

## Objectives

The objective of the TAP-AIS project is to strengthen capacity to innovate in national Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS) in the context of climate-relevant, productive, and sustainable transformation of agriculture and food systems. The project facilitates the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) at the global level, strengthens regional and sub-regional organizations' capacity to analyse and strengthen AIS at the regional level and is strengthening capacity to innovate in nine countries (five in Africa, three in Asia and one in Latin America).

## Background

Many low- and middle-income countries are facing challenges that affect their agriculture and food systems and do not have sufficient resources or mechanisms in place to properly develop their capacity to innovate.

[The Tropical Agriculture Platform \(TAP\)](#) was launched in 2012 by the G20 to tackle the constraints of weak capacity for agricultural innovation in low- and middle-income countries in the tropics. In 2015, TAP developed a [Common Framework](#) on capacity



Credit: A. Sempore /FAO

development for agricultural innovation system (CDAIS) which provides a package of concepts, stages, principles and tools for demand-driven and action-oriented capacity development interventions.

From 2015 to 2019, funded by the European Union, the Common Framework was piloted successfully in eight countries through the [CDAIS project](#), a partnership between FAO, host of the TAP Secretariat, and Agrinatura, an association of European universities and research centres. The project provided evidence that effective AIS require, in addition to technical and financial resources, functional capacities at individual, organizational and enabling environment levels. Building on the CDAIS project, the TAP-AIS project supports the implementation of the TAP Action Plans 2018-2021 and 2022-2025, and draws on lessons learned to update and expand TAP Common Framework tools, including an assessment framework for national AIS, and further promote them at national, regional/sub-regional and global levels.

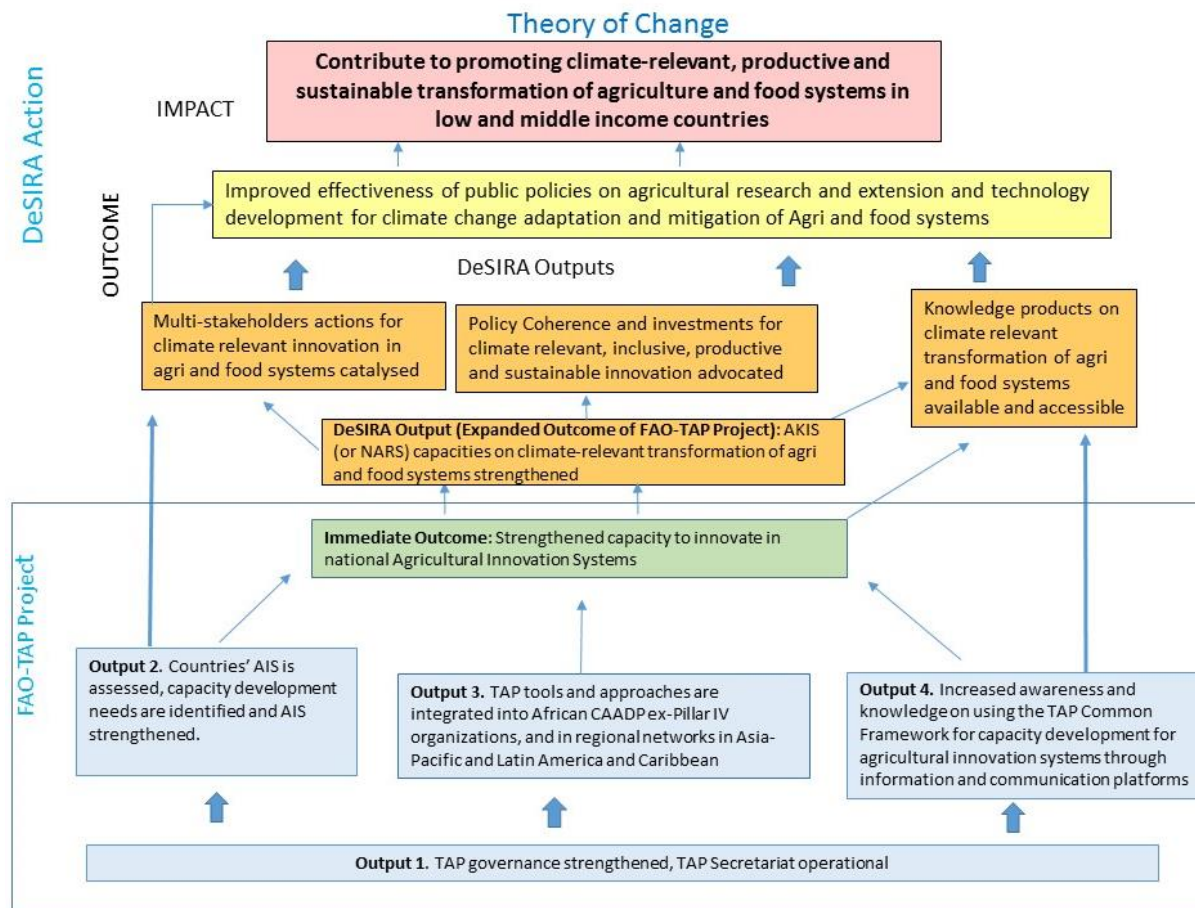
## The theory of change to achieve the objectives

The TAP-AIS project expected impact is to contribute to promoting climate-relevant, productive and sustainable transformation of agriculture and food systems in low- and middle-income countries, in combination with other components of the DeSIRA Initiative. The project outcome is “Strengthened capacity to innovate in national Agricultural Innovation Systems”. To achieve this, the project is delivering four outputs:

- ✓ At *global level*, the project supports TAP governance and the TAP Capacity Development Expert Group, which has reviewed and is updating the TAP Common Framework (**Output 1**).
- ✓ At the *national level*, in nine countries, the project is strengthening capacities to innovate of key national organizations and platforms –innovation services providers– and is strengthening the enabling environment for agricultural innovation (**Output 2**). Such interventions would lead to

improvement of national innovation policies. The results are shared with other actors and countries through the TAP.

- ✓ At *regional and sub-regional level*, the project promotes the use of TAP tools and approaches by African “CAADP ex-Pillar IV organizations”, and regional research, education and extension networks and organizations in Asia-Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean (**Output 3**). The use of TAP tools and approaches would strengthen the capacities of these organizations to promote better research for impact and support innovative approaches to transform agrifood systems.
- ✓ Through information and communication platforms, the project is promoting and increasing awareness and knowledge among a large community of organizations and practitioners on using the TAP Common Framework on capacity development for agricultural innovation systems. The simultaneous use of these TAP tools and approaches in multiple countries enables cross-country learning and continuous improvement of the tools. (**Output 4**).



## Main activities

At global level, the project supports the operations of the TAP Secretariat, including organization of TAP Steering Committee meetings, coordination of the Capacity Development Expert Group, and set up of the project Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning system (MEL).

In each of the nine countries, activities include: an assessment of the national AIS, including of key organizations and their capacity needs and review and analysis of policies and the enabling environment; various capacity development activities such as training and coaching sessions to

strengthen key organizations' functional capacities for innovation, 'bridging' events involving key stakeholders and other technical and development agencies to match capacity development demand and supply of support services including financial services; and a policy dialogue process to analyse how policies and their implementation affect agricultural innovation and to recommend policy improvements.

At regional and sub-regional level, rapid appraisals and identification of entry points for regional agricultural research and extension organizations in year one have informed a joint agenda for action, which the project is strategically supporting in the years 2-5.

Awareness, knowledge exchange and communication activities are implemented to reach out to more partners and stakeholders and promote the TAP Common Framework at global, regional and national level. Existing TAP tools are revised and new ones developed to fill gaps in the knowledge tool box. TAPipedia (<https://www.tapipedia.org/>) is supported, and links with other complementary knowledge platforms are strengthened.

### **Results achieved to date (September 2023)**

The project under Output 1 has facilitated TAP Steering committee meetings (at least 3 per year) and three TAP Partners Assemblies (virtual events) in 2020, 2021 and 2023. Face-to-face events are planned, including the 10<sup>th</sup> TAP Partners Assembly in November 2023 in Addis Abeba, Ethiopia".

The Capacity Development Expert Group has reviewed the TAP Common Framework and suggested revision to be made. A learning review of TAP was done in 2021 and the TAP Engagement and Expansion Strategy was developed and is being implemented. The third TAP Action Plan 2022-2025 was developed and approved by TAP Partners in 2022. The TAP e-learning course is under finalization and due to be launched by November 2023.

At country level, all nine countries have conducted assessments of their AIS and capacity needs



*Photo credit: P. Rudebjer/FAO*

assessment of selected organizations providing innovation support services. This led to the development of national roadmaps to strengthen national AIS in support of agrifood system transformation. Capacity development interventions (trainings, coaching sessions, bridging and multi-stakeholders meeting) have been organized or are ongoing. In Cambodia, Lao PDR and Rwanda the projects ended between December 2022 and June 2023. In the other countries activities are still

ongoing (capacity development at organizational and policy level). In all countries the policy dialogue processes have started (and are completed in Lao PDR, Cambodia, Rwanda and Colombia). Several events are still planned in 2023-2024 including national policy dialogues (in Eritrea, Malawi, Senegal and Pakistan), marketplace events and MEL workshops.

At regional level, joint rapid appraisals were conducted in 2020 and action plans for the regional research and extension organizations were developed. The Regional Research and Extension



Organizations (RREOs) are now implementing the action plans in the three regions. Main activities included: Training of Trainers (ToTs) in all three regions on applying TAP tools and approaches to strengthen AIS, publication of operational guide on the same topic (in Spanish, now being translated into English), a series of good practice notes (from Asia-Pacific and now coming out from Latin America and the Caribbean [LAC]); and regional working groups in LAC and Asia-Pacific on agroecology, higher education and biotechnology.

### **Organization**

The FAO's Office of Innovation, which technically manages the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) Secretariat, is implementing the project. Liaison with stakeholders throughout project implementation takes place at global, regional/sub-regional and national levels.

At global level, TAP Partners Assembly and TAP Steering Committee (SC) provide guidance and ensure alignment with the TAP Action Plan. Synergies and collaborations with other international organizations and networks, including IFAD and GFAR is ensured through the TAP.

At national level, the project is working closely with FAO country offices and government organizations, country focal points of regional and sub-regional fora and with Agrinatura member organizations with relevant expertise in capacity assessment and development in line with other DeSIRA initiatives. The EU Delegations at country level and key national stakeholders, including government agencies, are closely engaged.

At regional/sub-regional level, the project collaborates with FAO regional and sub-regional offices, with the African "CAADP ex-Pillar IV organizations" (FARA, AFAAS, ASARECA, CCARDESA, and CORAF), APAARI and APIRAS in Asia and the Pacific, and RELASER in Latin America and the Caribbean (all acronyms are expanded under the section "Other main stakeholders").

The project is also promoting and increasing awareness and knowledge sharing among a large community of organizations and practitioners on using the TAP Common Framework on capacity development for agricultural innovation systems.

### **Implementing organization**

The Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

### **Other main stakeholders**

- ✓ Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation (GFAR),
- ✓ African CAADP ex-Pillar IV organizations including the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), the Association of Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA), the Centre for Coordination of Agricultural Research and Development for Southern Africa (CCARDESA), and the West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research (CORAF/WECARD),
- ✓ Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI),
- ✓ Asia-Pacific Islands Rural Advisory Services Network (APIRAS),
- ✓ Instituto Interamericano de Cooperación para la Agricultura (IICA),
- ✓ Red Latinoamericana de Servicios de Extensión Rural (RELASER)
- ✓ TAP Partners, actors in agricultural innovation systems in nine countries, including government ministries, research institutes, universities, advisory service organizations, farmer associations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private sector value chain actors and smallholder family farmers.

**Location**

- ✓ Global (for TAP related work)
- ✓ Africa: Burkina Faso, Eritrea, Malawi, Rwanda, Senegal
- ✓ Asia: Cambodia, Lao PDR, Pakistan
- ✓ Latin America: Colombia

**Funding and co-funding**

UE	€ 5,000,000
Total budget	€ 5,000,000

**Duration**

60 months (August 2019 – July 2024)

**Website**

All communication, knowledge management and outreach activities of the project are published in the [TAP website](#) which includes [news](#) and [publications](#), [YouTube channel](#) for videos and webinar recordings, and the most recent activities are on [Twitter](#).

**Updated on 19/09/2023**