



2021 Stocktaking Report for the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP)

G20 1st Meeting of Agriculture Deputies, 19-20 April 2021, Italy

Coordinator: TAP Secretariat, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

1. Overview activities before 2020

The Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) is a multi-layer facilitation mechanism comprising 53 global, regional and national partners coming from the G20 and other countries from Africa, Asia, Europe, Northern America and Latin America and representing agricultural research, education and extension, international development and funding agencies. The full list of TAP Partners is available at the following link: <http://www.fao.org/in-action/tropical-agriculture-platform/partners/en/>.

2012-2017: TAP was officially launched by FAO at the first G20 Meeting of Agriculture Chief Scientists (MACS) in September 2012 in Mexico TAP as a G20 initiative to improve efficiency and effectiveness of capacity development programmes and knowledge sharing to strengthen agricultural innovation systems in the tropics and sub-tropics¹. The first TAP Action Plan was developed and approved by the TAP Partners for the period 2014-2017 at the TAP Partners Assembly (PA) in China in September 2013. Based on the review done in 2014, the Common Framework on Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems was developed in 2015 by the TAP Capacity Development Expert Group (CDEG) under the guidance of the Global Task Force (GTF). In 2014, FAO and AGRINATURA developed a proposal for a joint project on Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS) to support the implementation of the TAP Action Plan and piloting of the TAP Common Framework. The project supported capacity development processes in eight tropical countries focusing on specific innovation partnerships, thus complementing the strengthening of global, regional and national innovation mechanisms with concrete interventions in specific national value chains. The pilot countries included in this project were in Africa (Angola, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, Rwanda); in Asia (Bangladesh, Lao PDR); and in Central America (Guatemala, Honduras). In 2017 TAP Partners supported by the TAP Secretariat developed a draft TAP Action Plan 2018-2021, discussed and amended by SC members and presented to Partners during the fifth TAP PA held in Lao PDR in September 2017.

¹TAP Charter: http://www.tapipedia.org/sites/default/files/tap_pajan2016_ammendedcharter_2016-03-01.pdf



2018-2019: TAP Partners endorsed the new Action Plan 2018 – 2021, which aims at strengthening agricultural innovation capacities in the tropics and sub-tropics. It has a strong focus on improving TAP governance, expanding the political mandate of TAP at all levels, greater involvement and commitment of TAP Partners in all aspects of implementation, financial sustainability and country ownership of the agricultural innovation agenda. TAP developed a Resource Mobilization Strategy aligned with the approved TAP Action Plan (2018-2021). FAO in partnership with other key actors in agricultural innovation, including CGIAR, IFAD, TAP and AGRINATURA organized the [International Symposium on Agricultural Innovation for Family Farmers](#), held in Rome from 21 – 23 November 2018. A new CDAIS project was approved in El Salvador thanks to the financial support provided by the Italian Cooperation for Development Agency. In 2019 The [CDAIS International Forum](#) on strengthening functional capacities in agricultural innovation systems, was organized by FAO and Agrinatura on 13-14 May 2019 in Gembloux, Belgium. In June 2019, FAO and the EU signed the project “Developing capacities in agricultural innovation systems: scaling up the Tropical Agriculture Platform Framework”, in short TAP-AIS. The five years project started in August 2019 and it is implemented in 9 countries. The 6th TAP PA Assembly was held virtually and a new TAP Steering Committee was elected. The TAP CDEG was re-launched and new members were nominated by TAP Partners.

2. Progress since the previous stocktaking exercise (March 2020)

[Based on the TAP Action Plan 2018-2021](#)

Priority 1: Countries better acknowledge the importance of Agricultural Innovation in their national strategic plans

- The EU-funded “Developing capacities in agricultural innovation systems: scaling up the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) Framework” project (TAP-AIS project in short) continues its implementation in nine countries (Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Colombia, Eritrea, Lao PDR, Malawi, Pakistan, Rwanda, and Senegal) and works closely with regional and subregional organizations in Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean,
- At the global level, five issues of the TAP newsletter were prepared and disseminated: September 2019, January 2020, April 2020, July 2020, and October 2020.
- The TAP website continued to be hosted, maintained and updated by FAO (<http://www.fao.org/in-action/tropical-agriculture-platform/en/>).
- FAO in coordination with the TAP CDEG launched an e-discussion for the revision of the TAP Common Framework. The e-discussion took place from October to December 2020.



- The FAO's Research and Extension Unit published in June 2020 a policy brief on "[Enabling agricultural innovation systems to promote appropriate technologies and practices for farmers, rural youth and women during COVID-19](#)", where the TAP and TAPipedia experience is highlighted.

Priority 2: Countries substantially increase investments in the identified strategic priority AI interventions

- FAO together with the Natural Resources Institute (NRI) developed a joint rapid appraisal (JRA) methodology for identifying entry points to facilitate the uptake and integration of TAP tools into regional and sub-regional organizations (AFAAS, FARA, APIRAS, APAARI, IICA, RELASER) strategies and programmes. Following this methodology, joint rapid appraisals were conducted in Latin America, Africa and the Asian Pacific regions supported by the TAP-AIS project.

Priority 3: Countries learn from existing CD for AIS interventions and further develop the Common Framework to improve the coherence, and effectiveness of their CD for AI interventions

- A Transversal Analysis Report was finalized in 2020. It highlights the main outcomes achieved at individual (niche), organizational and enabling environment level, and providing recommendations for updating Common Framework. The report available here: <http://www.fao.org/3/cb1251en/CB1251EN.pdf>
- APAARI promoted the TAP Common Framework for learning and knowledge sharing at the interactive workshop on 'Innovation Strategies for Sustainable Agricultural Development' which was held on 14 June 2019 in Bangkok, Thailand.
- A series of manual and CDAIS project related publication were developed and co-published by Agrinatura and FAO. The publications are available at the following link: <https://cdais.net/publications/>
- The TAP Secretariat submitted the TAP G20 stocktaking report to the Meeting of Agriculture Deputies on 5 and 7 March 2019 in Tokyo, Japan, and shared it with participants of the G20-MACS on 25 and 26 April 2019.
- Agreenium signed an agreement with FAO to promote knowledge in the field of life sciences, including an annual cycle of conferences and debates as from 2020. A MOOC is under development with the support of seven of its members and international institutions on food systems for healthy nutrition.
- APAARI, in partnership with FAO and GCHERA organized a training workshop on "Knowledge



Management and Capacity Development for More Effective Agricultural Innovation Systems (AIS)" from 23 to 25 January 2019 at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) in Coimbatore, India.

- APAARI in collaboration with FAO organized a webinar on "How to make agricultural lectures more interactive for agricultural students". The event took place at the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University on 4 June 2019, targeting over 220 participants from agricultural universities and association in Asia.
- RELASER network under the framework of the project "Delivering Extension Services to the Last-Mile: Improving smallholders' access to innovation and pluralistic, demand-driven extension services" organized two regional workshops (July 2019 in Santiago, Chile and September 2019 in Bogotá, Colombia).
- In October 2019, TAP co-organized with FAO, the DG DEVCO of the European Commission and other partners, a side event at the Committee on World Food Security (CFS 46) entitled "Strengthening Agricultural Innovation Systems for Family Farming: Multi-stakeholder processes to develop capacities to innovate for food and nutrition security". The event focused on innovation as the driving force that can transform food systems and lift family farmers out of poverty to help the world achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
- TAP was represented by the TAP Secretariat at the Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) held in Berlin from 16 to 18 January 2020. A technical panel on "Tropical Agriculture: innovation for inclusive, sustainable and safe value chains" was organized during the GFFA.
- The first G20 MACS meeting under the presidency of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) was held in Dammam, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 17-19 February 2020. During the event, FAO's work on strengthening agricultural innovation systems (including TAP activities) was presented as background information for further discussion by the G20 members. EU's support to TAP was also highlighted during the MACS meeting.
- NRI through a LoA with FAO developed a methodology to conduct a joint rapid appraisal/study for integration and use of TAP tools and approaches on capacity development for AIS by regional research and extension organizations.
- FAO El Salvador continued the capacity development activities under the CD for AIS project (funded by the Italian Government)
- TAPipedia's content and network coverage continued to be expanded. The platform now includes more than 3,500 online resources and 74 member organizations (as of December 2020). The



layout and functionalities of the platform are being improved, as well as the website speed and the visibility.

Priority 4: Countries monitor the progress of their CD for AIS interventions/investments

- An independent final evaluation of the CDAIS project was conducted by the FAO Office of Evaluation in 2019 to assess the relevance of the CDAIS project and its underlying approaches; its contributions under each result area throughout its implementation period (January 2015 to August 2019). The final report is available at the following link: <http://www.fao.org/3/ca9582en/CA9582EN.pdf>
- Two news articles related to the work of the TAP-AIS project, were released on World Food Day (16 October 2020): 1) World Food Day 2020. Innovation in support of small farmers and sustainable food systems http://www.fao.org/research-and-extension/WFD2020-Innovation-in-support-of-small-farmers-sustainable-food_systems/en/ and 2) Celebrating World Food Day: FAO's work on innovation in the context of the Tropical Agriculture Platform <http://www.fao.org/in-action/tropical-agriculture-platform/news/detail/en/c/1314445/>.
- The sixth and seventh TAP Partners Assembly (TAP PA) took place virtually from 11 April to 2 May 2019, and from 16 to 20 November 2020, respectively. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions the TAP PA organized in 2020 was held virtually.
- TAP Steering Committee (SC) met regularly in 2019 and 2020 to provide strategic vision and oversee the progress made on the implementation of the TAP Action Plan. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions all meetings organized in 2020 were held virtually.

3. COVID-19 impacts

The 7th TAP Partners Assembly (PA) and other TAP related meetings (i.e. TAP Steering Committee meetings and CDEG consultations) could not be organized as face-to-face meetings as originally planned due to the restrictions associated to the Covid-19 pandemic. As contingency measures, these meetings were organized virtually.

At country level, inception missions and workshops and overall project activities of the TAP-AIS project have suffered some delays due to the Covid-19 pandemic and related restrictions. The project team developed a contingency plan. In the plan, certain activities were organized virtually or in a mix of virtual and face-to-face meetings. Several virtual trainings have been organized and practical guidelines have



been developed to support country teams in preparation of country project activities.

Knowledge activities to help countries in the context of the Covid-19 crisis include also the publication (in June 2020) of the FAO brief “Enabling agricultural innovation systems to promote appropriate technologies and practices for farmers, rural youth and women during COVID-19”, which promotes the TAP approach and TAPipedia.

4. Workplan for the future

Priority 1: Countries better acknowledge the importance of AI in their national strategic plans

- Assessment of national agricultural innovation systems (AIS) are being conducted in the nine countries of the TAP-AIS project.
- Capacity needs assessment of key organizations of the national AIS will be conducted in the nine countries where the TAP-AIS project is implemented, and the identified needs/gaps will be addressed with capacity development interventions.

Priority 2: Countries substantially increase investments in the identified strategic priority AI interventions

- Regional research and extension organizations (AFAAS, FARA, APIRAS, APAARI, IICA, RELASER) will develop and implement joint action plans for capacity strengthening of selected regional and sub-regional organizations in their respective regions, based on the outcomes of the Joint Rapid Appraisals (JRA) conducted in 2020.

Priority 3: Countries learn from existing CD for AIS interventions and further develop the Common Framework to improve the coherence, and effectiveness of their CD for AI interventions

- With the support of the TAP CDEG and the guidance of the TAP Steering Committee, TAP will revise the TAP Common Framework.
- Specific tools to support capacity needs assessment and capacity strengthening at the three levels will be developed: tools on enabling environment, gender and youth.
- An e-learning course on CD for AIS will be developed in 2021.

Priority 4: Countries monitor the progress of their CD for AIS interventions/investments

- At least four TAP Steering Committee meetings are planned in 2021.
- TAP Partners will initiate the drafting of the third TAP Action Plan covering the period 2022-2025.
- The TAP Secretariat will continuously work to expand the network with new interested partners



who share the TAP mandate and can add value to the platform. A TAP Engagement and Expansion strategy will be developed in 2021.

- An evaluation of the behavioral changes and impact attributed to the application of the TAP Common Framework will be conducted.