knowledge on food security and nutrition; (3) enhancing WFP's expertise by establishing mechanisms for tapping into the expertise of developing countries; and (4) creating incentives for WFP engagement in brokering SSC on food security and nutrition issues in line with WFP's rules, regulations and financial framework.

In October 2019, WFP held a global internal meeting on SSTC to review its experiences, draw lessons and develop a roadmap for the way forward. This thematic report, produced jointly by the Corporate Planning and Performance Division and the SSTC headquarters team in the Programme Division (PRO), contains three more sections. Section II summarizes WFP's global progress in 2019 in applying SSTC, using information from the SSTC team's quarterly reports<sup>9</sup> combined with analysis of WFP's annual country performance reports. In Section III, country and regional level examples are presented to provide a better picture of WFP's SSTC field work. Section IV describes the steps being taken to position WFP as a SSTC partner of choice during the final decade of the SDGs.

<sup>7</sup> The Buenos Aires Action Plan was adopted by 138 United Nations Member States; see <https://www.unsouthsouth.org/bapa40/documents/buenos-aires-plan-of-action/>

<sup>8</sup> WFP South-South and Triangular Cooperation Policy. WFP/EB.A/2015/5-D. April 2015.

<sup>9</sup> For access to the SSTC quarterly report series, see: <https://newgo.wfp.org/collection/south-south-quarterly-newsletter-series>



## September

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development specifically referred to SSTC as a means to achieve the SDGs.

WFP developed guidance, tools, training modules and good practices to assist country offices identify, prioritize and design appropriate SSTC opportunities and incorporate them into WFP's country plans.

## October

The first WFP Global Meeting on SSTC is held in Rome to chart strategic options for WFP's growing work on SSTC.



## May

WFP's South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) Policy<sup>8</sup> was adopted by the Executive Board.

The second WFP Centre of Excellence was established in Beijing – the WFP China Centre of Excellence.

## March

Forty years after BAPA, high-level representatives of governments gathered in Buenos Aires to renew their commitment to SSTC through the BAPA+40 Outcome Document. WFP set up a third CoE with the Government of Côte d'Ivoire.



Photo: WFP/Mariana\_Rochie

## II. OVERVIEW OF WFP'S SSTC ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2019

---



## GLOBAL HIGHLIGHTS

In 2019, WFP's global commitment to SSTC reached a new level with 85 percent of WFP country offices reporting SSTC engagement with their host government. The upward trend in this engagement rate since 2014 (see Figure 1) illustrates the rising importance that WFP's host governments place on SSC as a strategy to tackle their food security and nutrition challenges, lend support to their neighbours and peers and gain visibility as providers of solutions for SDG 2. It also shows that WFP country offices have steadily and increasingly embraced their roles as brokers for SSC, leveraging it as a means to engage with host governments on the changing lives agenda. Moreover, all Country Strategic Programmes (CSP) and interim CSP documents approved in 2019 reflected SSTC in their activities.

The year 2019 marked a milestone for WFP globally on SSTC, particularly in the following areas:

- positioning WFP as triangular partner - with a focus on resilience building - in the humanitarian-development domain, as highlighted on the global stage of the "BAPA+40";
- shifting from ad-hoc exchanges towards operationalizing coherent SSTC projects at the country level through the launch and roll-out of WFP's first wave of SSTC field pilots in Africa, Asia and Latin America, with WFP's first seed funding contribution from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, People's Republic of China (see Box 3);
- expanding WFP's network of Centres of Excellence (CoEs), with the launch of the Regional Centre Against Hunger and Malnutrition (CERFAM), complementing the work of WFP's existing centres in Brazil and China; and
- continuing direct support to WFP country offices and regional bureaux through the identification, formulation and prioritization of South-South opportunities by using "South-South Reviews", regional South-South mapping and "how-to guides" in key thematic areas. Specific examples include the SSC review for India, South-South mapping in the regional bureau in Dakar and the development of an SSTC approach to social protection by the Regional Bureau, Panama.

**Figure 1: Percentage of country offices supporting South-South and Triangular Cooperation**

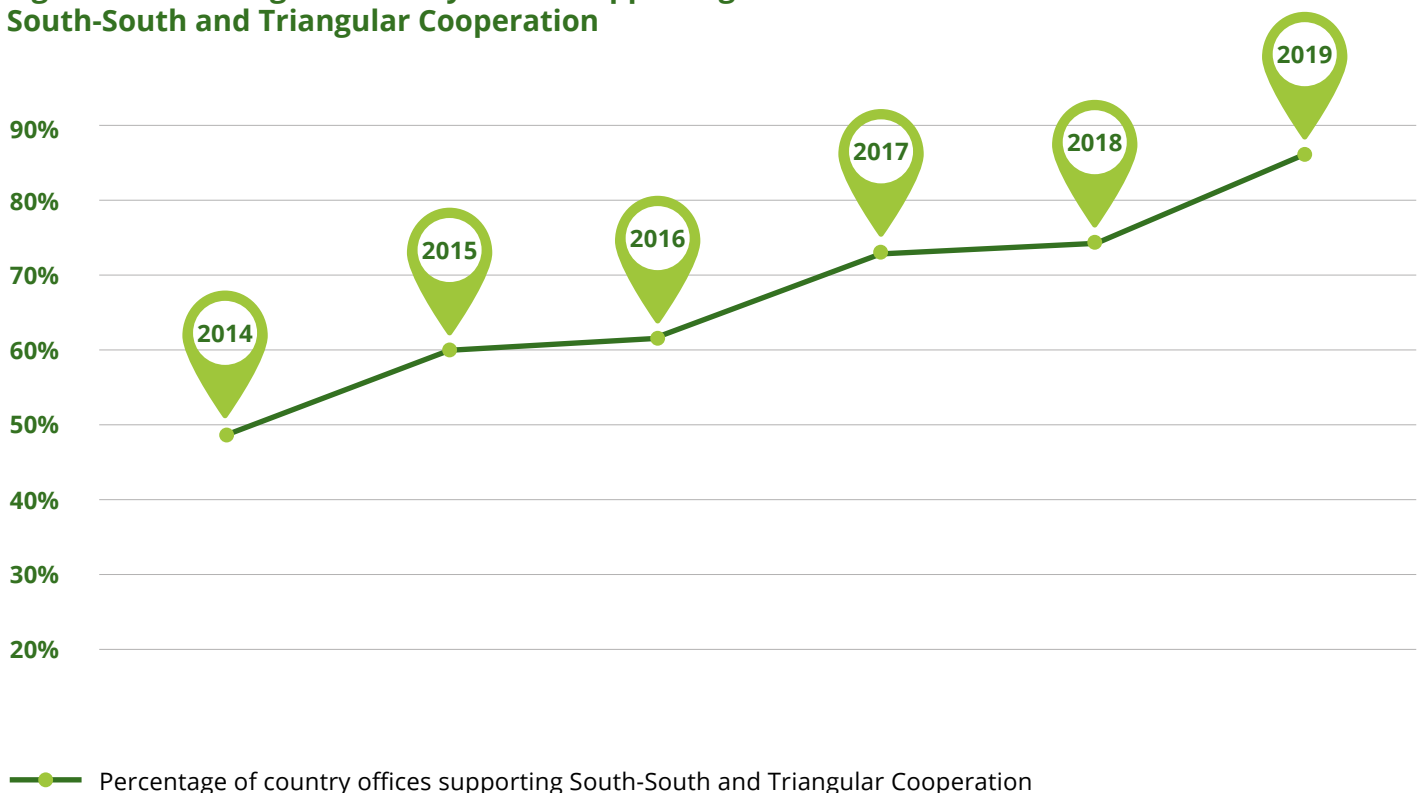


Figure 2

# GLOBAL OVERVIEW OF WFP'S ENGAGEMENT IN SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION IN 2019



# 97.1

MILLION PEOPLE SERVED



## EXAMPLE: ROLL-OUT OF WFP'S SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION FIELD PILOT INITIATIVE

PRO and WFP China, in coordination with the RBA (particularly FAO), launched four pilot projects in Ecuador, Kenya, Sri Lanka and the Republic of Congo in response to government demands for support in building the resilience of vulnerable smallholder farmers. This initiative enabled WFP country offices to create a space for learning and switch from a more traditional implementer role to an enabler of triangular cooperation. The pilots aim to inform a more strategic, field-oriented approach to

operationalizing SSTC initiatives on the ground, based on WFP's comparative advantages and complementarities with its RBA partners. Diverse SSTC modalities, such as farmer-to farmer exchanges, in-field training, advocacy and investment promotion were used to share China's successful experiences in reducing poverty and hunger while building on WFP's existing capacities in supply chain management, value chain and market access support. [Click here to read more.](#)



↑ 85%

OF WFP COUNTRY OFFICES ARE ENGAGED IN SSTC – AN INCREASE FROM 48% IN 2014.

↑ ALL

OF WFP'S COUNTRY STRATEGIC PLANS APPROVED IN 2019 FEATURED THE NEED FOR SSTC ENGAGEMENT WITH HOST GOVERNMENTS.

### Global SSTC Team (PRO)

SSTC is being brokered in different programmatic areas including emergency preparedness, nutrition, school feeding, programme

**CoE** WFP Centre of Excellence  
(Existing: Brazil, China, Cote d'Ivoire)

To effectively meet the growing country demand for SSTC in coordination with its host government, United Nations, non-governmental organization and private sector partners, WFP requires robust internal capacities, supporting structures, policies and tools. In 2019, significant efforts were made at headquarters and regional levels to take stock of WFP's current engagement and embed SSTC throughout WFP's programme of work (see Box 4). During an internal global meeting held in Rome, WFP's future strategic options for brokering South-South Cooperation were discussed with 50 staff including directors from country and regional bureau offices, the CoEs and key headquarters divisions. The meeting highlighted SSTC's essential role in helping countries meet their SDG 2 targets by 2030 and in shifting WFP's approach from being a "deliverer" to an "enabler" of development. The participants recommended further investments in SSTC, including the establishment of a global task force (including headquarters divisions, all regional bureaux and the CoEs) to further explore WFP's strategic options for engagement in SSTC.

### MAINSTREAMING SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION IN WFP

Several major initiatives were undertaken in 2019 to integrate and expand WFP's internal SSTC capacities:

- An internal knowledge platform was established to provide a global overview of demands and offers from host governments, enable WFP country offices to find the right partner to facilitate South-South exchanges, and share good practices. By the end of the year, this site included over 100 demands and offers.
- A strategy outlining key steps to systematically integrate SSTC into nutrition programmes as part of WFP's technical assistance to host governments was released in May. This contributed to expanding WFP-facilitated South-South exchanges into areas such as food fortification, HIV-sensitive programming, nutrition-sensitive school feeding and the promotion of healthy diets.
- The Regional Bureau in Panama developed a step-by-step guidance to mainstream South-South cooperation in social protection programmes. This supported WFP's facilitation of South-South transfers of knowledge and expertise on topics such as making safety nets more nutrition-sensitive and responsive to shocks.

## WFP CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

Since 2011, the host governments of three countries – Brazil, China and Côte d'Ivoire – have formed partnerships with WFP to facilitate South-South Cooperation by establishing WFP Centres of Excellence (CoE). The CoEs share their host government's experiences in addressing the zero hunger challenge with other developing countries and regions. With WFP support, these centres have leveraged government best practices in the design and implementation of national food security and nutrition programmes and providing access to relevant experiences and practices in food security, nutrition and poverty alleviation to other developing countries; the CoEs have become South-South knowledge "hubs". By responding to the growing demands of national governments and regional institutions for SSTC-based policy support, capacity strengthening, technical expertise and knowledge, the CoEs help countries accelerate their progress on country capacity strengthening towards zero hunger.

A brief summary of the many activities carried out by the CoE's during 2019 is provided below, along with a more detailed example of their country-level engagement.

## WFP Centre of Excellence Against Hunger in Brazil

Over the past nine years, 47 countries have benefited from policy and technical innovations to tackle hunger and malnutrition provided by the WFP CoE in Brazil. To date, 20 national food security and nutrition policies or programmes have been enhanced as a result of the Centre's direct and remote technical assistance, mainly on school meals, nutrition and social development.

In 2019 alone, the Centre facilitated capacity strengthening activities of stakeholders in 19 countries to support them meet their SDG 2 targets. This involved organizing five technical workshops, 10 in-country missions, a ministerial meeting and two major international school feeding and nutrition events, including during the Committee on Food Security 2019 and the XXI Global Child Nutrition Forum held in Siem Reap, Cambodia (December 2019). In addition, WFP CoE in Brazil assisted national government entities to design and implement 15 national policy documents and started to prepare projects for WFP field offices with the potential to mobilize over USD 10 million from multilateral partners to provide home-grown school feeding to over 74,000 children.

### SPOTLIGHT ON THE WFP CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

In 2019, WFP's CoEs:

- helped design and implement 15 national anti-hunger policy documents;
- mobilized USD 2.3 million for SSTC, including seed funds managed by WFP's PRO SSTC team for WFP country offices to operationalize field-oriented SSTC pilot projects with engagement of the RBA;
- signed seven Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) or partnership agreements;
- facilitated or organized over 15 major seminars, events or trainings; and
- facilitated five in-country trainings.

### LONG-TERM COLLABORATION ON SCHOOL FEEDING BETWEEN BRAZIL AND BURUNDI BEARS FRUIT

In September 2019, continuing its long-standing SSTC partnership with the Government of Burundi, the WFP Centre of Excellence Against Hunger in Brazil deployed Brazilian experts to help draft the implementation strategy for Burundi's National School Feeding Policy (NSFP). In previous years, the CoE contributed to the development of the 2014 action plan on school feeding and the adoption in 2018 of the NSFP. After consultations with government representatives and key stakeholders, the first draft of the strategy was submitted to the government in early November for review.

## WFP China Centre of Excellence

The WFP China CoE worked extensively with the recently established China International Development Cooperation Agency, which manages the country's USD 3 billion South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund, and with the ministry charged with implementing the fund's projects. Subsequently, China contributed USD 3.8 million for WFP-facilitated SSTC in 2019. In coordination with the PRO SSTC team, the CoE also collaborated with the RBAs (particularly FAO) and country offices, to design and roll out four SSTC pilot projects (see Box 3) thanks to the first seed funding contribution of USD 1 million to WFP from the Chinese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA) for its global work on SSTC. The CoE also organized over ten major seminars, events or trainings and secured five major MoUs or partnership agreements during the year.

## Regional Centre of Excellence Against Hunger and Malnutrition (CERFAM) based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

WFP's first regional CoE in Africa was launched in March 2019<sup>10</sup> in partnership with the Government of Côte d'Ivoire to promote African-generated solutions to end hunger and malnutrition by 2030 throughout the continent. Based in Abidjan, CERFAM developed an initial overview of focus areas including home-grown school feeding, rural development including post-harvest losses, nutrition interventions and community resilience. These thematic areas were refined based on discussions with the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and regional partners to respond to priority needs and gaps in the region.

In 2019, CERFAM pursued key initiatives to broker South-South partnerships in West Africa. For example, the Centre developed guidelines to support African countries in identifying and documenting good practices that can be shared with and adapted by other countries in the region through South-South Cooperation. Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana have already successfully tested these guidelines.

### FIELD PILOT - CONNECTING SRI LANKA'S SMALLHOLDER FARMERS TO CHINA'S AGRICULTURAL EXPERTISE

Ranking sixth on the Climate Risk Index 2020, Sri Lanka is one of the countries most affected by extreme weather events such as recurrent droughts and floods. These events wreak havoc on smallholder farmer's ability to grow, store and profitably sell their two main crops, rice and maize. In 2019, the WFP China CoE and FAO jointly developed a pilot project to share China's expertise and technology in rice production, processing and marketing in the field. The first activity took place in December, when four smallholder farmer leaders and six government officials from Sri Lanka participated in training and in-field demonstrations on China's model for rice processing and storage techniques, farmer's cooperatives, value aggregation and market access. These participants will share their knowledge in 2020 with over 1,000 other smallholders as part of WFP's three year "R5n" resilience project in six districts, using a "peer learning" approach to reach a wide audience.

### IMPROVING THE CASSAVA VALUE CHAIN IN WEST AFRICA

In the framework of triangular cooperation, CERFAM facilitated a technical exchange between Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and the Republic of Congo to develop the cassava value chain. Rural Congolese cassava producers were trained by Ivorian and Beninese experts in cassava processing and production and in fabricating more efficient machines for processing cassava. These rural producers acquired the techniques and equipment for processing with higher efficiency and productivity, thereby improving their food and nutritional security and livelihood. CERFAM also facilitated a technical workshop in November to highlight initiatives on post-harvest loss management (PHLM) from countries in Africa and foster discussions and sharing of experiences among stakeholders from Africa, China and Europe on innovative technologies and good practices for strengthening PHLM in Africa.

<sup>10</sup> Source: CERFAM Brief.

## REGIONAL BUREAUX HIGHLIGHTS

All of WFP's regional bureaux significantly stepped up their efforts to broker South-South cooperation in 2019 with dedicated regional SSTC focal points. Their activities included support to countries where WFP did not currently have a field presence, as well as cross-regional initiatives, as illustrated by the following examples.

### Regional Bureau in Panama

The Latin America and the Caribbean regional bureau is one of WFP's most advanced and experienced in terms of brokering SSC, due to the large number of middle-income countries and "South-South providers" in the region. In 2019, key thematic areas included nutrition- and gender-sensitive approaches to social protection, early warning and preparedness, and resilience-building of smallholder farmers' communities. For example, Peru has been tapping into WFP-facilitated SSTC with Costa Rica since 2017 to fight malnutrition by strengthening the national policy on rice fortification. Three workshops were held in Peru to train authorities at national and subnational levels between 2017 and 2019. Between 2018 and 2019, expert deployments from Costa Rica to Peru resulted in the development of preliminary guidelines on Monitoring and Surveillance of Rice Fortification. These South-South initiatives have reinforced the incorporation of rice fortification into social protection programmes in Peru.

### Regional Bureau in Bangkok

In the Asia and the Pacific region, WFP facilitated several important intra-regional exchanges to support social protection systems to become more shock-responsive and address remaining challenges of malnutrition. This work included peer learning on nutrition education and food fortification and launching a WFP-FAO project on SSTC in Sri Lanka. For example, at the request of the Department of Social Welfare of Myanmar (DSW), WFP organized a study visit to Nepal to learn about its social protection policies and programmes, including different programmes targeting vulnerable groups, the autonomy of sub-national levels in programme implementation and the effective application of information technology for decentralized digital payment platforms and banking services. The delegation from Myanmar also learned about the legal framework guaranteeing social protection as a fundamental right and the government's commitment and spending on social security programmes. As a result, DSW has incorporated some of these lessons learned into Myanmar's social protection strategy.

### Regional Bureau in Cairo

WFP supported countries across Northern Africa, Middle East, Eastern Europe and Central Asia to tap into South-South opportunities through intra-regional exchanges and policy dialogues on school feeding, social protection and nutrition in 2019. The regional bureau also facilitated inter-regional exchanges with Latin America on social protection and set up a WFP knowledge platform in Egypt to promote knowledge sharing and exchange of good practices within Africa. For example, with WFP support, the Government of Libya engaged in knowledge exchanges with Egypt to learn how to formulate and integrate a nutrition education strategy into its national primary school curriculum. The Egyptian National Institute of Health provided technical support to Libya's Ministry of Education (MOE) by deploying experts to Tunis to deliver a 3-day workshop. During the workshop, the Egyptian experts shared their expertise in nutrition education and healthy lifestyles tailored to Libya's specific needs. This workshop equipped forty staff from Libya's MOE with knowledge and skills to strengthen the government efforts to formulate a nutrition education strategy.

### Regional Bureau in Dakar

With the regional bureau's support, countries in West and Central Africa engaged in SSTC on topics such as emergency preparedness and response, social protection, school feeding and nutrition. WFP stepped up its regional triangular capacities through CERFAM to support countries in evidence-generation and knowledge sharing of African-generated solutions. Building on a regional South-South mapping, WFP continued the efforts to develop a roadmap to engage more partners in this field of work. For example, in April 2019, WFP and the World Bank facilitated a study visit of Mauritanian officials to Niger, as part of the efforts to strengthen their government's capacities to better respond to shocks and establish a national preparedness and response scheme. As part of the South-South exchange, officials engaged in peer learning about the history, modus operandi, success conditions and limitations of the schemes in place in these two Sahelian countries facing comparable challenges. Following the mission, an inter-ministerial technical working group was formed to develop concrete deliverables for the future scheme in Mauritania.



## Regional Bureau in Johannesburg

Southern African countries engaged in WFP-facilitated SSC through intra-regional exchanges, as well as with inter-regional partners such as Thailand and China. Key areas of South-South collaboration included nutrition, smallholder farmers' support including resilience building, and early warning and preparedness. For example, Zambia visited Thailand to learn how to prepare for the launch of its 'Good Food' logo that aims at promoting healthy diets and preventing non-communicable diseases. WFP facilitated a technical visit of representatives from the Zambian Bureau of Standards to Thailand. As a result of the exchange, the Government of Zambia decided to step up efforts in the preparation of the launch directed at consumers, with continued support from WFP.

## Regional Bureau in Nairobi

In Eastern Africa, WFP continued to support intra-regional collaboration in areas such as nutrition, social protection and safety nets and school feeding and launched WFP's first SSTC pilot project in Kenya. For example, in July 2019, WFP facilitated a study tour from the Government of Uganda to Ethiopia to learn about the technical aspects of the Labour Intensive Public Works and the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP). Twelve officials from the Government of Uganda studied the Ethiopian model. As key takeaways from the mission, Ugandan officials learned about the institutional arrangements for implementation of PSNP and what contributed to its successful implementation at all levels, and how to build the capacity of the Ugandan technical staff to effectively implement programmes.

## ROME-BASED AGENCIES PARTNERSHIPS

The RBAs have actively facilitated SSC in order to advance progress on SDG 2, based on their respective mandates, comparative advantages and distinctive strengths. The RBAs endorsed a joint roadmap for brokering SSC in 2017 outlining common priorities, focus areas and activities for 2018-2019.

Since the roadmap's endorsement, RBA collaboration on brokering SSC has increased significantly. Activities ranged from joint visibility and advocacy initiatives to emphasize the importance of investing in a world without hunger by showcasing successful examples from the field, to the first joint operational SSTC activities and projects in the field delivered at the request of host governments. In 2019, examples included hosting or co-hosting five joint side events in the "BAPA+40" conference held in Argentina, a joint Board event hosted by WFP on the United Nations day for South-South Cooperation to shed light on the contribution of SSTC to reach the most vulnerable people suffering from hunger and malnutrition, and the roll-out of WFP-FAO pilot projects, such as the ones in Sri Lanka and Ecuador. The agencies also began developing an RBA methodology for monitoring and evaluating the results of SSTC initiatives in the context of SDG 2.



### III. COUNTRY EXAMPLES

---



Photo: WFP/Bruno Djoyo

WFP-facilitated SSC emphasizes delivering concrete benefits for the most vulnerable people by contributing to results at three different levels:

- at policy level by incentivizing policy-makers to invest in and prioritize food security and nutrition;
- at technical level by empowering experts involved in programme design and implementation; and
- at grassroots level by promoting field experimentation to scale up local innovations.

The following examples illustrate this work in action.

### India supports its neighbours through advocacy and technical peer learning on rice fortification

Micronutrient deficiencies are most common in areas where rice is an important contributor to people's diets. Thus, the fortification of rice with vitamins and minerals has gained momentum in Asian countries with a high prevalence of micronutrient deficiencies. Successful rice fortification is country- and context-specific and requires careful planning and analysis, multisectoral partnerships and engagement of the private and public sectors. As the world's second largest producer of rice and a country in which WFP has been transitioning from food distribution to policy and technical assistance, India is a natural partner in this field.

Since 2013, WFP has worked with the Indian government across the rice value chain to introduce rice fortification into the country's safety net programmes through advocacy, policy and technical advice, knowledge-sharing and sensitization of the private sector. This assistance led to the inclusion of fortified rice in India's Public Distribution System, Integrated Child Development Services scheme and Mid-Day meal scheme, which now reach almost 800 million people who are most at risk of malnutrition.

Several countries in the region demonstrated interest in accessing South-South mechanisms to learn from this experience, particularly the quality assurance and food labelling efforts and strategies adopted by India to promote fortified rice. In response, WFP facilitated several South-South learning missions, including from Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Bangladesh to India in 2019, using advocacy and technical dialogue to help them to adapt India's best practices on fortification and school feeding to their own contexts.

For example, with support from WFP, Sri Lankan officials visited the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) to learn about the principles of setting minimum fortification standards and specifications, particularly the creation of the "F+" logo used to certify that a fortified product respects Indian standards and specifications. The officials were particularly interested in the social and behavioral change campaign - Eat Right India - developed by FSSAI to promote fortified food use by consumers and a healthy lifestyle for the people of India. The learning visit helped the participants enhance their knowledge of policy, standard setting and quality monitoring issues and gain a better understanding of the need for domestic production of fortified rice.

Bhutan also leveraged India's expertise to make progress on its rice fortification programme. In Bhutan, non-communicable diseases are a growing health concern, responsible for more than half of all deaths in the country.<sup>11</sup> Awareness raising and advocacy programmes on diet, food habits and health are central to reduce the risk of disease from foodborne illnesses. Through WFP-facilitated SSC, a senior delegation from Bhutan visited food testing laboratories and food establishments in India in 2019 to learn about the FSSAI food fortification quality assurance programme and the Eat Right movement. This study tour allowed Bhutanese officials to introduce some of the lessons learned into the country's National Nutrition Strategy.

Decades of experience have proven that largescale food fortification is a sustainable, safe and effective intervention with significant public health impact. These examples of South-South exchanges on rice fortification demonstrate the strength and effectiveness of SSTC as a modality for peer learning to help countries advance efforts towards achieving food security and nutrition for all.

11 WHO. 2018. Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs): Country Profiles 2018. [http://www.who.int/nmh/countries/btn\\_en.pdf](http://www.who.int/nmh/countries/btn_en.pdf).

## Mozambique's transition to home-grown school feeding through technical assistance from Brazil

Mozambique's population faces intractable food security and nutrition challenges due to poverty, internal conflict, natural disasters and an unstable domestic food system. Micronutrient deficiencies are widespread and chronic malnutrition is the eighth highest in the world, affecting 43 percent of children under five years of age.<sup>12</sup> In 2019, the country ranked 180 out of 189 countries in the 2019 Human Development Index. The education sector is especially weak, with very low primary school retention rates and a greater proportion of girls dropping out of school than boys particularly in higher grades.

In similar contexts, school feeding programmes have proven their cost-effectiveness in enhancing the food security of children while contributing to education and improving the health status of vulnerable populations. Since WFP began implementing school feeding programmes in Mozambique in 1977, the programme has grown steadily and now covers 170,000 pupils. At the government's request, WFP began supporting the establishment and scale-up of the national home-grown school feeding programme – the Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar or PRONAE – in 2010 by facilitating SSC assistance from the Government of Brazil. Brazil's school feeding programme – one of the oldest and largest globally – is recognized as an example of “good practice”, particularly in integrating procurement of fresh food from local smallholders into school meals and promoting nutrition education.

Following the successful implementation of the first phase of the SSTC project in 12 schools, in 2018 a second phase was initiated which expanded PRONAE to 24 schools. This follow-up SSTC project included a cost-benefit analysis, efforts to creation of a school feeding law and capacity development activities to improve the government's operational capacity, accountability and monitoring at all levels. Brazil shared its experience in food and nutrition education, local procurement and institutional coordination. The Russian Federation also contributed to the project through an innovative SSTC arrangement with WFP and the Government of Mozambique, by providing USD 40 million for school feeding. The funds are dedicated to the expansion of PRONAE to cover 150,000 students in all ten provinces.

In 2019, these arrangements enabled WFP to support PRONAE in doubling the number of students and schools assisted from 2018 to 125,945 students in 150 schools under one funding stream. To enhance monitoring and ensure programme quality, WFP provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Education and Human Development (MINEDH). This included provision of data collection equipment, a joint MINEDH-WFP monitoring mission to most provinces in November and capacity strengthening for MINEDH to manage and implement decentralised food procurement. In another SSTC project between Brazil and Mozambique, a technical assessment was carried out in 2019 to guide the next steps of the ‘Beyond Cotton’ project.

### BRAZIL SUPPORTS AFRICAN SMALLHOLDERS TO GO “BEYOND COTTON”

In partnership with the Brazilian Cotton Institute, the WFP CoE in Brazil has begun assisting smallholder farmers in four African countries to increase their cotton-crop profits through value aggregation systems. The aim is to increase the food and nutrition security of these vulnerable groups. For example, the CoE staff conducted a technical mission to Mozambique in 2019, visiting schools and farmer households in two provinces to collect baseline data and developed the project's results framework in a workshop with country stakeholders. The project will help cotton producers improve production by promoting companion planting of crops such as corn, sorghum and beans to improve soil fertility, and commercialize cotton by-products such as oil, also through institutional markets such as PRONAE.

<sup>12</sup> Source: Mozambique Annual Country Report. WFP.

## Strengthening the role of smallholder farming women in Ecuador through South-South advocacy and farmer-to-farmer exchanges in the field

In Ecuador, small family farms account for an estimated 75 percent of total agricultural units and produce much of the country's food for daily consumption.<sup>13</sup> The livelihoods of smallholder farmers are threatened by low productive capacity, restricted access to market and credit opportunities and high dependence on rice cultivation, which is an unsustainable and shock-sensitive monoculture. This situation limits the access of farmers to an adequate, diverse and nutritious diet, particularly for rural women who often face a triple burden of exclusion as women, as indigenous people and as agricultural workers. Therefore, the Government of Ecuador requested assistance to strengthen its capacity to provide effective and gender-sensitive rural services to farmers.

WFP, with funding from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA), People's Republic of China, and in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock in Ecuador (MAG), FAO, the WFP China CoE, Guatemala and Peru, has responded to this request by setting up a South-South pilot project in Ecuador using a two-tiered approach: (1) strengthening the technical and institutional capacities of the Ecuador Ministry of Agriculture through knowledge transfer with China; and (2) promoting a gender-transformative approach to rural development by facilitating policy dialogues between rural smallholder leaders from Guatemala, Ecuador and Peru.

First, the project facilitated a farmers-to-farmers exchange on rice production. Selected Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) technical staff and local rice producers visited Chinese rice farms in September 2019. This exchange visit was complemented with on-site training by Chinese experts on new production techniques to increase and diversify production. With support from MAG and WFP, these farmers established demonstration plots in their communities to foster replication of the innovative approaches. The Ecuador National Institute of Agricultural Research (INIAP) expressed interest in collaborating on this initiative and met with the WFP country office in December to discuss their active engagement during the next phase.

Second, the project supported the government in strengthening the role of rural women in agricultural policies and increasing their access to market opportunities. It provided a platform for intra-regional peer learning and networking of female lead farmers from Guatemala and Peru who have influenced public policies in order to overcome inequalities and promote the role of women in rural development. Enabling them to share their experiences. WFP Ecuador, FAO, UN Women and MAG organized the National Rural Women's Encounter in May followed by 12 regional dialogues to develop public policy guidelines on the role of women in Family Farming. Participants included 744 rural women from Ecuador, 77 MAG staff, and delegates from non-governmental and international organizations. Findings from the experience and key recommendations for Ecuador's rural policy were presented by female lead farmers and MAG at the "Day of the Rural Woman" held on October 2019 in Quito.

This project has successfully augmented individual and institutional capacities of Ecuadorians in implementing an integrated rice system to diversify crop production and income sources, while also effectively advocating for the importance of investment in rural development and the role of rural smallholder women. The project has attracted a further generous contribution from MARA, People's Republic of China to fund a scale-up phase in 2020.

---

<sup>13</sup> WFP. 2017. Ecuador Country Strategic Plan (2017-2021). WFP/EB.1/2017/7/2/Rev.2

## IV. LOOKING FORWARD

---



Photo: WFP/Judith Schuler

The year 2020 poses a significant challenge for WFP and governments worldwide with the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of people facing acute hunger might reach 265 million by the end of this year (NYT, 22 April 2020).

COVID-19 exacerbates the risks for already vulnerable and food insecure populations. It not only affects WFP's own operations and need to secure business continuity, but also and particularly the operating environment and effectiveness of national systems of WFP's host governments in areas such as national social protection systems, basic delivery systems (incl. school feeding and nutrition) and food systems.

WFP has developed and is rolling out a comprehensive Mid Term Programme Framework (MTPF) which sets out a comprehensive approach and clearly states WFP's intent to work primarily through national systems in the above areas in support to governments' responses to the COVID-19 socio-economic impact.

In this regard, technical assistance/country capacity strengthening, including South-South Triangular Cooperation, will be an important means for WFP country offices to engage with host governments in operationalizing the MTPF.

WFP has launched a WFP Service Offer in South-South cooperation with a specific focus on COVID-19 in order to support the operationalization of the MTPF. Just as an example, the service offer includes the launch of a small COVID-19 South-South Opportunity Fund to enable WFP country offices to realize South-South opportunities (one-off activities and field pilots) with host governments in order to respond to these COVID-19 challenges on the ground. It also includes a collaboration between WFP's Programme (Humanitarian and Development) Division and WFP's Innovation and Knowledge Management Division on "Digitizing WFP's approach and business model for South-South knowledge brokerage in the context of COVID-19."

2020 is also an important period for WFP's South-South and triangular cooperation engagement, notably as the organization's 2015 SSTC policy is being evaluated. The evaluation's findings combined to proceedings from WFP's Global SSTC Meeting and its SSTC Task Force will inform WFP's future strategic direction and instruments in this vital area.

WFP's vision for engagement in brokering SSC is two-fold. The first, internal objective is to help country offices deliver zero hunger results more effectively through the next generation of CSPs by brokering South-South exchanges. The second objective is to expand WFP's engagement with host governments on zero hunger by positioning the organization as an SSC broker and partner for country capacity strengthening in development contexts. This will be achieved through six priority activities:

1. matching country demand with offers in order to help country offices identify and realize SSTC opportunities;
2. helping country offices systematically tap into South-South investment opportunities for the design and implementation of their CSPs;
3. effectively engaging WFP's Centres of Excellence in brokering South-South knowledge sharing in order to support host governments;
4. facilitating learning from WFP's SSTC field operations;
5. generating strong evidence through monitoring and evaluation (M&E) about WFP's added value in enabling South-South exchanges; and
6. showcasing results from WFP-facilitated SSTC initiatives in order to better position the organization as an SSC broker.

With a longer-term strategic perspective, it will be important for WFP to further enable its country offices to fulfill their mandate and strengthen their position with host governments as a credible partner for development. This will include the need to further invest in and mainstream SSTC in WFP's programme and partnership work, and to strengthen internal capacities for equipping country offices to effectively promote SSTC. WFP's flagship initiatives, such as the SSTC Field Pilot Initiative, its network of Centres of Excellence and 'South-South reviews' will be reinforced over the next few years to achieve these goals.

Another key priority in 2020 is to strengthen monitoring and evaluation of WFP's SSTC activities in order to better inform evidence-based programming. However, capturing the results and contributions of WFP-brokered SSC initiatives is challenging given the wide scope of SSTC modalities and the fact that its initiatives are primarily set up and driven by host governments. Nonetheless, integrating M&E in its SSTC work and strengthening the evidence base is essential for WFP to be able to broker SSC effectively and with a clear focus on generating SDG 2 benefits for the most vulnerable people.

There is widespread agreement that SSTC offers a tremendous opportunity to assist more of the world's 821 million hungry people and achieve zero hunger. It is a valuable and timely approach to address country needs based on the principles of solidarity, ownership and mutual benefit – and one which is expected to gain even further relevance as part and parcel of international cooperation, especially in the current challenging times of COVID-19. Specifically, South-South and triangular exchanges break up 'traditional' provider-recipient relationships, thereby enabling all countries to contribute their knowledge and expertise for the greater good, regardless of their size or stage of economic development. Therefore, WFP has embraced the use of SSTC to make knowledge exchanges and country capacity strengthening support for host governments a central part of its business model.

To enable countries meet the SDG 2 target by 2030, WFP and its partners need to combine their efforts to unleash the growing expertise, capacities, knowledge, technologies, resources and local innovations that already exist in developing countries. WFP's role involves helping governments address food needs directly, while positioning them to help themselves and each other. By working together, zero hunger can be transformed from a goal into reality in the next decade.







Photo: WFP/Arssalan Serra

**World Food Programme**

Via Cesare Giulio Viola 68/70,  
00148 Rome, Italy  
T +39 06 65131 [wfp.org](http://wfp.org)

Cover Photo: WFP/Mariana Rocha