DECEMBER 2025

TAP NEWSLETTER

TAP SECRETARIAT & FAO-LED INITIATIVES

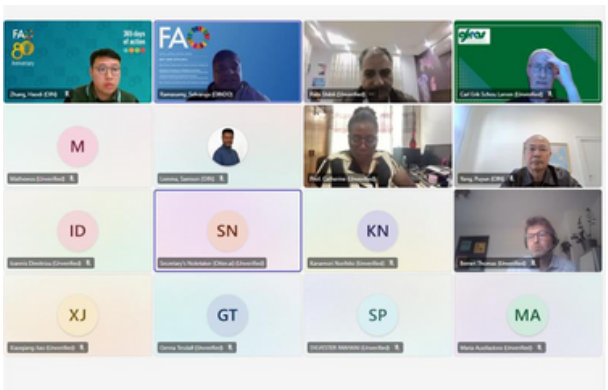
TAP Steering Committee Convenes to Advance Strategic Priorities and Strengthen Last-Mile Innovation Delivery

The Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) Steering Committee convened virtually on 14 November 2025, bringing together Steering Committee members, observers, and invited experts to review progress, discuss strategic priorities, and advance implementation of the TAP Roadmap 2025–2030. The meeting was chaired by Dr Abdou Tenkouano (icipe), TAP Chair, and facilitated by the TAP Secretariat at FAO.

In his opening remarks, the Chair noted that the meeting took place at an important moment for TAP, as the partnership transitions towards the implementation phase of the Roadmap 2025–2030. He acknowledged the continued engagement of TAP members and partners, and commended the Secretariat for sustaining momentum across governance, communication, and capacity development activities, including recent TAP newsletters and regional engagements.

A central feature of the meeting was a thematic spotlight on “Reaching the last mile: what works to get innovation into farmers’ hands”, which examined practical approaches to translating research and innovation into locally adopted solutions. The session featured presentations from Xiaoqiang Jiao (China Agricultural University) and Sylvester Panyani (China Agricultural University) on the Science and Technology Backyard (STB) approach and its application in Malawi, highlighting how embedding researchers and students within farming communities can strengthen co-creation, locally tailored solutions, and trust-based uptake. Puyun Yang (FAO) further reflected on alignment between the STB/MAIP approaches and FAO’s Science and Innovation Strategy and TAP-AIS objectives, including ongoing collaboration and capacity development efforts in Africa.

A second thematic spotlight focused on the role of professional associations in strengthening national agricultural extension and advisory services (EAS). Catherine Msuya (Tanzania Society of Agricultural Education and Extension) and Mathewos Belissa (Ethiopian Society of Rural Development and Agricultural Extension) shared experiences on how professional associations contribute to policy dialogue, capacity development, professional recognition, and service quality. The discussion underscored the importance of institutional support, accreditation mechanisms, and sustained investment to enable these associations to play a stronger role within pluralistic extension systems.



Participants during the TAP Steering Committee virtual meeting held on 14 November 2025.© TAP Secretariat

The Steering Committee also received an update on the TAP Roadmap 2025–2030, presented by Selvaraju Ramasamy (Head, TAP Secretariat, FAO). He highlighted the extensive consultative process underpinning the Roadmap and its phased implementation approach centred on inclusive innovation, multi-stakeholder collaboration, and resilience. Members discussed TAP's evolving role as a partner-driven global platform, emphasising shared ownership, alignment with regional and global frameworks, and continued efforts to mobilise resources and partnerships.

The meeting concluded with updates from TAP members across regions, reflecting active engagement in agroecology, capacity development, and regional collaboration. In closing, the Chair reaffirmed TAP's commitment to supporting partners in translating innovation into tangible benefits for farmers, and encouraged continued coordination as TAP moves forward with the first Action Plan under the Roadmap.

Presentation of the TAP Roadmap 2026–2030 during the TAP Steering Committee meeting, highlighting lessons learned and the transition from vision to action.© TAP Secretariat

Building Capacity of Youth Agripreneurs and Extension Actors, Kenya

FAO, through the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP), supported a five-day training workshop on integrated agricultural extension and advisory services (EAS) for youth agripreneurs in Nairobi, Kenya, from 22 to 26 September 2025. The training brought together 30 youth agripreneurs and was jointly organized by FAO, the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), the Kenya Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (KeFAAS), and China Agricultural University.

The workshop was designed to address key capacity gaps identified among youth agripreneurs, including integrated extension methodologies, agribusiness development, stakeholder engagement, digital advisory services, and monitoring and evaluation for social and business impact. The overall programme was moderated by Samson Eshetu Lemma (FAO Office of Innovation), who also facilitated sessions on integrated, systemic and pluralistic EAS approaches, as well as functional and socio-emotional capacities required for effective service delivery.

Puyun Yang (FAO Office of Innovation) led training sessions on innovative extension and advisory service models, with a particular focus on Multi-Actor Innovation Platforms (MAIP), Science and Technology Backyards (STB), and digital EAS solutions. Drawing on FAO's experience and South–South cooperation, the sessions highlighted how co-innovation platforms can link youth agripreneurs, extension agents, researchers and farmers to jointly develop locally relevant solutions and strengthen last-mile service delivery.

The training combined classroom sessions, interactive group work and a field visit to a joint agricultural training centre in Murang'a County, where participants observed practical applications of village-based advisory services, digital connectors and MAIP/STB approaches. Participants also developed individual action plans to apply the acquired knowledge within their own agribusinesses and advisory activities.

The workshop concluded by reaffirming FAO's commitment to supporting youth-led innovation, strengthening extension systems, and fostering partnerships among public institutions, farmer organizations and private actors to advance inclusive and sustainable agrifood systems in Kenya.

Participants of the training workshop on integrated agricultural extension and advisory services for youth agripreneurs, held in Nairobi, Kenya, in September 2025.
© FAO / TAP Secretariat

Strengthening University's capacity through the FAO TAP AIS e-Learning Course, Uganda

A joint seminar on strengthening university capacity through the FAO TAP AIS e-Learning Course was held at Makerere University, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES), Kampala, on 27 November 2025, with support from FAO through the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP). The seminar convened faculty members, postgraduate students and representatives from FAO, the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) and Uganda Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (UFAAS) to advance the integration of Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS) concepts into higher education.

The seminar aimed to strengthen Makerere University's faculty and postgraduate programmes through the integration of the FAO TAP-AIS e-learning course and other FAO e-learning resources into agricultural extension and innovation-related curricula. Samson Eshetu Lemma (FAO Office of Innovation) moderated the seminar and demonstrated the TAP-AIS module within the FAO e-Learning Academy. According to Ms. Costanza Mattia, Capacity Development Specialist at FAO, the Academy is designed to provide free, flexible and certified learning resources that support inclusive capacity development and enable institutions to strengthen teaching and learning at scale.

Participants during the joint seminar on strengthening university capacity through the FAO TAP AIS e-Learning Course at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda, in November 2025.
© Makerere University

In his remarks, Selvaraju Ramasamy (Senior Agricultural Officer, FAO) highlighted the shift from linear technology transfer to AIS approaches and encouraged universities to embed AIS principles in curricula. Makerere University representatives emphasized institutionalization and partnerships, while AFAAS and UFAAS underscored the need to prepare the next generation of extension professionals with systems thinking, digital skills and collaborative competencies.

REGIONAL HIGHLIGHTS – TAP PARTNERS IN ACTION

Africa

Empowering Ghana to Combat Fall Armyworm: Training Facilitators to Build Resilient Farming Communities

Fall armyworm (FAW), Spodoptera frugiperda, is a destructive pest affecting maize and more than 80 other crops, including rice, sorghum, millet, cotton and vegetables. Since its first detection in West Africa in 2016, FAW has spread rapidly, posing a serious threat to food security and the livelihoods of smallholder farmers. Effective management therefore requires timely information, practical skills and sustained advisory support.

In Ghana, FAO—through its South–South Cooperation Project funded by China's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs—is working with the Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate (PPRSD) to strengthen FAW monitoring, early warning and sustainable management practices. As part of this collaboration, an intensive two-week training of facilitators was organized by FAO's Plant Production and Protection Division (NSP) for 39 facilitators from 14 regions, held from 23 April to 2 May 2025 in Kumasi.

The training, conducted by Max Olupot, combined classroom sessions with hands-on fieldwork at Kwadaso Research Station. Participants built practical skills in Agro-Ecosystem Analysis (AESA), Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and the use of the Fall Armyworm Monitoring and Early Warning System (FAMEWS). The programme also strengthened capacities in pest surveillance, severity assessment, facilitation and decision-making, while introducing relevant courses from the FAO e-Learning Academy for continued learning.

By the end of the programme, participants—staff from PPRSD and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture—were equipped to serve as Farmer Field School facilitators supporting sustainable FAW management. An active community of practice was established to sustain peer learning and knowledge exchange, reinforcing national efforts to protect crops and build resilient farming communities in Ghana.

By Maged Elkahky (FAO, NSP), Max Olupot (FFS Master Trainer / Consultant), Qingpo Yang (FAO, NSPD), Jean Rwaburindi (FAO, NSPD)

Facilitators conducting field-based Agro-Ecosystem Analysis (AESA) exercises during the Fall Armyworm training programme in Ghana.
© FAO / Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate (PPRSD), Ghana

Participants presenting and discussing pest management and ecosystem observations during a classroom session of the facilitator training in Kumasi, Ghana.
© FAO / Plant Protection and Regulatory Services Directorate (PPRSD), Ghana

KCOA-YPARD

Meet the WYNA Fellows: Youth Driving Agroecological Transformation in Africa

The Building Women & Youth-led Network Alliances for Agroecology and Organic Agriculture (WYNA) Programme, supported by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and implemented in partnership with Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD), Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture and Agroecology (KCOA), Participatory Ecological Land Use Management Kenya (PELUM Kenya) and AGSN, is set to officially launch in September 2025. The programme aims to strengthen women- and youth-led networks across Africa by fostering collaboration, capacity development and leadership in agroecology and organic agriculture.

As part of the programme's initial activities, six young professionals were selected from over 500 applicants across the continent to participate in the Community Solutions Fellowship/Internship. The selected WYNA Fellows—Anyama Henry, Nabwire Bridget, Harriet Amondi, Gitau Irene Wanjiku, Ezefor Goodness Ifunanya, and Tabe Brandon Njume—are advancing agroecology through community-based initiatives that promote sustainable, inclusive and climate-resilient agrifood systems.

Building on the KCOA network, the WYNA Programme focuses on strengthening alliances among existing women- and youth-led platforms, supporting peer learning, entrepreneurship, leadership development and access to green jobs. By prioritizing co-creation, storytelling and cross-network collaboration, the programme seeks to contribute to resilient food systems and meaningful youth engagement across Africa.

The six WYNA Fellows selected under the Building Women & Youth-led Network Alliances for Agroecology and Organic Agriculture (WYNA) Programme, implemented by YPARD in partnership with KCOA, PELUM Kenya and AGSN, with support from GIZ.
© YPARD / GIZ

Latin America & Caribbean

RELASER

Farmer-made Videos Boost Agroecology in Latin America

Take-home for TAP Readers

In Costa Rica and Ecuador, a group of rural advisory services (RAS) facilitators is learning to tell their own stories of agroecological transition alongside local producers. Through a partnership between Access Agriculture (AA) and the Latin American Network for Rural Advisory Services (RELASER), the AERAS Project (Accelerating Agroecological Transformation via Rural Advisory Services) has launched an initiative to produce locally made videos and technical content for social media platforms.

The initiative aims to bring agroecological knowledge closer to small-scale farmers through materials created by the very people working the land. Using smartphones and affordable equipment, facilitators and farmers are producing videos that share sustainable practices tailored to local contexts. As RELASER representatives explain, these local productions strengthen rural identity, foster community pride, and promote co-learning grounded in real-life experience.

In September 2025, three virtual training sessions were delivered by Access Agriculture experts Kevin Mutonga and Jeff Bentley, with more than 30 participants learning basic filming, editing and scriptwriting skills for agroecology-focused videos. Participants also explored EcoAgtube, a global platform that will host 24 videos produced by AERAS facilitators in Costa Rica and Ecuador.

Participants during a virtual training session on producing farmer-made agroecology videos, organized by RELASER and Access Agriculture under the AERAS project in Latin America.
© RELASER

The initiative concluded with a regional webinar led by RELASER, providing a space to exchange experiences on communicating agroecology through digital platforms and to strengthen collaboration among facilitators across countries. RELASER and its country forums see this initiative as a key step toward scaling agroecology through locally driven knowledge sharing across Latin America.

Asia-Pacific

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION IN SOUTH ASIA (AESA)

AESA & APIRAS Webinar: Exploring Global Opportunities in Agri-Food Extension

AESA and APIRAS organised a webinar on “Exploring Global Opportunities in Agri-Food Extension” on 23 July 2025, to inform the AESA community on opportunities in higher studies and career options in Canada. Featuring speakers from the University of Guelph, the Government of Manitoba, the Government of Bangladesh, and the University of Jaffna, the event provided participants with insights into graduate programmes, scholarships, and professional roles in agri-food systems, while comparing experiences from Canada and South Asia.

The webinar highlighted the importance of strengthening international collaboration and encouraged students and professionals to explore global opportunities in agri-food extension and advisory services.

The recording is available here.

Promotional banner for the AESA and APIRAS webinar on “Higher Studies and Career Opportunities in Agri-food Extension and Advisory in Canada,” held on 23 July 2025.
© AESA / APIRAS

Celebrating 250 Blogs: A Decade of Thought Leadership in Extension and Advisory Services

In October 2025, Agricultural Extension in South Asia (AESA) published its 250th blog. AESA has become a dynamic platform for the extension community to share innovative ideas, challenge outdated paradigms, propose improvements, and engage in policy-relevant discussions that help shape the future of the Extension and Advisory Services (EAS) profession.

Read more here.

AESA marks the publication of its 250th blog (October 2025).
© AESA

APAARI

Regional Workshop on Policy Dialogue for Developing a 3rd Party Laboratory Accreditation Program (ISPM 45)

Date & venue: 18–19 September 2025 | Siem Reap, Cambodia

As part of the STDF-funded project "Strengthening Phytosanitary Compliance to Boost Seed Trade in the Asia Pacific (STDF/PG/755)", APAARI—together with partners including APSA, ISF, CropLife Asia and ASTA—organized a regional policy dialogue workshop on implementing ISPM 45. The workshop convened National Plant Protection Organizations (NPPOs) from Bangladesh, Cambodia, Laos, Nepal, the Philippines and Viet Nam, alongside private sector representatives (FSII/Bayer, East-West Seed, AuSPICA and AR Malik Seeds).

The event translated ISPM 45 into practical national actions, fostering public–private partnerships (PPP) and building capacity for third-party laboratory and inspection accreditation. A key highlight was the launch of the Seed Phyto Portal, a digital platform hosted by the private sector and powered by public-sector data to enhance transparency and facilitate safe seed trade.

Participants developed country-specific roadmaps for ISPM 45 implementation, focusing on enabling legal frameworks, accreditation models and sustainable PPP mechanisms, reinforcing regional collaboration toward harmonized phytosanitary measures and resilient seed trade systems across Asia and the Pacific.

Participants at the APAARI regional policy dialogue workshop on ISPM 45, held in Siem Reap, Cambodia, 18–19 September 2025.
© APAARI

CATAS

CATAS Experts Highlighted at FAO Global Workshop, Supporting Green Development of Tropical Specialty Crops in Nine Countries

From 8 to 10 July 2025, FAO held the inaugural workshop of “Global Action on Green Development of Special Agricultural Products: One Country One Priority Product (OCOP)” at FAO headquarters in Rome, Italy. As a core technical support institution for FAO’s “One Country, One Product” initiative, the Chinese Academy of Tropical Agricultural Sciences (CATAS) dispatched experts from the Tropical Crop Variety and Germplasm Resources Institute, the Spice and Beverage Research Institute, and the Coconut Research Institute. The CATAS team provided full value-chain technical support across seven tropical crops—cassava, banana, avocado, mango, cocoa, jackfruit, and date palm—for project activities in nine countries: the Republic of the Congo (Congo-Brazzaville), Malawi, Tanzania, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Samoa, Trinidad and Tobago, Egypt, and Iraq.

Participants at the inaugural FAO “Global Action on Green Development of Special Agricultural Products: One Country One Priority Product (OCOP)” workshop, held at FAO headquarters in Rome, 8–10 July 2025.
© FAO / OCOP

CATAS experts were highlighted as leading technical providers at the event. Their technologies—such as rapid tissue culture propagation, biological pest control, and advanced processing techniques—drew strong interest from participating countries. Hafez Muminjanov, FAO Global Coordinator for OCOP, noted that more than 60 percent of participating countries are located in tropical regions and emphasized the relevance of CATAS’ experience in value chain development, including for cassava.

FAO recognition of CATAS specialists during the OCOP workshop, Rome, 8–10 July 2025.
© FAO / OCOP

The workshop convened project leaders from 15 demonstration countries across FAO's five regions to discuss the OCOP implementation roadmap. Launched in September 2021, the initiative currently covers 95 countries and supports 56 agricultural products, including high-potential crops such as bananas, cocoa and date palms. China is the largest single donor, contributing USD 5 million through the FAO–China South-South Cooperation Programme. Beth Bechdol, FAO Deputy Director-General, underscored the role of South-South and triangular cooperation in amplifying project impact.

SOUTH ASIA BIOSAFETY PROGRAMME

Federation of Seed Industry of India (FSII) 9th Annual General Meeting and Conference: Lab to Land – Making Seed Business Easier, Faster, and Smarter

The Federation of Seed Industry of India (FSII) convened its 9th Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 26 September 2025 in New Delhi, alongside a high-level Knowledge Day Conference under the theme "Lab to Land: Making Seed Business Easier, Faster, and Smarter." The event brought together regulators, scientists, industry leaders and policy experts to discuss regulatory reform, innovation, and the future of India's seed sector.

A key highlight was the launch of FSII's sectoral report, "Ease of Doing Business in the Indian Seed Industry: Unlocking Growth Through Holistic Policy Reforms." The report emphasizes that India's seed sector is at an important moment where regulatory modernization can help unlock value for farmers, seed companies and the broader agri-innovation ecosystem. It notes that policy inefficiencies—such as delays in licensing, fragmented requirements across jurisdictions and repetitive varietal testing—create operational burdens, particularly for small and medium enterprises.

The report outlines reform directions including a more harmonized licensing framework, digitization of approvals, faster processing timelines, and stronger public–private collaboration. Speakers underscored that an enabling policy environment can accelerate innovation, support the responsible introduction of improved varieties, and strengthen climate resilience and farmer choice.

Discussions also highlighted the need to advance timely pathways for commercializing innovative technologies, including genetically engineered and gene-edited crops with improved traits. Dr. Bhavneet Bajaj and Dr. Vibha Ahuja from the South Asia Biosafety Program participated in the event, contributing to dialogues on biosafety, regulation and innovation.

Access the FSII report.

Group photo of speakers and participants at the Federation of Seed Industry of India (FSII) 9th Annual General Meeting and Conference (26 September 2025).
© South Asia Biosafety Program

JIRCAS

JIRCAS Releases "Technology Catalog Contributing to Production Potential and Sustainability in the Asia-Monsoon Region Ver. 4.0"

Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences (JIRCAS) has released the "Technology Catalog Contributing to Production Potential and Sustainability in the Asia-Monsoon Region Ver. 4.0" on 1 October 2025 on its website. The catalog is designed to support both increased production potential and sustainability across the Asia-Monsoon region.

In Ver. 4.0, JIRCAS updated two technologies (including an expanded method for estimating carbon sequestration through biochar) and added four new technologies, bringing the total to 44. In response to growing interest in high-impact areas such as biochar-related carbon sequestration, JIRCAS has also developed thematic reports that provide additional background, mechanisms, challenges and prospects beyond the individual technology entries. These reports are publicly available as part of the Green Asia Report Series, which supports evidence-based policymaking and promotes sustainable agricultural innovation in the region.

Cover image of the "Technology Catalog Contributing to Production Potential and Sustainability in the Asia-Monsoon Region Ver. 4.0," released by JIRCAS in October 2025.
© JIRCAS

- Read Technology Catalog
- Read Green Asia Report Series

Europe & Global

FIBL

Turning Palm Oil Waste into Value for Smallholder Farmers in the Tropics

Palm oil production often leaves behind large volumes of organic waste—such as empty fruit bunches (EFBs) and palm oil mill effluent (POME)—which can pollute water and soil if left unmanaged. A recent project in Côte d'Ivoire, led by the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), shows how innovative composting techniques can transform these residues into high-quality compost that improves soil fertility, supports smallholder yields, reduces waste, and strengthens more sustainable value chains.

The project, "Valorising Palm Oil Production Residues through Composting," funded by REPIC and Coop Switzerland and implemented with Plantations Modernes de Côte d'Ivoire (PMCI), established a pilot composting site in Kouakoukro (east of Abidjan). The facility produces compost from EFBs and POME, demonstrating how waste upcycling can generate practical benefits for both farmers and the environment.

FiBL also produced three short videos (French, with subtitles) showcasing the work:

- **From waste to resource** – illustrating the application of compost in palm plantations.
- **In the field** – showing how composting effectively recycles palm oil residues at the pilot site.
- **Ensuring quality** – highlighting the role of a field laboratory in guaranteeing compost quality, safety, and performance.

Building on the results, FiBL and PMCI are launching a new phase of collaboration—again supported by REPIC and Coop—to integrate industrial biochar production into the process, with the aim of enhancing soil health, carbon sequestration and overall sustainability.

Palm oil residues accumulated at a mill site in Côte d'Ivoire.
© Thomas Bernet, FiBL

Covered composting infrastructure at the pilot site to protect compost from heavy rain and sunshine.
© Jacques Fuchs, FiBL

Composting machinery processing palm oil residues at the pilot site in Côte d'Ivoire.
© Jacques Fuchs, FiBL

TAP has landed on LinkedIn

We're thrilled to announce that TAP has joined LinkedIn! This move represents our commitment to enhancing our online presence and fostering stronger connections. We invite you to follow our page and join us in this exciting journey. Your support in promoting our LinkedIn page among your network would be greatly appreciated, and we also welcome your contributions directly to our page.

Together, let's engage, network, and collaborate on LinkedIn to better promote agricultural innovation!

TAP on LinkedIn!

https://www.linkedin.com/company/tropical-agriculture-platform-tap

Contact the TAP Secretariat

TAP is a G-20 initiative launched in 2012 to promote agricultural innovation in the tropics. TAP has formed a coalition of more than 50 partners. Its main goal is to strengthen agricultural innovation systems (AIS) in developing countries through coordinated multi-stakeholder interventions.

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From August 2019 to December 2024, the European Commision (EU) supported TAP through the project "Developing capacities in agricultural innovation systems: scaling up the TAP Framework" (TAP-AIS), implemented by FAO.