é

**Global Programme for Small-scale Agroecology Producers and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation (GP-SAEP)**

Document date: 25 October 2022

Main Programme Document

 

## **Table of Contents**

[Table of Contents 2](#_Toc117542172)

[Acronyms 2](#_Toc117542173)

[1. Program overview 5](#_Toc117542174)

[*1.1 Objectives* 5](#_Toc117542175)

[*1.2 Structure* 6](#_Toc117542176)

[*1.3 Target group and area* 6](#_Toc117542177)

[*1.4 Programme financing and partners* 7](#_Toc117542178)

[*1.5 Implementation arrangements and responsibilities* 8](#_Toc117542179)

[*1.6 Key impact indicators and monitoring* 9](#_Toc117542180)

[*1.7 Criteria for resources allocation and articulation between components* 11](#_Toc117542181)

[2. Background and rationale 13](#_Toc117542182)

[*2.1 Problem analysis and approach* 13](#_Toc117542183)

[*2.2 IFAD comparative advantage* 16](#_Toc117542184)

[3. Programme description 16](#_Toc117542185)

[*3.1 Components/outcomes and activities* 16](#_Toc117542186)

[*3.2 Timeline and milestones* 29](#_Toc117542187)

[*3.3 Theory of change* 29](#_Toc117542188)

[*3.4 Sustainability and exit strategy* 30](#_Toc117542189)

[4. Budget of the action 30](#_Toc117542190)

[ANNEX I: Preliminary countries selection 30](#_Toc117542191)

[ANNEX II: Logframe 1](#_Toc117542192)

## **Acronyms**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ASAP+** |  Enhanced Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme |
| **CGIAR** | Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research |
| **CIRAD** | French agricultural research and international cooperation organisation |
| **CSOs** | Civil Society Organisations  |
| **DESIRA** | Development Smart Innovation through Research in Agriculture |
| **ECG** | Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division  |
| **EFA** | Economic and Financial Analysis of investments |
| **EC** | European Commission |
| **EU** | European Union |
| **FAO** | Food and Agriculture Organisation  |
| **FFS** | Farmers Field Schools  |
| **FOs** | Farmers Organisations  |
| **FO4ACP** | Farmers' Organisations for Africa, Caribbean and Pacific |
| **FO4LA** | Farmers' Organisations for Latin America |
| **FO-RI** | Farmers Organisations Leading Research & Innovation on agroecology for sustainable food systems  |
| **GCF** | Green Climate Fund |
| **GEF** | Global Environment Facility |
| **GFRAS** | Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services |
| **GHG** | Greenhouse Gases  |
| **GP SAEP** | Global Programme for Small-scale Agroecology Producers and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation |
| **ICT4D** | Information and Communications Technologies for Development |
| **IFAD** | International Fund for Agricultural Development |
| **ILC** | International land Coalition |
| **KAP** | Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices |
| **LAC** | Latin America and the Caribbean |
| **MSME** | Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises  |
| **NELK** | New Extensionist Learning Kit |
| **PGS** | Participatory Guarantee Systems  |
| **PMD** | Programme Management Department (IFAD) |
| **PMI** | Sustainable Production, Markets and Institutions Division (IFAD) |
| **RAS** | Rural Advisory Services  |
| **SDC** | Swiss Development Corporation  |
| **SDGs** | Sustainable Development Goals  |
| **SSTC** | South-south and triangular cooperation |
| **TEI** | Team Europe Initiatives |
| **UNCCD** | United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification  |
| **UN-FSS AEC** | Coalition for Food System Transformation through Agroecology |
| **WFP** | World Food Programme  |
| **YPARD** | Young Professionals for Agricultural Development |

##

## **1. Program overview**

### *1.1 Objectives*

Food and agricultural systems transformation is a pressing priority globally. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the European Union (EU) and its member states have successfully been working together for many years to achieve inclusive rural economies and food systems that benefit the most vulnerable people in rural areas. The European Union (EU) the Belgian Development Cooperation and IFAD are with this program embarking on a joint effort with other partners to support the scaling up of agroecology[[1]](#footnote-1) as an effective pathway to achieve sustainable food systems benefitting rural small-scale producers and to meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular SDG 1 (no poverty), SDG 2 (zero hunger) and SDG 13 (climate action) as well as SDG12 (responsible consumption and production) and SDG15 (life on land).

Based on discussions held in 2022 between the European Commission (EC) the Belgian Development Cooperation and IFAD, IFAD has developed this Global Programme for Small-scale Agroecology Producers and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation (GP-SAEP). The GP-SAEP programme aims at addressing key barriers for scaling up agroecology and the transition to sustainable food systems for small-scale producers (farmers and agri-food Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)) in Africa and Latin America & the Caribbean (LAC). The GP-SAEP seeks synergies with different investments from Belgium, the EC, IFAD, governments in Africa and LAC, and other investment partners (including other EU member states), to expand its impacts by supporting the adoption of agroecological strategies in the overall portfolio in partner countries. GP-SAEP will also generate key learning for the development community by strengthening the performance of agroecology investment programs for small-scale producers, measuring results and generating evidence. The programme articulates with and directly supports the secretariat of the United Nations Food Systems Summit “Coalition for Food System Transformation through Agroecology” (UN-FSS AEC). The programme will be implemented over a period of 4 years starting from Q1 2023.

The **overall goal** of the programme is to contribute to the transition to sustainable agri-food systems for the benefit of the rural poor. The **development objective** is to enable rural small-scale producers to strengthen their practice of agroecology through better access to knowledge, support services, improved technologies and market outlets thereby improving their resilience to climatic, environmental and socio-economic shocks and stressors as well as food and nutrition security and incomes.

### *1.2 Structure*

The GP-SAEP programme will focus on the key gap areas for strengthening interventions and approaches identified in the “Stock-take Report on Agroecology in IFAD Operations” (September 2021) and in dialogue conversations with the EC and the Belgian Development Cooperation. The programme will generate assessment tools allowing for better decisions on policies and investments in sustainable food systems that will benefit small-scale producers and their communities. The Programme interventions will as such be structured around four components focusing on:

1. Improving access to agroecological bio-solutions, including seeds, bio-inputs (organic fertilisers and bio-pesticides) and mechanical equipment adapted to small-scale agroecology farming practices;
2. Strengthening value addition and markets for agroecological produce harnessing sustainable food system benefits;
3. Increasing access to knowledge and empowering small-scale producers in agroecological transition through Rural Advisory Services (RAS) and farmer-to-farmer joint learning;
4. Expanding the Economic and Financial Analysis of investments[[2]](#footnote-2) (EFA+) taking into account avoided negative externalities and broader medium to long term food system sustainability benefits, knowledge management and sharing.

### *1.3 Target group and area*

The beneficiaries will be small-scale agroecology farmers, producers’ organisations and agri-food MSME[[3]](#footnote-3), with particular attention to the inclusion of Indigenous peoples, women, youth and vulnerable groups. It is estimated that 20,000 rural households will directly participate in and benefit from the programme and the parallel financed investment projects it will be linked to.

The policy and knowledge outputs of the programme will target development partners and project implementers at national, regional and global levels (including International Finance Institutions, Governmental and bilateral development agencies and private sector impact investors). They will be provided with knowledge products and tools to strengthen and scale up investments in sustainable food systems transformation through agroecology.

The programme will be implemented through sub-projects (components 1 and 2), a grant to GFRA through its network of partners (component 3) and directly by IFAD/PMI (component 4) in two regions: i) Africa and ii) Latin America and Caribbean. Countries will be selected based on the criteria described in section 1.7. Geographical targeting within beneficiary countries will be based on the following general criteria: a) opportunity for direct synergies with investment projects in the area, b) prevalence of multidimensional poverty; c) malnutrition prevalence; and d) exposure to climate shocks and stressors. Each sub-project and GFRAS will also apply other specific criteria linked to national priorities and based on the type of components implemented (e.g., regions with high agroecological development potential; regions with high territorial markets development potential).

### *1.4 Programme financing and partners*

The total cost of the programme will be 23.2 million including EUR 18.2 million from the EU and EUR 5.0 million from Belgium. The funds will be provided as a multi donor action without specific earmarks. Parallel financing amounting to a total of USD 18.0 million will be provided by IFAD and by the governments participating in the programme through IFAD’s loans and grants portfolio.

Following EC instructions, the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS) will receive EUR 4.5 million of the EU funding for the implementation of component 3 and Bioversity International will receive EUR 1.2 million of the EU funding to host the UN-FSS AEC and finance the operations of the Coalition Secretariat. GFRAS will provide EUR 450 000 in parallel financing and the UN-FSS AEC Secretariat will be benefit from additional CHF 100 000 from the Swiss Development Corporation (SDC)[[4]](#footnote-4). Other parallel financing is sought from other development partners to scale-out the program and increase the number of beneficiaries in Africa and LAC and eventually in other regions.

### *1.5 Implementation arrangements and responsibilities*

The programme component 1 (technologies and bio-solutions) and component 2 (agroecological markets) will be implemented through sub-projects designed to leverage funding from IFAD’s investment portfolio. They will address existing gaps and expand actions in the GP-SAEP’s priority areas. Components 1 and 2 may also be implemented through regional or inter-regional sub-projects with partners developing new investment approaches, instruments, and guidance for regulatory and policy frameworks and sharing through South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC).

IFAD will sign two contribution agreements; one with the EC and one with the Belgian Development Cooperation (expected in Q4 2022). As the recipient of the above-mentioned supplementary funds, IFAD will be responsible for the management, the coordination and the provision of implementation support to the programme through the Sustainable Production, Markets and Institutions Division (PMI) with the technical lead provided by the Natural Resources Management Desk. In the programme’s start-up phase, IFAD will sign two grant agreements with: GFRAS for the implementation of component 3; and with Bioversity International as the host organisation and the recipient of the funds to support the Agroecology Coalition Secretariat. Other grant agreements and service provision contracts will be signed with other partners and service providers for the implementation of subprojects under components 1 and 2.

As the recipient of the above-mentioned supplementary funds, IFAD will ensure the overall programme coordination in terms of: i) technical and financial planning and management; ii) progress and financial reporting; iii) M&E and knowledge management; iv) technical and operational implementation support; and v) communication and visibility. The implementation will be in compliance with IFAD’s contractual provisions. Results will be monitored through GFRAS (component 3), subproject-level (component 1 & 2) and IFAD/PMI (component 4) M&E systems. The results data received will be consolidated for periodic programme-level reporting allowing for results-based programme monitoring and management against implementation milestones.

In order to perform those tasks, in addition to the staff working in the PMI NRM team and dedicating part of their time to the programme, PMI will hire two full time fixed-term staff: one technical specialist on agroecology and one administrative assistant. In addition, temporary staff and consultants will provide ad hoc technical support for preparation and follow up on sub-projects.

In order to ensure due diligence and to maximise alignment and coherence with country programmes, grant agreements and service provision contracts will be managed in line with the existing IFAD’s project cycle, standards and procedures (i.e., social targeting and inclusion, environmental and social safeguards, financial risk assessment, fiduciary and integrity due diligence, and quality assurance mechanisms).

Subproject proposals will be identified and designed in collaboration with national, regional and global partners (in the first year of the Programme), and validated in consultation with the Advisory Committee of the Programme. Their implementation will be supervised by PMI in coordination with IFAD’s regional divisions of the Programme Management Department (PMD), the Environment, Climate, Gender and Social Inclusion Division (ECG) and national and regional stakeholders.

The implementation of the programme will be supported by an Advisory Committee (AC) formed by representatives of: i) the EC Directorate-General for International Partnerships (INTPA); ii) representatives of EU and Belgian Delegations in countries involved in the programme as applicable; iii) DGD- Belgian Development Cooperation; and iv) the Belgian Development Agency (Enabel). The AC will be responsible for i) providing advice and strategic guidance on the selection and implementation of sub-projects under components 1 & 2 as well as activities under component 3; ii) overseeing and monitoring programme implementation; and iii) ensuring programme activities are in line with stated objectives and establish synergies with other initiatives as relevant (e.g. DeSIRA). The AC will be convened by IFAD/PMI, which will also be responsible for preparing the agenda and drafting and sharing of minutes. The frequency of the meetings will be determined by the specific needs of the programme implementation expected to be 1-3 meeting per year. The AC will have an advisory and consulting role and therefore its recommendations are issued by consensus of its members and IFAD.

### *1.6 Key impact indicators and monitoring*

The outreach target of the programme is: 30 000 people, representing 20 000 rural households (HH), working in small-scale farming or agri-food MSME. At least 40% of these people are women, 30% are youth and 10% are indigenous people.

Key impact indicators at the *Development Objective* level are: i) number of people with improved agroecology transition score of at least 10% across all the Agroecology Elements[[5]](#footnote-5) (mean of all values, measured through FAO TAPE, Characterization of Agroecological Transition, CAET);[[6]](#footnote-6) ii)number of HHs with a 20 percentage point increase in their resilience index (measured through IFAD’s Resilience Design and Monitoring Tool (RDMT)); iii) number of women reporting Minimum Dietary Diversity (MDDW); iii) number of HH with a 10% increase in income.

Specific outcome indicator for each of the components are:

* *COMPONENT 1:* Small-scale agroecology producers reporting an increased use of bio- and other technology solutions adequate for their agroecology farming systems (disaggregated by: seeds; bio-fertiliser and other soil fertility solutions; bio-pesticides and other bio pest management solutions; machinery; digital technologies)
* *COMPONENT 2:* Small-scale agroecology producers and MSME reporting an increase in sales (disaggregated by volume and price).
* *COMPONENT 3:* Number of small-scale producers reached by RAS, farmer-to-farmer and/or FFS co-learning reporting the adoption of at least 3 improved agroecology practices.
* *COMPONENT 4: (EFA+) developed and tested*

The above mentioned indicators will be monitored through the programme’s M&E system. On a pilot and testing basis the household-based indicators may for a limited sample of beneficiaries (representative sample at the sub-project level) be complemented with landscape-based indicators monitored through GIS and remote sensing data such as: iv) hectares under agroecology farming systems; v) increase in soil organic carbon or soil moisture triangulated against rainfall in the project areas[[7]](#footnote-7); vi) biodiversity in the project areas (measured through ABC map).[[8]](#footnote-8)

An online template for baseline and completion surveys will be set up at the start-up of the programme though the open source KoboToolkit,[[9]](#footnote-9) including the outcome indicators described above and linked to the output indicators according to the specific objectives of sub-projects and component 3. The pre-programmed online survey will be available for all sub-projects and GFRAS for component 3 and tailored to the log frame indicators of each subproject to support data collection. Data will be available for the different implementing teams and stored into a centralised programme database. The database will support reporting, and results-oriented program management and data-driven decision making, and underpin the production of different knowledge management products.

Moreover, each data point will be linked with GIS coordinates and recorded in the GIS section of the programme’s M&E system[[10]](#footnote-10). This will include polygons of areas benefiting from the program, as well as different output produced such as seed banks, market hubs, FFS, inter alia. The system will allow for accurate monitoring of the output of the programme, triangulation analysis of outcomes with remote sensing data such as rainfall, vegetation cover and temperature, and for facilitating the monitoring of the different sub-projects. The programme will seek to establish collaborations with the EC Copernicus programme and the Joint Research Centre to strengthen knowledge generation through GIS.

### *1.7 Criteria for resources allocation and articulation between components*

Criteria for resource allocation to leverage funding from IFAD investment projects will include: i) geographical targeting of Africa and LAC[[11]](#footnote-11); ii) potential for addressing nutrition, resilience, and poverty challenges for small-scale producers through the integration of agroecology and sustainable food systems approaches in the investment project; iii) willingness of the investment project partners to engage in at least one of the priority areas outlined in the GP-SAEP components and planning/coordination of matching co-financing from the investment programme; iv) potential for demonstrating approaches with high potential for knowledge generation of global value and scaling up; and v) potential of creation of synergies with EC and Belgian development investments focusing on agroecology and sustainable food systems transformation.

In the programme’s start-up phase and in collaboration with IFAD’s regional divisions for Africa and LAC, investment projects in IFAD’s loans and grant portfolio (some already pre-identified in annex I) will be mapped against these resource allocation criteria and the IFAD investment project partners will be consulted to express interest, priorities and readiness[[12]](#footnote-12) to participate in the GP-SAEP programme. Based on this, a first list of proposed countries and sub-projects (1 page for each proposed sub-project) covering component 1 &2 activities will be presented to the AC for discussion. GFRAS will be involved in this mapping and will be responsible for ensuring that sub-projects covering specific countries and needs within the scope of components 1 & 2 are also complemented with parallel implementation of component 3 activities in the same countries.

Based on the agreement with the AC, sub-projects will be developed with IFAD-investment project partners addressing one or more of the priority areas of the GP-SAEP. Depending on the concrete needs and opportunities, each sub-project will complement the activities of the IFAD investment projects by combining activities across the 3 GP-SAEP components (1, 2 and 3) and ensure an integrated approach to agroecology and sustainable food systems. In some cases, depending on the needs of the beneficiaries of the partner investment project, a sub-project may also address only some of the priorities foreseen in the components.

The implementation of the three technical components will be structured as follows:

* Regarding investments in components 1 and 2 the indicative maximum amount for each sub-project is EUR 2,500,000. Proposals will also be identified for stand-alone regional or inter-regional grant subprojects with partners developing new approaches (with the involvement of small-scale agroecology producers) and sharing through SSTC for an indicative maximum amount of EUR 4,500,000. A total of 6 to 8 sub-projects will be prepared and financed under the programme for components 1 and 2 linked to IFAD investment projects. The subproject funds will be implemented through a grant agreement or service provision contract with a partner/service provider that can ensure implementation effectiveness and engagement with the IFAD investment project partner and bring in needed technical knowledge and support. Service providers can be any entity legally registered in the beneficiary country such as research institutions, NGOs including CSOs, and private companies. Providers will express interest to a call for proposal opened by IFAD and will be selected applying IFAD’s procurement rules[[13]](#footnote-13) or Policy for Grant Financing which also include the option of sole-source selection in exceptional circumstances (only one company is qualified or institutions/ organisations that are unique in their normative, policy or representation mandate). Funds will therefore not be transferred to the government implementing partner for the IFAD investment project, however, the specific implementation modality will in each case be agreed with the government partner, and included in the subproject document.
* The implementation of component 3 will be done in parallel with the component 1 & 2 sub-projects, through specific activities designed and delivered by GFRAS building synergies with the sub-projects. The budget covering activities under component 3 (EUR 4,500,000 in total) will be managed by GFRAS through the implementation of the grant agreement with IFAD, and its expenses are separated from the ones covering the first two components.
* Component 4 supporting the development of the EFA+, knowledge generation and management, will be implemented directly by IFAD/PMI, in consultation with the AC and in coordination with the UN-FSS AEC finance working group.

The programme will seek synergies with ongoing EU and IFAD investments programmes in agroecological innovations as well as with existing and future EU and IFAD joint programmes. These include: the EU-IFAD and Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) joint Agroecological Transition Program for Building Resilient and Inclusive Agricultural Food Systems (TRANSITIONS) with particular opportunities to collaborate on assessment matrix for food system benefits; the EU-IFAD joint programmes Farmers’ Organisations for Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (FO4ACP) and Farmers’ Organisations for Latin America (FO4LA) with particular opportunities for creating synergies with FO’s engaging in Agroecology and supported through these programmes; the Farmers Organisations Leading Research & Innovation on agroecology for sustainable food systems (FO-RI);the International Land Coalition (ILC), other relevant DeSIRA projects supporting agroecological approaches, and the upcoming IFAD’s Contribution to the EU initiative on Food Production and Resilience of Food Systems in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. The programme will also seek synergies with bilateral programmes of the Belgian Development Cooperation focusing on agroecological innovations.

## **2. Background and rationale**

### *2.1 Problem analysis and approach*

Despite global commitments to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as the Paris Climate Agreement, the 2030 Biodiversity Targets and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)’s Land Degradation Neutrality, agriculture and food systems continue to cause and be affected by a series of severe and interconnected environmental, climate, socio-economic and health-related crises. Small-scale farmers and agri-food producers and their communities in low- and middle-income countries are among the most affected given their dual role in food systems both as producers and as consumers with unmet needs of access to a diversity of affordable and nutritious food. Furthermore, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ukraine crisis and the surge in agricultural inputs and food prices are adding to the increasing number of people experiencing food insecurity and malnutrition. As a result, achieving the SDG 2 has become a serious struggle.

Agroecology, *an integrated approach that simultaneously applies ecological and social concepts and principles to the design and management of agricultural and food systems*, has increasingly been identified by farmer’s organisations, governments and international institutions as a crucial enabler for food systems transformation required to meet the SDGs. Agroecology provides an approach to simultaneously address challenges from climate change, land degradation and increasing costs for industrial farming inputs. At the same time, it can leave more value and jobs in rural areas, by strengthening entrepreneurship and access to markets for affordable and diverse food.

Since 2018, IFAD has strengthened its support to agroecology seen as a holistic approach to inclusive and sustainable rural transformation by: joining the FAO-lead multiagency Scaling Up Agroecology Initiative; developing a framework for assessing agroecology in IFAD’s portfolio and conducting a stocktake to identify strength, opportunities and barriers for engaging more in agroecology and sustainable food systems; joining the UN-FSS AEC; and approving IFAD’s Biodiversity Strategy by its board in 2021.

In May 2020, the EC published the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the Farm to Fork Strategy as key components of the European New Green Deal. Farm to Fork aims at guiding the EU towards more sustainable food systems over the next 10 years. Together with the Biodiversity Strategy, it acknowledges the significant role that agroecology can play in underpinning food systems transformation and biodiversity conservation. Simultaneously, the Team Europe approach has been launched to support sustainable recovery and the achievement of the SDGs. Several Team Europe Initiatives (TEI), underpinned by EU’s policy priorities and especially the EU Green Deal, have been launched across multiple countries, and include objectives of food systems transformation including agroecological approaches.

Transition towards sustainable food systems is also one of the key strategic priorities of the Belgian Development Cooperation. In its guidelines for Agriculture and Food Security Strategy, agroecology is highlighted as a key innovation to support a transition towards sustainable food systems. The Belgian Development Cooperation recognizes the potential of agroecology to: i) improve food security in terms of availability, accessibility (poverty reduction), stability (increased resilience) and use (diversified diet); ii) reinforce local food systems and territorial markets; iii) promote sustainable use of natural resources (soil, water, biodiversity) and more effective use of ecosystem services within food systems.

In 2021, IFAD published the “Stock-take Report on Agroecology in IFAD Operations: an integrated approach to sustainable food systems”[[14]](#footnote-14) – the first comprehensive report on a holistic approach to sustainable production and food systems in IFAD. The report found a broad IFAD support to agroecological activities in particular at farm and landscape level with 60% of IFAD-funded projects supporting agroecological practices, of which 13% fully supported the agroecological approach across multiple levels (farm level, landscape level, markets level and policy level). The report also found that IFAD’s mainstreaming priorities - i.e., gender, nutrition, youth, climate change - strongly benefit from the inclusion of agroecology in the design of projects and programmes and that agroecology projects outperform non-agroecology projects on all IFAD key indicators relevant for inclusive and sustainable food systems.

Agroecology has also been recognised as an important enabling approach in achieving the objectives of IFAD’s Biodiversity Strategy[[15]](#footnote-15). Indeed, the stocktake report found that 81% of agroecology projects support diversity in farming systems against only 1% of non-agroecology projects. By assessing to what extent IFAD-supported projects incorporate a comprehensive set of agroecology relevant activity groups across farm, landscape, markets and policy levels, the stocktake was also able to identify key areas of opportunity to further support agroecological transition for small-scale farmers and agri-food producers. These key areas include: agrobiodiversity, local seed systems and bio-inputs; value addition and access to markets; knowledge creation, learning and exchange; land, water and natural resources governance and generation of impact evidence to improve transition policies and investments.

These areas, as well as EC and Belgian Development Cooperation experiences with supporting agroecological approaches, have inspired the structure of the GP-SAEP.[[16]](#footnote-16) The 10 Elements of Agroecology, approved by the 197 Members of the FAO Council in December 2019[[17]](#footnote-17), are used as a benchmark for the strategic orientation of the programme.

### *2.2 IFAD comparative advantage*

IFAD’s board approves around USD 1 billion in financing for rural development and poverty reduction each year, levering additional resources from other development partners, governments and rural communities and is as such uniquely placed to promote food systems that benefit the rural poor. The comparative advantage of IFAD in supporting agroecological approaches stems from: its social inclusion approach targeting the most vulnerable, harnessing the potential of Indigenous Peoples, and implementing context specific strategies for the inclusion of women and youth in rural economies; its commitment to empowering rural communities through participatory approaches and their engagement in territorial governance; its solid experience in promoting climate change adaptation practices and sustainable natural resource management at farm and landscape levels improving rural populations’ resilience and leveraging additional funding (e.g. Enhanced Adaptation for Smallholder Agriculture Programme (ASAP+), Green Climate Fund (GCF), Global Environmental Facility (GEF)); its proven experience in working with vulnerable communities on the diversification in production and value addition to increase their access to and income from nutritious food; and on the promotion of innovative Information and Communications Technologies for Development (ICT4D) solutions to support production processes, value addition and marketing, and access to digital financial and extension services.

With the proposed program, IFAD will partner with the EC, the Belgian Development Cooperation and GFRAS to take further its work on agroecology in its portfolio, while strengthening its engagement with partners and at the same time building knowledge products and tools for the development community to scale-up their investments in agroecology and sustainable food systems.

## **3. Programme description**

### *3.1 Components/outcomes and activities*

The programme is structured around four components that will focus on the identified recurrent challenges for small-scale producers practicing agroecology or in agroecological transition and their contribution to sustainable food system transformation, as well as the need for better investment support tools, data and knowledge to scale-up investments. The four components are: 1) Improving access to inputs for agroecology production, including seeds, bio-inputs and mechanical equipment; 2) Increasing value addition and markets for agroecological produce; 3) Enhancing Rural Advisory Services (RAS) and farmer-to-farmer joint learning for small-scale producers in transition to agroecology;  4) Improving Economic and Financial Analysis of investments (EFA+) tools, knowledge management and sharing.

The lessons learnt from the programme will contribute to generating data on the importance of strengthening bio-solutions systems, AE markets and rural advisory services to build an enabling environment for an agroecological transition of food systems. This would underpin upscaling opportunities at different levels. The development of an EFA+ tool will support the generation of knowledge and clarify the cost effectiveness and value added of investing into agroecology to achieve food system transformation. This will incentivise increased investments (C4).

As described below, each Component will involve a diversity of stakeholders to ensure that the proposed solutions are co-created as well as promoted and implemented by this broad set of stakeholders to increase outreach and impacts. As described in section 1.7 the components 1 & 2 will be implemented through subprojects agreed with IFAD investment project government partners and regional or cross regional partners bringing expertise, a strong mandate and outreach within the objectives of the GP-SAEP.

The subprojects linked to IFAD and government investment projects will include a mix of activities from the GP-SAEP component 1 & 2 according to the demand of the IFAD investment projects to which they will be linked. The subprojects will be complemented by component 3 activities implemented by GFRAS and its network of partners. The concrete focus and activities of each subproject will be tailored to the needs of the small-scale producers participating in the investment projects and opportunities to create additional value-added to the investment project’s already secured funding and activities. The subprojects will be prepared with the IFAD investment project government partners and in close consultation with the GP-SAEP AC, the investment project participants and other relevant partners in the country (e.g. other government partners, Farmers Organisations (FOs), Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), private sector actors and bilateral and multilateral agencies). National consultants might be contracted to support the government and IFAD in conducting the consultations and writing up the subproject proposal.

#### Component 1. Agroecology relevant bio-solutions and technologies (seeds, bio-inputs, mechanical and digital technologies)

Small-scale producers’ access to appropriate and quality agricultural bio-solutions and technologies is essential for a successful transition towards sustainable agricultural production. Farmers adopting agroecology need access to high plant and animal genetic diversity adapted to local conditions to strengthen their resilience to the multiple shocks and stressors they are exposed to, and to improve their productivity and the nutrition outcome of their production. They need access to low-cost bio-solutions (organic fertilisers and bio-pesticides), and appropriate equipment and digital technology solutions. These solutions need to be adaptable to their small-scale conditions and agroecology systems with high levels of diversification and integration of crops, trees and animals, the use of regenerative and circular practices for soil and water management, and integrated pest management.

Building on IFAD experiences[[18]](#footnote-18), lessons from the EU policy on the commercialisation of heterogeneous planting material[[19]](#footnote-19), and experiences from the Belgian Development Cooperation portfolio, this component has the objective to provide small-scale agroecology producers with access to affordable and quality inputs.

The component is structured in three main action areas:

*1.1 Strengthen agroecology farmers’ access to, use and management of plant genetic diversity.*

Seed systems and markets, often dominated by genetically uniform hybrid seeds, have become increasingly limited in the diversity they offer and ill-adapted to small-scale agroecological producers' needs with limitations in working capital. The component will support subprojects with national seed system and agrobiodiversity actors (national genbanks, crop research institutions, CSO’s, local seed producers, FO etc.) working with agroecology producer groups, cooperatives or community groups participating in IFAD investment projects, the FO4ACP or FO4LA. The subproject will support them in improving their access to and management of a diversity of crop varieties and their incorporation in local seed systems. The subprojects may include support for:

* participatory research, characterization and selection of varieties and evolutionary plant breeding to strengthen farmers capacities to manage their plant genetic resources and strengthen traits important for local climate conditions, other stressors and nutrition;
* capacity building of seed producer and conservation groups/cooperatives in seed collection characterisation, storage in community seed banks, multiplication, exchange and selling;
* establishment of digital platforms for geo mapping of the use and availability of different varieties/seeds and evolutionary populations adapted to agroecology farming conditions and their traits/characteristics for regional and global use;
* farmer-to-farmer seed exchange markets/events;
* development and/or adoption of digital tools/apps to facilitate the exchange and selling of quality seeds and evolutionary populations;
* adaptation of regulatory frameworks for seeds enabling farmers’ access to the seed diversity and management of plant genetic resources needed in agroecology farming systems learning from the EU and other experiences.

*1.2 Strengthen agroecology farmers’ access to bio-inputs and create related employment opportunities.*

Bio-solutions can to some extent be produced on farm by farmers as part of the agroecological circular systems, but in order to meet the demand, there is a need to supplement these inputs through innovation and products from community bio-factories and agroecology MSMEs. Despite good examples of innovation and product development collaborations between private companies and public research institutions this supply is still very limited. Bio-factories and bio-input MSMEs face barriers linked to inadequate regulatory frameworks made for synthetic agrochemicals and there are overall shortages in meeting the growing demand from agroecology and organic producers alike.

The component will support subprojects with national bio-input innovation and business development support partners (e.g. universities, incubators, private companies, CSO’s, FO etc.) working with agroecology MSME, producer groups, or cooperatives participating in IFAD investment projects, the FO4ACP or FO4LA and interested in the production of bio-inputs relevant for small-scale agroecology producers. The subprojects may include:

* Technical assistance and capacity building for community bio-factories (involving youth, 50% young women) producing organic fertiliser and biopesticides primarily based on local materials (e.g. animal manure, biomass, organic waste, plant extracts, grey wastewater), and development of their business model and service provision to farmers. Financed by the co-financing from IFAD investment projects the biofactories may also be supported in upgrading their physical infrastructure, production equipment and technologies that can support the testing and monitoring of the quality of their products;
* Research partnerships between bio-input MSME, research institutions and small-scale agroecology farmers to develop new or improve existing bio-input products and technical assistance and business development support for existing or incubation of new rural bio-input MSMEs, targeting in particular youth businesses (50% young women);
* Innovative financial mechanisms and products to support the development of bioinput rural MSME, especially targeting women and youth businesses;
* Capacity building for farmers and community groups in: mulching; use of green manure; composting; and natural resources and ecosystems restoration interventions that maximise biomass production for composting and mulching, contribute to push-pull techniques for pest management and conservation of habitats for pollinators (cross-supported by component 3);
* Capacity building and co-learning through agroecology FFS on the optimum use of organic fertilisers and biopesticides as part of integrated soil fertility and pest management including agroforestry practice (cross-supported by component 3);
* Technical assistance supporting the development of regulatory framework for bio-inputs.

*1.3 Strengthen agroecology farmers’ access to adequate mechanical equipment and digital technologies.* Innovation in agricultural equipment is predominantly focused on the needs of mono culture and or uniform agriculture models and designed by manufacturers that market patented equipment built from new materials and intended for large-scale, often international markets. The component will support subprojects with national partners for the development of mechanical equipment and digital technologies adequate for small-scale agroecology farming systems (e.g. universities and agricultural research institutions, private companies, CSO’s, FO etc.) working with agroecology MSME, producer groups, or cooperatives participating in IFAD investment projects, the FO4ACP or FO4LA. The subprojects will provide support for improving designs of mechanical equipment and digital technologies for small-scale agroecology producers. The subprojects may include:

* Facilitation of the sharing of experiences among small-scale agroecology farmers with on-farm designs of mechanical equipment eventually repurposing local existing equipment and material;
* Support for partnerships between farmers and agricultural local equipment developers and workshops for co-designing new equipment addressing challenges in their agroecology farming systems;
* Support partnerships between farmers and digital technology tool developers for co-designing digital technology solutions for challenges in their agroecology farming systems (e.g. apps, platforms, drone or remote monitoring/testing[[20]](#footnote-20));
* Publication of material/manuals (including digital) for auto-construction of equipment and use of digital technology solutions relevant for agroecology farming systems;
* Support small infrastructure such as ateliers for tools and cooperatives for autoconstruction of farming equipment.[[21]](#footnote-21)
* Technical assistance and business support for existing or incubation of new rural MSMEs producing mechanical equipment or digital technology solutions for small-scale agroecology producers, targeting in particular youth businesses (50% young women).

#### Component 2. Increasing value addition and markets for agroecological produce

Connecting producers and consumers around the value of sustainably produced and quality food is fundamental for the economic viability driving the agroecological transition and for realising the job creation and food system benefits of agroecological production systems. With agroecological farming systems being characterised by a diversity of products and smaller quantities for each product, they often do not fit into more traditional support for strengthening value addition and market access through mono-product value chains. The socio-economic elements in agroecology put emphasis on more direct connection between consumers and producers through shorter value chains with high decision power and participation of agroecological farmers and rural agri-food MSMEs. Investing in agroecological MSME (sourcing, aggregation and commercialisation of agroecological products, using renewable energy, recycling water/waste, developing social responsibilities, etc.), territorial markets, public procurements with agroecological products for schools/public institutions, and trust-based connections with consumers (including through digital tools) is crucial in creating more value in rural areas and providing entrepreneurship and employment opportunities for women and youth. Currently markets are not always ready to differentiate and promote agroecological and healthy food and create new market channels. Existing organic and fair trade certification systems have proven to be costly for small-scale producers and contribute to organic products often being significantly more expensive, thereby excluding low-income consumers.

Building on IFAD experiences[[22]](#footnote-22) as well as lessons from the EU Farm to Fork Strategy[[23]](#footnote-23), this component has the objective to strengthen the value addition and market outlets for small-scale agroecology producers ensuring that a fair share of value is allocated to them. As an important co-benefit will be the creating employment opportunities for women and youth in rural since they are more likely than men to be employed in processing and value addition small enterprises in rural areas. The component will support subprojects based on partnerships of food systems and markets stakeholders (e.g. local and national governments, CSOs, rural MSME and farmers’ organisations working in agroecology production, processing and commercialisation) linked to IFAD investment projects, FO4ACP or FO4LA and interested in the objective of this component.

The component is structured in three action areas:

*2.1 Connect demand and supply through a territorial “foodshed” approach.*

Agroecological territorial approaches promote inclusive processes to identify gaps and barriers and find solutions to solve systemic issues for market access for producers while addressing nutritious food gaps for consumers. As such, these approaches help create markets that harness the benefits for both small-scale agroecology producers and low in-come consumers can benefit. Building on these approaches, the subprojects may include technical assistance and support for:

* Territorial “foodshed” analysis of demand and supply gaps for affordability of nutritious food and market access barriers for small scale agroecology producers (e.g. lack of food safety regulation adequate for small-scale agroecology producers, local/territorial aggregation and market spaces, road and internet connectivity, registration of agroecology producers and low cost participatory guarantee systems (PGS) supporting the building of consumer trust, rural business development services, public procurement incentives);
* Multi-stakeholder platforms with participation of small-scale agroecological producers and MSMEs for identifying solutions for systemic barriers for value addition and access to markets;
* Establishment of inclusive market governance arrangement for aggregation points and local territorial markets which may include price policy committees;
* Support for connecting demand and supply via e-commerce platforms and improving access to financial and non-financial market services for agroecology producers;
* Establishment of producer-consumer associations for community supported agriculture (CSA) arrangements;
* Adjustment of policies and regulations to enable the market participation of small-scale agroecology producers and increase territorial food system benefits (e.g. in relation to food safety, public procurement, registry of agroecology producers and quality labelling and PGS).[[24]](#footnote-24)

*2.2 Small-scale farmers’ innovative linkages to consumers.*

The direct food system benefits for consumers and small-scale agroecology producers are primarily generated through trust and direct linkages around the value of sustainably produced food. The challenge is to achieve a fair price paid to farmers and at the same time maintain food prices affordable for low-income consumers. This can be done through more direct linkages and efficiency in commercialisation arrangements. To this end subprojects may include technical assistance and support for agroecology farmers organisations in:

* Development of labelling and community-based Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) to create trust relationship, accountability and transparency around agroecological produce.
* Generation of evidence of the cost-effectiveness of the community-based PGS and development of frameworks for PGS and quality labelling of agroecology produce
* Market analysis and differentiated market communication and access strategies

*2.3 Development of rural agroecology MSME value addition and marketing.*

In addition to agroecology farmer’s own enterprises other rural MSME can create businesses around value addition and commercialisation of agroecology produce from small-scale producers, which might expand opportunities for aggregation and accessing markets in urban centres further afield. To support the business development of agroecology MSME subprojects may include technical assistance and support for:

* Youth and women entrepreneurship and business development services (e.g. aggregation value addition, commercialisation, market logistic, PGS, access to finance and financial management, etc.)
* Development of digital solution to facilitate the organisation and articulation of short value chains including supporting aggregation and commercialisation connecting directly with consumers (e.g. manage on-line ordering and direct delivery of agroecology food baskets at decentralised collecting points
* Invest in value addition and post-harvest infrastructures powered by renewable energy (financed by the co-financing investment projects);

#### Component 3. Empowering Small-Scale Farmers in the Agroecological Transition through Participatory Rural Advisory Services (RAS)

Agroecology is knowledge-intensive and builds on small-scale producers’ collective knowledge combined with applied knowledge from modern science to identify problems and develop long-term solutions adapted to their ecological and cultural contexts. Extension and advisory services systems have a key role to play to support small-scale producers in transitioning to or improving their agroecological farming systems by bridging modern science and technologies with local, indigenous and traditional knowledge in joint experimental learning processes. The objective of this component is to strengthen and expand agroecology-based rural advisory services (RAS) supporting the co-creation with and empowerment of small-scale producers and enabling them to innovate and adopt agroecological practices and technologies adapted to the accelerating challenges of climate change.

The component will be implemented by GFRAS and will be structured in two main action areas: i) Strengthen the capacity of RAS for Agroecology; and ii) Generate and disseminate knowledge on best practices for agroecology RAS. In both areas this will be done in collaboration with Access Agriculture that will develop and disseminate farmer-to-farmer demonstration and training videos to rural areas for the uptake and dissemination of agroecological practices. Together with Young Professionals for Agricultural Developme (YPARD), there will be a deliberate effort to involve young entrepreneurs in RAS as well as in the dissemination of demonstration videos and support them in making a business out of it. Both action areas will articulate with the “Development of Smart Innovation through Research in Agriculture “ (DeSIRA) and Farmers Organisations Leading Research & Innovation on agroecology for sustainable food systems (FO-RI) initiative[[25]](#footnote-25), harnessing the knowledge created under the participatory action research processes to underpin the activities of the component. This will be done in collaboration with CIRAD.

*3.1 Strengthen the capacity of RAS for Agroecology*

The component will support RAS providers (including public agricultural extension, CSOs, FOs, agroecology-based MSME input providers) in shifting from conventional linear and sometimes ‘quick-fixe’ technology transfer approaches towards co-creation and participatory, experiential learning approaches that recognize farmers as drivers of agroecological innovation in integrated practices and technologies. Within agroecology, Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and other participatory extension methods like Management Advice for Family Farms, are relevant approaches in this respect since they build farmers' capacity to experiment, exchange and innovate independently in developing appropriate solutions on their own farms. At the same time, they provide a platform for introducing, discussing and adapting new technologies and practices that can support small-scale producers in addressing key challenges they face in improving their agroecology production systems. IFAD is currently participating in a FAO-led stocktake on the effectiveness of FFS for promoting agroecology, as well as on efforts to digitalise FFS, which are expected to provide important recommendations for moving forward.

Agroecology is premised on horizontal sharing of knowledge especially through farmer-to-farmer exchanges and peer-to-peer learning. Farmers’ Organisations thus need to be recognized as actors of change, and must be involved as key actors in providing RAS to support agroecological transition among their members and local communities[[26]](#footnote-26). Many FOs engaged in agroecology are partnering with agricultural research institutions to build the capacities of their field staff and farmer members to assist small-scale producers in adopting agroecological practices and multiplying/cascading knowledge to the local level[[27]](#footnote-27). This helps create a network of practitioners and a new cohort of bottom-up advisors which should be supported in linking with public extension and the other players in the Innovation and RAS systems. Partnering with FO4ACP and FO4LA programmes will be instrumental to achieve this end. Capacity-building should also include bio-input providers to equip them with skills and knowledge to support small-scale farmers in adopting integrated pest management and effective use of biological inputs and solutions.

The component will foster the use of digital solutions such as e-learning modules tailored to agroecology RAS, the use of apps for remote technical assistance and exchanges of information, farmer-to-farmer demonstration and training videos, and developing networks of young e-extension service providers to expand the outreach of agroecology RAS services. Online training programmes will tap into FAO E-learning platform, particularly agroecology-related e-learning modules and training modules on Farmer Field Schools.

Activities falling within the scope of this component may include:

* Capacity-building needs assessments among different RAS stakeholders and FFS facilitators and groups in the project countries (including public extension system, Farmers Organisations[[28]](#footnote-28), CSOs, Rural School Trainers, private sector providers) with a focus on agroecological practices and participatory and joint learning and co-creation RAS methods;
* Designing and implementing agroecology RAS training programmes including e-learning modules (building on GFRAS’ New Extensionist Learning Kit (NELK) training modules and FAO E-learning platform) for RAS actors covering technical knowledge on agroecology, functional skills and agroecology-appropriate RAS methods including FFS and other farmer-to-farmer co-learning facilitation approaches;
* Implementing a training programme for agroecology FFS master trainers (RAS professionals, FOs’ agroecology promoters, agroecological farmers multiplicators, youth) who will subsequently train agroecology FFS facilitators, through a blended learning program with face-to-face interactions, online training, interactive workshops, field practical training;
* Capacitating master trainers and FFS facilitators, RAS providers, and youth in producing and using videos with farmers for farmer-to-farmer sharing of practices, and eventual translation of videos in different local languages;
* Coaching and mentoring young entrepreneurs as e-advisory service providers;
* Establishing communities of practice through e-platform for agroecology practitioners, MSME and farmers;
* Establishing online registries of agroecology RAS providers mentioning their experience, specialities and certifications and/or ratings by small-scale producers they have supported.

Small-scale producers should be involved in all activities, including the process of needs assessment, knowledge creation and knowledge sharing.

*3.2 Generate and disseminate knowledge on best practices for agroecology RAS*

The effectiveness of capacity building activities and approaches to strengthen Agroecology RAS supply will be iteratively analysed through action research approaches to identify constraints, enablers and best practices. The research will be coordinated with other relevant organisation work on this, such as FO-RI, the Transformative Partnership Platform on Agroecology (TPP), the UN FSS Coalition on agroecology, and others. Research results will be disseminated for inter-regional and cross-regional learning on transformation of RAS systems to promote agroecology and knowledge briefs and recommendations will be produced to support policy processes for RAS systems supporting agroecology co-learning and transition. To implement these actions, GFRAS will seek a research partner with experience in agroecology action research such as the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development Centre (CIRAD).

Activities may include:

* baseline study on knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) among RAS providers to monitor progress in transforming RAS knowledge and practices to better support joint-learning and co-creation on agroecology among small-scale producers;
* studies on the most effective agroecology RAS approaches for facilitating co-creation and experimental learning through FFS and other participatory approaches;
* national workshops for knowledge and experience sharing among agroecology RAS providers and agricultural knowledge and innovation systems (AKIS) stakeholders;
* organisation of regional/global webinars for knowledge and experience sharing among agroecology RAS providers and policy stakeholders.

#### Component 4. Improving Economic and Financial Analysis of investments (EFA+) tools, knowledge management and sharing.

In order to facilitate the transformation towards sustainable food systems through agroecology, adequate concepts and tools to assess the impacts and benefit of investments in the rural agri-food sector are needed, which consider the multifunctionality of food systems. As many of the ecosystem services produced by agroecology systems are not only benefitting the medium to long term sustainability of farms and agri-food businesses but are also public goods, they are insufficiently priced in the market. When assessing the viability of their investments, both public and private decision makers therefore often neglect their full economic, environmental and social value. Investment decisions are still mainly based on rather short term Economic and Financial Analyses which ignore most of the negative (and positive) so-called ‘externalities’ (e.g. on climate, food security and nutrition, biodiversity, water, soil, landscapes, rural jobs and socio-economic needs) that often materialise over a longer timespan. In economic terms, this translates into global social and environmental benefits or costs from the reduced/increased ecosystem services and these should be priced and included in Economic and Financial Analyses (i.e. EFA+) of investments in the agri-food sector.

The objective of this component is to enhance IFAD’s Economic and Financial Analysis (EFA) by including costs of negative and positive externalities as well as broader public environmental and food system goods. Such an enhanced EFA+ tool will support the generation of a better understanding of cost and benefit structures in small-scale farmers and rural MSMEs transition to agroecology-based production and commercialisation systems. The enhanced tool will enable better targeting of the financial support they need, recognising the broader public goods they generate e.g. for biodiversity, clean water, flood risk reduction, soil regeneration, carbon storage and reduced Greenhouse Gases (GHG) emissions. The tool may potentially benefit international financial institutions, insurance companies, impact investors and policy makers, making visible the benefits of agroecology for sustainable food systems and positively affect the flow of investments it receives.

Great attention will be given to data accessibility in different country contexts and the use of freely available remote sensing data and analytical tools when relevant to ensure the models can be practically implemented within the budget, time and capacities of investment project and program design processes and teams (including IFAD’s project development missions and teams). Once the prototype of the tool is developed, it will be pilot tested and implemented in different IFAD investment projects participating in the GP-SAEP.

This cross-cutting intervention is directly linked with the work IFAD and other partners have initiated in the finance working group of the UN-FSS AEC, and will build on interactions and knowledge from its participants. While implementing this component, IFAD will also interact with and build on the knowledge provided by other actors involved in developing agroecology economic impact indicators (such as the EU-funded Transformative Partnership Platform on Agroecology).

The activities of this *knowledge component* will include:

* Analysis of existing state-of-the art assessment methodologies developed or under development by other partners, taking into account factors such as: social inclusion in quality rural employment and income generation, carbon sinks and GHG emissions, (agro)biodiversity for resilience and food security and nutrition, and other ecosystem services (e.g. soil regeneration, quantity and quality of water, flood and landslide risk reduction, health impacts);
* Developing and testing different assessment models in the IFAD investment projects collaborating with the GP-SAEP sub-projects to be included in the EFA+.
* Consolidating and adjusting the models based on the learning from testing and development of EFA+ technical guidelines and tools for agroecology and food system investment practitioners and decision makers. The technical guidelines will be a live document allowing for continued updates as more people are using it and based on cross-learning from other tools within the UN-FSS AEC community and beyond;
* Supporting the implementation of other systematic assessment and knowledge generation tools (TAPE, ABC Map, RDMT, MDDW), cross portfolio data analysis and the development of knowledge products based on findings.
* Organising regional and global knowledge events and exchange workshops.

### *3.2 Timeline and milestones*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Year 1 | i) Staff hired and team consolidated ; ii) Grant agreements with GFRAS and Biodiversity signed; iii) At least 2 sub-projects designed; iv) Competitions for designed subproject service providers published; iv) Grant agreements with designed subproject service providers signed and first tranche of payment disbursed; v) M&E system designed; vi) Consultant contracted and research on the EFA+ started. |
| Year 2 | i) All sub-projects are designed; ii) Competitions for subproject service providers published; iii) All grants agreements with service providers signed and first tranches disbursed; iv) Implementation of all subprojects started.  |
| Year 3 | i) First data from projects impacts collected and analysed; ii) EFA+ assessment models being developed and tested in at least two investment/sub projects. |
| Year 4 | i) EFA+ pilot testing results and development of technical guidelines; ii) SubProjects completed; iii) Data from project impacts collected and analysed; iv) Completion reports published. |

### *3.3 Theory of change*

 **

### *3.4 Sustainability and exit strategy*

The program’s sustainability strategies will be continuously updated including the following three main elements:

* Sustained technical and managerial capacity, so that stakeholders can operate independently of the program: targeted capacity building will be included in subprojects and implemented according to the needs at national and local levels. At national level, the program and its subprojects will work with a network of AE promoters to support policy changes and ensure long term technical support while at local level, farmers co-learning and agroecology networks will be strengthened.
* Sustained motivation of beneficiaries and service providers: this will be ensured through the benefits they will get from continuing the program activities. Many activities are linked to increased production, reduced input costs and improved market linkages ensuring higher revenues and resilience for the beneficiaries. This will incentivise their continued engagement in agroecology.
* Sustained access to inputs and resources: the organisation of seeds banks, the promotion of biosolutions and mechanical and digital technologies relevant for small-scale agroecology production systems etc. are contributing to the sustainability of agroecology transition and scaling up processes.

The linking to investment funding in the IFAD portfolio working closely with government, farmers’ organisation and private sector partners is another pathway to support sustainability and scaling up.

A detailed exit strategy will be clearly spelled out during the inception phase of each subproject, particularly regarding requirements for (i) recipient(s) or beneficiaries to maintain, sustainably use and share assets over a defined timeline; (ii) systematic collection of data and generation of evidence on impacts; (iii) location of all relevant supporting documentation and key contact details (updated as required both at IFAD, Project Management Units/Government levels).

## **4. Budget of the action**

The total programme cost is EUR 23.2 million including EUR 18.2 million from the EU and EUR 5.0 million from Belgium as per the budget below. The funds will be provided as a multi donor action without specific earmarks. Parallel financing will be: USD 18.0 million from IFAD and the governments participating in the programme through IFAD’s loans and grants portfolio; EUR 0.45 million from GFRAS; and CHF 0.1 million from the Swiss Development Corporation (SDC) to Bioversity International to co-finance the UN-FSS AEC Secretariat.

**BUDGET OF THE ACTION**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Budget Headings** | **Budget Lines** | **Budget of the Action** |  | **Year 1** |
| **A. TOTAL GRANT-RELATED DIRECT COSTS** | Component 1: Agroecology relevant inputs (seeds, bio-inputs, mechanical and digital technologies) | €6.350.000 | €444.500 |
| Component 2: Increasing value addition and markets for agroecological produce | €6.310.000 | €441.700 |
| Component 3: Empowering Small-Scale Farmers in the Agroecological Transition through Participatory Rural Advisory Services (RAS) | €4.500.000 | €450.000 |
| Component 4: Improving Economic and Financial Analysis of investments (EFA+) tools, knowledge management and sharing. | €1.220.436 | €244.087 |
| Support to the UN FSS Coalition on Agroecology | €1.200.000 | €300.000 |
| A. TOTAL GRANT-RELATED DIRECT COSTS | €19.580.436 | €1.880.287 |
| **B. TOTAL IFAD DIRECT COSTS** | Cost of staff assigned to the project | €1.757.243 | €1.230.070 |
| Technical assistance, supervision, implementation support (missions) | €255.000 | €63.750 |
| B. TOTAL IFAD DIRECT COSTS | €2.012.243 | €1.293.820 |
| C=(A+B) TOTAL DIRECT COSTS | €21.592.679 | €3.174.107 |
| D. Provision for contingency reserve (1%) | €0 | €0 |
| E= (C+D) TOTAL DIRECT ELIGIBLE COSTS | €21.592.679 | €3.174.107 |
| **H= (E+F+G) TOTAL ELIGIBLE COSTS** | F. Indirect costs | €1.557.321 | €230.984 |
| G. UN Levy (1%) | €50.000 | €50.000 |
| H= (E+F+G) TOTAL ELIGIBLE COSTS | €23.200.000 | €3.455.091 |
|   |   |  |   |

## **ANNEX I: Preliminary countries selection**

The below is a list of qualifying countries from Africa and LAC that have been preliminary identified on the basis of the criteria detailed in section 1.7 and in dialogue with the EC, the Belgian Development Cooperation and Enabel.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AFRICA | LAC |
| Niger | Argentina |
| Democratic Republic of Congo | Brazil |
| Burkina Faso | Cuba |
| Senegal | Mexico |
| Benin | Bolivia |

## **ANNEX II: Logframe**

|  |
| --- |
| *Logical Framework* |
| **Results Hierarchy** | **Indicators** |  |
| **Name** | **End Target** | Project M&E Unit (surveys) |
| **Outreach** | **Persons receiving services promoted or supported by the project** |
| Males (Number) | 18000 |
| Females (Number) | 12000 |
| Young (Number) | 9000 |
| Indigenous people (Number) | 3000 |
| Total number of persons receiving services (Number) | 30000 |
| **Corresponding number of households reached** |
| Households (Number) | 20000 |
| **Development Objective**Enable rural small-scale producers to strengthen their practice of agroecology through better access to knowledge, support services, improved technologies and market outlets thereby improving their resilience to climatic, environmental and socio-economic shocks and stressors as well as food and nutrition security and incomes | **Number of smallhoders working in farms with an increased Characterization of Agroecological Transitions (CAET) score of 10%** | Tool for Agroecology Performance Evaluation (TAPE) |
| Male (Number) | 18000 |
| Females (Number) | 12000 |
| Indigenous people (Number) | 3000 |
| Number of hectares  | TBD |
| **Households reporting an increase of at least 20 percentage point in their resilience index** | [MDD-W](https://www.fao.org/nutrition/assessment/tools/minimum-dietary-diversity-women/en/)RDMT Methodology Project M&E Unit (surveys) |
| Households (Number)  | 14000 |
| **Women reporting Minimum Dietary Diversity for Women (MDD-W)** |
| Households (Number)  | 14000 |
| **Number of HH with a 10% increase in revenues** |
| Households (Number)  | 14000 |
| ***Outcome****Component 1: Farmers have access to an increased diversity of seeds varieties and animal breeds. Bioinputs value chains are available to small farmers in the targeted regions and employment opportunities in the sector are available. Mechanical equipment fit for the need of agroecological production is available.* | **Small-scale agroecology producers reporting an increased access to biosolutions** | Project M&E Unit (surveys) |
| Seeds and animal breeds (number of households) | 10000 |
| Bio-Fertilizers (number of households) | 10000 |
| Bio-Pesticides (number of households) | 10000 |
| Machineries (number of households) | 10000 |
| ***Outcome****Component 2: Value addition benefits fairly smallholders farmers. Agroecological farmers increase the volume and prices of their sales through better access to markets and better identification of their products (PGS schemes, labelling).* | **Small-scale agroecology producers and MSME reporting an increase in sales** | Project M&E Unit (surveys) |
| Volume (number of people) | 15000 |
| Prices (number of people) | 15000 |
| ***Outcome****Component 3: Agroecology RAS & FFS are strengthened and farmers are involved in the co-development of knowledge. Knowledge on best practices for agroecology RAS & FFS generated and disseminated.* | **Number of small-scale producers reached by RAS, farmer-to-farmer, FFS co-learning reporting adoption of improved agroecology practices** | Project M&E Unit (surveys) |
| Households (Number) | 10000 |
| Households (%) | 50% |
| ***Outcome****Component 4: AE impact indicators are used in investments decisions* | **EFA+ developed and tested** | Programme M&E (managed by IFAD) |
| Number of projects piloting EFA+ (Number) | 5 |

1. Agroecology is understood in this document as grounded in [the 10 Elements of Agroecology](https://www.fao.org/agroecology/overview/overview10elements/en/), approved by the 197 Members of FAO in December 2019. These Elements have been defined through an inclusive global multi-stakeholder consultation process between 2015-2019 and serve as a framework to support the planning, management, and evaluation of agroecological transitions to sustainable food systems. The 10 Elements of Agroecology are interlinked and interdependent. They encompass the elements of *Diversity* in farming and food systems integrated through *Co-creation and sharing of knowledge* and seekingresources use *Efficiency,* *Recycling* and creation of *Synergies* as foundational and innovation characteristics of agroecological systems. The element of *Resilience* is an emergent property of systems built upon these five elements. The elements *Human and social values* and *Culture and food traditions are* context features of agroecological systems, while *Responsible governance* and *Circular and solidarity economy* describe the enabling environment context as well as serving as goals agroecology farming and food systems are contributing to. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. EFA of investment projects is a basic instrument supporting investment project decisions for financiers and borrowers. Most international finance institutions (IFI), including IFAD, and governments require an EFA when deciding a new investment project of program. The EFA is updated at midterm and project completion to ensure proper monitoring and eventual follow up on economic and financial performance of the investment. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Including farmers and producers who want to start or are in transition to agroecology. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The remainder of the funding will be mobilized from other coalition members in the last trimester of 2022 and the first trimester of 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. https://www.fao.org/agroecology/overview/overview10elements/en/ [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <https://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/ca7407en/> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. GIS and drone methodologies to measure soil moisture and organic carbon will be pilot tested in the programme. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. ​​https://abc-map.org [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. [https:/kobotoolbox.org](https://www.kobotoolbox.org) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Through the open-source software QGIS (https://qgis.org) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. If the GP-SAEP is joined by other donors the geographical scope could eventually be expanded. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. For newly started projects, they should have: i) a minimum staffed and functional project management unit (PMU) in place; ii) the first year annual work plan and budget approved and with no-objection from IFAD; and iii) the first transfer of funds processed. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. <https://www.ifad.org/documents/38711624/39421018/proc_handbook_e.pdf/2febc53a-4244-4447-a788-d06a632fd3b5> [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. The report presents an assessment of IFAD-supported projects implemented by member state governments and completing in 2018-2023 across the five IFAD regions. [https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/45258342/PMI+Agroecology+assessment.pdf/d39e37dd-8c35-c909-669d-906bb3ad716f?t=1649164401038](https://www.ifad.org/documents/38714170/45258342/PMI%2BAgroecology%2Bassessment.pdf/d39e37dd-8c35-c909-669d-906bb3ad716f?t=1649164401038) [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. <https://www.ifad.org/en/-/biodiversity-strategy> [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Land, water and natural resources governance has not been directly included as a component in this program. It will be addressed through the co-financing loans and grants and might be directly included in the program in the future with eventually more co-financing partners joining. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. FAO, 2019. Hundred and Sixty-third Session of the FAO Council. The Ten Elements of Agroecology. Rome, 2-6 DECEMBER 2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. IFAD has supported farmers, international and national research institutions in introducing participatory approaches for recovering local varieties and boosting plant genetic resources in farmers’ fields (e.g. participatory variety selection, evolutionary plant breeding, community seed banks and seed guardians). In Bahia Brazil, 420 “seed guardians” promote more than 235 varieties of locally adapted traditional creole seeds used by thousands of families for improving climate change resilience and nutrition benefits from their crops. In Jordan, Iran, Uganda, Ethiopia, Nepal and Bhutan 1,127 farmers have adopted evolutionary populations (EP) containing a mixture of sometimes thousand different varieties of rice, wheat, barley or beans. These populations are now evolving in their fields, progressively adapting to local pressures. Already the second-year trials with EPs confirmed that most of these populations are as good as or superior to the more commonly grown landraces or improved varieties for grain yield and some quality traits. Nutrition analysis of the milk from goats being fed EP barley has shown higher content of micronutrients than milk from goats being fed other fodder. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. The EU Commission Implementing Decision of 18 March 2014, pursuant to the EC Council Directive 66/402/EEC, made it possible in Europe to market experimentally heterogeneous EP materials of different cereals. A similar flexibility from the seed system regulations prescribed by the UPOV (91) convention has now been included in the EU Organic Regulation (and its new special regime for organic heterogeneous material). COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) 2021/1189 of 7 May 2021. Supplementing Regulation (EU) 2018/848 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the production and marketing of plant reproductive material of organic heterogeneous material of particular genera or species. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. See for example: <https://www.routledge.com/Drones-and-Geographical-Information-Technologies-in-Agroecology-and-Organic/Marchi-Diantini-Pappalardo/p/book/9780367146382> [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. For example: <https://www.latelierpaysan.org> [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. In IFAD projects, multi-stakeholder territorial platforms have been supported to solve systemic barriers and market access have been addressed by connecting small-scale agroecological producers to public procurement for school feeding programmes and by investing in infrastructure for farmers markets among others. In West Africa, IFAD has been supporting semi wholesale markets and multi-stakeholder social engineering as an alternative territorial approach to the value chain development model. Likewise, in Brazil, IFAD has been supporting agroecology territorial markets with products differentiation adding value to local native products, with emerging trends of producer organisations’ (PO) and CSOs organising for marketing through territorial networks. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. The [Sustainable food system framework initiative](https://ec.europa.eu/food/system/files/2022-02/f2f_legis_iia_fsfs_5902055.pdf), as a part of the EU Farm to Fork Strategy, puts forward important proposals to adjust market failures in the EU, and level the playing field for agroecological produce in the EU common market. This includes a proposal for a sustainable food labelling framework, different incentives for sustainable food producers, addressing imperfect competition, minimum mandatory criteria for sustainable food procurement in schools and public institutions, inter alia. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. These activities can be inspired by the [EU food quality schemes](https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/farming/geographical-indications-and-quality-schemes/geographical-indications-and-quality-schemes-explained_en), and develop mechanisms for those schemes to better capture the co-benefits of agroecology. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. The main goal of this action is to drive a transition towards resilient, productive and sustainable agroecological food systems through farmer-led innovation and research. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. In the 2022 IFAD “[Stocktaking of Farmer Field Schools: Collective action, self-organization, and the role of farmers’ organizations in scaling up and institutionalizing FFS](https://www.ifad.org/en/web/knowledge/-/stocktaking-of-farmer-field-schools)”, it is showed that FFS approach helped small-scale farmers to engage in collective action and become more autonomous in responding to the problems they face. This assessment is also highlighting the role and importance of farmers’ organisations (FO) and their apex organisations in these processes, and how they can help scale up FFS and ensure their sustainability and institutionalisation. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. In LAC, FOs engaged in agroecology transition have been fostering a network of agroecology promoters and “agroecological farmers’ multiplicators”. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Whenever possible, FOs from FO4ACP will be involved in this process. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)