



**Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations**

IMPROVING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY, NUTRITION SECURITY, AND CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE IN BHUTAN

Agriculture is central to Bhutan's economy, but the sector faces significant challenges that limit growth and rural poverty reduction. The country's mountainous terrain and poor infrastructure isolate many communities from markets and essential services, creating persistent disparities between urban and rural areas. As such, food insecurity and malnutrition remain pressing concerns, particularly in remote regions.

To address these challenges, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) provided technical assistance to the Food Security and Agriculture Productivity Project (FSAPP), implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MoAL) across five southwestern districts of Bhutan, funded by the Royal Government of Bhutan and financed through the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP). Through collaboration with key partners, the project built capacity among researchers, agriculture extension officers, and farmers while developing critical infrastructure. Key activities focused on strengthening farmer groups, enhancing agricultural productivity, improving market access, and promoting nutrition through behaviour change communication and school feeding programmes. This comprehensive approach aimed to transform subsistence farming into commercially viable agriculture while ensuring food security and improved nutrition outcomes.



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WHAT DID THE PROJECT DO?

Through capacity development workshops and training of trainer (ToT) sessions, the project helped form and strengthen 335 farmer producer groups comprising 10 794 members, with women representing 44 percent. With the support of the newly FAO-revised Nutrition Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) Strategy 2022-2024, the project established a network of 160 community resource persons (CPRs) who served as nutrition advocates in their communities, providing education for improved dietary practices.

The project strengthened value chains for priority crops, including cardamom, citrus, chili, and potato, while introducing climate-smart technologies such as drip irrigation, mini tillers, and water harvesting tools. These interventions were complemented by support to youth affected by COVID-19 through targeted capacity building in agricultural entrepreneurship.

Additionally, environmental and social impact assessments were conducted for critical infrastructure development, such as the establishment of four irrigation channels that benefited over 2 395 water users. The project also supported feasibility studies for two integrated cold stores and seven field pack houses in strategic locations. To enhance market access, the project connected 23 feeding schools with 43 producer groups and organized buyer-seller meetings that resulted in sustainable market opportunities for farmers.

KEY FACTS

Latest Approved Budget
USD 1 152 911

Duration
August 2017-June 2024

Resource Partner
The Royal Government of Bhutan

Partners
Ministry of Agriculture and
Livestock (MoAL)

Beneficiaries
Government stakeholders, farmers,
and school children

IMPACT

The project made significant contributions toward reducing hunger, food insecurity, malnutrition, and rural poverty in Bhutan. Through comprehensive training and infrastructure development, beneficiaries gained vital skills in sustainable agriculture and enhanced their business capabilities. The establishment of market linkages, development of post-harvest facilities, and introduction of climate-smart technologies have improved agricultural productivity while creating profitable farming opportunities and increasing access to nutritious food.

ACTIVITIES

- Trained agriculture extension officers through ToT workshops, who then equipped farmer groups with improved capacities in crop production, post-harvest management, climate-smart technologies, bookkeeping, and marketing.
- Developed and implemented the BCC Strategy for the 2022-2024 period.
- Established a network of CRPs through ToT sessions, who educated project beneficiaries across the target districts.
- Created comprehensive training materials, including manuals, toolkits, and educational resources to support the BCC Strategy.
- Built the capacity of MoAL staff on agronomy, pest management, and disease control for cardamom and citrus fruits.
- Conducted environmental and social impact assessment for irrigation channels in Samste and Sarpang districts.
- Organized buyer-seller meetings for producer and farmer groups, creating new domestic market opportunities.
- Supported the technical feasibility assessments for integrated cold stores, centralized pack houses, and field pack houses.
- Established farm-to-school (F2S) linkages connecting feeding schools with producer groups.
- Conducted F2S assessments to strengthen linkages.
- Developed an online project monitoring system adopted as a template for future government projects.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Project Title

Provision of Technical Assistance for the Food Security and Agriculture Productivity Project (TA-FSAPP)

Project Code

FAO: UTF/BHU/013/BHU

Contact

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Partnerships and Outreach

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