TeleFood funded projects provide direct assistance to food-insecure communities. These small-scale projects help people increase their income, work more productively and either grow or purchase the food they need for a healthier life.

TeleFood projects are based on a few guiding principles:

- They are small in scale and directly receive supplies and materials such as seeds, farming tools, water pumps and small animals.
- The projects target specific needs, they are sustainable and environmentally safe, and are designed to continue to produce benefits without additional assistance.
- They are linked to other development projects to ensure sustainability and access to technical supervision.
- The projects are submitted by FAO member countries or by communities themselves, and are approved by FAO technical experts. The average cost of a project is about US$7 500, with a ceiling of US$10 000. Funds are used exclusively to provide materials such as seeds, tools, starter livestock, field supplies and non-motorized equipment. TeleFood funds are not used to cover administrative costs.
- Project categories are crops, livestock and fish.

Crop production projects typically cultivate cereals, roots, tubers, fruits and vegetables. Small animal projects usually produce poultry, rabbits, goats, sheep or pigs. Fish projects focus on small-scale fish culture and on improving artisanal fisheries.

These small projects improve the diets of families by providing them with healthful foods, and increase their incomes when they produce a surplus to sell in local markets.
Emphasis on women and youth

Women produce most of the food in the rural areas of developing countries, where the majority of the world’s hungry people live. By targeting women, TeleFood-funded projects increase food production and processing and ensure greater food security for families. School garden projects teach young people about growing food while providing them with something nourishing to eat.

School gardens for good nutrition

Hunger and malnutrition inhibit growth and reduce a child’s ability to learn. School gardens provide food for nutritious school meals. They encourage attendance and increase a child’s academic performance. Beyond providing food to eat, the gardens serve as a lesson in agriculture, nutrition and economics. TeleFood projects provide seeds, tools and fertilizer for the gardens. The modest income generated by selling the surplus pays for materials for the following season.

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TeleFood projects by region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number of countries with TeleFood projects</th>
<th>Number of projects in the region</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Asia</td>
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<td>Latin America/Caribbean</td>
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<td>222</td>
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<td>Pacific</td>
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Source: FAO