



Afghanistan



Bangladesh



Bhutan



India



Maldives



Nepal



Pakistan



Sri Lanka



SAARC Agriculture Centre

INTERNATIONAL
FOOD POLICY
RESEARCH
INSTITUTESAARC
Development Fund

Investing in rural people

Consortium for Scaling Up Climate Smart Agriculture in South Asia (C-SUCSeS)

Background

South Asia is one of the world's most vulnerable regions in terms of climate change impacts. The region is still predominantly an agrarian society, with much of the population dependent on agriculture for their livelihoods, but the sector is at high risk from climate change. Agricultural production is severely constrained by extreme climate events whose frequency has increased in the past few decades. Estimates show that South Asia could lose between 10 and 50 percent of crop production by the end of the century due to global warming. Moreover, South Asia is still home to more than a quarter of the world's hungry and undernourished population. The region will likely need to double its food production to feed a population of up to 2.68 billion people by 2050.

Climate change has thus emerged as a major challenge to farming systems' ability to respond to the increasing demand for food in a sustainable way. Consequently, sustainable intensification of agriculture and climate change adaptation have become inextricably linked agendas. For South Asia, a paradigmatic shift is required in the design of agricultural programs and interventions that couples enhanced resilience with greater efficiency in natural resource use at the farm level, prioritizing farming systems that are most vulnerable to climate change and exposed to natural resource degradation.

Climate change challenges are being tackled locally through nationally supported experimentation with climate-smart technologies and practices. Further development of these technologies and practices is urgently needed, along with catalyzing existing efforts and scaling up proven successes. A major effort is needed to match existing technologies with farmers' needs, market

opportunities, and environmental concerns. Currently, cross-border cooperation among National Agricultural Research and Extension Systems (NARES) in South Asia is constrained by lack of capacity, which precludes access to opportunities.

The SAARC Agricultural Centre (SAC) plays a pivotal role in enhancing regional cooperation as it has an explicit mandate to promote and support regional cooperation among member states of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to foster sustainable and resilient agricultural systems in South Asia.

The 2014 SAARC Summit in Kathmandu agreed on sustainable intensification and climate adaptation of agricultural systems as strategic priorities for cooperation among member states and between the SAARC system and international development partners. The third meeting of the SAARC Agriculture Ministers in April 2016 called for a broader engagement between SAARC and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) on a regional agricultural program. In addition, the SAARC-CGIAR roundtable meeting (August 2017) on Agricultural Research for Development (AR4D) in South Asia identified climate change adaptation as a high-priority area. This has led to the creation of a consortium between SAC and the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) to promote climate-smart agriculture (CSA) in South Asia by catalyzing NARES' national programs through regional cooperation, knowledge-sharing, and scaling-up of innovative solutions and best practices through national programs and policies. Further, the fourth meeting of the SAARC Agriculture Ministers in June 2019 endorsed the project with appreciation.



Building on this, IFAD developed and approved the Consortium for Scaling Up Climate Smart Agriculture in South Asia (C-SUCSeS) grant to SAC, with co-financing from the SAARC Development Fund (SDF), SAC, IFPRI, and the NARES – totaling over US\$3million. The project will foster partnership and cooperation between C-SUCSeS partners, other CGIAR Centers, and SAARC governments around the CSA agenda.

Project Goal and Objectives

Over the four-year (2021–2024) implementation period, the overarching goal of the project is to promote sustainable and resilient agricultural intensification in South Asia through enhanced capacity (policy, institution, skills) to scale up climate-smart strategies and technologies.

The specific objectives include:

- Accelerating the identification of and scaling-up of viable CSA interventions through national policies and programs in South Asia.
- Setting up effective and efficient mechanisms for knowledge-sharing, policy dialogue, and cooperation in R&D programs on CSA among SAARC countries.

Targeted Beneficiaries

The grant activities will directly target 7,500 smallholders, as well as researchers, extension workers, and policymakers in SAARC countries. Of the 7,500 beneficiaries, 1,500 farmers will participate in validation of CSA technologies and practices, and 6,000 farmers will benefit from training, exposure visits, and other knowledge events. Beneficiaries' distribution across farming systems and target countries will be defined in consultation with NARES.

About 50,000 smallholders will indirectly benefit from scaling-up activities and implementation of scaling-up strategies developed under the grant. NARES and relevant government technical agencies will broadly benefit from the project in terms of improved institutional capacity and program development.

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Expected Outcomes and Outputs

The project expects to achieve the following outcomes:

Outcome 1: Best CSA technologies and practices suitable for smallholders, particularly women farmers, identified and scaled up in project countries.

Output 1.1: Report on inventory of CSA technologies and practices.

Output 1.2: Paper and policy brief based on the participatory research on CSA technologies.

Output 1.3: Papers and policy briefs based on benefit-cost analysis of CSA technologies.

Output 1.4: Set of national strategies for project countries for the scaling-up of CSA technologies.

Outcome 2: CSA policies and strategies mainstreamed in national agricultural development strategies with appropriate institutional arrangements.

Output 2.1: Papers outlining policy and institutional constraints to the adoption of the selected CSA technologies.

Output 2.2: Strategy paper on how to promote regional cooperation for promotion of CSA.

Output 2.3: One policy roundtable and one high-level policy forum on CSA.

Outcome 3: Enhanced capacities of national staffs and smallholder farmers on CSA technologies and sustainable and resilient agricultural intensification.

Output 3.1: A well-functioning community of practice on CSA.

Output 3.2: Training materials developed on CSA technologies and practices.

Output 3.3: Enhanced knowledge and learning of stakeholders on CSA technologies.

Output 3.4: Innovative knowledge-sharing approaches developed and pilot tested.

Outcome 4: Enhanced SAC-led regional cooperation program on CSA in the SAARC region.

Output 4.1: Well-functioning Project Coordination Unit (PCU) set up and trained at SAC.

Output 4.2: Timely preparation and submission of progress reports and coordination of project activities.

