



GACSA ACTION PLAN 2023

Jan - Dec 2023

SUMMARY

GACSA Action Plan focuses on 5 thematic areas, where GACSA activities are described until December 2023, and support the ten-year main objectives, which are aligned with the new GACSA Strategic Plan 2022-2032.

GACSA Facilitation Unit

January 2023, Rome, Italy

1. INTRODUCTION

The GACSA Annual Forum 2021 approved and adopted the new GACSA Strategic Plan for 2022-2032, outlining the vision for GACSA 2030 and beyond. Based on the objectives defined in the Strategic Plan 2022-2032, this Action Plan showcases the activities for GACSA and the Facilitation Unit for 2023. These activities are considered, as the first steps and milestones towards achieving the Strategic Plan's objectives within the 10 years' time. As such, the Action Plan aims to convert GACSA's ambitions for the next 10 years into attainable outcomes, outputs, and activities of the ten-year period. To measure the progress towards achieving the Strategic Plan, a midterm review will be executed after the first five years, possibly also one review after three years

Over the past years, GACSA has grown into an extensive network of many stakeholders representing various constituencies. During the first half of 2022, GACSA Membership update has been undertaken, ensuring 6 (six) constituencies are represented and the membership consists of active members contributing to CSA advocacy on all levels. The added value of GACSA is its broad range of stakeholders representing different constituencies and regions, from the global to the local level. The main objective for 2023 is to utilize the skills, knowledge and expertise of GACSA Members and to bring them closer together by creating partnerships with impact on the ground, focusing especially on increasing sustainably climate-smart production of food. To this end, the Action Plan focuses on five flagship outputs: a capacity building programme for young farmers in form of a "Shark Tank" approach and e-learning, platform for sharing innovations and holding discussions amongst farmers, CSA knowledge sharing app to achieve climate pledges, funds searching tool to connect farmers and investors, and overall increasing CSA awareness that are in line with current debates on global level. All activities and thematic areas are ensuring cross cutting themes of the Strategic Plan 2022-2032 (women, indigenous people and finances), as well as placing farmer in the center of all value chains.

The Action Plan consists of four parts; the first part showcases thematic programming, the second focuses on coordination and management, the third part on Finances, and the fourth part includes short summaries of main activity proposals. The activities in the section on thematic programming, aligned with the new Strategic Plan, are focusing on 5 thematic areas, where activities until December 2023 are in support of the ten-year main objectives. The Coordination and Management chapter describes the necessary activities that should be executed by the Facilitation Unit in support of the effective functioning of the different elements of GACSA's implementation model (Facilitation Unit, Annual Forum, Strategic Committee, Action Groups, and Regional Alliances). The third part specifies available funds, staffs and estimate costs to achieve this Action Plan until Dec 2023.

2. ACTION PLAN: GACSA ACTIVITIES 2023

This action plan supports the new GACSA Strategic Plan for 2022-2032, and will focus its work on its three interlinked strategic themes: i) sustainable agriculture - addressing climate change in a multi-dimensional food system, ii) innovation and new technologies for climate-smart agriculture, and iii) resiliency and climate change adaptation.

This action plan is divided in five areas:

- **Capacity development**
- **Innovation**
- **Advocacy**
- **Investment opportunities**
- **Communication**

2.1 Main Thematic Areas and GACSA activities for 2023 towards the 10 years objectives

THEMATIC AREA 1: CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	
Climate-Smart Agriculture E-learning Course for students and (young) farmers	
OBJECTIVE	
Train young farmers, young adults that might enter the agriculture field (students), policy makers and investors on CSA approaches to address the capacity development needs, identified by the GACSA members, and create future leaders with a solid background in CSA.	
OUTCOME	Spread awareness about climate change science, impacts, and CSA solutions to drive, improve and develop local skills and foster communication so that stakeholders can make informed development choices.
OUTPUT for 2023	Develop a “Climate Smart Agriculture e-learning course” that presents CSA science and practices from an interdisciplinary perspective, specifically using CSA case studies from GACSA members to share 'good practices' with the course's users and promote intergenerational learning.
ACTIVITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work closely together with GACSA Action Groups and Regional Alliances to develop the content and outline the curriculum for the "Climate-Smart Agriculture e-learning course". • Work closely together with FAO e-learning academy to design, implement and translate the e-learning lessons. • Work with GACSA partner universities and Regional Alliances to promote these courses to their communities, including both farmers, farmers' organization and students.
COSTS	Please refer to proposal document
THEMATIC AREA 2: INNOVATION	
GACSA “Shark Tank” approach for sharing innovations	
OBJECTIVE	
Increased research and development promoting an integrated approach to CSA technologies, practices, and policies, along the value chain, and best practices scaled out through outreach, extension, and technical assistance	
OUTCOME	Create a supportive and positive experience in which participants are empowered to develop communication, projects and leadership skills, resulting in greater self-confidence and personal growth in order to bolster innovation for sustainable development within CSA approaches. Scale up CSA best practices and promote capacity building opportunities through a real competition
OUTPUT for 2023	GACSA Shark-Tank approach activity for Climate Smart Agriculture to initiate dialogues and accelerate innovations in sustainable agriculture between potential investors and participants. The potential investors will select the best proposals, as part of the jury, and will offer a research grant up to USD 20,000 to facilitate data collection, analysis, purchase of products and machinery. In addition, the winner will present their winning innovation during a WFF side-event.
ACTIVITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with World Food Forum and the FAO Office for Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environment on preparations and organization for this flagship event. • Create a selection criterion for submission of proposals by participants • Circulate a call to action amongst GACSA Members (youth focused) to submit their CSA related proposals and innovations • Create and support communication material for this flagship event

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a jury to judge the submissions and award the prize to the winner of this side event. • Ensure proposals are available on GACSA platform as part of knowledge sharing products
COSTS	Please refer to proposal document

THEMATIC AREA 3: ADVOCACY	
CSA platform for countries to achieve climate pledges	
OBJECTIVE	
Mutually beneficial and collaborative tools, analyses and research documenting best practice and lessons learned from GACSA members, demonstrating economic and social benefits and identifying trade-offs and strategies.	
OUTCOME	Fully functioning CSA platform for GACSA Members focusing on global, regional and country CSA 'best practices'.
OUTPUT for 2023	<p>Design a unique platform for CSA related knowledge, showcasing CSA related information, ranging from capacity building opportunities to relevant GACSA events, as well as practices and news from the Alliance itself and its GACSA members.</p> <p>Designate space on this platform to upload new and innovative ideas, including for example the (Winning) “Shark Tank” approach, to share recent innovations and technologies in the field of Climate-Smart Agriculture.</p>
ACTIVITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work together with FAO OCC and CSI to design a new CSA platform • Ensure call to action for GACSA Members to provide feedback and apply their inputs (if necessary) – including Action Groups and Regional Alliances • Present the first mock-up to Co-Chairs and subsequently to the SC members by March 2023.
COSTS	Please refer to proposal document

THEMATIC AREA 4: INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES	
Compass Funding Proposals: funds searching tool	
OBJECTIVE	
Matchmaking, which includes facilitating public/private partnerships to fund CSA (connecting, capacity building, sharing good practices) linking farmers directly to investors and enhancing farmers financial literacy	
OUTCOME	Increasing farmers’ accessibility to funding opportunities through the matchmaking platform and enhancing their financial literacy
OUTPUT for 2023	<p>Designing a Matchmaking platform: dual approach platform where farmers can propose their CSA business idea and investors can directly contact them and offer them an investment plan. Vice-versa, investors can showcase on the platform their investment proposal and farmers can reach out to them, directly proposing a CSA project</p> <p>Informative and educational tools and guidance on how CSA projects can be funded and how small-holder farmers can ask for and receive funding from private sector and other GACSA constituencies, designed in collaboration, and with the support from three Action Groups, available for farmers on the Compass Funding Platform</p>
ACTIVITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work together with FAO OCC and CSI divisions to develop and design the dual approach platform • Collaborate with Investment Action Group in organizing tools and guidance for GACSA

	members focusing on “How to access CSA related funding” and with FAO technical divisions, and other RBA’s
COSTS	Please refer to proposal document

THEMATIC AREA 5: COMMUNICATION	
Climate-Smart Agriculture (Mobile Phone) Application for farmers	
OBJECTIVE	
Develop a peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, capacity building and networking platform, which will allow farmers to connect and interact with each other, as well as with local agriculture researchers, policymakers and investors, to facilitate and accelerate the adoption of climate-smart practices, increasing the climate resiliency of their farming livelihoods.	
OUTCOME	Scale up CSA practices using a geographically tailored approach. Foster peer-to-peer connections within regional and national farmer communities to exchange knowledge and experiences. Promote capacity building opportunities through signposting farmers to training and skill sessions, improving knowledge-sharing networks.
OUTPUT for 2023	Develop a ‘participatory technology development approach’ to address the hesitancy among smallholder farmers to adopt CSA approaches. ¹ The suggested format is the “GACSA CSA application for Farmers” (Final Name TBD) for mobile phones, which includes a CSA Knowledge and Discussion Portal.
ACTIVITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an extensive stakeholder analysis among our end users, namely farmers from regions covered by GACSA's Regional Alliances, to learn about their specific needs and to ensure that these are considered when designing the application. This will also include a full assessment of existing applications, their purposes and entities involved. • Work closely together with GACSA Action Groups and Regional Alliances to assemble the information needed for the design and implementation of the application. • Work closely together with FAO technical divisions and/or external partners, including software engineers and computer scientists, to develop and test the application. • Present and launch the application at one of GACSA's flagship events. • Webinar in collaboration with Aim4Climate and support Aim4Climate Summit (May 2023) to target wider audience and raise awareness of GACSA and CSA
COSTS	Please refer to proposal document

¹ Ayorinde Ogunyiola, Maaz Gardezi & Sumit Vij, ‘Smallholder farmers’ engagement with climate smart agriculture in Africa: role of local knowledge and upscaling’, in Climate Policy, 22 (4), (2022); 411-426, 412.

2.2 Coordination and Management

COMPONENT	OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES
Facilitation Unit	Successfully implement the Action Plan 2023 and support the Action Groups and Regional Alliances accordingly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the delivery of the Action Plan 2023 Engage/support members in high level meetings (incl. COP28, CFS, World Food Forum) Set up a financial task force to broaden GACSA's financial basis
Annual Forum	The Annual Forum delivered by 31 December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All related activities, including supporting documents and a detailed annotated agenda, to deliver a successful AF Implement lessons learnt from previous AF to increase members' engagement Ensure a more prominent role for farmers
Strategic Committee	one virtual SC meetings delivered by 31 December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the establishment of the new SC composition Support co-chairs and SC members to successfully deliver this meeting (i.e., Prepare agenda, minutes, financial overview, and other relevant material)
Action Groups	Active GACSA Action Groups in support of delivering the Strategic Plan 2022-2032, specifically to share and disseminate information and provide access to expertise with/from key CSA actors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify activities to deliver with AGs and RAs Increase collaboration with the Regional Alliances Organize quarterly meetings with co-leaders Support in organizing AGs related webinars CSA focused
Regional Alliances	Providing a mechanism that constitutes appropriate structures for ownership and management of joint initiatives, in order to connect CSA actors and share knowledge from local to global level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase collaboration amongst Regional Alliances by accelerating knowledge sharing activities across regions, as well as country level Increase collaboration with the Action Groups and support their CSA related activities Organize quarterly meetings with co-leaders
Co-Chairs	<p>Two co-chairs, elected in their personal capacity, oversee the Alliance, its Strategic Committee, and the Facilitation Unit. Their activities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chair meetings of the Strategic Committee, and preside over the Annual Forum Manage stakeholder relations, speak for GACSA publicly, and present/sign formal communications for the Alliance Provide guidance to the Facilitation Unit and co-select the Head of the Facilitation Unit (including yearly performance review), in consultation with the host institution (FAO) Maintain high-level strategic oversight of the work of the Action Groups and Regional Alliances 	

3. Available Funds, Staffs and Estimate costs

Please refer to Financial Report

4 Summary of Activity Proposals

GACSA Facilitation Unit has been working on four new activities proposals that are being developed in order to revamp GACSA. A short description of each proposal is as per below:

3.1. GACSA App

The GACSA Facilitation Unit (FU) is currently working on developing a peer-to-peer knowledge sharing, capacity building and networking platform for (young) farmers in the form of an application for mobile phones. The idea behind this application is that it will provide a ‘participatory technology development approach’ to address the hesitancy among smallholder farmers to adopt Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) approaches because of their usual top-down implementation, omitting the incorporation local customs in their design. Through this app (young) farmers, who are interested in CSA, will be able to connect and interact with likeminded farmers from their region as well as with potential investors and local policymakers and academics, to foster peer-to-peer learning and an intergenerational knowledge exchange. Furthermore, they will be able to receive tailored information, relevant to their specific businesses, through the knowledge portal section in the application, addressing networking and capacity development needs. In doing so, the app will be in line with IFAD’s recommendations for successful interventions to support smallholder commodity farmers, offering a multidimensional and customized approach, focussing on connecting and partnering farmers with each other and public and private sector institutions and sponsors.

3.2. GACSA E-learning

GACSA members have identified, through a survey done through membership update during the first quarter of 2022, a lack of development opportunities for knowledge sharing of CSA ‘good practices. Therefore, the GACSA Facilitation Unit (FU) is working on developing a “Climate Smart Agriculture e-learning course” aimed at training young future leaders with a solid background in CSA, as one possibility to address these capacity development needs. The course will be divided into specific modules, addressing CSA topics from an interdisciplinary perspective. The aim is to include in every module a set of online pre-recorded lectures, GACSA case studies and a final examination. Additionally, the GACSA FU would like to complement these online trainings with lectures from guest speakers from the GACSA’s member base and beyond, to introduce an intergenerational exchange between young students and practitioners within the same classroom. Upon successful completion of the course, the idea is to present participants with a GACSA (and other involved partners supported) certificate.

3.3. GACSA “Shark Tank” approach

GACSA Facilitation Unit have identified a lack of funding opportunities young farmers often have no access to potential investors. To incentivize the development of these risk financing tools, GACSA is launching the following four challenges (sustainable and equitable increases in agricultural productivity and incomes, greater resilience of food systems and farming livelihoods, reduction and/or removal of greenhouse gas emission associated with agriculture, where possible and female led CSA innovative approaches) with the aim to demonstrate alternative ways of collecting or monitoring critical datasets and indices that can be used to ultimately assess in a granular, scalable and dynamic way the various dimensions of impact induced by agricultural stressors. GACSA Shark-Tank for Climate Smart Agriculture will in fact create dialogues and accelerate innovations in agriculture between potential investors and participants. GACSA “Shark Tank” approach will be held online to promote collaboration and participation from

across the world and intersectional industries. After the competition, the winner will have the opportunity to showcase the proposal during the next World Food Forum 2024 (WFF) at the FAO Headquarters and will be also invited to the next GACSA Annual Forum 2024 in person to debate over the latest improvements of the proposal and will be awarded as the new Farm Hero of the year.

3.4. GACSA Website

GACSA Facilitation Unit together with the Office of Communications and the Digitalization and Informatics Division (FAO IT Division) unit will ensure a smooth transformation from the old GACSA website to a new, modern and modern and user friendly one. The previously described features will be introduced, together with a simpler layout. The website will be in English and will be maintained by GACSA Communications Specialist. The website content will be co-created by GACSA members, FAO Technical divisions, Action Group co-leaders and the Regional Alliances leaders. The new version of the GACSA website will be more user friendly, contain HD photos, and clear sections guiding the user. The main aim is to provide information regarding GACSA, Regional Alliances, Action Groups and GACSA Members, as well as CSA practices in general. This will be done in the form of a news and a CSA capacity building section that will focus on developments within innovation & technology, financing tools, and CSA e-learning opportunities. Additionally, the platform will provide the opportunity to hold discussions between farmers and young farmers, to share CSA practices. The aim is to ensure fast information and knowledge sharing amongst members and external users, providing one platform in which all CSA related information is accumulated as well as a place where the latest developments regarding new CSA innovations and technology are shared. The target audience of the new GACSA website is GACSA Members from the six different constituencies (governments, civil society, business, non-governmental organizations, farmers' organizations and research bodies), external audience, Rome Based Agencies (RBAs), students, farmers, youth interested in CSA and sustainable agriculture, and anyone who is willing to learn more about GACSA and especially CSA.

3.5. GACSA Compass Funding Platform

Aligned with the new Global Alliance for Climate Smart Agriculture (GACSA) Strategic Plan 2022-2032 and the guiding principle of ensuring the central role of farmers in food systems, GACSA intends to enhance and increase investment opportunities for farmers that practice CSA. This is important in order to expand the widespread use of CSA approaches at a global level and consequently tackling climate change and food securities issues. GACSA Fund Your Farm platform seeks to create an impact in increasing investment opportunities for farmers concerning CSA practices and allowing farmers to have direct access to funding opportunities. The platform will focus on these objectives with the following actions. Firstly, the platform will link farmers to investors through the development of an online dual-approach platform. It will allow farmers to propose their business ideas to investors and the latter will have the opportunity to contact farmers directly and vice versa. Secondly, on the platform there will be a section to enhance the knowledge of farmers on project writing and proposal, enabling their access to possible funding opportunities. This will be done through the development of online tools and guidelines. Lastly, the GACSA FU will host high-level side event along the GACSA Annual Forum to attract potential investors and increasing funding for small-scale farmers and farmers' organizations on CSA.