



Brazil and FAO, the path to cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean

A historical alliance for promoting sustainable development and food security in the region



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Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
and
Brazilian Cooperation Agency for
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Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme

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ABC Foreword

In 2008, due to the growing interest of other developing countries in learning about successful Brazilian policies in the area of food and nutrition security (FNS) and agriculture, the Brazilian Government initiated a partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to share Brazil's experience through South-South cooperation, based on FAO's comparative advantages.

Under the scope of this partnership, the implementation of Trilateral South-South Cooperation projects for the benefit of developing countries in Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa began in 2012, with technical support from Brazilian Cooperating Institutions (BCIs) such as the National Fund for Educational Development (FNDE, by its acronym in Portuguese), the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Food Supply (MAPA, by its acronym in Portuguese) and the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (EMBRAPA).

It is crucial to highlight that Brazil conducts its cooperation actions in accordance with the constitutional mandate of Article 4, item IX, of the Federal Constitution, which states that "in its international relations, the Federative Republic of Brazil is governed by", among others, the principle of "cooperation among peoples for the progress of humankind". This mandate enforces the pursuit of an international order that favours peace and prosperity for all peoples.

By reaffirming its commitment to South-South cooperation objectives and methods, the Brazilian Government intends to contribute to the creation and transfer of knowledge among partners in a mutual learning process, free of conditionalities. Strengthening family farming and fighting against food insecurity are considered key issues for Brazilian South-South cooperation.

The Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC, by its acronym in Portuguese) will continue to build innovative solutions to face the enormous difficulties that mark this challenging and unprecedentedly modern time we are experiencing in the midst of this persistent pandemic. And we will do so together with our valued partners. At the same time, we will continue to implement the necessary measures to continue developing shared cooperation projects.

I am very pleased to announce the launch of this publication, which captures the main achievements of the Brazil-FAO partnership over the past 14 years, promoting capacity-building in other developing country partners, and corroborates our intentions to seek joint solutions to face future challenges for cooperation initiatives.

Ruy Pereira

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**Director of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency
(ABC, by its acronym in Portuguese)**

FAO Foreword

South-South and Triangular cooperation are grounded in Article 4 of the Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil, which mandates that the country's international policy must be guided by the principle of "cooperation among peoples for the progress of humankind."

This statement is all the more crucial since humanity is currently facing challenges — such as pandemics, climate change and the eradication of hunger and poverty — that can only be addressed through global multilateral action.

For 14 years, the Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme has been making this principle a reality, improving living conditions and food security in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Brazil has a long history of public policies to eradicate hunger, reduce poverty, promote research and innovation in agriculture and strengthen the institutional framework for rural and urban development. The Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme has been one of the most successful initiatives in this regard, allowing the exchange of experiences, the improvement of public policies, and technical and financial support to promote sustainable development in the region.

FAO approved a new Strategic Framework (2022-2031) that seeks to support the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the transformation to more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agri-food systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life, leaving no one behind.

There is still a long journey ahead to eliminate hunger and malnutrition, a situation aggravated by the pandemic; to reverse the effects of climate change; and to strengthen family farming, with an emphasis on rural women and youth.

This publication reflects the spirit of international cooperation that has inspired the joint action of Brazil and FAO, presenting the achievements that have undoubtedly improved the lives of hundreds of thousands of families in our region.

Julio Berdegú

•••••
FAO Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean



**Brazil-FAO
International
Cooperation
Programme and
the transformation
of agri-food system**

Design and management
for innovative projects

Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme and the transformation of agri-food systems
Design and management for innovative projects

“ Our aspiration is that there should be food for all. But our thinking and action must go beyond the mere production of food and include, among other aspects, consumption, quality and food culture, taking into account environmental repercussions and contributing to sustainable development. ”

QU Dongyu
Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) reflect the needs of a world in constant transformation. In particular, the need to ensure food and nutrition security to everyone implies facing a reality where, on one side, people are going hungry, while on the opposite side, food is produced in sufficient quantities: and in the middle of these two scenarios, an abyss of economic, social and environmental needs. The initiatives implemented by the Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme aim to "unite the two ends" through innovative projects that are capable of balancing this reality, with a focus on fighting poverty, achieving zero hunger, and strengthening sustainable agriculture.

Hand in hand, the Government of Brazil, through the Brazilian Cooperation Agency of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE, by its acronym in Portuguese), and FAO have been building a historical partnership in Trilateral South-South Cooperation (TSSC), implementing, for over a decade, the Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme. Focused on promoting sustainable agriculture and food and nutrition security, the projects developed have produced fruitful partnerships among countries in the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region.

“ Brazil has a long history of public policies to eradicate hunger, reduce poverty, promote research and innovation in agriculture and strengthen the institutional framework for rural and urban development. ”

Julio Berdegue
FAO Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean

“ ABC will continue to build innovative solutions to face the enormous difficulties that mark this challenging and unprecedentedly modern time we are experiencing in the midst of this persistent pandemic. And we will do so together with our valued partners. ”

Ambassador Ruy Pereira
Director of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (ABC/MRE)

Since 2008, the work of international cooperation in Brazil has gained a new direction. The country's success in developing and implementing public policies aimed at issues that converge with FAO's agenda has opened up space for new alliances. At that moment, a new trajectory of sharing not only knowledge, but also experiences in implementation, monitoring, governance and cross-sectorial work began.



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Hand in hand in cooperation



From FAO's side, the effort to bring together different areas, such as government, international financial institutions, private sector, civil society, and research and extension entities, matches the coordination work of the Brazilian Government — carried out by the **Brazilian Cooperation Agency** — which identifies best practices, innovations, skills and experiences developed by Brazilian institutions and makes them available for knowledge exchange. **The essence of this cooperation is for the countries involved to experience a rich process of capacity building and mutual learning.**

Food and Agriculture at the heart of the 2030 Agenda
Connections with agri-food systems

In recent decades, Brazil has invested in the idea of building prosperous and inclusive rural areas through food and agriculture, contributing to better living conditions for society as a whole. A trajectory of important results for the transformation of agri-food systems, which contribute to the achievement of the SDGs.

Family farming is at the centre of this new scenario: about four million family farmers, who produce most of the food Brazilians consume every day (CENSO/IBGE/2017). An important social actor capable of boosting local economies, making more sustainable use of the environment, providing fresh and healthy food to populations, and strengthening the social fabric in rural territories.

The National School Feeding Programme (NSFP) was a major milestone of this moment. Since 2009, the NSFP has brought into focus the vision of school meals as a Human Right, with family farming as the main supplier of fresh and healthy food for students on a daily basis.

“ The TSSC Brazil-FAO Programme has given Brazil significant growth. It has contributed to its international projection concerning the promotion of sustainable development. It is a valuable political capital and encourages the development of technical bodies in the exchange of experiences with other countries. ”

Ambassador João Almino
Former director of ABC (2015-2018)



The United Nations Decade of Family Farming 2019-2028 aims to recognize the importance of this productive sector, which is crucial to the global action plan against hunger and poverty.

If, on the one hand, the Brazilian initiatives caught the attention of other countries that started to request more cooperation from Brazil, on the other hand, the internal results achieved in this period reinforced the country's decision to support other nations in the region.



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Achievements of a region that moves forward in cooperation

Taking into account the priority issues of the institutions and countries involved has been, at the same time, the great challenge and one of the most significant achievements of the alliance between Brazil, FAO and the other countries participating in cooperation activities. A continuous adaptation and a technically robust posture of all those involved has allowed for the readjustment of eventual changes requested by the countries in new agreements, throughout the activities, without losing the progress achieved.

“ The Brazil-FAO Cooperation Programme stands out for its joint construction, especially on the issues of family farming and school feeding. In a horizontal and participatory manner, the partnership between FAO and the countries involved generates a greater sense of commitment and belonging, giving the term "cooperation" an even more concrete meaning. ”

Rafael Zavala

FAO Representative in Colombia until 2018 and current FAO Representative in Brazil

The Brazil-FAO cooperation alliance has allowed to share with other countries the Brazilian expertise in building public policies focused on food and agriculture, such as the National Programme for the Strengthening of Family Farming (PRONAF), which provides rural credit policies, agricultural insurance, technical assistance and rural extension, public procurement programs, water supply and access to water for all, as well as food and nutrition security.

Transforming food system
An urgent agenda embraced by the Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme

No tool is more important in the cooperation process than dialogue. Likewise, for it to really contribute to the desired transformations, it is fundamental that this process be strengthened and constantly renewed.

On this basis, the Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme is making progress, contributing to a process of sharing and innovation in which everyone wins. The +Cotton project is an example of this win-win relationship. Based on the request originated within the Brazil-FAO partnership to bring innovations and strengthen the cotton family farming activity, The Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) identified the

“ FAO is the main partner, with more than 50 percent of the projects under ABC's Trilateral South-South Cooperation Programme. Governance and shared implementation with international organizations and other actors involved in South-South cooperation projects have been one of the greatest challenges, but Brazil has considered it valuable to move forward in the Brazil-FAO partnership based on these principles. ”

Cecilia Malaguti

Coordinator of Trilateral South-South Technical Cooperation with international organizations at ABC

technical capacity of the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa). The cooperation resulted, among other things, in the development of machinery, implements, and exchange of seeds suited to the activity.

At the same time, it brought innovation to the Latin American cotton sector, contributing to the technical and scientific improvement of the corporation itself. An exercise of intense technical dialogue, which generated mutual benefits.

This fruitful alliance has resulted in important progress towards the SDGs, including the construction and implementation of policies such as School Feeding in the region, and has created spaces for dialogue, like the MERCOSUR Specialized Meeting on Family Farming (REAF, by its acronym in Spanish). Such results have contributed significantly to the strengthening of family farming, the inclusion and autonomy of women, and the generation of opportunities for rural youth in LAC countries.

The protagonism assumed by Brazil in the Latin American and global scenario is noteworthy in this process. Through South-South cooperation projects, themes that have been developed at the national level have gained scale at the global level, reinforcing Brazil's leadership role in the agenda to fight hunger and poverty.

“ The distinguishing feature of the Brazil-FAO Trilateral South-South Cooperation programme is that it maintains a process of permanent dialogue between the cooperating actors, bringing to the cooperation environment the programmatic updates of all stakeholders involved. ”

João Intini

Food Systems Policy Officer, FAO Office for Latin America and the Caribbean



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COVID-19 Pandemic
 Greater uncertainty calls for new initiatives

The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the scenario of hunger and malnutrition at the global level, already affecting three billion people across the planet — almost 40 percent of humanity. According to the Regional overview of food security and nutrition 2021 - the number of hungry people in the LAC region increased from 13.8 million in 2019, to 59.7 million in 2020. To achieve the Zero Hunger goal in the world, among other challenges, food must be available and accessible to those who are hungry. To achieve this, it is essential to combine short- and long-term processes with the leading concept that adequate and healthy food is a universal Human Right, taking into account aspects such as production, access, nutrition, sustainable use of natural resources, and the way of life of individuals and communities involved.

In early 2020, when the World Health Organization (WHO) announced the beginning of the pandemic, new challenges arose for the actions contemplated in the Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme. The work took on a new format, without losing sight of the dialogue between the partners. As in the rest of the world, methods and ways of communicating and working some methods and communication and working strategies needed readjustment. Face-to-face technical exchanges, the main activity in cooperation, gave way to webinars, virtual technical conversations, remote hearings, production of new documents and programmatic frameworks using digital tools that brought the different stakeholders closer and facilitated fluidity in cooperation agendas.

“ This is a long-lasting, meaningful and, above all, very innovative partnership. ”

Gustavo Chianca

 FAO Programme Officer in Brazil



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The benefits of Cooperation

The new challenges to achieve the SDGs have required trilateral South-South cooperation initiatives to adopt an innovative design and, as a consequence, to deepen partnership with shared responsibilities and mutual gains.

Innovation

Experiences and knowledge related to the design, implementation, monitoring, intersectoral work, and governance of public policies are shared with partner countries through the projects — a process that yields important gains for all those involved.



Longevity and durability

Over the past few years, within the scope of Brazil-FAO cooperation, the demand for medium and long-term projects has increased, requiring a longer duration. The longevity and durability of the partnerships between the stakeholders involved are some advantages of this new format.



Credibility

The actions resulting from the projects implemented by the Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme have contributed to Brazil achieving even more credibility in international forums, as they allow external recognition that Brazilian best practices can be a reference for other countries.

Mutual benefits

At the same time that cooperation actions open new doors for Brazil, the exchange of experiences with other countries promotes the improvement of Brazilian technologies and public policies, based on critical reflection and capacity building among the technical staff of partner institutions.



Governance

In a horizontal way, this cooperation is based on shared governance and implementation in order to improve the flow of experiences and knowledge between Brazil and the partner countries.

Funding

The projects developed under the Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme stimulate the inflow of funding from the countries involved as they contribute to the implementation of public policies and stimulate international actors to fund new initiatives.





Better Production

More sustainable consumption and production models, inclusive production chains, and resilience of agri-food systems to climate change

Production systems in Latin America and the Caribbean
Family farming and Brazil-FAO International Cooperation as a driver of economic inclusion in rural territories

Ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture are the main purposes of the second SDG: Zero Hunger (SDG2).

To an increasing extent, this challenge requires guaranteed access, consumption and production supported by efficient and inclusive production chains at local, regional and global levels, thus ensuring the resilience and sustainability of agri-food systems even in the face of climate and environmental changes.

To face this challenge, family farming emerges as a strategic element for social and economic inclusion in the territories, resulting in better living conditions for thousands of families. These farmers are men and women, indigenous peoples, river dwellers, artisanal fishers, descendants of traditional peoples and communities, responsible for producing most of the food consumed on a daily basis. These farming families have as their vocation the production of healthier foods from the nutritional point of view, based on more sustainable productive practices, from the environmental point of view.

Improving programmes and public policies, fostering better nutritional practices and supporting technologies to increase agricultural productivity are actions leveraged by the **Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme**. An important partnership that has contributed to increase the availability and improved access to food for the most vulnerable population, inspiring other countries that face similar challenges.

“It is necessary to maintain the institutional focus, extending the vision of Brazilian cooperation beyond the governments in office, with family farming as the core issue capable of boosting local economies, making more sustainable use of the environment, providing fresh and healthy food to their communities for the benefit of the market while strengthening the social fabric.”

Luiz Carlos Beduschi
 Territorial Development Policy Officer at FAO
 Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean



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Hunger-Free Latin America and The Caribbean 2025 Initiative | Food security from the standpoint of sustainable production to eradicate hunger permanently by 2025

The Hunger-Free Latin America and the Caribbean Initiative 2025: Contribution of the Federative Republic of Brazil through South-South Cooperation has been contributing to restore food and nutrition security in the countries of the region for more than a decade. The humanitarian character of the initial period (2010 to 2016) paved the way for a more comprehensive format of trilateral South-South cooperation, starting with the new phase that began in 2016.

The project is currently implemented through a set of cooperation actions, bringing technical assistance to countries, populations and rural communities in emergency or potentially vulnerable situations — either by rehabilitating or supporting the maintenance of production processes, always respecting their local methods, realities, customs and potential. The "umbrella" format of the project encompasses and develops several initiatives, either regional (more recently reaching the Central American Dry Corridor countries: El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala), or national, resulting in relevant experiences that serve as an important driver for social and economic inclusion in the territories and promote better living conditions for thousands of families.

“Sembrando Capacidades” (Sowing Capacities) | Cooperation as a tool for local transformation

“Knowledge management in favor of rural, family and community-based agriculture in Colombian territories has been essential for the achievement and improvement of public policies in favour of this important sector in the country.”

Ronaldo Ferraz
 FAO Coordinator for the Hunger-Free Latin America and the Caribbean 2025 Initiative project

Sowing ideas is also a way of cooperating. The role of Brazil-FAO cooperation is to strengthen this sowing process, facilitating and accelerating the circulation of knowledge that contributes to the achievement of common goals among the countries of the region. Among the experiences, the project **“Sembrando Capacidades” (Sowing Capacities)** stands out, which has contributed to important advances in Colombia.

In Colombia, similarly to Brazil, rural, family and community-based agriculture (ACFC, by its acronym in Spanish), as family farming is defined in that country, plays a key role in rural development, covering 74 percent of agricultural units and producing around 70 percent of all fresh food. Recognizing and valuing knowledge and productive practices is determinant for the sector to achieve its potential for economic, social and environmental transformation. A reality that bears resemblance to Brazil, which in recent decades has been structuring a set of policies and programmes to strengthen its family farming sector, which is responsible for producing most of the food consumed in the country on a daily basis.

“Rural, family and community-based agriculture contributes significantly to food security, rural job creation, sustainable production and the preservation of our nation's cultural and natural heritage. The “Sembrando Capacidades” (Sowing Capacities) project represents a major advance in social and productive inclusion in our country, reducing poverty gaps and social inequality.”

Omar Franco Torres
 Vice-minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Colombia

From this convergence, the **“Sembrando Capacidades” (Sowing Capacities)** initiative was born, through trilateral South-South cooperation between Brazil, Colombia and FAO. Over two years, the project brought together methodologies and approaches to facilitate the empowerment of farmers and their organizations and the generation of innovation on a territorial scale to promote better production and, consequently, better nutrition in a better environment.



PARTNERS | Hungry-Free Latin America and Caribbean Initiative 2025, Contribution of the Federative Republic of Brazil through South-South Cooperation:
 •Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) •Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) •Central American Dry Corridor countries: El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala. **Sowing Capacities:** •Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) •Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply (MAPA) of Brazil •Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR) of Colombia •Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO). **Other partnerships:** •Associação Brasileira das Entidades Estaduais de Assistência Técnica e Extensão Rural (ASBRAER) •Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária (Embrapa) •Universidades.



Harvested fruits: Different actors were mobilized by cooperation and have contributed to driving new agroecology and organic production policy cycles and to opening up spaces for family farming in debates on sustainable rural development, with some highly transformative results in Colombia:



Dynamization of Territorial Innovation Systems (STI, by its acronym in Spanish) and contributions to the implementation of the Agroecological Policy.



Law No. 2046 of 2020 | 30 percent of public procurements to be purchased from family farming; impacting more than 3 million Colombian farmers.



Resolution 464 of 2017 | A guiding framework for comprehensive State action to strengthen the social, economic, and political capacities of rural, family and community-based agriculture.

Lessons learned

From the emphasis on **agroecological knowledge** and in line with the SDGs, came the focus on people and knowledge sharing rooted in sustainability.



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Experiences in **differentiated markets**, such as public procurement and short commercialization circuits, emerged as a tool for integrating farmers and consumers, in a fairer and more sustainable consumption and production pattern.



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The exchange on the Brazilian **Information System** provided references for the task of identifying and characterizing family farming, to design and adjust public policies focused on the real needs and potential of this important development sector.



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Experiences sharing in **agricultural extension and innovation** created spaces for research, training, sharing of agricultural extension technologies and techniques, institutional articulation and knowledge dialogue in the area of food production.



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All of this is articulated in a dynamic environment of **technical exchanges, virtual workshops, information and communication strategies, among other tools used to sow capacities in Brazil and Colombia.**

Semeando capacidades

O projeto **Semeando Capacidades**, iniciativa de cooperação trilateral sul-sul, que buscou fortalecer instrumentos e políticas para a Agricultura Camponesa, Familiar e Comunitária na Colômbia, a partir da gestão do conhecimento e da troca de experiências, apresenta neste repositório web todos os produtos desenvolvidos ao longo do projeto.

sembrandocapacidades.fao.org.co

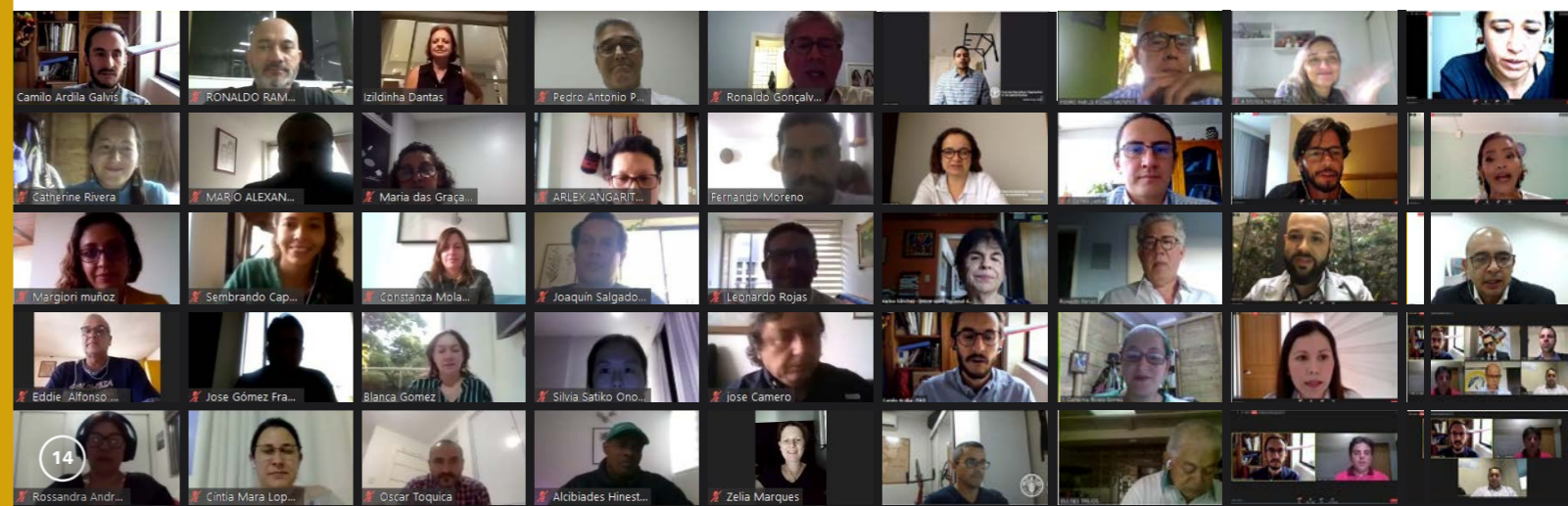
Innovation in times of pandemic

As a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, new ways to articulate the actors involved in cooperation actions had to come out. The activities planned in the framework of the **"Sembrado Capacidades" (Sowing Capacities)** project were intensified, exceeding the project's goals and allowing to share policies and exchange territorial experiences, reaching a much larger number of people involved.

About 50 virtual events were organized, with the participation of more than seven thousand people and the production of an extensive technical and communicational material, which is available in the repository created by the project.

“ Thanks to this exchange we highlighted the role of family farming as a key player in sustainable food systems in Colombia. It is important that we continue cooperating and learning from each other, always with a view on promoting sustainable development and food sovereignty. ”

Camilo Ardila
Sembrando Capacidades
Project Coordinator in Colombia



+COTTON | Diversified production systems as a strategy for sustainable rural development

As one of the 20 most significant commodities on the world market in terms of value, cotton is strategic in developing countries. In Latin America and the Caribbean, cotton production involves family farming as an important actor for sustainable development. Family farmers produce from the perspective of diversified agri-food systems where cotton occupies a central position for income generation. This production modality takes into account factors that influence the promotion of environmental preservation and healthy eating, such as access to land, water, and means of production, processing methods, supply, commercialization and distribution, as well as the choice, preparation, and consumption of food, and the generation and destination of residues. With this differential, cotton cultivation in the region plays an important role in fostering better living conditions among farming families, besides being an essential activity to promote food and nutrition security and to fight hunger and poverty.

Cotton cultivation in the Latin American and Caribbean region dates back thousands of years. Data from the +Cotton project indicate that in 2019, out of the more than 130 000 cotton growers in Latin America, 77 percent are family farmers.

The foundation for building the +Cotton project, which began in 2013, is based on Brazil's successful experience in cotton production, the world's second largest exporter and fourth largest producer, according to the Brazilian Association of Cotton Producers (Abrapa).

The connection of these farmers to sustainable markets has been the focus of regional and national cooperation efforts, promoting products and co-products of the "agro-textile-fabrics system" while strengthening family farming, enabling the generation of income for thousands of families. The actions cross borders and drive the strengthening of the cotton chain in partner countries, focusing on the sustainable production of cotton fiber.



“ This project has awakened in all the countries involved, the support from governments to such organizations as well as to cooperatives and associations leaders. The great lesson is that, if they want to become strong and independent, this strength comes from actions such as the +Cotton project, and they have to organize themselves into cooperatives to democratize access to machinery, inputs, technology, and markets. ”

Márcio Portocarrero
Executive Director of the Brazilian Association of Cotton Producers (Abrapa)



Inclusion of youth and women cotton farmers and access to differentiated markets •••••

Some of the activities integrated to cotton crops carried out by rural women cotton farmers: rescue of native seeds and seed production, planting and cultivating cotton (especially the colored variety), artisanal crafts, animal husbandry, and family food security through intercropping.

The gender approach is one of the priorities of the +Cotton project, besides other equally important ones, such as indigenous people, rural youth, and resilience to climate change. The project's activities include training these groups for the differentiated cotton market which values the production that comes from family farming.



In Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay and the Plurinational State of Bolivia, **around 700 artisan women** and their organizations have already received training in business plans, market access and product improvement.



In Paraguay and Colombia, **700 young students** have been trained under the +Cotton project.



In Peru, more than **5 000 pima cotton-producing families**, organized under the COSTACH cooperative, are taking part in a pioneering pilot project in Latin America to register information, transactions, and traceability of lint production and transparency in the region's textile industry through a blockchain initiative. Via the +Cotton project, the cooperative receives advice on markets and support for this pilot



“ The +Cotton project is an initiative that respects the characteristics of each country in which the exchange of Brazilian experiences takes place; these experiences are adapted according to the local reality and characteristics, thereby building up on the knowledge of each region. ”

Haroldo Cunha
Executive President of the Brazilian Cotton Institute (IBA, by its acronym in Spanish)

“ Implemented in a shared and innovative way, the +Cotton project has repositioned cotton in the governmental agenda of Latin American countries. Alliances with public and private organizations have strengthened the production chain, adding value to cotton and increasing the competitiveness of the cotton sector. ”

Adriana Gregolin
FAO Coordinator for the +Cotton project



PARTNERS | +Cotton: •Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) •Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO) •Partner countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Haiti, Paraguay and Peru. **Financial support:** •Brazilian Cotton Institute (IBA). **Technical and human resources:** •Company Brazilian Association of Agricultural Research (Embrapa) •Brazilian Association of Cotton Producers (Abrapa) •Brazilian Association of State Companies of Technical Assistance and Rural Extension (Asbraer) •Company Paraíba for Research, Rural Extension and Land Regularization (Empaer-PB) •Institutions from partner countries.

To achieve the proposed outcome, this cooperation initiative mobilizes a regional network of more than 80 public and private sector institutions. From the standpoint of sustainable rural development

The +Cotton project contributes to:

Value addition, fair trade, and promotion of the agro-textile-fabrics system, through technologies, innovations, alliances, and public policies for the sector.



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Aligned with this purpose, analysis and best practices studies are produced, as well as field visits; face-to-face and virtual courses and exchanges between countries.



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delivery of inputs, such as seeds; soil and water management and conservation.



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and promotion of new technologies adapted to family-based cotton production, such as machinery, among others, facilitating digital transformation processes in rural territories of partner countries in Latin America.

Technological innovation and the challenges arising from the pandemic

Technological innovation is present in the projects implemented in each partner country under the regional +Cotton initiative. To name a few, the use of drones in Ecuador, a machine prototype for family farming developed by Embrapa Cotton, mechanized harvesting in Peru, cotton ginning machines in Paraguay and Ecuador, and small machines to process cotton for artisanal crafts in Colombia and the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, innovative methodological alternatives applied to cooperation experiences helped the project to know the effects of the crisis in participating countries. Through digital tools, information was taken and brought from the field, especially for the maintenance of remote technical assistance and rural extension to family farmers.

The LazosApp platform, driven by the +Cotton project and the Federal University of Santa Maria (UFSM, by its acronym in Portuguese) of Brazil, is an example of innovation that gained even more importance during the pandemic. The initiative bridges the digital gaps in the rural sector and aims to promote innovation in agricultural practices among family farmers and rural youth in Latin America. The action has reached rural youth in three agricultural schools in Paraguay and is now reaching Ecuador and Colombia.

Innovation also defines the horizontal management model implemented by +Cotton, between ABC, FAO and the countries, building the necessary references for the implementation of trilateral South-South cooperation projects through knowledge sharing and participative construction of the project implementation process.

With the support of the +Cotton project, carried out in the framework of the Brazil-FAO cooperation, countries are moving forward in formulating national plans for cotton and improving their competitiveness strategies.



The +Cotton project supported the elaboration of the National Programme for Bolivian cotton production, approved by the Ministry of Rural and Land Development (MDRyT, by its acronym in Spanish) in 2021. The CCA-348 Mandiyuti seed was replicated, in support of the Center for Tropical Agricultural Research (CIAT, by its acronym in Spanish) and is available for the cotton sector.



The project supported the development of a plan to strengthen the national capacity for cotton research and extension, as well as the establishment of the national ATER desk. The Brazilian cotton variety BRS 336, from Embrapa Cotton, was also validated, with positive results in terms of adaptation and productivity.



The cotton trading desk was reactivated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG, by its acronym in Spanish) and the Inter-institutional Technical Team (ETI, by its acronym in Spanish) was formed. Five white and three colored cotton varieties from Embrapa Cotton were validated, contributing to the exchange between the countries.



The project supported the elaboration of the National Cotton Plan, under the leadership of the Ministry of Agrarian Development and Irrigation (MIDAGRI).



Cotton has positioned itself as one of the government's ten priority crops in the National Development Plan of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MADR, by its acronym in Spanish).



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Dialogue between FAO, Governments and Civil Society | Strengthening family farming in LAC countries

Producing food involves preparing the land, choosing and caring for the seed, so that it sprouts and develops to its full potential. These are actions the Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme cares for. The creation of spaces for dialogue with the different stakeholders — civil society, international organizations, governments, the private sector, parliaments, and academia — is an appropriate environment to cultivate ideas and overcome obstacles in the face of shared problems.

The Brazilian experience of the last few decades, filled with a set of programmes and public policies aimed at strengthening family farming, has been seen as a reference and inspiration among the other countries in the region.



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Mercosur Specialized Meeting on Family Farming (REAF Mercosur)
Multilevel governance and regional integration

From the local to the international environment to regional connections, the Mercosur Specialized Meeting on Family Farming (REAF Mercosur) was created in 2004, articulating social players from the most diverse identities brought together by a common goal of cooperation. Transnational visibility allows these actors to gain the capacity to politically impact their national realities, rebuilding the image of family farming from "vulnerable actor" to protagonist in sustainable development and the promotion of food security. REAF Mercosur has been an important channel for disseminating public policies, both in the South American context (the expanded Mercosur, which includes Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and the Plurinational State of Bolivia), and on a global scale, adapting them to national realities, in line with the principles of cooperation.

“The United Nations Decade of Family Farming, through its global action plan, urges countries to adopt measures to create more and better opportunities for the economic inclusion of family farming and sustainable production. In recent years, REAF/MERCOSUR has allowed progress in prioritizing an agenda for the sector to give visibility and build strategies in the bloc to promote the access of family farming to new markets and technologies.”

Nelson de Andrade

Deputy Secretary of Family Farming and Cooperativism of the Brazilian Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply

“People articulating around common problems through the application of innovative technologies strengthens the region politically. Following the example of Brazil, which used to treat agriculture as a sectorial problem, since 2000, with the approval of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), it began to be considered a political issue.”

Adoniram Sanches
FAO Coordinator for Central American countries.

The following projects illustrate the environment of shared construction: **“Strengthening the dialogue between FAO, Governments and Civil Society”** (2008 to 2018), and **“Strengthening Family Farming and Agrarian Reform Settlers in the Region: Pathways to Sustainable Development”** (ongoing project).

These initiatives have served to make cooperation actions more convergent in the region, as they open spaces for the participation of civil society organizations in the design, management and evaluation of public policies for family farming.

Among the outcomes, it is worth highlighting the strengthening of the agenda of the Mercosur Specialized Meeting on Family Farming (REAF/Mercosur), the support to the establishment an Alliance for Food Sovereignty (a platform for political dialogue between sectors of rural and urban areas), the creation of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) Working Group on Family Farming, and the contribution to the adoption of a regional agenda focused on gender policies.



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Family farming and the Road to Sustainable Development Goals ●●●●●●

In order to keep strengthening family farming policies towards the achievement of the SDGs, the project's current stage aims to support capacity building of the technical and managerial staff of government, institutions and farmers' representations for the development of differentiated policies for the sector. An extensive exchange of knowledge takes place through the exchange of experiences and best practices, and the generation of evidence on policies and programmes that have facilitated market access and services for family farming.

“The implementation of these projects within the framework of Trilateral South-South Cooperation considers the importance of regional space as a place to build opinions and consensus for decision-making.”

Pedro Boareto
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 FAO Coordinator for FAO/INCRA and FAO/MAPA Projects



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From dialogue to practice | outcomes that have impacted production improvement in the LAC region



Creation of family farmer national registries, public procurement from family farming.



©FAO/Eliana Belancor



Land tenure regulations and control.

©FAO/Fabiola Alcora



Educational programmes for the rural youth.

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Gender equality policies with a focus on rural women.

©FAO/Imanol Cambor



Dissemination of laws for the protection of family farmers in case of environmental or climate disasters.

©FAO/Charlene Cortes



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Better Nutrition

Fighting hunger and
ensuring food and
nutrition security in all
its forms

School Feeding | From the perspective of the human right to adequate food

Brazil is a world reference in **school feeding policies**. A distinction earned thanks to the historic decision to link this issue to the Human Right to Adequate Food and the initiative to strengthen the role of family farming as a key player in supplying healthy food to schools.

Brazil's commitment to support other countries in strengthening their School Feeding Policies results from the understanding of the importance of this structuring tool in building a sustainable world that respects the right of all to adequate and healthy food.

The results achieved by the projects **"Strengthening School Feeding Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean"** (2009 to 2018), and **"Consolidation of School Feeding Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean"** (since 2018), under the Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme, reaffirm this commitment.

The year 2009 represented a historic milestone for school feeding in Brazil. The transformation became effective when the vision of food as a right was extended to all students in primary education and started to occupy the centre of a national policy, with the enactment of the specific Law on School Feeding (SF). An important step towards significant advances in education and health in the country, especially in the fight against hunger and malnutrition.

The Human Right to Food was introduced in Article 6 of the Brazilian Federal Constitution, through the Constitutional Amendment No. 64 of 2010, reaffirming what is stated in Law No. 11.947 of 2009 and its regulations.

Another major innovation of the Law on SF was the purchase of food produced by family farming to be served in schools. Since then, the National School Feeding Programme (NSFP) determines that at least 30 percent of these items must come from this important productive sector.



Brazil's National SF Policy guarantees, with the same public funding allocated, higher quality food served to students (**more than 40 million people – children, youth, and adults – in 150 000 public schools, representing almost half of the total number of students served in the whole LAC region**), improved income and living conditions for those who produce the food (**more than 4 million farming families**), and incentives to the local economy, through public purchases in short commercialization circuits (**5 570 municipalities throughout the country**).

This successful experience in Brazil has crossed borders and gained repercussion throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. As of 2009, the demand for technical cooperation on School Feeding has intensified, especially since it is a multi-sectoral and cross-cutting policy in the fight against poverty and other social issues.

“When facing the challenge of ending hunger, and since Brazil can contribute to other countries structuring their own School Feeding policies, there is no other path left to take than that of Cooperation.”

Karine dos Santos
General Coordinator of the National School Feeding Programme of FNDE/Brazil



Sustainable Schools Food security and nutrition in practice

Established in 13 LAC countries, the Sustainable Schools methodology brings into practice the cross-cutting and intersectoral perspective of the policy, in a rich and catalyzing environment of multiple experiences. The initiative is the result of cooperation between Brazil-FAO and partner countries and involves the participation of local administrators from the areas of education, health, agriculture, planning, and social development. **Healthy food on the students' plates** comes from the garden cultivated at school or from family farms and is collaboratively prepared by volunteer cooks and mothers. The methodology is organized around six components that complement each other and allow the scaling of this action for the country's national policy. Twenty-three thousand Sustainable Schools are already in operation, impacting the lives of students and family farmers throughout the region.



PARTNERS | Strengthening School Feeding Programs in Latin America and the Caribbean and Consolidation of School Feeding Programs in Latin America and the Caribbean: •Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) •National Education Development Fund of the Ministry of Education in Brazil (FNDE/MEC) • Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), with the participation and continuous support of the countries of the Latin America and the Caribbean.

Fighting obesity and overweight

Knowing how to make healthy food choices, not only for oneself but also for the benefit of future generations and the planet, is an aspiration aligned with the SDGs. Individual attitudes collectively contribute to better nutrition, better production, a better environment, and, consequently, a better life for everyone.

A regulatory framework for Brazil's Law on SF, published in 2022, established that 75 percent of the items purchased for School Feeding must be either fresh or minimally processed foods. A State action that reaffirms, based on the law, the importance of offering healthy food to students and of strengthening family farming to meet this demand.

The LAC region faces many challenges in making healthy food available to everyone. The most expensive region to eat healthily also has eight out of ten people overweight or obese. This reflects the lack of access to healthy diets and the low quality of the food, especially among the most vulnerable population.

Brazil-FAO cooperation actions on school feeding emerge as an essential strategy to reverse this worrying picture, especially among the most vulnerable population. Altogether, the School Feeding Programmes implemented in the region serve about 85 million people — children, young people and adults who find at school a valuable opportunity to access adequate food.



Institutionality, permanence and sustainability of the School Feeding Policy

Supporting the drafting and implementation of a law on school feeding at the national level is paramount to strengthen the institutionality, permanence and sustainability of the actions intended at local level. This is how school feeding is consolidated as a State policy, guaranteeing, among other benefits, the resources for its execution. The initiatives of this cooperation support the partner countries to move forward in this regard. Since the project began in the region, six countries have passed their laws on school feeding: Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay and the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

Pandemics

At school or at home, adequate food is everyone's right

The COVID-19 pandemic brought social isolation and, with it, the challenge of continuing to feed, adequately and healthily, the students in their homes. In Brazil, the role of school feeding as a State policy was once again decisive. The food, until then prepared and served in the school environment, started to be distributed in the form of kits delivered to the students' families.

This required rapid adaptation, both of the law and logistics, as well as a shared action of the different levels of government — federal, state and municipal — and an intense participation of the school community. The unprecedented experience was quickly shared with the other countries through the direct channel established in the cooperation actions. The innovation in the potential use of virtual tools — webinars, remote meetings and training sessions — allowed for a qualified and exponential outreach to the cooperation's target audience.

One of the highlights was the participation of 21 countries in dialogues and debates about the permanence of SF supply during the pandemic.



School feeding for the creation of healthy eating habits

Website screen print



Sustainable School Feeding Network ••••• An innovation network for unprecedented times

The **Sustainable School Feeding Network (RAES, by its acronym in Portuguese)** is one more response from Brazil to the global commitment to improving food quality and promoting a healthier and more sustainable food system worldwide. Conceived in 2018, as part of the project **"Consolidation of School Feeding Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean"**, RAES is a permanent space for dialogue between countries, in which experiences, best practices, and actions to strengthen school feeding programs are shared, even in times of pandemic.

“ Every day in schools, Brazil feeds more than 41 million students with quality and efficiency. Added to this challenge, the country has made itself available to dialogue with other countries. This joint construction is based on the understanding that everyone can have adequate and healthy school meals. Partner countries have responded positively in this dialogue process. ”

Najla Veloso
FAO Coordinator of the project Consolidation of School Feeding Programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean

Promoting food security and overcoming poverty | Ongoing efforts by Brazil and FAO in Latin America and the Caribbean

The year 2009 was marked by a strong recession at the global level, resulting from the effects of the global financial crisis that began in 2007. The same year, in Rome, at the World Summit on Food Security, FAO insisted on the international commitment to eradicate hunger from the face of the Earth by 2025. A position defended by several actors worldwide, opening space for new partnerships or reinforcing existing ones towards common objectives: eradicate poverty, hunger, and reduce malnutrition.

In Brazil, the Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme gave rise to several actions and projects. Among them, the initiative "Support for National and Subregional Strategies for Food and Nutritional Security and Overcoming Poverty in Countries of Latin America and Caribbean" [2008 to 2018].

The cooperation between the Government of Brazil, FAO and partner countries was an incentive to share experiences and lessons learned, benefiting from the comparative advantages and synergies between the parties to increase the scale of South-South cooperation initiatives and favour actions with greater impact.

A strong multi-sectoral articulation with the government of the countries resulted in strengthening the institutions responsible for Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) policies. At the centre of this effort was the support to the implementation and monitoring of FNS agendas, strengthening the link between governments and civil society towards a more integrated action in the region.

Based on the principle of complementarity of trilateral South-South cooperation, some actions were added to other projects and initiatives of the Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme, such as the Strengthening of School Feeding Programmes in the LAC region, the Mercosur Specialized Meeting on Family Farming (REAF Mercosur), and the Parliamentary Fronts Against Hunger.

“ As long as there is a conviction that it is only possible to keep innovating and developing public policies in food and nutrition security with the participation of civil society, positive results will come, also diminishing the impacts of phenomena like the current post COVID-19 economic crisis, and allowing us to progress in the fight against food insecurity in the region. ”

Alberto Ramírez
FAO Regional Advisor and Project Officer



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PARTNERS | Support for National and Sub-regional Strategies for Food and Nutrition Security (FNS), and for Overcoming Poverty in Countries of the Latin America and the Caribbean: •Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) •Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) together with the governments of: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Peru. In addition to regional and sub-regional regional integration bodies, such as the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

Food and Nutrition Security in the political agenda of the countries in the region
Outlines for the construction of new scenarios

Without disregarding the cooperation principle of respecting the countries' sovereignty, their specificities and rhythms, and coordinating actions jointly, based on local realities, the project contributed to:

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Raise awareness of national actors on food insecurity paradigms; promote a gender approach in FNS policies and its instruments.

Reinforce the importance of multisectoral work, monitoring and evaluation of FNS policies.

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Build capacity to measure the state of food insecurity, through training for the implementation of the Latin American and Caribbean Food Security Scale (ELCSA, by its acronym in Spanish).





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State institutions in LAC countries focused on the issues of Food and Nutrition Security and overcoming poverty


 Definition of the conceptual framework for family farming.

 Support for the institutionalization of spaces for dialogue with the civil society.

 Support for legal and normative frameworks on FNS.

 Support for the design of "Public purchases from family farming" (2014-2015).

 Support for the drafting of "Public purchases from family farming for School Feeding": PROALIMENTOS Programme (2015).

 Advice and technical assistance in the creation of spaces for dialogue with civil society, aimed at designing and implementing public policies for food and nutrition security.





Better Environment

More efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable agri-food systems, sustainable use of terrestrial and marine ecosystems

The role of the Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme in producing evidence for a better governance of natural resources

Food, environment and health are interconnected in the quest for a better life. It is not enough to eat. It is necessary to eat based on healthy, sustainable, and regular choices. This is why SDG 2 includes "Zero Hunger and Sustainable Agriculture", a perspective that takes into account the production of healthy food and a sustainable use of land and other natural resources.

To achieve this goal, Brazil needs to overcome the challenges of a continental-sized territory (8 516 000 km²), with enormous biodiversity. Added to this is the cultural diversity of its inhabitants — more than 210 million people with varied lifestyles, realities and needs.

In recent years, Brazil has been seeking ways to achieve a federal public governance capable of integrating the different agendas of sustainable development: environment, food production and sustainable consumption, access to land and food as a right for everyone.

The Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme is organizing demands, bringing together experiences, and systematizing knowledge and know-how to help this process. In a shared way, with a focus on improving the governance of natural resources, the knowledge produced has been used to design and implement public policies that contribute to this process, understanding that it is necessary to incorporate dimensions of the future in decisions of the present.

“Brazil-FAO Cooperation, in particular concerning the FAO Strategic Framework 2022-2031 and the Triangular South-South Cooperation Framework 2022-2025, offers opportunities to increase trilateral South-South cooperation in Latin American and Caribbean countries and takes advantage of Brazil's knowledge and experience.”

Dina Lopez

FAO South-South Cooperation Officer for Latin America and the Caribbean



Agro-environmental policies in LAC countries | strategy to reduce poverty and food insecurity

The eradication of hunger is a constant task of the **Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme** until **Zero Hunger in LAC countries is achieved, as foreseen in SDG2**. With a continually growing population, the region is experiencing increasing pressure on its natural resources, and the impacts of environmental degradation affect the most vulnerable social sectors.

In this challenging scenario, sustainable development is the way forward, where health and environment are intertwined in the search for ways to produce and consume food properly and are a structural part of the agro-environmental analysis.

This requires improving the analysis of different sectoral policies, creating more spaces for dialogue and proposals for public policies that contribute to adequate use of land and marine space.

In LAC, positive experiences have served as examples for other countries, within the framework of trilateral South-South cooperation. The project **“Strengthening Agro-Environmental Policies in Latin America and the Caribbean through Dialogue and the Exchange of National Experiences”** [2012 to 2018], reinforced the role of agro-environmental public policies as tools for reducing rural poverty and food insecurity.

This process results from assessments made in Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and Paraguay (which together respond for 57 percent of the agricultural production in the region), and from the systematization of cases and the evaluation of different realities, strengths and weaknesses in a broad and multisectoral way. The production of the **Voluntary Guidelines for Agro-Environmental Policies in Latin America and the Caribbean** and the proposal of Indicators for Agro-Environmental Policies in convergence with the SDGs were two significant outcomes.

AGRO-ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES:
strategic planning and governance instruments adopted by the states. Articulated under sustainability principles in the economic, cultural and environmental dimensions and applied to agricultural and forestry production, fishing and aquaculture, these principles help reduce the negative impacts affecting ecosystems and food and nutrition security in a climate change scenario.

Representatives from 124 public and private sector institutions, academics, community and civil society organizations, and hundreds of experts from 15 countries participated in the regional forums. At the national level, progress was made in terms of governance and national agro-environmental agendas, institutional capacities, and intersectoral agreements were strengthened.



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PARTNERS | Strengthening Agro-environmental Policies in Latin American and Caribbean countries: •Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) •Ministry of Brazil's Environment •Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) •Ministries of Agriculture and the Environment of Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico, Panama and Paraguay. Chile and Nicaragua participated in the first stage of the project.

Agro-environmental policies versus climate change

Local solutions to a global problem

Addressing common problems at the regional level starts with finding local solutions. *The Voluntary Guidelines for Agro-environmental Policies in Latin America and the Caribbean* is designed to guide the implementation of sectoral actions and governance systems that strengthen local ownership and social participation, with an impact on agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and aquaculture. An instrumental framework that seeks to contribute to the SDGs.

At the 2018 FAO Regional Conference for Latin America and the Caribbean, the decision was made to disseminate the Voluntary Guidelines for Agro-Environmental Policies among LAC countries. In a scenario of global changes, this was a way to contribute to improving public policies for sustainable rural development, integrating society, territory, environment, and economy into policies applied from the interaction of different social and institutional actors. Commitments such as the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development create a favorable context in the countries for developing and adopting strategic instruments with an agro-environmental focus.

“ The project has created an integrated vision that guides discussions in the areas of food production, food security, and the environment. It is essential to strengthen capacities, identifying the needs for inclusive institutional development, governance, and governability, which are key factors for the implementation of agro-environmental policies. ”

Jéssica Casaza


FAO Coordinator for the project “Strengthening Agro-Environmental Policies in Latin American and the Caribbean”




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Studies on Agro-Environmental Policies

A "portfolio" of successful experiences in agro-environmental policies to promote food security and fight hunger in the participating countries: Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and Paraguay.



The orientation of the Brazilian agro-environmental policy seeks to contemplate multiple objectives: improving productivity and food security, fighting poverty, and promoting environmental conservation. The agro-environmental strategy is built from normative bases on which programmes are constructed focusing on productive, social and environmental goals.



In Costa Rica, numerous agro-environmental public policy instruments in the country incorporate the challenges of climate change, food security, ecosystem goods and services, watershed management, and land use planning and management, among others. The systematized experiences have resulted in transformative processes for agriculture.




By Chile gradually incorporates the concepts of sustainability, clean production, equity and quality into the forestry and agricultural sector. The agro-environmental approach in the policies implemented in the country addresses the basic pillars of regulation in the agriculture and forestry sector.



Cuban agricultural and environmental sectors have come together, achieving even more relevant results. The agroecological movement has reorganized agricultural production and family farming, allowing the development of new scenarios with biological, productive, economic, energy, and environmental efficiency.




In Colombia, agricultural policy instruments are increasingly incorporating the environmental dimension, recognizing that environmental services are decisive for the productivity and long-term sustainability of agriculture.




In Mexico, an emphasis is put on agrobiodiversity resources and traditional agricultural knowledge in different forms of land use. Traditional production systems contribute to guarantee food sovereignty, promote rural development and fight poverty in both rural and urban areas.



Development programme implemented in the Paraguayan agricultural sector are beginning to include a cross-cutting component in environmental issues, addressing the issue of sustainable rural development from a damage-mitigation standpoint (soil degradation, climate change, production versus preservation of natural resources, management of forestry systems, etc.).



Description of the characteristics of the agricultural sector in Nicaragua, the background and assumptions under which the Law on the Promotion of Ecological or Organic Production is structured. Ecological and sustainable agriculture was analyzed based primarily on small-scale experimentation, focusing on agroecological knowledge management.



In Panama, the agricultural production with an agro-environmental focus, territorial and environmental planning guarantees a territorial balance between the use of natural resources (land, water, soil) and their conservation, focusing on the population's well-being, the maintenance of sustainability and the competitiveness of agricultural production.



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As part of the project, the **Regional Programme for the Construction and Operation of Demonstrative Agri-Aquaculture Farms** (“Programa Regional de Construcción y Operación de Granjas Agro-Acuícolas Demonstrativas”) was implemented to strengthen the capacities of "resource-restricted aquaculture producers" (AREL, by its acronym in Spanish) and micro and small-scale aquaculture producers (AMyPE, by its acronym in Spanish) in LAC countries. A cooperation initiative involving Brazil, FAO, and the governments of Antigua and Barbuda, Costa Rica, Colombia, Guatemala and Paraguay

A network for Aquaculture in the Americas

Despite being the fastest growing agri-food sector in the world and with huge potential for expansion in Latin America and the Caribbean, aquaculture has been impacted by the climate crisis and the interruption of production and consumption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Initiatives to strengthen this activity are critical for sustainable development in order to contribute to the fight against hunger and poverty in the region.

Created in 2010, at the initiative of the Brazilian Government by the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquaculture, the Aquaculture Network of the Americas (RAA, by its acronym in Spanish), which initially brought together 20 countries, was an important tool for the sustainable development of this sector.

The work of the Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme, through the “Activation of Services and Consolidation of the Aquaculture Network of the Americas” project, further strengthened the actions

of the Network, facilitating its operation as an independent body. In coordination with the region's governments, the work addressed the requests for information on best aquaculture practices; access to markets; value chains; institutional strengthening and normative development; incorporation of under-resourced population strata — such as women and indigenous peoples.

“ The contribution of the Aquaculture Network of the Americas was not only crucial for knowledge transfer between the countries; it also continues to bear fruits to this day in the spaces for information exchange of the Cooperation project, especially among producers, who, despite time constraints, remain in communication with each other. ”

Roberto de Andrade

 FAO Consultant on Fisheries and Aquaculture

Antigua and Barbuda | response to environmental issues

In 2008, Hurricane Omar traveled an unusual path in the western Caribbean Sea, affecting Puerto Rico, Sotavento Islands, Montserrat, and Venezuela. In response to the damage caused, especially in the agricultural sector, within the framework of the “Zero Hunger and Sustainable Agriculture” goal, training was provided to extensionists for the construction of Demonstrative Agri-Aquaculture Farms. Results include, among others, an increase in awareness and interest in fish consumption in bars, hotels, and restaurants on the island.

Colombia | response to gender and value chain issues

The establishment of Demonstrative Agri-Aquaculture Farms with the participation of women fish farmers brought innovations to the tilapia value chain, with the processing and use of fish skin for high quality by-products. The project contributed to increase business and environmental awareness.

Costa Rica | strengthening farmers settled under the Agrarian Reform

Demonstrative Agri-Aquaculture Farms were established with the participation of the Llano Bonito de Guatuso rural settlement, an area rich in springs, with rivers and tributaries that originate in the Sierra Volcanic region of Guanacaste. Strengthening technical capacities for cultivation and developing basic managerial and commercialization skills are examples of noteworthy results.

Guatemala | food security for indigenous people

The Agri-Aquaculture Demonstration Farms have contributed to tackling food insecurity and the high levels of exclusion of the indigenous population, especially in rural areas, to eradicate hunger and malnutrition and strengthen rural economy. As a result, the units continue to operate as Learning Centres for Rural Development, integrated to the National Rural Extension System.

Paraguay | Sustainable aquaculture

Demonstrative Agri-Aquaculture Farms have contributed to the implementation of Paraguay's National Policy for the Development of Sustainable Aquaculture. The farms continue to create job opportunities and alternatives and to transfer local capacities, integrated with other activities such as poultry farming and horticulture. The increase in aquaculture production stands out, contributing to the availability and access to fish consumption, and improving the nutrition of the populations in the beneficiary areas.



PARTNERS | Activation of Services and Consolidation of the Aquaculture Network of the Americas: •Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) •Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO) •Partner countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Costa Rica, Colombia, Guatemala and Paraguay.



Cooperation in action | Initiatives for strengthening the RAA

Creation of the Council of Ministers of the Network, the Technical Committee and the Forum of Parliamentarians of Fisheries and Aquaculture.



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Creation of an aquaculture regional observatory (virtual).

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Capacity building through the organization of regional courses on aquaculture best practices

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Elaboration of a Technical Report on value chains in Aquaculture products.

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Pilot Farms with a focus on activity dissemination centres.

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Responsible Governance | Of Land Tenure in Latin America and the Caribbean

For family farming to fully unfold its vocation to produce food and contribute locally to food security while generating jobs, income and local development with inclusiveness and guaranteeing a better life for thousands of families, these must have the right to access land.

Land tenure governance in LAC countries is facing historic challenges, such as unequal access to, and management of natural resources, high level of informality in land tenure, and limited access to natural resources for marginalized groups of population (women, indigenous peoples, the youth and smallholder farmers).

Since its adoption in May 2012, the **Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security**, negotiated at the **Committee on World Food Security** by the Council of Representatives of Member Nations, civil society and the private sector, has been used in the LAC region as a tool to address these challenges.

In 2017, the High-Level Meeting on Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fishing and Forests in the LAC region, was organized by FAO and the National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform of Brazil (INCRA, by its acronym in Portuguese). The need to move forward regarding land management systems, institutional strengthening, reduction of gender and youth gaps in access to natural resources, and concrete mechanisms for South-South cooperation between the countries were highlighted issues.

The operational response came with the project called **“Support for the strengthening of responsible governance of tenure in the Americas”**, a joint

initiative between FAO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Brazilian Cooperation Agency and INCRA, in the framework of the **Brazil-FAO International Cooperation Programme**. The project relates to local challenges through the support to activities for the implementation of the Guidelines at regional and national levels. As part of its main objectives, the project aims to assist in developing tools for land and natural resources management through technological innovation and institutional strengthening.

In 2021, the cycle of exchanges on **Technological Solutions for Land Management (“Soluciones Tecnológicas para la Administración de Tierras”)**, carried out in three virtual events, presented an overview on the subject considering the regional scenario. This cycle was an expressive contribution in identifying measures and solutions with potential for replication in the different countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and promoting dialogues for building a joint action agenda on the subject.

“A cooperation project is efficient when it helps to build strong relationships between the technology and knowledge providers and the recipients, so that it is not just a one-off effort.”

Alan Bojanic

FAO Representative in Brazil until 2018 and current FAO Representative in Colombia



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