



Integrating climate resilience into agricultural and agropastoral production systems through soil fertility management in key productive and vulnerable areas using the Farmer Field School approach

EVALUATION HIGHLIGHTS

BACKGROUND

The project “Integrating climate resilience into agricultural and agropastoral production systems through soil fertility management in key productive and vulnerable areas using the Farmer Field School approach” (the IRCEA project) aimed to directly support at least 150 000 farmers through an existing network of 5 150 Farmer Field Schools (FFS) to develop and implement climate resilient approaches and practices. This project, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), started in November 2016 and was officially closed in November 2022.



ABOUT THE EVALUATION

The evaluators asked:

- To what extent has the project, in line with the priorities of the GEF, FAO and the Government of Angola, effectively contributed to strengthening the climate resilience of agropastoral systems in the targeted vulnerable areas?
- What were the quality and timeliness of the results obtained, and the factors involved?
- To what extent were the results generated by the project sustainable?

EVALUATION METHODS

The evaluation covered the entire project implementation and five municipalities in Huíla province where core IRCEA activities were located, complemented by field visits in Bié and Huambo provinces where those of a similar project were implemented. It carried out focus group discussions and interviews with key informants and members of the FFS of the IRCEA and Smallholder Agriculture Development and Commercialization Project II (MOSAP II) projects.



PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT CODE

GCP/ANG/050/LDF

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE

Five municipalities in Huíla province, Angola

START/END DATE

November 2016 / November 2022

FUNDED BY

The Global Environment Facility (GEF)

PRIORITY AREAS

- Better environment
- Better production

PARTNERS

Government of Angola, local institutions



WHAT DID THE PROJECT ACHIEVE?

The project made a valuable and successful contribution to capacity building and to promoting climate-smart agriculture practices through FFS. The introduction of the Chitaka integrated production system later (2022) in the project motivated farmers to re-engage with FFS activities that most had abandoned during the long interruptions and resulting uncertainty of the communication gap. The project promoted the testing and dissemination of an approach and technologies that are within the reach of producers and can be adapted to the local context. The project created positive environmental and social effects in terms of improved climate change adaptation/sustainable land management (CCA/SLM) practices through FFS without any notable negative environmental impacts. The FFS provided a sense of belonging and recognition to its members, mainly women farmers.



WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES?

The project faced several factors that hampered project implementation and execution and therefore reduced its effectiveness and efficiency, including: activities delay, interruptions due to bureaucratic procurement and recruitment policies, staff turnover, the COVID-19 pandemic, the limited monitoring and evaluation system and the change of government.

The project results and achievements remain fragile and it has failed to adequately mainstream CSA into policies/programmes. The long-lasting adoption of CCA/SLM practices by individual smallholders outside the FFS needs appropriate support for them to obtain investments required for modern agriculture.



LESSONS LEARNED

- Project design flexibility and adaptability are essential to withstand internal and external shocks. CCA/SLM practices have proven to be suitable to meet production needs in emergency situations, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, when people produced more food locally to satisfy the country needs.
- The integration of CCA into policies is a continuous and long-term process which requires, on the part of FAO, advocacy, awareness-raising and continuous dialogue with the government, and on the part of the government, awareness-raising of managers and decision-makers at several levels (executive, parliamentary, authorities at central and local level) on interventions opportunities.

Find out more in the full report, [here](#).



NEXT STEPS



FAO's future similar projects in Angola should support the Government in embedding the Farmer Field School model and CCA/SLM tools and technologies in the planning of future national agricultural development programmes and curricula.



FAO must put in place adequate measures to prevent and mitigate organizational and operational risks and weaknesses in GEF-funded projects and the delivery of expected results.



FAO should develop and implement a strategy for disseminating the content of the scientific material and other intellectual property housed by partner institutions.



FAO should support the development of a database of master trainers, and Chitaka community contractors who can be mobilized and deployed as local service providers in future resilience projects in the country.

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