



联合国
粮食及
农业组织

Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations

Organisation des Nations
Unies pour l'alimentation
et l'agriculture

Продовольственная и
сельскохозяйственная организация
Объединенных Наций

Organización de las
Naciones Unidas para la
Alimentación y la Agricultura

منظمة
الأغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

E

FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA

Twenty-ninth session

Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, 4-8 April 2016

Africa Solidarity Trust Fund for Food Security

Executive Summary

The Africa Solidarity Trust Fund for Food Security (ASTF) was spearheaded by the 27th Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Regional Conference for Africa, held in April 2012 in Brazzaville, Congo, and officially launched during the 38th Session of the FAO Conference in June 2013. It is an innovative Africa-led fund to support Africa-for-Africa development initiatives. Its main goal is to strengthen food security across the continent by assisting countries and their regional organizations to eradicate hunger and malnutrition, eliminate rural poverty and manage natural resources in a sustainable manner. In many respects, the ASTF is South-South Cooperation (SSC) in nature as many of the supported programmes and projects are upscaling good practices, knowledge and technology from one African country to another.

Since 2013, contributions have reached USD 40 million, with Equatorial Guinea and Angola being the major financial contributors. Governed by a joint Steering Committee (SC) and a Fund Assembly (FA), with the support of a Programme Management Unit (PMU), the Fund supports activities aligned to FAO's renewed strategic framework and priority programmes as well as development priorities determined by the Africa Regional Conference. Through its governing structure, the fund allocated USD 34.5 million to 15 regional programmes and national projects which are being implemented in 36 countries to boost efforts to eradicate hunger, and reduce malnutrition and poverty.

Results achieved through these supports are beginning to demonstrate the significance of the vision of an Africa-led support for Africa to achieve food security, and substantiate the value of the innovative mechanism to mobilize resources from Africa for Africa. Based on the successes and lessons learned to date, the ASTF will be launched with a renewed and focused vision and calls for expanded partnership, in particular, to enhance intra-Africa/South-South collaboration and importantly, raise the visibility of each countries' role in ending hunger on the continent.

*This document can be accessed using the Quick Response Code on this page;
an FAO initiative to minimize its environmental impact and promote greener communications.
Other documents can be consulted at www.fao.org*



mp590

As a result of the ASTF funding in Niger, 160 000 vulnerable households improved their agricultural productivity and food security from quality input distribution while child feeding and nutrition is enhanced through investments in livestock recapitalization for women and development of small-scale irrigation infrastructure. Over 700 000 potential farmers and pastoralists stand to benefit from six farmer warehouse complexes or “Maison du paysan”, established as integrated input and agricultural service centres to strengthen communities’ resilience against drought or other crisis.

In South-Sudan the funding helped to increase food security of over 200 000 most vulnerable individuals. It improved the nutritional intake among displaced households, and protected rural livelihoods to different shocks with the distribution of fishing and livestock production kits. Pastoral assets of 18 743 households were protected and the risk of livestock disease outbreaks and mortality substantially reduced through country-wide vaccination and treatment campaigns.

In Malawi and Mali, capacity of women and youth groups is being strengthened to effectively engage in production and marketing activities, and to start up or boost personal businesses. Production of rice and vegetables increased through better access to inputs, thus improving food security of more than 5 000 beneficiary households in Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) affected countries (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone). ASTF interventions attracted new partnerships and additional funding with FAO-Malawi successfully mobilizing EUR 5.5 million of bilateral funds, and additional EUR 35 million are expected to materialize soon; FAO-Mali attracted EUR 1.5 million while FAO-Liberia raised USD 1.2 million and FAO-Niger USD 810,300 to scale up ASTF-funded activities respectively.

In Ethiopia, a remarkable success has been demonstrated through the promotion of livelihood diversification strategies, integrated approaches to improving food/nutrition security and poverty reduction. Nearly 12 000 rural smallholders benefitted from access to inputs, supports in bee-keeping and poultry production. Their productions are projected to generate USD 7 801 786 income, enabling them to meet their food and nutrition needs.¹

Guidance sought by the Regional Conference

Based on the successes and lessons learned to date, the ASTF will be renewed, its vision focused and call for expanded partnership to:

- sharpen its focus on enabling intra-Africa/South-South collaboration to deliver on national projects and regional programmes in line with Africa’s priorities, and raise the visibility of each countries’ role in ending hunger on the continent;
- document good practices and showcase African institutions of excellence in food and agriculture, and support the establishment of an “African Centre of best practices, capacity development and south-south cooperation”;
- encourage countries to share their expertise and financial contributions in support of the Fund in order for knowledge to be shared/exchanged Africa-wide.

Matters to be brought to the attention of the Regional Conference

The Conference encourages countries to:

- join in expanded partnership;
- put forward offers of expertise, in-kind contributions, and showcase their institutions of excellence through South-South collaboration;
- make additional financial contributions to fund key initiatives and to share/exchange knowledge Africa-wide.

¹ Other funded projects are been implemented and their achievements documented in this information note.

I. Background

1. The idea of an Africa Solidarity Trust Fund (ASTF) for Food Security was launched during FAO's 2012 Regional Conference for Africa held in the Republic of the Congo. The Fund became a reality in February 2013 with a first donation of USD 30 million by the Government of Equatorial Guinea, and was officially launched in June 2013 during the 38th Session of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Conference. Administered by FAO, the Fund supports Africa-led, Africa-owned initiatives in the framework of the African Union's Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) to boost agricultural productivity and food security in the region.

II. Scope

2. Building on the impressive results achieved so far, the Trust Fund will be launched with a renewed and focused vision, and calls for expanded partnership, as well as importantly raise the visibility of each countries' role in ending hunger in Africa.

3. The renewed Trust Fund aims to support African governments and partners in the implementation of national or regional food security initiatives and, in particular, is designed to enhance capacities to:²

- contribute to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition;
- increase and improve the provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner;
- reduce rural poverty;
- enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems at local, national and international levels; and
- increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises.

4. In particular, intra-African (Africa for Africa/South-South) cooperation will be encouraged, through countries supporting each other by sharing best practices, knowledge and technologies that have worked in Africa, and network with other countries that have the potential to adapt, adopt and upscale these for the benefit of their own national or regional priorities.

5. The renewed Trust Fund will also aim to support the establishment of an "African Centre of best practices, capacity development and South-South Cooperation (SSC)". FAO is working with regional bodies such as the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as key partners to document, catalogue and upscale African cooperation and support the development of such a Centre. In support of the Malabo Declaration through this concept, FAO is also implementing a Regional Initiative (RI) on "**Africa's Renewed Partnership to End Hunger by 2025**".

6. The African Centre will serve as a South-South Cooperation mechanism for catalysing learning and innovation; connecting national, regional and global policy makers and practitioners for economic and social development. It will provide a global platform to showcase "African home-grown development solutions" and best practices, thereby enhancing visibility of Africa's strengths and capacities. It will seek synergies and linkages with other similar initiatives in the region, among others, the AU/NEPAD networks of centres of excellence and the agricultural knowledge, information and learning system developed by the Forum for Agriculture Research in Africa (FARA).

² These areas encompass FAO's new Strategic Framework, are consistent with the priorities for Africa which were reaffirmed by participating countries during the Regional Conference. They are also in line with the priorities of the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs).

7. To reach this vision, countries are invited to partner both through sharing their expertise and by providing important financial contributions to fund key initiatives and share/exchange knowledge across countries in Africa.

8. For example, the ASTF has already allocated USD 1 million to foster intra-African SSC and initiatives such as policy dialogues for building resilience, learning exchanges for sustainable intensification of agriculture, and collaboration in the early conceptualization of the African Centre with the AU and NEPAD. In addition, multiple SSC projects have been supporting Africa's development priorities, facilitated by FAO, such as with Brazil, China, Morocco, Viet Nam and the Fund could also support their scaling up.

III. Fund Governance Structure

9. The Fund will continue to be governed through the Steering Committee (SC) and the Fund Assembly (FA). These two bodies decide on priorities and approve proposed activities, based on a set of criteria namely: (i) geographic coverage; (ii) country needs as determined by the level of undernourishment, number of those displaced by humanitarian crises, levels of current official development assistance for agriculture, etc.; and (iii) country commitment to the goals of the Fund which may be demonstrated by co-funding, in-kind contributions, spending in agriculture or rural development against the total budget, among others. Their implementation will be coordinated and directed by the Programme Management Unit (PMU), established by FAO in the Regional Office for Africa (RAF) for this purpose.

IV. Building on projects' achievements

10. To date, the Fund of USD 34.5 million is allocated to 15 regional programmes and national projects implemented in 36 countries to boost efforts to eradicate hunger, and reduce malnutrition and poverty. All initiatives funded by ASTF are consistent with the priorities identified by the FAO Regional Conference for Africa; they are also in line with the priorities of the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs) agreed between national governments and FAO. Their achievements are summarized as follow.

Ethiopia: "Enhanced livelihoods and poverty reduction through economic diversification and decent work opportunities for rural communities"

11. Implementation of the two-year project was launched and is being led by the State Minister for the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (MoANR). The project has demonstrated remarkable successes by promoting an integrated approach to improving food/nutrition security and poverty reduction through livelihood diversification and capacity development. Across the country, 11 686 rural smallholders benefitted from integrated production of cereals, legumes and vegetables. Food-insecure households were able to meet their food and nutrition needs through the production of 8 301 tonnes of food which is projected to generate an income of USD 7 801 786 for the beneficiaries. The project supported a total of 290 youth to engage in beekeeping which is expected to generate additional income of USD 420 per youth per year, amounting to USD 121 800 for the group. Moreover, 1 050 vulnerable women and rural youth have benefitted from income generating activities such as dairy, poultry production, and kits for small scale irrigated agriculture.

12. The project addressed institutional weaknesses with the development of a sector-wide Web-based Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system for the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (MoANR). The capacity of nearly 3 000 extension staff and beneficiaries was strengthened in sustainable and nutrition-sensitive agriculture. Furthermore, training was provided to federal and regional staff focusing on agricultural policy analysis, project M&E as well as statistical analysis aimed at improving their capacities to deliver extension services based on timely and accurate information. Thanks to these interventions, beneficiary households have more resilient livelihoods and are in a much better position to cope with the effects of the current El Niño-induced drought.

Malawi: “Building the capacities of the most vulnerable households to meet their basic needs and withstand shocks”

13. Through participatory training of farmers, using Farmer Field Schools (FFSs) approach, blending skills development on good agricultural practices with provision of nutrition education, promoting Village Savings and Loans (VSL) schemes and undertaking group income-generation activities, over 2 606 farm families have been empowered to diversify and increase their household incomes, increase their market access to inputs, and improve their food and nutrition security, culminating into increased resilience to climatic shocks. With the establishment and capacity strengthening of 56 VSL groups, savings grossing about USD 17 600 were mobilized, allowing 1 232 members to access credit facilities, farm inputs, and to start-up or boost their own businesses. The project also supported 8 500 producer households during the state of disaster after the 2015 floods.

14. ASTF funding has been catalytic to bring the United Nations Development Programme (UDP), the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and FAO into a flagship programme for the UN Country Team under a coherent and holistic resilience approach. Nutrition education campaigns and public works for the most vulnerable households were implemented in synergy. The project mobilized additional resources and is now being replicated in three other districts with a EUR 5.5 million funding from the European Union, and will be replicated on a larger scale with an additional EUR 35 million programme currently under formulation. As the scale and intensity of disasters become more frequent in Malawi, FAO will continue to help farmers to prepare for and resist the effects of drought and floods.

Mali: «Jeunesse au Travail: Réduction de la pauvreté rurale (Youth employment towards rural poverty reduction)»

15. The capacity of youth groups is being strengthened to effectively engage in the production and marketing of rice, milk, poultry, fish, and vegetables. The project was well received by communities in Mali, agricultural professional organizations, and by the Government. The Junior Farmer Field and Life School (JFFLS) approach adopted has generated widespread enthusiasm and the project has had a strong impact in mobilizing additional resources from other funding partners. In one example, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Kayes funded the FAO intervention with USD 209 950 in support of 50 young Mauritanian refugees in Mali together with 50 young residents among the host communities. Similarly, under the Indicative Cooperation Programme (ICP) III of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, FAO-Mali received EUR 1.5 million to replicate the approach in the region of Segou and Sikasso. A total of 400 new jobs are to be put in place and 1 000 others improved with an average of about five young per activity set up. Eighty youth were trained as facilitators and 40 persons from the agricultural offices and agricultural professional organizations as trainers of the JFFLS approach.

The Niger: “Support to the 3N (Nigériens Nourish Nigériens) initiative in the communities of convergence”

16. The frequency and recurrence of droughts and other natural disasters which rural communities are subjected to in the Niger, increase their vulnerability to food and nutrition insecurity. With funding from ASTF, a total of 160 000 vulnerable households improved their agricultural productivity from quality input distribution throughout village input shops. Child feeding and nutrition was enhanced through investments in livestock recapitalization for vulnerable women and small-scale irrigation infrastructure developed on 20 ha of garden, enabling 700 households to produce vegetable and diversify their diets.

17. Furthermore, six farmer warehouse complexes, or “Maison du paysan”, were built, offering supplies of agricultural inputs, animal feed and phytosanitary products. These centres are now fully operational and able to support hundreds of thousands of farmers over the coming planting seasons. The ASTF project has thus contributed to the establishment and development an integrated service system to improve the performance of agropastoral activities and strengthening the resilience of over 700 000

potential farmers and pastoralists against future drought or other crisis. Newly developed partnerships led to the mobilization of additional USD 810,300 from Norway to scale up ASTF-funded activities in the communities.

South-Sudan: “Support to South Sudan emergency livelihood programme”

18. In response to the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Republic of South Sudan, ASTF funding contributed to FAO’s Emergency Livelihood Response Programme in both 2014 and 2015, which achieved significant and measurable impacts including mitigation of the risks of famine. In particular, ASTF funding has helped increase food access and availability, and protected the livelihoods of over 200 000 of the most vulnerable individuals in both conflict- and less-affected areas. The project promoted the consumer uptake of locally produced food items and in turn, improved the nutritional intake among displaced households as well as stimulated local markets within the host community. Kit distribution monitoring indicated that recipients were able to cover household food needs for up to six months while fishing kit recipients’ catch exceeded consumption, allowing them to access other commodities every month.

19. The project also reduced the risks of livestock disease outbreaks and mortality for 560 000 animals while protecting the livelihood assets of 18 743 pastoral households by contributing to country-wide vaccination and treatment campaigns. In addition, it re-established South Sudan’s veterinary cold chain by procuring a refrigerated container, cold boxes and solar fridges. In the Greater Bahr el-Ghazal, 3 430 households were supported with enough quality seed to prevent them from slipping into higher levels of food insecurity while seed suppliers were supported to sustain local seed production and marketing.

Central African Republic: “Livelihoods Resilience opportunities for conflict affected rural communities”

20. As of March 2015, a total of 16 074 households received assistance in the field of agriculture which lead to improvements in access to and the production of groundnuts and rice. The capacities of 60 members of Village Savings and Loan associations were strengthened. Support to emergency response in the country was enhanced through crop and food security assessment missions as well by two rounds of Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) analyses. A comprehensive review of FAO’s projects and their outcomes was hindered by the on-going civil unrest across the country, at the peak of which some 2.7 million people required immediate humanitarian assistance.

Central Africa: « Enhanced urban food security in Central Africa through improved availability of locally produced food” - *La sécurité alimentaire renforcée en milieu urbain en Afrique centrale grâce à une meilleure disponibilité de la nourriture produite localement* » (Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome & Principe and Chad).

21. Capacities of 372 project beneficiaries are strengthened in four countries on good agricultural practices in vegetable farming which will be translated into better yields and increased production in the season. By providing a three-week Training of Trainers (ToT) course for technicians from all the Subregional Office for Central Africa (SFC) countries, Central Africa now has a group of qualified trainers in the field of FFS, thereby reducing its dependence on resource persons from other subregions. The capacity of some lecturers at the Gabonese Institute of Agriculture and Biotechnology (INSAB) was strengthened with the objective of integrating FFS in the curriculum of the institute. Likewise, the experimental site of INSAB has been rehabilitated and is now fully operational after several years of inactivity.

22. The project participated in creating a Farmer Field School Support Network for West and Central Africa, a professional forum that will provide technical support, quality control of FFS services and facilitate the institutionalization of FFS as an extension delivery method in countries of the two subregions. Project beneficiaries are being organized into groups to facilitate training, supervision and the collective management/sharing of certain equipment. Studies on land use planning and irrigation systems are on course and results will be used to propose better use of available land in the peri-urban

settings as well as affordable options for small scale irrigation. The project has trained 25 technicians on the use and maintenance of the horticultural database in order to contribute to enriching its content through inputs from Central African countries are currently poorly represented in this database.

Eastern Africa: “Promoting Nutrition Sensitive Agricultural Diversification to Fight Malnutrition and Enhance Youth Employment Opportunities in Eastern Africa” (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda).

23. The programme aims to create decent employment opportunities for young women and men in the agricultural sector in order to improve incomes and access to food specifically for vulnerable children through school feeding programmes, and to increase the overall productive capacities of both the poultry and aquaculture value chains. Youth micro-enterprises and out-grower schemes are established or enhanced to produce seeds (pullets, juvenile fingerlings) for poultry and aquaculture value chains.

24. Small-scale producers, with a focus on youth, are supported in increasing poultry and aquaculture products; and accessing group cooperation, training on production systems and management. Market opportunities are enhanced for small-scale producers (including young women and men) of fish and eggs through school feeding programmes. Public-Private partnerships are established to support youth inclusion in producers’ associations. Similarly, support is provided in the local seeds and feed manufacturing sector to increase the availability of quality and standardized seeds and feed.

Southern Africa: “Strengthening controls of food safety threats, plant and animal pests and diseases for Agricultural productivity and trade in Southern Africa” (Angola, Botswana, Madagascar, Mozambique, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe).

25. The project has made tremendous contributions to the appreciation of the importance of meeting the Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary (SPS) measures in order to effectively contribute to food security, in particular, in improving opportunities for trade within and outside the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. The SADC SPS committee has started supporting the establishment and improvement of National SPS committees in participating countries. Communication, coordination and synergistic relationship between SADC Secretariat, the regional stakeholders and technical committees has greatly improved. Interventions have significantly raised the profile of the SPS measures in the region through various visibility activities.

26. It has provided a great opportunity to appreciate the issues of food safety and how it hinders achieving adequate nutrition and marketing opportunities through the various technical meetings, workshops and training events for government officials and other stakeholders along the value chains of various strategic commodities. The project activities have enabled the region to begin the identification of strategic commodities that needs to receive support along the value chain. During the first year of implementation, the project exceeded the targets set for training on Animal Health, Food Safety and Plant Health issues at a regional level, thus setting a firm basis for expansion on a national level. A number of national implementation plans for surveillance of diseases and pests e.g. EUS and capacity assessments of various national institutions on plant health and animal health have been agreed upon at regional level for 2016 implementation at national level.

West Africa: “Creating agribusiness employment opportunities for youth through sustainable aquaculture systems and cassava value chains in West Africa” (Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria and Senegal)

27. The approach of the project in West African countries is to formulate integrated models for agribusiness employment opportunities for young people through sustainable aquaculture systems and cassava value chains. Models for sustainable and decent jobs for youth in aquaculture and cassava value chains are now defined in each of the six countries with the specificity of a “mentorship” model in Côte d’Ivoire, vertical integration in Ghana, in addition to start-up activities driven by a good professional

environment and market dynamism in Nigeria and Senegal. The development of structures is ongoing in Burkina Faso and Guinea Bissau.

28. Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso are now completing the confirmation of the establishment of cluster sites, coupled with model farm designs. Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Nigeria and Senegal have completed all technical studies and are ready to install the aquaculture clusters. A total of 310 youths candidates have been accepted to benefit from the project support and 12 employment opportunities have been defined along the aquaculture and cassava value chains.

Guinea: “Support to the Resilience of Ebola Affected Households”

29. The ASTF project improved food security 1 000 households affected by the disease to Ebola Virus in five prefectures of Lower Guinea (Boffa, Dubreka, Forecariah and Kindia Coyah), through the provision of inputs agriculture: rice seed, fertilizers and small agricultural tools. Rice production among beneficiary households reached 1 214 tonnes through a 100 percent increase in yields. Such a production is sufficient to feed 1 000 households and their 8 000 dependents for 14 months, thus fulfilling their need in terms of food availability.

30. The project carried out sensitization campaigns on the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD), enhanced capacities of the staff within the network of participative and integrated monitoring of wildlife. Ninety-five percent of households in the project area benefitted from agricultural inputs distribution, training and supervision to strengthen their resilience. The ASTF fund provided significant assistance to the Government of Guinea when it needed it to fight against the disease in Ebola virus, to strengthen the resilience of affected rural households and to raise awareness and prevent the spread of the disease. This innovative mechanism African funding for African is highly appreciated by Guinea and deserves to be supported in view of a stronger Africa.

Sierra Leone: “Post-Ebola Recovery of the Agribusiness Sector”

31. Following the outbreak of the Ebola Virus Diseases (EVD) and the subsequent disruption of production, harvesting and marketing activities, the project supported nearly 3 000 farming households in eight districts (Bombali, Kailahun, Kambia, Kenema, Koinadugu, Moyamba Bo and Port Loko), through access to critical agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizer, etc. As a result, vegetable production increased by over 40 percent and yields doubled when compared to the production during Ebola period. Households' earnings increased from zero to about USD 50-100 per week, which enabled them to meet their needs and make savings for reinvestment in the next agricultural season.

32. Through a lending scheme, up to USD 250 000 was spent on establishing 20 farming groups/Agricultural Business Centres as recapitalization for petty trading. At least 60 percent of the recipients later reported improvements in their businesses both in terms of volume and sales turnover. Proceeds from the recapitalization were used to contribute to Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) funds and to pay school fees and hospital bills among other needs. The project supported agricultural processing units and trained machine operators, and processing of agricultural products restarted. This approach saved labour and also enabled the Agricultural Business Centres (ABCs) to build more resources and many community members will continue to benefit from it. Social cohesion that was lost during the outbreak of the EVD, as a result of quarantine measures instituted by Government, is being re-established again.

Liberia: “Emergency Response to Mitigate the Impact of Ebola Virus Disease on Food Security and Agriculture Based Livelihoods in Liberia”

33. Funding from the ASTF was timely because during the EVD crisis Village Saving Loan associations and financial clubs became inactive and depleted; farmers could neither afford to pay dues nor buy shares, and at the same time, cater to their household needs. The project supported farmers, in particular women to adopt improved farming methods following the provision of improved seeds, hand tools, agro-chemicals and cash for labour. Rice productivity doubled to 2 248 Kg in post- EVD. Through a revitalization of the loan schemes, women have resumed income generating activities and commenced

cross-border trade. Community food stocks have increased thereby positively impacting on food security.

34. A strong partnership was achieved with the Swiss Development Cooperation which contributed USD 1 179 245 towards scaling up interventions to boost integrated lowland development, high yielding rice and vegetable production, small businesses and other entrepreneurship.

NEPAD Youth Programme: “Promoting Decent Rural Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship in Agriculture and Agribusiness” (Benin, Cameroon, Malawi and the Niger).

35. To promote decent employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for rural youths in agriculture and agribusiness, ASTF supports the NPCA’s Rural Futures Program. It will set up a platform and use the funds efficiently to build synergies and partnerships with ongoing programmes in the beneficiary countries. An inception phase is on course for better scoping, for defining a coherent approach at the country level and setting up institutional arrangements between implementation partners. A capacity assessment is conducted to enable FAO to transfer project funds and execution responsibilities to NEPAD.

Africa’s South-South Cooperation “Facility for Agriculture and Food Security” (Angola, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, the Niger and Zimbabwe).

36. In support to the Renewed Partnership to End Hunger in Africa by 2025 and in close collaboration with regional stakeholders including the African Union Commission (AUC) and the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency (NPCA), the African Capacity Development Foundation (ACBF), the project initiated the conceptualization and establishment of an “African Centre of Best Practices, Capacity Development and South-South Cooperation”. The centre will identify, package and disseminate Africa’s best practices in the realm of agriculture and food security.

37. In the context of building resilience in Africa’s dry lands, an exchange visit is facilitated and participants from Rwanda visited Uganda to observe new initiatives in small-scale irrigation. Participants from Kenya, Uganda and Zambia visited Zimbabwe to share experience in climate smart agriculture and conservation agriculture based on lessons learnt from past and ongoing activities. Similarly, cassava farmers and participants from Chad and the Democratic Republic of Congo visited and gathered experience from cooperatives in the cassava value chain in Cameroon. The project also supports the production and dissemination of communication, visibility and advocacy materials for other ASTF projects in selected countries.

38. In conclusion, results achieved through these projects are beginning to demonstrate the significance of the vision of an Africa-led support for Africa to achieve food security across the continent. They also substantiate the value of the innovative mechanism set up in 2012 as a real opportunity to mobilize resources from Africa for Africa, to foster intra-Africa collaboration among African institutions of excellence in food and agriculture, to share knowledge on good practices and experiences, for capacity development and more broadly towards increased South-South Cooperation.