



## South-South Quarterly Newsletter

### November 2023

*"Through South-South Cooperation, countries of the Global South can share knowledge, skills, expertise and resources, coordinate their efforts, and benefit from economies of scale. Together, they can multiply their sustainable development efforts to mitigate climate disruption, find solutions to a global health crisis, manage supply chain disruptions and deliver humanitarian assistance".*

António Guterres  
UN Secretary General  
at the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation  
12 September 2023



# Content

## WFP's Global Work on South-South Cooperation

RBA Joint Celebration of the 2023 UN Day for South-South Cooperation .....	3
Update on SSTC Projects in the Republic of Congo .....	3
SSTC Unit Conducts Regional Webinars on SSTC Policy Update .....	4
Final Plenary Meeting of the 2022 Global SSTC Task Force .....	4
Towards Policy Implementation - Regional Bureaus, CoEs Joined HQ Unit for a Retreat in Rome .....	5
WFP Participated in the 7th International Meeting on Triangular Cooperation in Portugal .....	5

## Update from WFP's Network of Centres of Excellence

### WFP China Centre of Excellence for Rural Transformation (WFP China CoE)

Peru Learns from China Via Webinars on Strengthening Capacities in E-commerce & Linking Smallholder Farmers to Markets .....	6
Cameroonian Delegation Visits China to Learn about Agricultural Development & School Feeding Programmes .....	6
China's Seminar on Post-Harvest Loss Management - a SSTC Policy Dialogue on Resilient & Sustainable Food Systems .....	7
Ghana and Southern African Delegations Explore Post-Harvest Loss Reduction, Grain Storage and Trade in China .....	7

### WFP Centre of Excellence Against Hunger in Brazil (WFP Brazil CoE)

WFP and IDB Host High-Level Meeting on Human Capital Development in Latin America and the Caribbean .....	8
Brazil Contributes to the Republic of Congo's Family Farming and School Feeding Programmes Through the IBSA Fund .....	8

### WFP Regional Centre of Excellence Based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire (CERFAM)

China and Guinea Strengthen Cooperation on Rice Value Chain in Côte d'Ivoire .....	9
CERFAM: Advancing Sustainable Food Systems Through Value Chains .....	9

## Regional Outlook: Latin America and the Caribbean

The Dominican Republic and Honduras Leverage SSTC for Social Protection Systems .....	10
Haiti Visits Argentina on a Technical Mission in the Framework of the Prohuertas Programme .....	10
Cuba Exchanges Knowledge with Brazil and China on Strengthening Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture .....	11
Nicaragua Visits Guatemala to Learn about Home-Grown School Feeding .....	11

## Regional Outlook: Africa and Middle East

Lebanon-Jordan Exchange on Wheat Flour Fortification .....	12
Regional Boot-Camp on Community-Based Participatory Planning and Community Asset Creation ...	12
South-South Exchange on Community-Led Integrated Resilience Programmes in Niger .....	12
Nigeria Promotes Knowledge Exchange on Social Protection Systems Within African Countries .....	13
ECOWAS – RBD Conference on Home-Grown School Feeding .....	13

## Regional Outlook: Asia and the Pacific

China Supports Timor-Leste in Developing a Mushroom Value Chain .....	14
India Shares Its Experience in Rice Fortification with Nigeria .....	14

# WFP's Global Work on South-South Cooperation

## RBA Joint Celebration of the 2023 UN Day for South-South Cooperation

On September 12, the Rome-based Agencies (RBA) of the United Nations – namely the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and WFP, in collaboration with the Rwanda Cooperation Initiative (RCI), celebrated the 2023 UN Day for South-South Cooperation (SSC).

This year's theme was "Strengthening collaboration and institutional frameworks for effective implementation of SSTC".

The theme reflected the need for creating robust partnerships and mechanisms to mobilize resources, knowledge sharing, enhanced policy dialogue and stakeholder engagement as crucial instruments for strengthening SSTC as an effective mechanism for transformative development.

Rwandan representatives of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, ICT, Environment & Gender Equity, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, SS & TC Agencies, UN Agencies, Development Partners & Non-governmental agencies, Development Financial Institutions (DFIs) participated in the event.

During his speech, Mr. David Kaatrud, Director of Programme - Humanitarian and Development (PRO-T) Division in WFP, emphasized the great potential and impact HGSF programmes (e.g., [RBA joint programme on SSTC in HGSE](#)) can have on entire communities.

Using SSTC as a matchmaker and a facilitator, such excellent practices can be replicated in the neighbouring countries, in the region and also globally.

## Update on SSTC Projects in the Republic of Congo

In September, David Kaatrud, the Director of Programme – Humanitarian & Development Division in HQ visited the Republic of Congo (RoC) to view progress and updates on the ongoing country projects in SSTC.

During his visit, Mr. Kaatrud, accompanied by the WFP RoC management team and HQ SSTC unit focal points, visited the local authorities and donor representatives, a cassava field with a demonstration of production and processing techniques, a cassava processing factory.

The director confirmed his appreciation for the joint efforts towards the ongoing SSTC projects:

- ["Strengthening the capacity of smallholder farmers to produce cassava-derived products and reduce banana post-harvest losses in the Republic of Congo"](#) funded by China's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA) in the context of WFP-MARA global SSTC initiative;
- "Establishing an integrated cassava value chain in RoC" an RBA joint SSTC project funded by the IFAD-China SSTC facility; and
- ["Enhancing Family Farmers' Access to Local Markets in the Republic of Congo through South-South Cooperation"](#) via the India, Brazil South Africa (IBSA) Fund.

As part of this two-day event, RBA representatives conducted a field visit in the South of Rwanda, where the Joint RBA Programme on "Accelerating Progress Towards Rural Women's Economic Empowerment" (JP RWEE) is being implemented.

The objective of this trip was for RBA to acknowledge JP RWEE's activities and their impact on the ground, interact with the members of the cooperative.

Also, RBA sought to get familiar with implementation modalities and the impact of the Gender Action Learning System (GALS) methodology and climate-smart practices (i.e. solar-powered irrigation) used in the programme.

Local governments' representatives expressed their appreciation of the UN support and welcomed new projects and synergetic approaches calling for the replication of good practices.

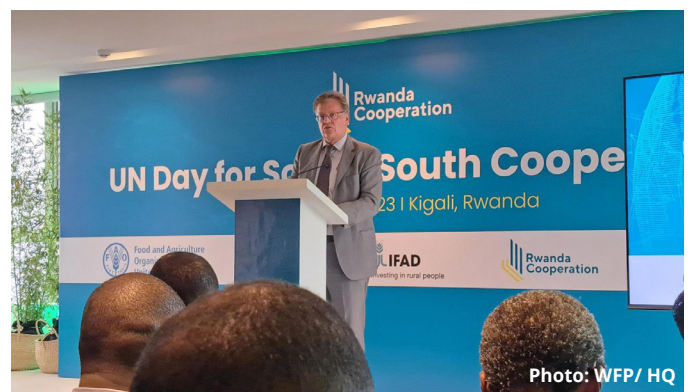


Photo: WFP/ HQ

In addition, David Kaatrud met with the Head of Cooperation of the European Union (EU) Delegation in RoC in light of recent EU (INTPA) funded projects implemented by WFP, namely, Projet d'Appui aux Petits Producteurs de Haricots (project to support small-scale bean producers) and ProManioc (project to strengthen the artisanal cassava value chain).

As next steps, WFP will continue to support the strengthening of the cassava value chain with its partners by enhancing the complementarities and synergies among the ongoing SSTC initiatives and explore opportunities for scaling up.



Photo: WFP/ Katherine Gaylord

# WFP's Global Work on South-South Cooperation

## SSTC Unit Conducts Regional Webinars on SSTC Policy Update

In September and October, the SSTC Unit in HQ in collaboration with Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBB) and the Regional Bureau for Western Africa (RBD) convened regional webinars to roll out the [2023 SSTC Policy update](#) approved by the Executive Board last June.

The agenda for both webinars covered the theory and practice of SSTC as a corporate WFP agenda and portfolio.

The aim was to inform participants on the SSTC policy update and facilitate a discussion on how this could be rolled out in their regions in alignment with regional priorities and building on achievements of and lessons learned from WFP-facilitated SSTC initiatives.

Key aspects of the updated policy include a distinct focus on WFP capacities to effectively support country-driven SSTC and to deepen its role as a trusted and reliable partner for countries learning from each other.

RBB and RBD webinars were attended by more than 70 and 100 participants respectively joining from RBx, COs and HQ offices.

Moving forward, the RBB and RBD with support from HQ SSTC Unit will:

1. Conduct a regional mapping survey and design a regional implementation plan;
2. Support COs to identify opportunities to implement the policy as part of a strategic approach to SSTC;
3. Continue to carry out South-South Reviews and other analyses to inform/support CO-level SSTC engagement integrated in their Country Strategic Plans; and
4. Review the opportunities that are currently on the South-South Match knowledge platform for the region and add any new opportunities that are available.

The SSTC Unit is planning to organize SSTC regional webinars in the remaining RBx to continue the SSTC policy update dissemination and roll-out across all regions.

To learn more about the SSTC work across Asia and the Pacific, please see [this Factsheet](#) and in the Western Africa region, please see [this Factsheet](#) or contact [ssts.global@wfp.org](mailto:ssts.global@wfp.org).

## Final Plenary Meeting of the 2022 Global SSTC Task Force

In September, the final plenary meeting of the internal Global Task Force on SSTC, chaired by David Kaatrud, PRO Director.

The objective of this plenary was to (1) present and endorse the deliverables of the SSTC Task Force workstreams (WS), (2) wrap up the work done by the 2022/23 SSTC Task Force and (3) discuss a new structure of the SSTC Task Force to provide oversight for the SSTC Policy update implementation over the next 4 years (2024-2027).

### WS1 – Mainstreaming SSTC into WFP's second-generation country strategic plans, and programme of work on saving and changing lives.

Elisabeth Faure, Country Director of India, chair of the SSTC Task Force WS1, presented the fourth deliverable [“Reflecting Gender Equality Objectives and Increasing Gender-integrated South-South and Triangular Cooperation”](#).

The deliverable is a Gender Checklist that provides an overview of potential actions and considerations for initiating gender integration in SSTC projects.

### WS2 - Strengthening WFP's approach to generating evidence and fostering learning on WFP-supported SSTC.

Christiani Buani, Programme Officer Strategic Partnership Division, ad interim chair of the SSTC Task Force WS2, introduced the final deliverable of WS2 [“How-to guide on M&E for SSTC practitioners”](#).

The deliverable provides hands-on guidance to WFP SSTC practitioners to monitor, report on and evaluate SSTC initiatives in line with the WFP Corporate Results Framework as well as the UN system-wide M&E framework for SSTC.

The guide will be complemented by tools and templates over the coming months.

### WS3 – Peer review for WFP's SSTC Policy Update.

Jean-Pierre de Margerie, Deputy Director of PRO, chair of the SSTC Task Force WS3, showcased the work of the WS3 on the [SSTC Policy update](#) approved by the Executive Board last June and accompanied by a [costed implementation plan](#).

The deliverables were endorsed by the SSTC Task Force plenary composed of senior and technical level staff from COs, RBx, Centres of Excellence (CoEs) and relevant HQ divisions.

For a quick recap of the highlights of 2023 for WFP's SSTC work, please see this [video](#).





# WFP's Global Work on South-South Cooperation

## Towards Policy Implementation - Regional Bureaus, CoEs Joined HQ Unit for a Retreat in Rome

In October, the SSTC Unit in HQ held a global retreat in Rome with the participation of SSTC focal points in WFP RBx and all 3 CoEs – Brazil, China and Cote d'Ivoire.

The focal points discussed the SSTC Policy Update implementation and corporate coordination mechanisms.

RBx and CoEs play a critical role in policy effectiveness and success. In view of this, the retreat set the stage for successful policy implementation and highlighted the way forward, focusing on collaboration among SSTC champions at all levels.

The retreat was a strategic opportunity for WFP SSTC key stakeholders to exchange and create consensus around building blocks for policy implementation at the regional level.

The retreat was further enriched by in-depth contributions by David Kaatrud, the PRO Director, and Kai Roehm, the new Chief of the Country Capacity Strengthening (CCS) Unit.

The next steps towards SSTC regional implementation plans include:

- Organize regional webinars in remaining RBs to disseminate the SSTC policy update;
- Carry out SSTC regional mappings and surveys to inform the development of regional implementation plan aligned with regional priorities across thematic areas;

- Further SSTC-CCS coordination around respective policy implementation, including during upcoming CCS regional workshops; and
- Ensure proper coordination among SSTC Unit, RBx and CoEs on the development/review of SSTC guidance and tools as foreseen in the global SSTC policy update implementation plan, as well as on the set up of the new Global SSTC Task Force to oversee the policy implementation.

See the details of the retreat [here](#).



## WFP Participated in the 7th International Meeting on Triangular Cooperation in Portugal

In October, the Deputy Director of Programme and the SSTC Unit participated in the [7th International Meeting on Triangular Cooperation](#) hosted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Portugal.

The event brought together a wide range of countries and actors involved in Triangular Cooperation<sup>1</sup>, here forth SSTC.

The meeting aimed to analyze global perspectives on TrC, scaling up partnerships for small island developing states as well as triangular partnerships, financing TrC, and the role of TrC in view of the growing global crises.

The main objective of WFP's participation in the conference was to showcase the results of the [2023 SSTC Innovation Challenge](#) and to explore options for WFP's pursuit of systematic long-term programming and diversification of partners and funding for WFP facilitated SSTC.

Some key takeaways include:

- The need for improved reporting on SSTC and enhanced institutionalization of this cooperation modality including through national reporting mechanisms;

- SSTC needs to be better reflected in the UN system and UN wide strategies;
- SSTC is no longer a niche area of work, the potential for SSTC to bridge gaps and support progress towards the SDGs has grown rapidly.

As next steps, WFP will follow up on the potential areas of collaboration with targeted SSTC partners and scope potential donors for the 2nd phase of the Innovation Challenge.



Photo: WFP/ Katherine Gaylord

<sup>1</sup> The UN system, including WFP, uses the expression SSTC to refer to TrC, which is the cooperation among 3 countries (a pivot or provider country from the global south, a recipient country from the global south and a triangular partner that can be a UN agency, a country from the Global North or an IFI).

# Update from WFP's Network of Centres of Excellence

## WFP China Centre of Excellence for Rural Transformation (WFP China CoE)

### Peru Learns from China Via Webinars on Strengthening Capacities in E-commerce & Linking Smallholder Farmers to Markets

In July, the Peruvian Government tapped into the expertise of China by participating in two webinars: "Strengthening Capacities in E-commerce and Associativity to Link Smallholder Farmers to Markets."

The webinars were organized by WFP Peru CO, WFP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (RBP), WFP China CoE and the WFP SSTC Unit in HQ.

The event aimed to strengthen the capacity of Peruvian Government officials in innovative e-commerce models and developing farmers' associations through the exchange of knowledge and expertise from China.

It was a part of WFP's Global Field Pilot Initiative on SSTC, which started in Peru in 2020 with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of China (MARA).

102 experts from MARA, the Northwest A&F University, representatives from the RBA, the Peruvian Ministry of Agricultural Development and Irrigation (MIDAGRI), the Peruvian Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion (MIDIS), the Peruvian Ministry of Production (PRODUCE), as well as the local Government of Ayacucho, where the SSTC field project was piloted, participated in the webinars.

The webinars introduced the concept, implementation methods and development trend of e-commerce in China.

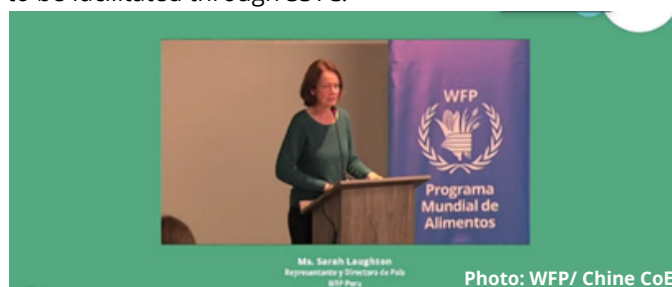
Specifically, the Chinese presenter from the Northwest A&F University explained in detail the e-commerce modal for smallholder farmers, the e-commerce + co-operative modal and mobile e-commerce modal.

Participants discussed details of conducting e-commerce training for smallholder farmers and connecting smallholder farmers to e-commerce platforms.

As key takeaways, the discussion reflected the gaps still existing in farmers' associations and e-commerce in Peru.

Participants noted the need for efficient strategies to link smallholder farmers to markets as well as public purchase laws and family farming policies in Peru.

As a next step, further technical collaborations and knowledge sharing between China and Peru are expected to be facilitated through SSTC.



### Cameroonian Delegation Visits China to Learn about Agricultural Development & School Feeding Programmes

In July, representatives of the Cameroon Government including as well as delegates from the WFP Cameroon CO visited China on a study tour.

The Cameroonian delegation included Ministries of Basic Education, Agriculture and Rural Development, Economy, Planning, Regional Development and External Relations.

The visit was organised by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of China (MARA) as part of a [SSTC Opportunity Fund](#) project in Cameroon.

The study tour provided an opportunity to discuss the Preschool Children Nutrition Improvement Programme, Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) Programme and SSTC.

The Cameroonian delegation had a chance to meet with the China International Centre for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE) to explore the cooperation opportunities in tropical agriculture research, production, and industry development, as well as to exchange experiences on the nutrition enhancement scheme for rural students.

Also, the Cameroonian delegation took part in WFP's 60th Anniversary Commemoration at the UN Compound in Beijing.

During the study tour, the delegation successfully held meetings and field visits with China's line ministries and research institutes which had explored more technical and financial resources for SSTC activities in Cameroon.

As next steps, Cameroon and China plan for further collaboration on cassava and potato value chains, rice value chains, and school feeding programmes, all with the continued support of the WFP China CO.



# Update from WFP's Network of Centres of Excellence

## WFP China Centre of Excellence for Rural Transformation (WFP China CoE)

### China's Seminar on Post-Harvest Loss Management - a SSTC Policy Dialogue on Resilient & Sustainable Food Systems

In September, the Department of International Cooperation of the National Food and Strategic Reserves Administration, the Department of International Cooperation of MARA, Henan University of Technology, WFP China CoE and the WFP Regional CoE against Hunger and Malnutrition (CERFAM), organized a seminar on post-harvest loss management (PHLM) held in the Henan Province of China.

The seminar themed "A South-South Cooperation Policy Dialogue on Resilient Food Systems in a Sustainable Way."

It brought together over 100 delegates from government departments, international organizations, academic and research institutions, and the private sector from 10 countries in Asia, Africa and LAC.

It aimed to provide insightful discussions on national policy support for post-harvest loss within food systems.

The seminar consisted of four thematic sessions, covering the key stages of PHLM, namely harvesting, storage and transportation, processing, and supply chain management.

### Ghana and Southern African Delegations Explore Post-Harvest Loss Reduction, Grain Storage and Trade in China

In September, a Ghanaian delegation from the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the National Food Buffer Stock Company, the Ghana Commodity Exchange, and the WFP Ghana CO visited China as a part of the WFP-MARA SSTC Pilot Initiative in Ghana.

The aim of the visit was to learn about the Chinese experience and good practices in grain storage and trade.

The delegations visited China's National Food and Strategic Reserve Administration (NAFRA), including the National Grain Trade Centre.

They learned about China's experience in policies and strategies for developing the grain sector (e.g., in reducing post-harvest losses, supporting grain trade and national grain reserves).

The participants also visited the Henan Food and Strategic Reserves Administration, including the Henan Grain Trade and Logistics Market.

And learned about the experience of grain reserves and grain trade at the provincial level, as well as the operation of the grain post-harvest service centre and food processing.

The visit provided the Ghanaian delegates with a comprehensive vision of China's grain reserve, electronic grain trading platforms, and grain post-harvest service centre.

Through this SSC policy dialogue, China and other developing countries exchanged knowledge and experience to address post-harvest loss challenges and advance country-led progress toward national food security.

As a next step, the WFP China CoE will continue working with Henan University of Technology to implement the SSC Roadmap and intensify technical coordination with other partners.

The coordination will focus on leveraging SSC to tackle post-harvest food loss challenges with a focus on knowledge sharing, capacity building, and practical implementation.



Photo: WFP/ China CoE

As next steps, SSTC capacity building activities in grain storage techniques, post-harvest management and grain trade are expected to be organized to support smallholders to further access markets in Ghana.

Later that month, a study tour in China was conducted with a Southern African delegation.

That included the Ministry of Entrepreneurship in Botswana, the Agricultural Marketing Board of Botswana, the Strategic Reserves Department of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Department of Agriculture and Livestock in Madagascar, and the Food Reserve Agency of Zambia.

This study tour was facilitated by the WFP China CO and the RB for Southern Africa (RBJ).

The objective of the mission was to facilitate partnerships and explore potential cooperation between China and Southern African countries at the policy and technical levels, in the areas of strategic food reserves and post-harvest management.

The Southern Africa delegation met with the Deputy Director General of NAFRA to discuss advancing cooperation based on the MoU between WFP and NAFRA on SSTC in the food sector.



# Update from WFP's Network of Centres of Excellence

## WFP Centre of Excellence Against Hunger in Brazil (WFP Brazil CoE)

### WFP and IDB Host High-Level Meeting on Human Capital Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

In August, the local and national representatives of the Government of Brazil, the WFP RB in Panama (RBP), the WFP CoE Brazil and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), organised the [“Power of Multi-sector Approaches for Human Capital Development”](#) event in Brazil.

The event provided a platform for the Ministers of Education, Social Development and Finance, international financial institutions, UN entities and other key actors to share lessons learned in policies and programmes on school feeding and social protection systems.

Around 200 participants from 25<sup>1</sup> countries from Latin America and the Caribbean met to discuss multi-sector approaches linking education, food security and nutrition for human capital development.

The event marked the launch of the report on [“State of School Feeding in Latin America and the Caribbean 2022”](#) produced by WFP and the IDB.

The report that offers comprehensive insights into the state of school feeding in the region.

The publication of the regional study on [“Social Protection Pathways to Nutrition”](#) was presented as well.

The publication created in partnership between the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and WFP.

At the end of the event, participants agreed on a document with inputs for the Global Coalition for School Meals meeting, which took place in October in Paris.

One of the key recommendations in the document was to continue to promote SSTC to share experiences and lessons learned with the aim to strengthen social protection systems, advance food security and fight against malnutrition in all its forms.



### Brazil Contributes to the Republic of Congo's Family Farming and School Feeding Programmes through the IBSA Fund

In September, the Government of the Republic of Congo (RoC) and the Government of Brazil with support from WFP Brazil CoE and RoC CO, launched a SSTC project.

The project aims to improve food security and the nutritional status of smallholder farmers, particularly women, and school children in RoC.

The project, called “Enhancing Family Farmers’ Access to Local Markets in the Republic of Congo through South-South Cooperation” and funded by the India, Brazil and South Africa Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation (IBSA Fund).

It will enable RoC’s Ministries to tap into the wealth of expertise and innovations available in Brazil, with a focus on pro-family farming and school feeding programmes.

The project will focus its actions on institutional capacity strengthening for policy makers.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEP) and the Ministry of Pre-school, Primary, Secondary Education and Literacy (MEPSA) in RoC will participate in the project.

The project will also focus on capacity strengthening at the grassroots level for family farmer associations/cooperatives.

Targeted districts in the Bouenza, Plateaux and Pool departments will receive equipment, tailored training and in-field demonstrations.

This project will also help enhance the institutional capacity of MEPSA to implement its National School Feeding Policy with a view to transition from a WFP-led to a fully Government-led national programme.

The project, which will run for two years, includes market assessments, workshops, field visits, distribution of farming equipment, among other activities.

See [here](#) more information about the project and the IBSA Fund.

<sup>1</sup> Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Venezuela.



# Update from WFP's Network of Centres of Excellence

## WFP Regional Centre of Excellence Based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire (CERFAM)

### China and Guinea Strengthen Cooperation on Rice Value Chain in Côte d'Ivoire

In October, the Government of Guinea and the People's Republic of China participated in a study tour to Côte d'Ivoire organized by CERFAM.

The visit was accompanied by representatives from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), the Sino-Grain Chengdu Research Institution and the National Agency for the Rice Sector in Côte d'Ivoire.

The visit comes as a follow up to a training conducted in August by Chinese experts on new technologies and the practical use of various innovative equipment for rice production, processing, and storage.

See more details [here](#).

The study tour was organised on the side-lines of the [Salon International de l'Agriculture et des Ressources Animales d'Abidjan](#) (SARA 2023) and within the framework of the rice value chain development project in Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea.

The SARA event aimed to strengthen the Côte d'Ivoire-China SSTC partnership and assess smallholder farmers' conditions and needs for the production, processing, and storage of rice.

### CERFAM: Advancing Sustainable Food Systems Through Value Chains

In October, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and CERFAM, in collaboration with the WFP China CoE, hosted [a side event](#) during SARA.

The event, titled "Unlocking the potential of improved value chains towards sustainable and resilient food systems" aimed to exchange knowledge and experiences on the contribution of value chain development towards improved food systems.

The event was attended by representatives of CERFAM, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in Beijing, WFP China CoE, the National Agency for the Development of the Rice Value Chain in Côte d'Ivoire (ADERIZ), WFP Guinea CO, and the Africa Rice Centre ([AfricaRice](#)).

During [the event](#), participants highlighted the importance of an inclusive and multi-sectoral approach to value chains emphasizing the contribution to improved diets, job creation, economic growth, and climate change adaptation.

They also reflected on the experience of the [Zero Hunger Village](#) initiative and the rice value chain in Guinea, highlighting the role of research in accelerating progress in these areas.

The event served as a platform to exchange challenges and opportunities of the development of value chains in Africa.

As key takeaways from the visit, the delegation identified challenges, mainly related to the distribution and storage of rice.

They also committed to providing mini silos to help preserve and store the products to avoid post-harvest losses.

By leveraging SSTC, stakeholders have been enabled to further develop a sustainable rice value chain, strengthen the capacity of smallholder farmers, especially in post-harvest loss management.

They also increased market access for smallholder farmers, whilst providing access to improved technologies at the local level.



Photo: WFP/ CERFAM

Additionally, the event showcased country-specific case studies, demonstrating the role of value chains in various aspects of food systems, including nutrition enhancement and empowerment of smallholder farmers.

Among the key recommendations to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and other sub-Saharan African nations were calls to strengthen the production capacity of local rice producers through targeted investments.

It was also proposed to promote the nutritional quality of locally produced rice and other staple value chains through large-scale fortification.

In addition, mini silos will be distributed to groups of smallholder farmers, and training for trainers will be organised on rice parboiling in Guinea to help reduce post-harvest losses.



Photo: WFP/ CERFAM

# Regional Outlook: Latin America and the Caribbean

## The Dominican Republic and Honduras Leverage SSTC for Social Protection Systems

In August, a delegation from Honduras visited the Dominican Republic facilitated by the Honduras and the Dominican Republic COs.

The visit aimed at exchanging experiences between the Government Agency for the Single Beneficiary System (SIUBEN) in the Dominican Republic and the Observatory of Social Development of Honduras from the Secretariat of Social Development (SEDESOL) on social protection programmes.

The exchange aimed to leverage SSTC for peer learning between both institutions and improve their expertise in the single registry through the identification of good practices and the exchange of lessons learned.

The exchange focused on the single registry methodology, protocol for data collection in the event of a disaster, information gathering mechanisms and interoperability processes.

A document compiling good practices and lessons learned from the South-South Cooperation visit was developed and shared between both institutions.

The collected good practices aim to strengthen collaboration and joint learning to improve practices and processes related to data management in the field of social development.

As a next step, SIUBEN and SEDESOL will continue their collaboration to contribute to public policies.



## Cuba Exchanges Knowledge with Brazil and China on Strengthening Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture

In September, Cuba engaged in two missions to [Brazil](#) and [China](#) that were carried out under the overarching “[Gibara Verde x Ciento](#)” project, supported by WFP and IFAD.

The exchanges aimed at advancing Cuban agricultural practices, knowledge sharing and collaboration with China and Brazil.

During the mission to Brazil, the Deputy Prime Minister of Cuba, representatives of the Cuban Ministries of Education, Agriculture and Foreign Affairs, as well as WFP Cuba CO participated in technical meetings organised by the WFP Brazil CoE.

The purpose of the visit was to promote knowledge sharing on food procurement from family farming, nutrition and food education.

During the visit, the delegation explored the work of the Technical Assistance and Rural Extension Company of the Federal District (Emater-DF) and the Federal District Supply Centre (CEASA-DF).

They learned about Emater-DF's work with family farmers, supporting the production and distribution of food for school meals and other food security programmes.

The delegation had a chance to gain insights on school food menu planning, cost analysis, meal production and food safety activities from nutritionists from the Secretariat of Education and Health.

This collaborative effort was part of a high-level event on human capital development and regional alliances within the International School Feeding Coalition.

As Cuba and Brazil move forward, their collaboration aims to document and disseminate best practices, enhance policy planning, foster local relationships, promote circular economy practices in food systems, and develop methodologies to support small-scale producers.

During the visit to China, the Cuban delegation interacted with agricultural production centres, research facilities, cooperatives, and officials from the Ministry of Emergency Management.

Notably, the visit led to agreements regarding advanced agricultural technologies for smallholder farmers, particularly in rice, corn, and beans.

The delegation proposed agricultural trainings using local resources and the transfer of agricultural varieties, technologies, and expert knowledge.

This exchange initiates a collaborative process between Chinese and Cuban institutions, technicians, and producers.

It seeks to enhance Cuba's local production, resilience, and climate adaptation, and identify practical approaches for implementation in Cuba based on Chinese expertise.

These collaborative efforts between Cuba, China, and Brazil underscore the commitment of these nations to sustainable agriculture and food security.

By sharing knowledge and fostering international relationships, Cuba aims to build resilient, locally sourced food systems that benefit its communities and promote sustainable agricultural practices.



# Regional Outlook: Latin America and the Caribbean

## Haiti Visits Argentina on a Technical Mission in the Framework of the ProHuertas Programme

In September, a technical delegation from Haiti visited Argentina in the framework of the Prohuertas project.

The project is piloted in Haiti by WFP in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development and the National Institute of Agricultural Technology (MDS-INTA).

The ProHuerta programme is developed by MDS-INTA of Argentina.

It promotes the development of agro-ecological school gardens as a learning tool for schoolchildren, that addresses issues of food security and nutrition in schools.

In addition, in line with the planned work to support water access in targeted schools, technical experts from Haiti had a chance to learn different models of water infrastructure that have shown positive results in projects carried out by INTA and the White Helmets in Argentina.

The mission also allowed different teams to collaborate on assessing the water-access status in schools in Haiti and define the next steps on infrastructure installation in each school.

As next steps, a new technical mission from Argentina to Haiti will be organized at the end of November in the framework of the project.



Photo: WFP/ Adrien Wilkenson

## Nicaragua Visits Guatemala to Learn about Home-Grown School Feeding

In September, an inter-ministerial delegation from Nicaragua including representatives from Nicaragua's Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Family Economy visited Guatemala on a study tour organized by WFP.

The Nicaraguan delegation aimed to learn about Guatemala's Home-Grown School Feeding (HGSF) model.

Currently, Nicaragua is exploring different HGSF models in the LAC region as part of a WFP-supported initiative to introduce fresh products from local production into its National School Feeding Programme (NSFP).

The Nicaraguan NSFP is the country's largest social protection programme that provides a daily hot meal, that consists of rice, beans, flour, maize and oil, to 1.2 million students.

The introduction of fresh products to school meals can improve both children's nutrition and healthy eating habits while supporting local economies.

The Government of Guatemala provides school meals to more than 3.1 million children with an investment of more than USD 382 million.

These resources are administered and executed through decentralized Parents' Organizations and a school feeding law that promotes that at least 70% of the budget is allocated to purchases of fresh products from smallholder farmers.

During their visit, the delegation from Nicaragua gained valuable insights about the achievements and challenges related to purchases from smallholder farmers in Guatemala.

The delegation highlighted the importance of an institutional framework for HGSF, the importance of inter-ministerial collaboration and a certification process for smallholder farmers.

As a next step, WFP and Nicaragua will jointly design a HGSF model aiming to be launched as a government-led pilot in 2025.



Photo: Guatemala Ministry of Education

# Regional Outlook: Africa and Middle East

## Lebanon-Jordan Exchange on Wheat Flour Fortification

In July, representatives of the Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Economy, Industry and Trade as well as representatives from the mills and bakeries syndicates of Lebanon and Jordan participated in a 3-day study tour.

The tour's objective was to experience first hand the potential benefits of a national wheat flour fortification programme for the context of Lebanon.

The Government of Jordan under the leadership of the nutrition division of the Ministry of Health hosted the exchange, supported by WFP Jordan CO and Lebanon CO.

The exchange was critical for Lebanon to learn from Jordan's experience in implementing the Wheat Flour Fortification programme.

Lebanon may benefit from adopting the programme, with the support of WFP, to address the existing nutrition problems, particularly in the area of anaemia and micronutrient deficiencies.

During the exchange, the participants discussed policies, laws and sustainable funding required, as well necessary as processes and partnerships for the successful implementation of the programme.

A field visits to Jordanian private and public mills provided practical exposure to processes of wheat flour fortification at the mills.

Representatives specializing in laboratory and testing visited the laboratory of the University of Jordan to gain insights on the biochemical tests used to monitor adherence to the fortification specifications.

The survey on the micronutrient deficiencies situation in Lebanon is underway to inform the level of fortification needed.

Also, the Governments of the two countries are discussing the way forward for the successful implementation of the programme.

## Regional Boot-Camp on Community-Based Participatory Planning and Community Asset Creation

In July, Government officials and lecturers from the National University of Science and Technology of Zimbabwe participated in the RBJ resilience boot camp. The event was organised by WFP and supported by the Czech Republic and WFP USA as triangular partners, in Malawi.

The boot camp aimed to enhance participants' knowledge about community-based participatory planning (CBPP) and community asset creation.

It also aimed to develop a pilot community programme that can be adapted and replicated across different ecological zones, to empower universities and technical departments in line ministries and enhance staff capacities.

The 13-day event brought together 60 participants from six countries: Eswatini, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

Some key takeaways from the bootcamp included that a critical factor for adapting CBPP in different countries was the collective buy-in.

In addition, Zimbabwe's potential to share its experiences in the Urban Resilience Programme, as it provoked a lot of interest during the event, was highlighted.

Based on the knowledge and experience shared at the bootcamp, the countries are planning to implement actionable strategies and institutionalise invaluable insights of CBPP.

Also, Zimbabwe is planning to organize a boot-camp to cascade the training to local stakeholders.

## South-South Exchange on Community-Led Integrated Resilience Programmes in Niger

In July, a peer learning visit with Kenya, Malawi, and Zimbabwe on resilience programmes was organized in Niger by the WFP Niger CO with the support of WFP's Livelihoods Asset and Resilience Academy (LARA).

LARA is an initiative to support networks of African universities to lead the localization of expert capacity in community-mobilized integrated resilience programmes.

The exchange visit organized in the commune of Sokorbé involved 21 government and university representatives from Kenya, Malawi and Zimbabwe.

The three-day field visit provided the delegation with practical insights on communities' efforts in building resilience through these integrated programmes.

The trainings and exchange visits helped the participants to enhance their knowledge about multi-sectoral and integrated programming approaches, focusing on rural development, education, nutrition, capacity building, improving livelihoods, resilience and social cohesion.

As takeaways, government commitment, community participation, university involvement and partnerships for resilience were identified as key factors for successful implementation of an integrated resilience programme.

Going forward, the Niger CO and its partners will continue to engage in and support similar SSTC initiatives across Africa to share Niger experiences and learn from others to strengthen and build on their own actions.



## Regional Outlook: Africa and Middle East

### Nigeria Promotes Knowledge Exchange on Social Protection Systems Within African Countries

In August, a Nigerian delegation participated in a South-South knowledge exchange mission to Kenya that was facilitated by WFP Nigeria CO and involved Malawi, Rwanda and Somaliland.

The delegation included representatives from the Government Coordinating Ministry for Social Intervention Programmes of Nigeria, the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation (FMHAPA), the National Social Safety-nets Coordination Office (NASSCO), the National Cash Transfer Office (NCTO) and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).

The exchange aimed to provide a platform for the countries to share experiences and strengthen country-specific approaches to the implementation of social protection programmes.

Kenya shared its experience in social protection that focused on the design of social protection programmes and their implementation on national and sub-national levels.

They also discussed the coordination and collaboration between the government, development partners and the private sector among other topics.

The Nigerian delegation shared their experience in producing a revised National Social Protection Policy, the institutionalization and legislation of social protection and the experience of the Nigerian National Social Register.

They also shared the experience of Nigeria in laying out a Shock Responsive Social Protection (SRSP) framework.

All of this was achieved through collaboration between the Government of Nigeria, development partners (e.g., WFP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), International Labour Organization (ILO), and International Financial Institutions (e.g., World Bank).

The mission visited Makuweni County to see the practical implementation of the programme in Kenya.

Also, the participants discussed the joint multi-country approach to learning about social protection practices with the Principal Secretary to Kenya's Ministry of Labour and Social Protection.

As the next steps, the Nigerian government and WFP office will proceed to test the designed framework for SRSP in Nigeria and document the lessons learned.

Also, the countries look to conduct a similar knowledge experience mission to Nigeria to assess the impact of the learnings in the participating countries.



Photo: WFP/ Dennis Matendechere

### ECOWAS – RBD Conference on Home-Grown School Feeding

In October, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) jointly with RBD organized a conference on "Investing in HGSF to Strengthen Human Capital, Women's Economic Empowerment and Contribute to Economic Development" in Senegal.

The event brought together over 70 technical experts, including government officials, policy makers, researchers, and UN agencies, as well as representatives from 14 ECOWAS member states<sup>1</sup> to explore the transformative potential of HGSF.

The participants shared valuable insights and best practices of HGSF emphasizing its promising impacts on economic growth, food system enhancement and women's empowerment.

The event highlighted challenges the ECOWAS region faces in overcoming multiple economic, health and climate crises encouraging ECOWAS member states to invest in school meals programmes.

Looking forward, the participants seek to foster a stronger collaboration across the ECOWAS member states and partners to maintain current gains and improve on identified gaps through country specific action plans.

In conclusion, the conference provided a forum for critical discussion among government officials and other stakeholders to establish a community and exchange knowledge among peer countries.

The conference also opened the door for collaborations with the research community to address knowledge and evidence gaps in HGSF.

See more details about the conference [here](#).



Photo: WFP/ RBD

<sup>1</sup> Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo.

## Regional Outlook: Asia and the Pacific

### China Supports Timor-Leste in Developing a Mushroom Value Chain

In September, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Forestry (MoALFF) of Timor-Leste, the National University of Timor-Leste (UNTL) and the WFP Timor-Leste CO jointly organised a Juncao Technology study tour and High-Level Bilateral Meeting in China.

The mission aimed to support the Government of Timor-Leste in developing a mushroom value chain, strengthen the relationship with CIDCA and seek WFP China's guidance and support in partnering with China.

The study tour was funded by MARA of China through a SSTC grant. The Director General of the Cooperation and Development Institution (DG-CDI from MoALFF, UNTL, WFP Timor-Leste CO, MARA and WFP China CoE participated in the study tour.

The study tour focused on learning about the technical aspects of mushroom cultivation using Juncao technology and the requirements to produce mushrooms in Timor-Leste.

The Juncao technology enables smallholder farmers to grow mushrooms from dried, chopped grasses, without cutting down trees and damaging the environment as an approach to fighting against climate change.

Also, the technology can help small-scale farmers and farming communities to develop a low-cost, commercial-scale mushroom cultivation industry that can provide sustainable livelihoods for family farmers and local or rural entrepreneurs along agri-food value chains.

As a next step, WFP Timor-Leste on behalf of the Government of Timor-Leste is drafting a proposal for trainings in utilizing the mushroom production technique at Fujian Agriculture & Forestry University (FAFU).

The training will pave the way for the development of a climate-smart mushroom value chain in Timor-Leste, supporting rural livelihoods and improving the diversity and nutrition of local diets.



Photo: WFP/ Timor-Leste

### India Shares Its Experience in Rice Fortification with Nigeria

In September 2023, a Nigerian delegation visited India on a study tour to learn about India's rice fortification model and the distribution in government led social safety nets particularly the school feeding programme.

The delegation included representatives from the Nigerian Government departments responsible for food security, public health, and education, as well as officials from the Nigerian food regulation body.

The objective of the visit was to promote cross-country collaboration for knowledge and resource sharing and explore public-private partnerships that facilitate rice fortification.

The visit focused on establishing linkages between the rice millers in Nigeria and fortified rice kernel equipment manufacturers in India as well as understanding the preparatory actions undertaken, government plans, policies, successes and challenges in rolling out fortified rice.

During their visit, the delegation visited the state of Odisha to learn about the State's rice fortification experience and discussed the mandatory integration of fortified rice in the food-based social safety nets operated by the Department of Food and Public Distribution.

As a result of the study tour, the Nigerian delegation highlighted the importance of the government leadership for the effective implementation of the rice fortification programme.

In addition, the need to strengthen the technical capacity of key regulatory agencies and incentivise rice millers to produce fortified rice at subsidised rates was also stressed.

Looking forward, advocacy to the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Poverty Alleviation to integrate fortified rice into the food-based social safety nets in Nigeria and discuss the possibility of subsidising the cost of the fortified rice.

Also, the process will seek to involve other stakeholders (e.g., the private sector) to support the rice fortification agenda to address micronutrient deficiencies.

See more details [here](#).



Photo: WFP/India



**To submit an article to the SSTC global team for the next edition of the SSTC Quarterly Newsletter, please contact:** [sstc.global@wfp.org](mailto:sstc.global@wfp.org) (PRO-T, SSTC Unit).

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