



Evaluation of the third project cycle of the Treaty's Benefit Sharing Fund (BSF)

First Phase results-for discussion purpose only

Presentation to the Funding Committee,
donors and project partners
28 January 2021



Outline of Presentation

- ☐ Overview of evaluation process
 - ☐ BSF 3 portfolio analysis
 - ☐ Key findings
 - ☐ Conclusions
 - ☐ Recommendations
 - ☐ Next steps
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Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

- ❑ The operational procedures of the Benefit-sharing Fund stipulate an independent evaluation at the conclusion of each project cycle for **accountability and learning purposes**.
 - ❑ The primary purpose of the evaluation is to provide an independent assessment of the extent to which planned collective objectives set out for the third project cycle of the Benefit Sharing Fund have been met.
 - ❑ **Scope: the entire period of the third project cycle from 2014 to 2020**; focusing on the 20 operational projects across Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Middle-East and North Africa and South-West Pacific.
 - ❑ **Evaluation Results of the Phase 1 is presented for discussion:** covered extensive grounds with rigorous methods, cross-referencing evidence and analysis leading to substantive findings, conclusions and recommendations.
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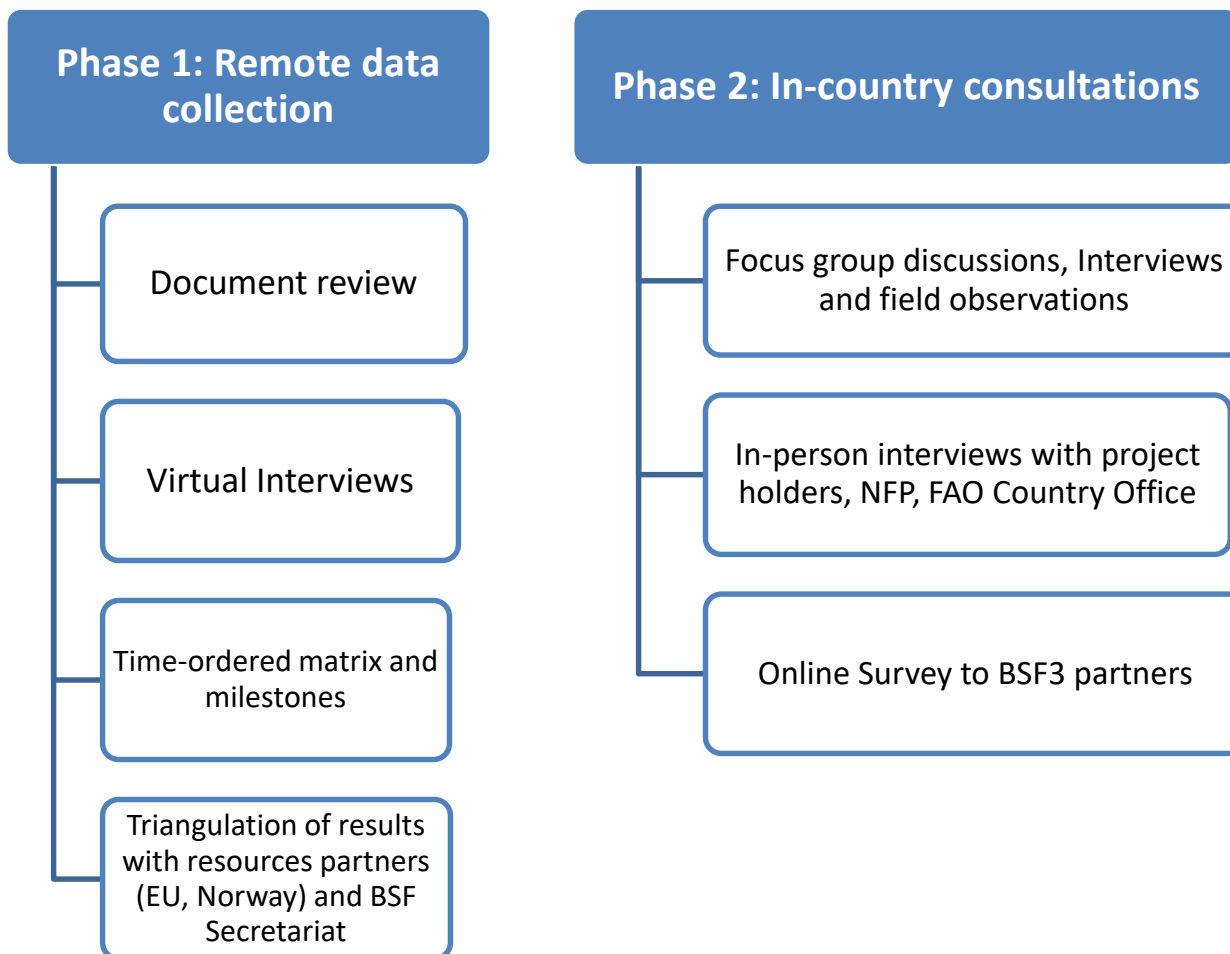


Evaluation Questions

1. **Relevance:** Is the BSF third project cycle relevant, filling gaps and adding value in the PGRFA conservation and management?
 2. **Effectiveness:** Have BSF 3 programme and projects objectives been achieved (nationally and regionally) and were there any unintended results?
 3. **Partnership:** Has the BSF 3 been effective in fostering partnerships at different levels (global, regional and national levels)?
 4. **Efficiency:** How efficient was the institutional and implementation setup?
 5. **Knowledge Management:** Has the BSF 3 been able to contribute to knowledge management and PGRFA consultations worldwide?
 6. **Sustainability:** What are the prospects for sustaining the results beyond the projects' closure?
 7. **Crosscutting issues:** Were crosscutting issues taken into account in the BSF 3 projects?
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Evaluation Methodology

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the execution of the evaluation was modified:





Limitations

- ☐ The evaluation is being conducted under unprecedented circumstances with the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - ☐ Inability to carry out field visits and farmer interviews in the first phase due to travel restrictions, as such more time allocated to remote data collection (first phase).
 - ☐ In the absence of direct consultations with farmers, the findings and evidence for Phase 1 were based on triangulations of interviews with the project stakeholders, and extrapolation from project and programme documents (Phase 2 will primarily focus on farmers' perspectives).
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Phase 1 Coverage

☐ 11 projects, 55% of BSF 3

Type of projects covered:

- ☐ Window 2 projects: 6 (Africa, GRULAC, MENA)
- ☐ Window 3 projects: 5 (Africa, Asia and GRULAC)

Regions/Countries covered

- ☐ Africa (Zimbabwe, Malawi, Kenya, Ghana, Tanzania)
- ☐ Asia (Indonesia)
- ☐ GRULAC (Peru, Ecuador)
- ☐ MENA (Turkey)



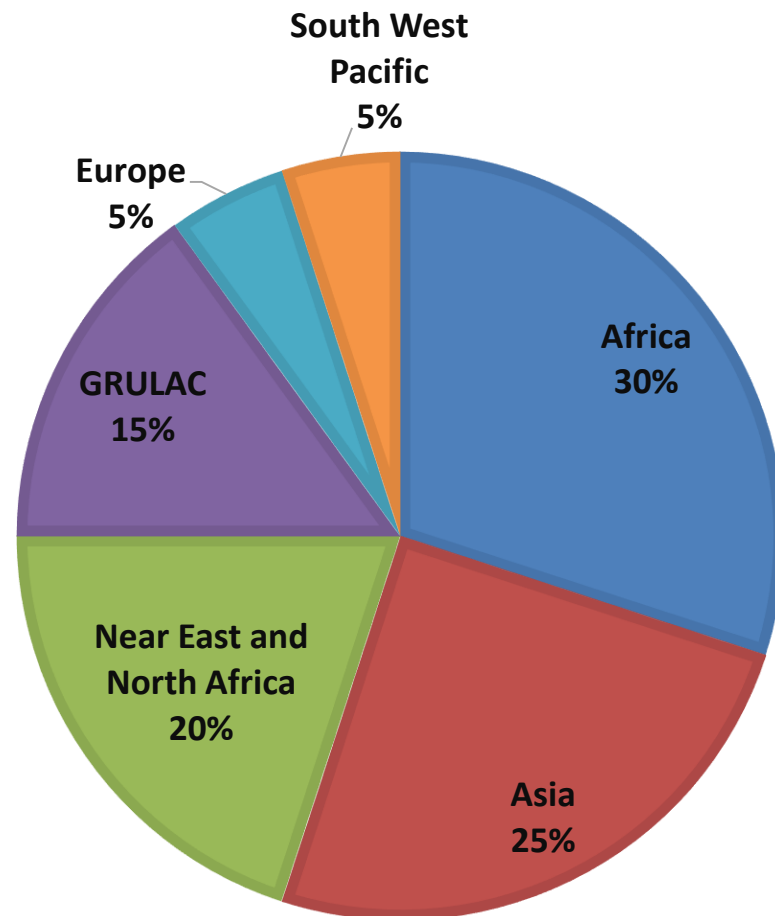
☐ 79 people interviewed:

- BSF 3 project partners (national government, NGOs, CGIAR, Universities, Research institutes)
 - Bureau Members
 - Contracting Parties and National Focal Points
 - Resource partners (EU, Norway, Italy, ISF)
 - Secretariat staff
 - FAO Staff
 - Peer Agency (Crop Trust)
 - Co-chairs, Committee for the Treaty's Funding Strategy
 - Private Sector ((International Seed Federation, ISF)
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- ### ☐ Extensive document review of project & programme documents, M&E data and analysis of project statistics

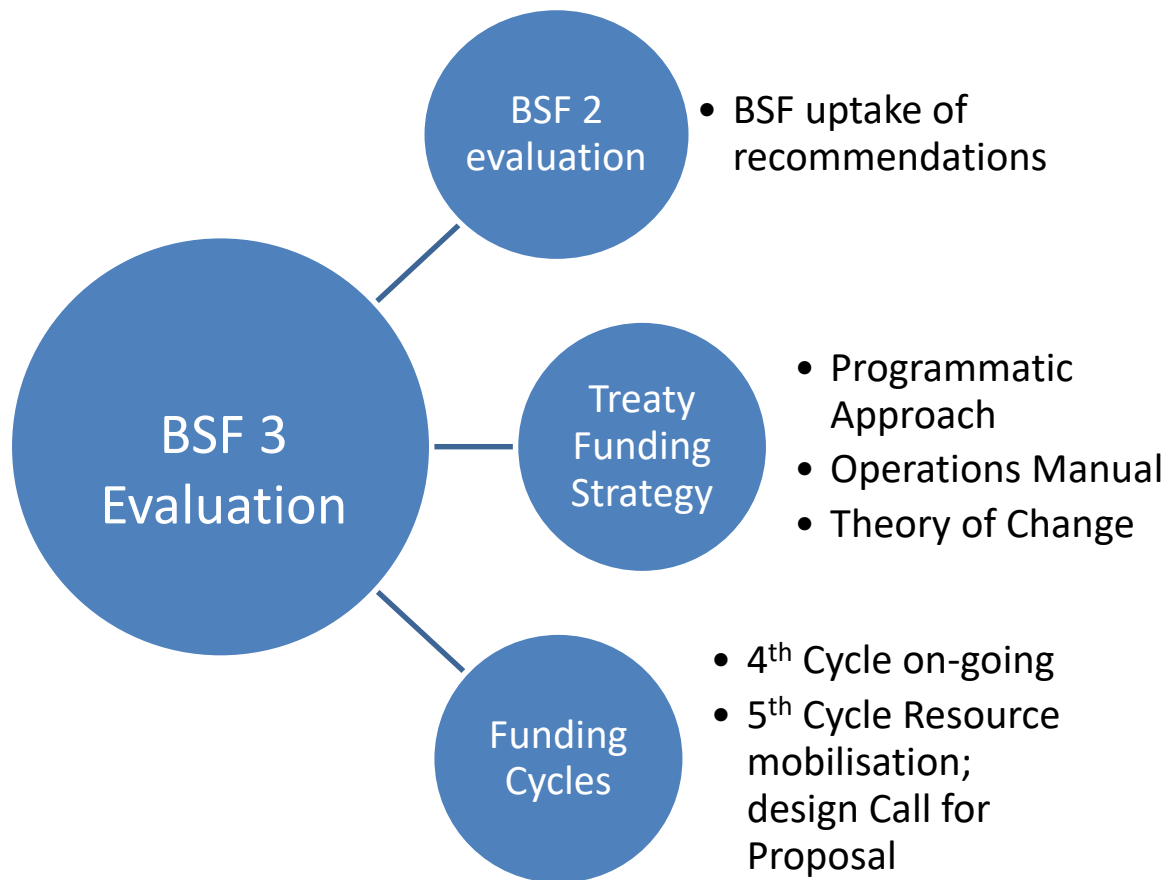


BSF 3 Portfolio overview

- ❑ **20 operational projects implemented in 43 developing countries**
- ❑ **BSF 3 Budget: 10 million USD**
- ❑ **Two thematic windows :**
 - Window 2- Immediate action projects
 - Window 3- Co-development and technology transfer projects



Dynamics of BSF 3 evaluation





KEY FINDINGS



Relevance

- ☐ Aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs 1,2, 12, 13,15 and 17).
 - ☐ Aligned and strategically linked with the Second Global Plan of Action on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (GPA), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the various articles of the International Treaty, including its updated Funding Strategy.
 - ☐ National priorities: focus on crops that are important for food security and relevant for climate change adaptation.
 - ☐ Responds to the needs of men and women farmers who live in poverty and are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.
 - ☐ Regional distribution is balanced but there are some intra-regional discrepancies: absence of Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa and dominance of Indonesia for the Asia region.
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Effectiveness

Co-development of Technology

- * From fragmentation to cooperation
- * Capacity development
- * PGRFA materials
- * Software and knowledge sharing platforms

Farmers' PGRFA Conservation & Use

- * Capacity development
- * Multi-location testing, adaptation in highly diverse agro-ecologies & cultures
- * Seed management
- * Local market engagement & commercialization
- * Policy engagement, planning

Contribution to Outcomes

- * Diversity in the field
- * Food security and livelihoods
- * Seed security
- * Climate adaptation strategies, Community-based Disaster Risk Management
- * Cross-boundary response



Linking short, medium and long terms outcomes

Immediate

- Seed selection
- Vulnerability assessment and improved understanding of farmers' climate change perception and on farm impact
- Using traditional Knowledge , meteorological data and farmers field data for planning farmers' seasonal growing calendars

Medium

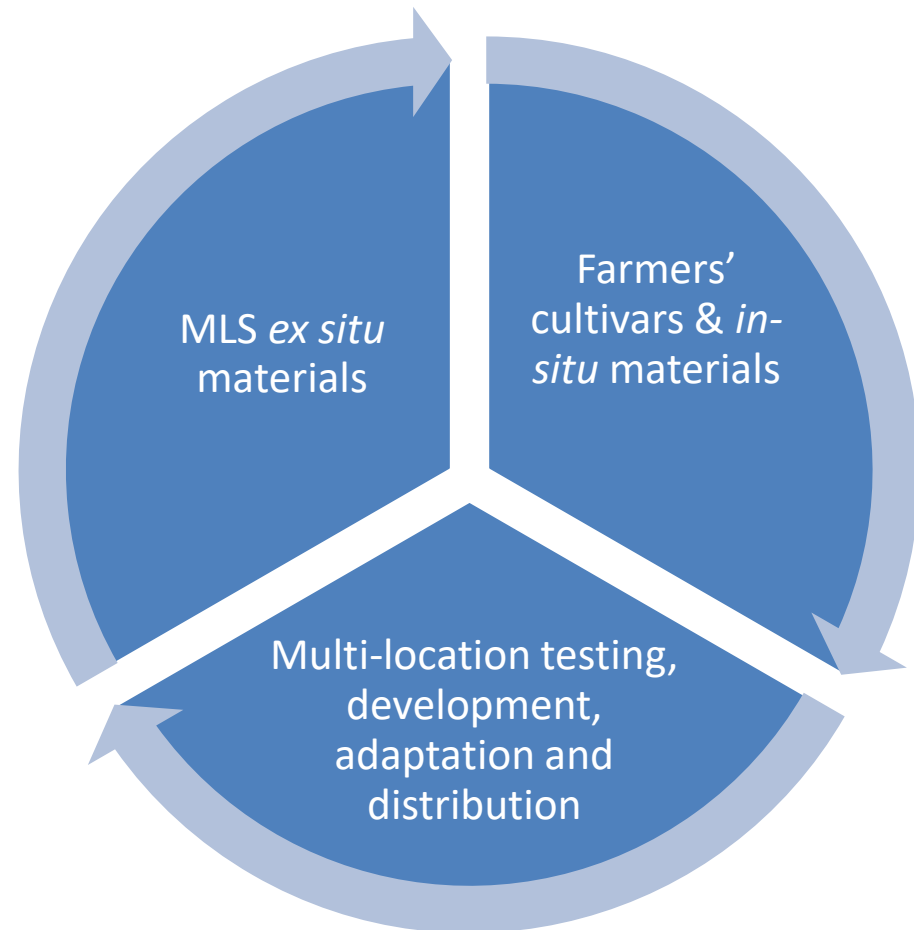
- Participatory Plant Variety Selection, Enhancement, and breeding
- Increased seed security through e.g. community seed banks
- Climate adaptation Strategies, Disaster Risk Reduction
- Improved local seed markets
- DOI and web based platform
- Identification of candidate genes and trait variations for breeding for increased resilience to abiotic and biotic stress
- *In situ* and *ex situ* linkages for PGRFA conservation and sustainable use

Long-term

- Participatory Plant Breeding
- Policy change to support farmers' seed systems
- Farmers participation in the commercial market
- Climate adaptation and mitigation strategies, disaster risk reduction
- National Plans and strategy incorporating PGRFA management for climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Robust and organized PGRFA institutions that mainstream farmers' participation on PGRFA management
- Organizational, national, regional and global policy reforms

Partnerships: institutional innovations

- ❑ Multi-stakeholder and multi-country partnerships significantly contributed to project achievements
- ❑ Contracting Parties were highly decisive in facilitating the wide access and use of PGRFA; dealing with trans-boundary pest and diseases
- ❑ BSF 3 demonstrated a viable model of the MLS and Benefit-sharing





Efficiency

- ☐ **BSF constantly evolving: well executed selection, rigorous checks and balances, highly competent Secretariat support**
- ☐ **Good system for MEL, needs systematic adaptive management & outcome indicators**
- ☐ **Length & size of project adequate for results delivery**

Given Realities

- ☐ Highly complex programme
- ☐ New Normal: Systemic risk: extreme, more frequent climate variability and hazards compounding risks in agriculture and PGRFA management
- ☐ Plant breeding takes 6- 15 years
- ☐ Donors project cycles 2- 5 years
- ☐ BSF cannot and should not solve everything

BSF 3 Findings

- ☐ Good direction set by the Funding Strategy for the programmatic approach—needs milestones
- ☐ Re-assess: communication of rejected proposals, awarding of certificate of excellence to proposals with no funding
- ☐ Technical support to the BSF Secretariat limited to project selection and lacking for PMEL



Knowledge Management, Sustainability, Cross Cutting

- ☐ Good **knowledge management** at project level but not leveraged at programme level.
 - ☐ Accessible and compelling **communication** is a weakness.
 - ☐ Long term funding **sustainability** dependent on a fully functioning MLS. Immediate and medium term sustainability dependent on further development of a programmatic approach translated into a convincing programme proposal.
 - ☐ **Sustainability** of some projects are at risk, many Window 3 projects lacks uptake plans and some community seed banks are insecure .
 - ☐ **Cross-cutting**: Most of the projects, considered gender, fairness and equity primarily by choosing to work in areas with high levels of poverty, including indigenous communities that are vulnerable to climate change. However, there has been weak targeting of youth.
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Conclusions



Conclusion 1: Relevance

- ❑ **BSF-3 was highly relevant in leveraging PGRFA as an indispensable element of farmers' food security and adaptation strategy for climate change; aligned at various levels linking PGRFA interventions from local, national to major international agreements (SDGs, the Paris Agreement, CBD and GPA2) .**
 - ✓ The focus on poverty, climate vulnerability and geographic distribution of the BSF 3 projects were balanced at regional levels.
 - ✓ There were some discrepancies within Asia and the Africa regions, particularly with the absence of Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa.
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Conclusion 2 : Effectiveness

- ❑ **For a relatively small amount of money, the BSF 3 significantly contributed to the objectives of the Benefit Sharing Fund. With 10 million USD, the BSF 3 enabled the formation of 270 partnerships to implement 20 projects in 43 participating countries. The multi-stakeholders and multi-country collaboration delivered a likely unprecedented number of PGRFA materials to be accessed by farmers: 20,706 varieties were tested, developed and adapted in multiple locations around the world, 298 new varieties were developed, and 5933 accessions were planned for inclusion into the MLS.**
- ✓ The participatory development and adoption of climate-resilient strategies resulted in access to crops and varietal diversity, contributions to food security and livelihoods of men and women farmers.
- ✓ The contribution to farmers' seed security and disaster risk reduction were part of the unexpected results.
- ✓ Greater appreciation of the achievements of the BSF 3 could have been better framed by the further development of a strategic programmatic approach.

Conclusion 3 : Partnership

- ❑ The inter-governmental mechanism of the Treaty and the partnerships within the multi-stakeholder and multi-country arrangements in the BSF 3 significantly contributed to the achievements of the projects. The partnerships generated innovations and capacity building, which otherwise were highly unlikely to be achieved by a single institution on its own. Through partnerships, the BSF 3 played a catalytic role in linking *in-situ* and *ex-situ* PGRFA management
 - ✓ Demonstrated viable model of MLS and benefit sharing
 - ✓ Support to Southern leadership
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Conclusion 4 and 5: Efficiency

- ❑ **BSF 3 provided an effective and reasonably efficient funding modality, that enabled the funding and implementation of a number of relatively small but critical PGRFA interventions, which otherwise would not have been possible to be funded individually by major donors.**
- ✓ BSF 3 was efficiently designed with very good selection and approval processes. The checks and balances in project selection and approval were rigorous.
- ✓ The Secretariat provided highly competent support to the selection, approval and help desk function.
- ✓ The Secretariat need technical support in the implementation (planning, monitoring).
- ✓ A good system for project cycle management is operational and the Operations Manual has been established.
- ✓ The planning, monitoring and reporting were not consistently efficient.

Conclusion 6: Knowledge Management

- ❑ **BSF 3 generated rich and tangible data and knowledge on the still-developing field of PGRFA management for food security in the context of climate change. The effective knowledge management at the project level resulted in actionable climate adaptation strategies, with potentially promising outcomes. However, at the programme level, the leveraging of the knowledge generated by the BSF has so far been limited.**
- ✓ The gaps in quality, accessibility and frequency in the communications of the BSF achievements had been consistently expressed by all the stakeholders.



Conclusion 7 : Sustainability

- ☐ **While it is too early to assess the sustainability of the projects, there were promising indications:**
- ✓ many of the BSF 3 projects were linked to other programmes;
 - ✓ a number of projects made provisions to help project continuity;
 - ✓ the results in capacity building could help sustain key project activities;
 - ✓ changes in policy and practice indicating intentions to pursue the collaboration to engage farmers.
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Conclusion 8 : Cross-cutting

- ❑ Most of the projects, especially for Window 2 considered gender, fairness and equity by working with communities with high levels of poverty and vulnerability to climate change.
 - ✓ projects generally targeted individual farmers, rather than household members. This may not reflect the nature of family farming, the diversification of crops and varietal preferences between men, women, and youth.
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Over-all conclusion: niche and added value

The niche and added value of the BSF (past and present cycles) are due to a combination of traits:

- ☐ **Unique and unequivocal mandate** with 147 signatory countries and the European Union
- ☐ **Works with the entire array** of PGRFA needed to address the immense challenges brought about by climate change
- ☐ **Representation of all stakeholders** in the entire spectrum of in-situ and ex-situ PGRFA management
- ☐ **Synergistic and mutually reinforcing multilateral system of access and benefit sharing**
- ☐ **Integrates research for development**

BSF niche needs to be integrated into a coherent programme and message



Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Relevance

To capitalize on the BSF's achievements in highlighting PGRFA as an indispensable element of farmers' food and nutrition security and climate adaptation strategies; and in line with the call of ITPGRFA's Funding Strategy to support the nexus between biodiversity and climate change:

- ❖ **The Governing Body** should further advance the BSF's alignments with SDG 2 (Zero hunger), SDG 13 (climate action) and the Paris Agreement on enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change by further sharpening , illustrating and further concretising the strategic importance of PGRFA to a resilient food and nutrition security in the context of climate change.
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Relevance (suggested actions)

- PGRFA climate adaptation strategies integrated into comprehensive community-led measures for seed security, resilient crops and DRR; define PGRFA impact pathways and outcome indicators for climate change adaptation and resilient livelihoods.
 - Highlight the global interdependence of PGRFA; and leverage BSF's experience in addressing trans-boundary pests and diseases,
 - Enable the regions to define their specific regional and intra-regional needs and priorities as inputs to the programme strategic framework of the BSF and for the specific call for proposals.
 - For alignment at local and national levels, projects should seek linkages and synergies with the specific country's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans for Agriculture (NAP-Ag)
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Recommendation 2: Effectiveness

- ❑ In line with the ITPGRFA Funding Strategy for the programmatic implementation of the BSF in a long-term, coordinated, synergistic and effective manner; and to further leverage the significant achievements of the BSF-3, the evaluation recommends that:
 - ❖ **The Funding Committee** commissions the development of the BSF multi-year programme framework that is: both strategic and operational, both technical and political, both visionary and results orientated; links short and medium term objectives to long term goals
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Effectiveness (suggested actions)

- Medium-term outcomes should be guided by and contribute to the long-term goals: (i) preparing for the possible change in range where crops can be grown; (ii) PGRFA base-broadening; (iii) long process of plant breeding
 - Provide a strategy for linkages and institutional support for both the farmers' current and longer term DRR and adaptation
 - Include a methodology and rationale for the differentiated and articulated breeding objectives and trait preferences of the men, women and the youth.
 - Continue to prioritise approaches that reinforce and strengthen the cyclical and mutually enhancing relations between the MLS and benefit sharing
 - The programme framework should be used as a basis for fund raising, broadening donor base, and appealing to voluntary contributions
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Recommendation 3: Partnership

- ❑ In line with the Funding Strategy's objective to strengthen partnerships, and to leverage the significant contribution of the multi-stakeholder partnerships to the BSF-3, the evaluation recommends:
 - ❖ **the Secretariat** map institutions and programmes to define synergies and further define the programmatic approach of the BSF.
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Partnership (suggested actions)

- Define synergies to complement and support BSF's medium- and long-term goals.
 - Synergistic planning to expand the BSF's reach; BSF to allocate funding where there may be added value.
 - Dialogue with the CGIAR, focus on role as technical experts; not in project management; not be recipients of BSF funding.
 - More participation of plant breeding institutes to support small holder farmers in the development of climate-resilient PGRFA materials.
 - Consider private sector expertise
 - Encourage multi-stakeholder and multi-country collaboration.
 - Maintain project leadership by national institutions (governments and CSOs).
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Recommendation 4, 5 and 6: Efficiency

- ☐ **To improve technical efficiency, the Funding Committee should consider:**
 - ❖ extending the support of a broad range of experts not only in the selection process but also in the planning, monitoring, evaluation and learning.

- ☐ **To ensure more efficient project management, the BSF Secretariat should improve its Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning by:**
 - i. ensuring the integration of an adaptive management with periodically updated project plan, budget and risk management.
 - ii. obtain additional expert support to establish the technical feasibility of the project.

- ☐ **To improve efficiency in contract management and reporting, the Secretariat should regularly submit and distribute the BSF's annual progress and financial report to all the donors, the Funding Committee the Contracting Parties and the project holders.**

Recommendation 7: Knowledge Management

- ❑ In line with the statement of the funding strategy on knowledge management and investing in communications, the strategic programme framework referred to in Recommendation 2 should **include the development and budget allocation for a corresponding knowledge management and communication strategy:**
 - ❖ The Secretariat can formulate the design so that the BSF's contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA is leveraged for greater reach, impact and visibility.
 - ❖ More knowledge sharing with FAO



Recommendation 8: Sustainability

- ❑ For greater reach and sustainability of the BSF project , **the Funding Committee** should emphasize efficiency in capacity building methods, impact pathways with clear entry and exit strategies and extending investments in high performing projects from previous project cycles.

Recommendation 9: Cross-Cutting

- ❑ To improve the reach to more farmers and to improve gender and social inclusion, **the Secretariat** should:
 - ❖ guide projects towards a more coherent way of calculating the numbers of farmers reached
 - ❖ formalize women's role and leadership as a project selection criterion and in consideration of family farming, consider working with the household as a unit rather than individual farmers.



Next Steps

Presentation
of Phase 1
Results to
Treaty's
Funding
Committee,
resource
partners and
projects'
partners
(28 January
2021

Launch of Phase
2: In-country
consultations
and online
Survey
(dates to be
confirmed)

Second Phase
Draft report
shared for
second round
of comments
(dates to be
confirmed)

Request for
Management
Response
(1 month
after
evaluation
finalisation)

First Phase
draft
evaluation
report shared
for second
round of
comments
(February
2021)

Second Phase Draft
evaluation report
shared for first
round of comments
(dates to be
confirmed)

Final report
and
presentation
of the
evaluation
findings to
Governing
Body
(dates to
be
confirmed)



**Comments and questions
are welcome**

Thank you!
