

SEEDSGROW

FINAL REPORT

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OXFAM

to (Local
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[signed]

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Cover: Tulsi Deuba, 27, from Matela, in the Ganaypdhura Rural Municipality in Dadheldhura, Nepal, served as facilitator at the local Farmer's Field School working in the varietal selection process for soyabean.

Photo: Prasiit Sthapit

Page 39: Local seeds in an Ugandan seed bank. Photo: ESAFF

Back cover: Logo of Oxfam Novib's GREEN goal unit

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	Access and Benefit-Sharing mechanism
BtBP	Behind the Barcodes/Price campaign
CBD	UN Convention on Biological Diversity
CCRP	Collaborative Crop Research Program, McKnight Foundation
CIRAD	French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development
CGIAR	Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers
COP15	Fifteenth meeting of the CBD Conference of the Parties, Kunming
COP26	UN Climate Change Conference, Glasgow
CSBs	Community Seed Banks
CSOs	Civil society organizations
DFIs	Development finance institutions
ESG	Environmental, Social and (Corporate) Governance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFS	Farmer Field School
FMO	Dutch Entrepreneurial Development Bank
FPIC	Free, prior and informed consent
FSE	Farmer Seed Enterprise
GALS	Gender Action Learning Systems
GB9	9 th meeting of the Governing Body of International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
GMOs	Genetically modified organisms
HRDD	Human Rights Due Diligence
HRIAs	Human Rights Impact Assessments
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFI	International financial institutes
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPSHF	Indigenous peoples and smallholder farmers
LAPA	Local Action Plans for Adaptation
MEAL	Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning
NARS	National Agricultural Research System
NDCs	National Determined Contributions
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NUS	Neglected and Underutilized Species
PMU	Project Management Units
PPB	Participatory Plant Breeding
SD=HS	Sowing Diversity=Harvesting Security
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
S-PGG	Sida Programme Governance Group
SPM	Seed production and marketing
TOT	Training of Trainers
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNGP	United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
UPOV	International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants
WROs	Women's Rights Organizations

MESSAGE FROM THE PROGRAMS DIRECTOR

During the past three decades we have often heard that, throughout the world, extreme poverty has reduced significantly, that more women go to school and have more opportunities, and that billions of people are standing up to injustice. Things have been different during the past five years. The COVID-19 pandemic had a devastating effect, with millions of deaths, the collapse of the national health systems, and laying bare the inequalities of the global economic system. At the same time, people all over the world experienced irregular rains and floods, drought, and higher temperatures, as the effect of climate change becomes ever more defining of people's lives, especially in more vulnerable communities. The hunger crisis has exacerbated in recent years, and uncertainty of future livelihoods is increasing. The spaces and possibilities for civil society to make its voices heard have reduced significantly, and we have seen war coming back to Europe and the Middle East, with enormous negative consequences for our collective capacity to act in coordination and solidarity to address these complex, global issues.

We need to scale our actions to the size of the problem. SeedsGROW has been an invaluable force in combining advocacy to change unequal, unsustainable food system with showing what the alternative can be. It has done this by establishing a network of change-makers in the communities, in organizations and institutions and in global fora. We recognize and acknowledge the important role played by many organizations and by countless individuals. During these difficult years, there were thousands of small-scale farmers, traders, researchers, extension agents, students and activists who were willing and eager to speak up, join broader efforts, collaborate with others, test new ways of working and share lessons and insights – and show that, in spite of the enormous difficulties, it is possible to move towards a global food system that is just and sustainable, that supports the rights of small scale food producers, that guarantees food and nutrition security and that promotes the sustainable management of the world's natural resources and biodiversity.

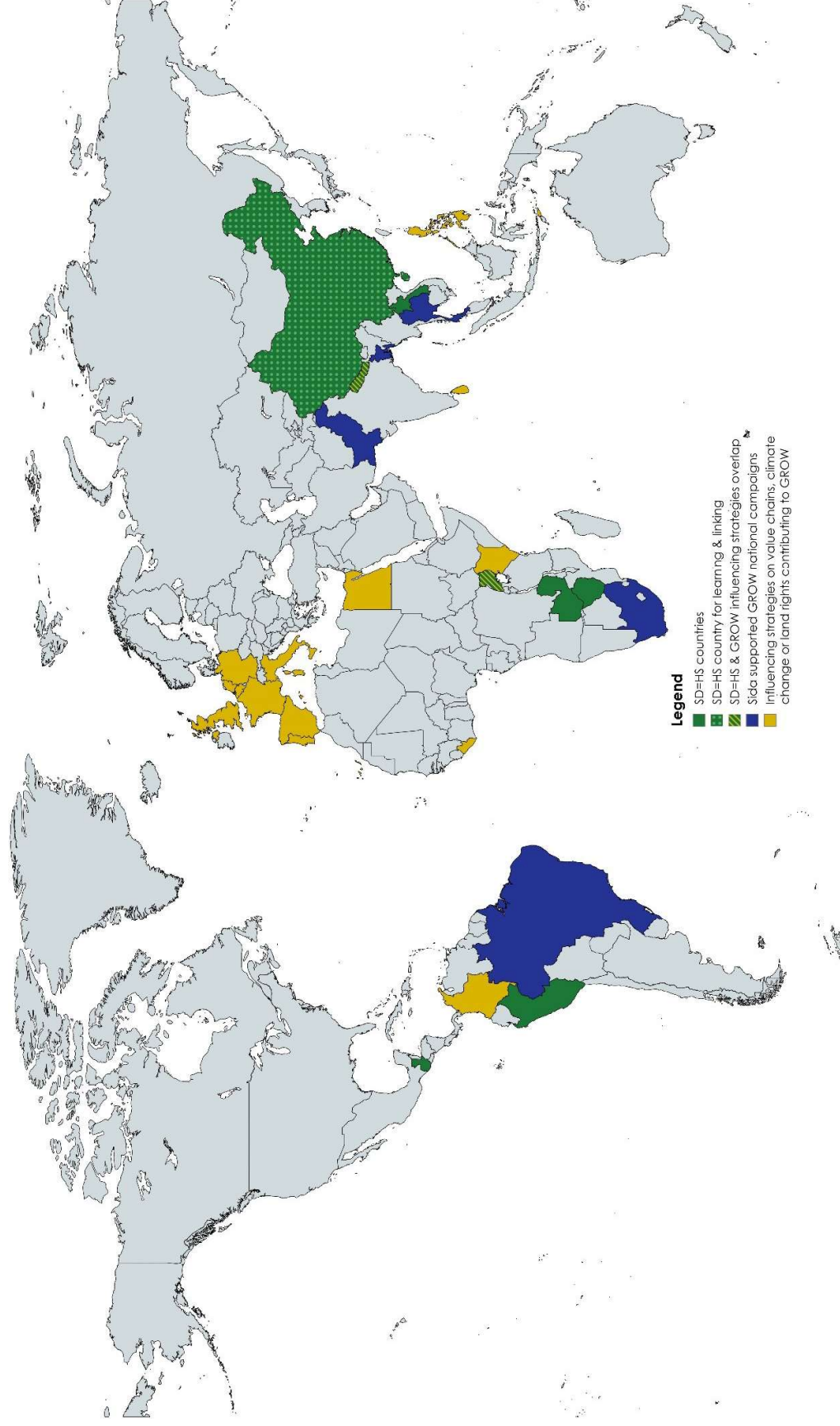
Oxfam Novib is grateful to Sida for the crucial support throughout the years, and we look very much forward to our continued collaboration as we endeavor on a new and exciting program- Cultivating Change in a Warming World. Finally, Oxfam Novib would like to express its appreciation and solidarity with all those with whom it worked, and is proud of all the results we achieved together as part of the SeedsGROW programme. With this report we want to say thank you, hoping it also inspires others to join similar efforts.



Pepijn Gerrits

Programs Director, Oxfam Novib
Chair of the SeedsGROW Programme Governance Group

GLOBAL OUTREACH



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This SeedsGROW Final Report provides a comprehensive overview of the SeedsGROW programme's achievements, lessons, and future direction as implemented by Oxfam in close collaboration with a diverse and inspirational network of partners and allies at a local, national and global level. The report highlights the programme's multifaceted efforts to address global food security, seed diversity, climate resilience, and equitable food systems over the past five years.

The programme was divided into two primary components: SEEDS and GROW. The SEEDS component focused on enhancing farmers' crop diversity management, developing farmer seed enterprises, improving nutrition through local food plants, and fostering an enabling policy environment. The GROW component aimed to influence global private sector actors, financial institutions and multilateral organizations to create more equitable and sustainable food systems.

SEEDS, also known as Sowing Diversity=Harvesting Security (SD=HS), made significant strides in strengthening farmer-managed seed systems. Its key achievements include the establishment of 982 Farmer Field Schools (FFSs), reaching over 38,000 farmers – with an average of 60% women participation. These schools have facilitated the development of climate-resilient crop varieties through participatory plant breeding (PPB) processes. Just as an example, farmers in Zambia created and released a new sorghum variety in record time, demonstrating the effectiveness of a community-led breeding programme. Additionally, the programme supported many different Community Seed Banks (CSBs), all of which have played a crucial role in conserving and distributing local seed varieties, especially after climate disasters. The integration of traditional crops and new agricultural skills has led to increased food security and dietary diversity among the participating communities. The programme's emphasis on gender equality and youth engagement has empowered women and young farmers, fostering social cohesion and community resilience. There are few programmes that have been so holistic in their design and application, bolstering inter-generational connections, gender equality and livelihoods. In the same line, the MTR stated that the TOC of the programme was faultless.

The GROW component has been equally impactful, focusing on global advocacy and policy influence. The programme's campaigns reached millions worldwide, advocating for fairer food systems and corporate accountability. Significant commitments were secured from key retailers and food companies, including adherence to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the adoption of gender-sensitive policies. In the realm of financial institutions, the Sida2GROW project achieved increased transparency and accountability among international financial institutions (IFIs), particularly the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Dutch development bank FMO. These institutions have now adopted mandatory disclosure policies for high-risk projects, enhancing their accountability.

Climate finance advocacy was another critical area of focus. Persistent efforts led to the establishment of a Loss and Damage Fund at COP27, with further commitments at COP28 to transition away from fossil fuels. Public campaigns, including climate caravans and petitions, successfully amplified global attention on climate justice and inequality and gave way to a self-organizing network of civil society and activists. Gender and youth integration was a central theme, with initiatives aimed at addressing gender disparities and empowering women within rural labor unions and community structures. Research like "Coffee Stain" and "Sweet Fruits Bitter Lives" brought attention to gender pay disparities, leading to advocacy for gender-sensitive policies.

Overall, SeedsGROW has been a hallmark programme for Oxfam, spearheading a new narrative, offering sound, tested solutions, and establishing an engaged, world-wide activist network of farmers, civil society, and the public towards global food security, climate resilience, and equitable food systems. Through collaborative and inclusive approaches, influencing public and private policies, strengthening community seed systems, and investing in networks and alliances, the programme has set a strong foundation for sustainability and future efforts in these critical areas.

CONTEXTUAL CHANGES

The world has become increasingly aware of climate change in the past five years, with more frequent and severe weather events, including wildfires, hurricanes, droughts and floods. The political and scientific consensus has solidified around the urgent need for substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, acknowledging a healthy environment as a human right ([UN Resolution, 2022](#)). The importance of preserving biodiversity in order to meet the Paris Agreement's goal of limiting global warming to well below 2 °C. COP27 ended with an agreement to provide [loss and damage](#) funding to the countries hit by climate disasters and COP28 provided funding.. In parallel, the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) concluded with a “historic” deal to protect a third of the world’s biodiversity in 2022¹ which, if implemented, could signal major changes to farming, business supply chains and the role of Indigenous communities in conservation. These are all breakthrough steps, even if far from sufficient.

Although we see a growing consensus in policies, the political will to implement the needed measures has lagged far behind what is required. A multitude of other crises accumulated in the last five years, from the war in Ukraine to the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated deep socio-economic inequalities and highlighted the vulnerabilities and injustice of the global economic system. This, in turn, has increased domestic pressures on governments and weakened collective action on the climate. We are witnessing a spike in nationalist and protectionist responses, including larger budgets for defense and energy sovereignty, radical migration policies, and the reduction or reallocation of foreign aid.

Growing inequalities

Least developed countries have been disproportionately impacted by the [further disruption of global food supply chains](#). While food systems were already hit by the COVID-19 pandemic and the effects of climate change, the consequences have shown in increased malnutrition to economic insecurity, gender-based violence and population displacement. The 2023 edition of FAO’s [The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World](#) reveals that between 691 and 783 million people faced hunger in 2022. This represents an increase of 122 million people compared to 2019, and the situation is expected to worsen further. This at a time when, between 2020 and 2022, the world’s most affluent 1% of the population captured nearly twice as much of the global wealth created as did the other 99% put together², and, on average, each one of the richest 1% of the people in the world contributes 100 times more in terms of emissions as the average person in the poorest half of the population³. Such inequalities have far-reaching consequences, hindering the achievement of a just and inclusive society. But the flaws of our economic system go beyond wealth disparities. Extractive capitalism perpetuates unsustainable practices, leading to environmental degradation, climate change, and biodiversity loss. Data from the [Global Footprint Network](#) highlights that our current economic activities require 1.7 planets, underscoring the urgency to behave and act differently.

The food system is a glaring example of the confluence of inequality and ecological breakdown. The approach of maximizing agricultural productivity and economic efficiency has resulted in food production models that require lands to be used for monocultures, are heavily reliant on chemical inputs, result in deforestation and water depletion, and contribute enormously to climate change. In numbers, 80% of the production of food is powered by fossil fuels; the food system is responsible for over one-third of the global greenhouse gas emissions, and it is the primary driver of biodiversity loss. It is a cause of human rights violations as well. In 2022 alone, Global Witness recorded that 170 land and environmental defenders were killed, following 200 in 2021. These are linked to resource exploitation, such as logging,

¹ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/12/1131837>

² Oxfam, 2023. Survival of the richest: How we must tax the super-rich now to fight inequality. Oxfam Briefing paper: <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/survival-of-the-richest-how-we-must-tax-the-super-rich-now-to-fight-inequality-621477/>

³ Oxfam, 2023. Climate Equality: A planet for the 99%. Campaign report, Oxfam Policy & Practice: <https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/climate-equality-a-planet-for-the-99-621551/>

mining and large-scale agribusiness, plus hydroelectric dams and other infrastructure initiatives. Out of these killings, 50 victims were small-scale farmers, showing how the relentless commodification and privatization of land for industrial agriculture is putting these farmers increasingly at risk, as land deals ignore local tenure rights. Small-scale food production, on which most of the world's rural poor depend, is threatened by large-scale plantations, export-led agriculture, the corporate capture of seeds and input markets, and the production of commodities over food. The chemicals used in the form of pesticides, oil-based chemicals and plastics, are some of the greatest threats to humans and nature. These are now found in every liter of rainwater everywhere on the planet⁴.

“Global food systems are broken - and billions of people are paying the price”

Antonio Guterres at the UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment in Italy, July 2023

Oxfam's [latest inequality report](#) draws attention to the persistent disparities seen in the food systems, primarily stemming from the concentration of power and wealth in the hands of a select group of corporations. In the last three years, as people all over the world struggled with hunger and ever-rising costs, the profits of the five biggest traders in agricultural commodities tripled compared to the years before. Together, ADM, Bunge, Cargill, COFCO and Louis Dreyfuss Company (ABCCD) hold a monopoly position on the global market for staples like grain, corn, soy and sugar. This enables them to influence prices and costs, which resulted in their excessive profits (and also fueled inflation)⁵. Notably, a trend towards increased market concentration is evident in the agricultural seed sector as well, where the ownership of the global seed market has dramatically consolidated, with two companies owning more than 40% of the global market.

While corporate power and monopoly are among the root causes of inequality and ecological breakdown, what is most alarming is that these firms have enormous bargaining power to shape the global food landscape, as well as energy, finance and climate action, influencing government policies and regulations. This limits our ability to address pressing global challenges. Even the most important summit on Earth, the Conference of Parties (COP), is treated like a trade fair. A [record number of fossil fuel representatives](#) attended last year's COP28 climate talks, promoting carbon capture and storage, hydrogen power and carbon offsets as viable climate solutions. Greenwashing and “solutions” that aim to preserve their business models, have infiltrated policy, global measurements and finance allocation.

An alternative is possible

On the other hand, the last five years have also witnessed a growing push from academia, scientists, politicians and activists, all of them interested in revisiting our economic system. They are challenging the profit-driven paradigms and calling for a transition to regenerative economies, sufficiency, and equitable wealth distribution. As the [President of Ireland stated in 2023](#): “That narrow focus constitutes an empty economics which has lost touch with everything meaningful, a social science which no longer is connected, or even attempts to be connected, with the social issues and objectives for which it was developed. It is incapable of offering solutions to glaring inadequacies of provision as to public needs, devoid of vision”.

SeedsGROW has offered in the last five years a unique platform to those most affected by these inequalities to shape and speak out for the change needed. Through a combination of on the ground climate resilient models, solutions with local communities and advocacy and campaigning for a global system that enables and fosters these models, we have been able to showcase that an alternative is possible.

⁴ <https://www.euronews.com/green/2022/08/04/rainwater-everywhere-on-earth-unsafe-to-drink-due-to-forever-chemicals-study-finds>

⁵ Hietland, M. / SOMO, 2024. Hungry for profits: Monopoly power in global agriculture. Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO), Amsterdam: <https://www.somo.nl/hungry-for-profits/>

SOWING DIVERSITY = HARVESTING SECURITY

The completion of the second phase of SD=HS also marks the closing of a way of working, and the beginning of a new one, as part of broader and stronger alliances. As the largest programme in the world centered around participatory plant breeding, SD=HS provided Oxfam and its partners the luxury of a secluded “seeds universe” with the budget to bring many actors together and the space for joint experimentation. Over the course of the last few years, different methods, tools and models were tried, tested and refined, and reapplied in new settings and new countries.

In that universe, remarkable things happened to make farmer-managed seeds systems stronger and more diverse, and thus strengthen food security. Zambian farmers and plant breeders created and released a new sorghum variety in four years, a record by any standard. Several governments adopted ways of working with farmers, securing agricultural biodiversity introduced to them by the programme. They also formally recognized, or else considered, critical components of the seed systems that had always been dismissed as “informal” and often deemed

illegal: the seeds of so-called farmer varieties and the roles of farmers in seed production. In the space created by these changing policies and with the skills gained in their farmer field schools, farmer groups in all programme countries now earn incomes from selling seeds of their most important crops, crops often left unaddressed by the commercial and formal sector. And finally, complementing the dietary role of these staple crops are the myriad local food crops. Learning about these indigenous crops, unravelling the stigma surrounding their use, and cooking them in novel ways has demonstrably reduced hunger and enriched dinner tables. To varying degrees, these changes and the ways of working have become part of the DNA of formal and non-governmental institutions in the countries where SD=HS worked. While more work is needed in many cases, we are confident the changes seen in the countries where SD=HS worked will last and begin a life of their own.

During two long years, the COVID-19 pandemic made the world grind to a halt. But it also laid bare some of the limitations in a regular training approach: we saw the critical role that skilled facilitators play to ensure the success of Farmer Field Schools and the need for adequate training and support by partner organizations and Oxfam Novib. Despite creativity and resolve, that chain faltered. And yet, virtually without exception, all the Farmer Field Schools persisted. Fields were planted and results analyzed and shared. From the inception of this programme, we made Farmer Field Schools central to our approach for their emphasis on the resourcefulness and dignity of farmers. They offer a space for collaborative learning, creation and organization in a process that could remain exclusively technical if approached differently. The strength of these groups, during and after the pandemic, reaffirmed the wisdom of this



Clea Ramírez López sowing corn seeds in Los Ramírez, Todos Santos Cuchumatanes, Guatemala. Photo: Carlos Zaparolli

choice. There were small marvels in each country. Within their groups, Nepalese women overcame caste divisions and confronted cases of domestic abuse. In another example, Ugandan farmers asserted their right to a good night's sleep by investing in mattresses with the proceeds from their first seed sales.

Halfway through the phase that started in 2019, the Mid Term Review provided time for reflection. While affirming the deep impact the work has had on the lives of farmers and the people working with them, it called for more efforts to be dedicated to, among others, decentralization, integrating the different work pillars, the analysis of the data collected and sharing of findings, and more efforts for transforming gender roles. At the same time, it became apparent that beyond the boundaries of our programme, there were changes going on in the agricultural research and development fields that were not going our way – with farmers increasingly seen as mere end-users of a commercial product (seed) developed by a research centre and delivered by agribusinesses. So as the programme looked inside to address the points raised in the Mid Term Review, we also reached out, through several global workshops, to farmer organizations, research institutes, donors and the CGIAR institutes to exchange, influence and form new alliances. These parallel processes shaped the way in which we have reimagined our future work.

The core threads that formed SD=HS persist in all plans but also expand into new areas of work. They are complemented by the expertise and networks of new partners:

- In our collaboration with PELUM Uganda and CIRAD in sub-Saharan Africa under the “Rooted in Diversity” project, we leverage our collective experience with formal sector researchers and the expansive reach of farmer organizations. This initiative is uniquely decentralized and marks the first NORAD-funded project led by a southern organization;
- In West Africa, alongside research centres such as CIMMYT and ICRISAT, our efforts extend to humanitarian contexts, with a focus of ensuring seed aid builds on and strengthens rather than displaces local seed systems; and
- Within the “Cultivating Change” programme, where we seek to integrate the foundational themes of SD=HS into Oxfam Novib’s broader influencing mechanisms. A key element in Cultivating Change is the continuation of our community-based work and utilize the insights and inspiration drawn from it to inform Oxfam’s global efforts to advocate for better rights and policies for smallholder farmers.

Amidst an increasingly decentralized programme, the challenge will lie in maintaining cohesion and bringing together experiences and insights in a manner that continues to have influence and impact.

“This project brings us invaluable opportunities for our farmers to put more food on the table and generate more incomes. From now on I will help other farmers with what I have learned, so they can push it further. Especially our Saphad 1 [developed by the FFS] rice and other vegetable seeds”

Gongchai Sithichak, member of the Farmer Field School in the Saphad village, Vapi district, Laos

OUR RESULTS



OUTCOME 1: FARMERS CROP DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

The SD=HS plant breeding efforts have shown results in terms of the genetic diversity introduced and/or improved, but also in terms of empowerment. Between 2019-2023, the data shared by the different country teams showed that thousands of farmers were able to join the different FFSs and participate in all activities and decisions. They all reported having learned new ideas about plant breeding, developed new agricultural skills, and gained confidence. The consumption of traditional crops and/or varieties, threatened by climate change and socio-economic changes, started increasing again as a result of the greater awareness and skills developed. From an agronomic perspective, the introduced or improved varieties have helped meet the breeding objectives set by the farmers themselves: climate resilience and yield were important areas of improvement, but taste/nutrition, or post-harvest processing capabilities, were also improved, testifying for the capability of PPB to cater for small holders' naturally multifunctional needs.

Training and evaluations

There were a total of 982 PPB farmer field schools established between 2019 and 2023, reaching over 38,000 farmers –with an average of 60% of them being women. While there were differences among countries in the starting number of FFSs as well as in the progress made, the general tendency was to have a larger number of FFSs every year.

As a precondition, the capacity building efforts also steadily continued, with numerous workshops and (refresher) training sessions. Some of these had to be conducted online as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions, but resumed in person as soon as this was possible. More than 800 master trainers and facilitators were trained in these five years, showing a similar ratio: 60% of them were women. The dissemination of the results occurred throughout the years in both a spontaneous manner (conversations and exchanges between neighbors and friends) as well as through more structured events, such as Farmer Field Days. These gatherings helped other farmers become aware of the potential benefits of a PPB process and were in part responsible, especially in countries like Zimbabwe, for the exponential growth in the number of FFSs established across the country.

SD=HS also helped establish and continued providing support to many Community Seed Banks: a total of 71 were operating at the end of 2023. CSBs have helped restore crops or varieties that had disappeared from certain areas and districts, in some cases increasing their quantities through regeneration and in others through repatriation from custodian farmers. In specific cases (e.g. Guatemala) they have also supported the provision of seed after climate disasters. While the quality of CSB seed was sometimes not fully satisfactory, farmers reported that in many cases they contain the traits they want – especially when compared to the seeds coming from the formal sector. Further increasing the CBSs' capacities to conserve and distribute high-quality seed will be important, especially in some regions and for some crops (e.g. groundnut).



Mercy Shibleleki with different maize varieties from the Bingo Farmer Field School, Chirundu, Zambia. Photo: CTD

PVS, PVE and PVD

Most of the Farmer Field Schools started a Participatory Variety Selection (PVS) process. The main traits that farmers sought for were related to yield and abiotic stress tolerance, with drought tolerance being the most relevant trait in the latter category. Early maturity was also important, helping crops escape drought. Climate-related traits were almost always considered, testifying to farmers' struggle to adapt their farming systems and traditional crops to the increasingly challenging conditions. While gender-based preferences in terms of breeding objectives were not always evident, in some cases women aligned themselves more closely with quality traits (like palatability, taste and cooking/processing traits), whereas men prioritized traits related to yield and biotic/abiotic tolerance.

Most of the seeds for the PVS trials came from the national breeding institutes, while the varieties they were compared against were sought locally. Over 3,500 lines were made available by different breeding programmes. This is a key aspect of an effective PPB programme: its capacity to mobilize genetic resources from formal institutions, increasing the relevance of the formal sector breeding efforts while enhancing communities' access to germplasm. The SD=HS programme acted as an intermediary "innovation broker", facilitating such access to germplasm and the exchange of information between breeding programmes and smallholder communities.

The post-harvest evaluations conducted in each FFS showed farmers' satisfaction with the results: over 41% of the introduced lines performed better than the control, with the most notable improvements seen in terms of appearance and yields. FFS and community members declared to have fully adopted over 300 introduced lines/varieties of several different crops into their fields while discontinuing the trials with those which did not fully satisfy their needs – even if they had outperformed the control under some aspects. Of course, some of these lines may be later discontinued or further selected. However, this number testifies to an important injection of diversity into the farming systems. A number of facilitators conducted "multi-location trials" in their communities, with many farmers replicating the studies on their own farms using seeds multiplied from the PVS plots and increasing ownership over the process. Having multi-location trials has also provided valuable data for the registration of selected PVS lines at a national level: in Zimbabwe, six PVS lines (two of sorghum, pearl millet and groundnut each) were registered and released as commercial varieties. In Laos, thanks to the conducive policy environment drafted with support of SD=HS before 2019, 12 rice lines derived from the programme's PPB efforts were registered and three have significantly disseminated across other districts.

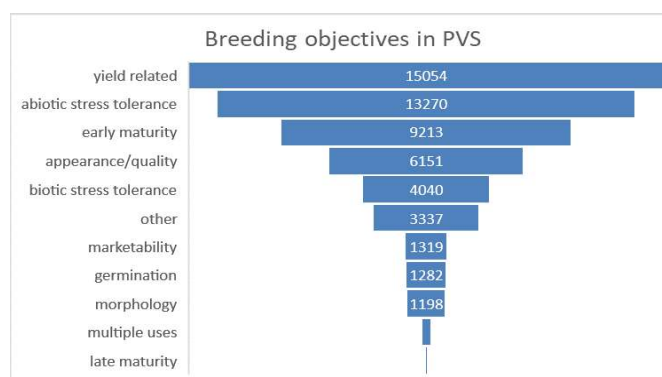
In Zambia, Zimbabwe and Nepal, a total of 165 FFSs also started a Participatory Variety Enhancement (PVE) process with maize and sorghum, and also pearl and finger millet, groundnut, cowpea and common beans. The smaller number of FFSs and farmers involved (when compared to PVS) show that PVE approaches require more time as well as more advanced selection skills. However, PVE is very relevant as it allows farmers to restore or enhance traits which render local crops and varieties even more resilient to the new conditions brought on by climate change, while maintaining the quality traits for which they are traditionally appreciated. The efforts of these different FFSs showed positive results. Focusing on features such as stress tolerance (particularly to drought), there was an overall improvement of the target varieties: on average, varieties were considered to have become "slightly better" after only two or three years of selection. The most outstanding results (varieties being scored as "much better") were seen in cowpea and common bean, followed by millets. When looking at yield gains, on average all crops experienced significant yield improvements. These were more evident in finger millet, groundnut and

"The support we received has been huge. It has given me technical know-how and now I am able to develop seeds on my own. If there comes a time when we have other challenges in our village, we will develop new varieties. The community is happy because they have people who can develop seeds. If I can develop seeds, how can my neighbour suffer?"

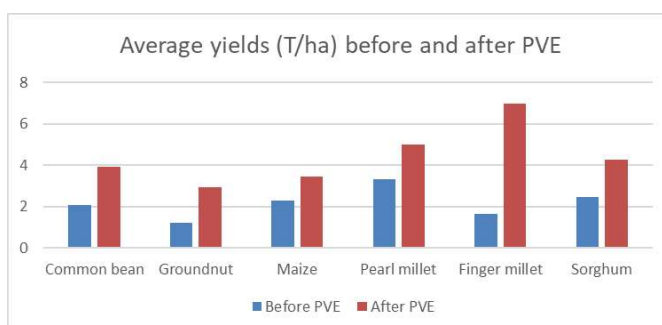
Julius Mufana, farmer and FFS facilitator from Chirundu, Zambia

common beans. It is important to mention that these results cannot be attributed to genetic gain alone but are also due to improved agronomic/agro-ecological practices, which are also discussed as part of the FFSs' curriculum (in tandem with the breeding process).

While most FFS participants (44%) mentioned they wished to continue selecting their target varieties to further improve them or stabilize the gains, an equally relevant number of participants (40%) expressed their intention to start multiplying seeds, paving the way for their own seed production and marketing activities (in some cases under the guidance of the project, in others independently). These results prove that, even within a very short timeframe, significant improvements are indeed possible, and that farmers are valuable partners in a breeding programme.



Fewer groups undertook a Participatory Variety Development (PVD) effort, with five FFSs in Zambia evaluating the segregating populations of maize and sorghum, and 23 FFSs in Zimbabwe working with sorghum and pearl millet. PVD gives communities the opportunity to create their own variety rather than selecting stable lines or enhancing an already existing one. It also challenges them to become even more skilled in the advanced selection techniques they have been exposed to as part of the FFS training process. While PVD can be more complicated, the interaction and knowledge sharing between farmers and breeders enabled communities grasp the process: in Zambia, one of the most remarkable achievements of the project (and in the history of PPB), was the development of a new PPB sorghum variety within a span of 3.5 years. The cost of this development dropped from approximately US\$ 250,000, as estimated in a conventional plant breeding approach, to less than US\$ 10,000. This has generated a lot of interest from breeders and communities alike.



Institutionalization

In Nepal, the project succeeded in strengthening the linkage and relationships between CSBs, national gene banks and local/provincial governmental entities: several CSBs now receive financial support from the local government for local crop conservation efforts and for seed sales. SD=HS popularized PPB in Laos and Zimbabwe to the extent that almost all breeding institutions, including CIMMYT and ICRISAT, have adopted PPB as part of their breeding programmes. Other organizations that have embraced PPB include PELUM Zimbabwe, which asked SD=HS to train its partners across the country. In September 2023, the African Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) and PELUM Zimbabwe also facilitated an exchange visit whereby farmers from other African countries were able to learn about PPB and community seed banking. In Peru, with the support of INIA and the Continental University, an educational programme for agricultural science officials and professionals was developed, including PPB in its curriculum. In Guatemala, where no breeding programmes had ever focused on the needs of the indigenous populations living in the highlands, there is now a greater recognition of the value of FFSs: government institutions and NGOs take them into account and consider them as part of their community development programmes. In Uganda, FFS facilitators are working closely with FFSs on germplasm evaluations conducive to seed production and marketing. Partners have supported the signing of MOUs with research institutions and breeders and the establishment of FFS networks.

Main achievements

Outcome	Planned	Achieved
Resilient indigenous and farming communities reached	35,000 households with better access to improved seeds	An estimated total of 60,200 households were able to access and use better seeds thanks to the PPB efforts
Output	Planned	Achieved
The network of Farmer Field Schools has expanded to new regions and programme countries and sustains itself in existing working areas with 50% women participation and youth engagement	Develop and refine engendered and youth-sensitive FFS curricula based on the specific crops and research needs of each country	Three new illustrated guides describing the PVE, PVD and selection techniques were completed, as well as one on CSBs
	SD=HS will train and further support core groups of master trainers, at least 50% women, in each programme country. In turn they will cascade training to others	982 PPB FFS were established between 2019 and 2023 across the six implementing countries. A total of 806 master trainers and facilitators were trained between 2019-2023. Of these, 516 are women (64%), 156 are youth
	In existing working areas, an FFS network will be fostered to ensure sustainability and self-management, using the proven entry and exit strategies in Phase I	In Zimbabwe and Uganda, FFSs are developing a wider, institutionalized network of FFS. Nepal decided not to develop a separate FFS network but rather to involve as a key partner the national level farmer's group network (the National Farmer's Group Federation - NFGF)
Key stakeholders such as breeding institutions, gene banks, research centers, extension services and local governments have committed and contributed to the FFS approach	Involvement of and alliance building with key stakeholders	Breeding institutions made available over 3,500 lines for PVS testing in FFS and provided technical support to communities
	Further commitment of partner institutions both at the management and field levels, and formalization of alliances	There were 45 cases of institutions adopting the FFS/PPB approaches in their operations, with most MOUs signed in Nepal. Agreements were signed between local project partners and formal research institutions in Uganda, Zimbabwe and Zambia too. Following the previous example from Laos, the registration of varieties from the FFS/PVS trials is underway in other countries, with local extension services providing support to farmer groups
The capacity of communities to adapt to climate change and be prepared for and manage shocks has been strengthened	Support the development of varieties with traits needed to cope with floods, drought, salinity, pests and diseases	PVS processes tried over 3,500 lines, of which over 40% were reported to surpass the control in some aspect; 300 were adopted, formally and informally, into farmers' fields. A total of 54 FFS involved in PVE worked on over 30 varieties. All of the varieties experienced at least a slight improvement, while 17 of them were reported as "much better". Of the 29 FFS running PVD trials, 20 reported at least one population being in the process of becoming stable
	Exchange of knowledge and crop diversity with geographically distant communities which are better adapted to new climate conditions	Farmer field days were instrumental in sharing knowledge and facilitating the spread of promising lines and varieties out of the FFS communities
Indigenous peoples and small-holder farmers (IPSHF) – men and women – have established, strengthened	Support and strengthen organization of community seed banks	A total of 71 CSBs are running across countries. In specific cases (e.g. Guatemala) CSBs have also supported the provision of seed after climate disasters or crop losses

and sustained community seed banks	Ensure linkages between community seed banks and national gene banks, allowing seeds from communities to be centrally stored for future needs, as well as repatriation of important but lost varieties back to communities	In Nepal, linkages and relationships between CSBs and local/provincial governmental entities were strengthened as well as those between CSBs and local seed produced groups. In Zambia, over 2,200 farmers are accessing seeds from CSBs. In Peru, three communities institutionalized CSBs, improving the availability of 38 crop varieties.
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Key lessons

- The teams' most important conclusion is that a country's approach to plant breeding can change, and that breeding systems can change. The primary condition, and the way we have designed our work from the beginning, is to do it jointly – farmers, breeders and civil society – and that it becomes embedded in daily practice. We observed important differences between countries where formal sector breeders from the NARS were actively involved (as in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Laos) and those where they were initially reluctant or had financial constraints which prevented them from taking an active role during and after the project (Guatemala, Nepal, Uganda).
- Ownership appears to be greater in those (fewer) FFS which worked on PVE and PVD compared to those working only on PVS: while the former techniques require more technical skills, farmers acquire the capacity to improve their traditional varieties and to really touch with hand what it means to be a farmer/breeder. However, a solid relation with a breeder is crucial in these cases. Indeed, to expand these approaches it will be important to plan training sessions with the breeders themselves, and not only to facilitators and farmers, to ensure these breeders are specifically trained to work alongside farmers in a participatory approach. This, in turn, can have an even greater potential for change at institutional level.
- While the adoption and diffusion of PPB materials has been observed throughout the project, community level adoption is not enough. In addition to the Farmer Field Days, it is necessary to integrate stronger adoption pathways into a project like SD=HS from its inception, developing networks which also involve the national extension services, and working on the legal aspects which may prevent more significant diffusion of PPB varieties (see pillar 4).
- After five years of work, additional steps are needed so that PPB FFSs continue working together in the future, regardless of the presence of a project. This is true of CSBs as well. Indeed, only when FFSs (and/or CSBs) evolve into central community hubs, where the work from different outcomes is brought together (conservation and breeding are linked to seed multiplication, seed aid, sales, saving associations, nutrition), can their potential for upscaling be maximized. To this end, Oxfam Novib and its country partners are planning a follow up phase, where the FFS/PPB approach is embedded within broader interventions looking at markets, seed aid, land rights and agro-ecology. A wider partnership is also envisaged in this continuation, involving e.g. research organizations like CIRAD and farmer organizations, while intentionally shifting power to the south.
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REAPING THE BENEFITS OF SORGHUM

Muzamani Lihinga is a 63-year-old smallholder farmer living in Maihwa, a village in the district of Chiredzi, Zimbabwe. As a member and facilitator of the Hlubuko Farmer Field School (FFS), he played an active role in the plant breeding processes that involved many other farmers in his village. The sorghum variety they developed is now helping many villagers face the challenges of climate change.

Maihwa is found in the semi-arid southeastern region of Zimbabwe. There, as in other parts of the country, climate change has intensified the dry spells and made the rains increasingly erratic. This is having an enormous impact, making it difficult to secure a harvest. During the past few years, Mr Lihinga has seen how it is more and more difficult to secure the crops he depends on for his food. Together with many neighbors he was interested in joining SD=HS and to start a plant breeding process: their objective was to develop varieties that would help them adapt to the changes they experience, and simultaneously counteract the loss of local diversity.



*Mr Muzamani Lihinga showing off his SDR5 crop.
Photo: CTDZ Zimbabwe.*

From 2019 to 2021, Mr Lihinga and the group he led ran a Participatory Variety Selection process in sorghum. Their starting point was their own preferences and needs: farmers were interested in traits such as early maturity and drought tolerance, traits that often go hand in hand, as well as a large panicle size. Working together as a group, and with the support of breeders and scientists from the government-affiliated Crop Breeding Institute (CBI), this FFS evaluated a number of sorghum breeding lines from CBI's breeding programme, identified a few promising lines carrying their desired traits, and finally, participated in the registration and release of one of these varieties at national level. As Mr Lihinga said, "These efforts have helped the whole community in more ways than one. We now have a variety that suits the context and responds to what we want, helping us improve our families' food and nutrition security. But we have also been able to show how important it is to talk about climate change and farmers rights".

While the whole group could see the benefits of the new variety, Mr Lihinga also saw its

economic potential and decided to multiply it to share and sell seeds. Mr. Lihinga secured a higher income, while allowing high-quality, climate-adapted seeds to reach other farmers in the same village and region.

Through this activity, Mr Lihinga earned a profit of US\$ 350 per year (in 2021 and 2022). He was able to invest in a small-scale irrigation facility which allowed him to expand the range of crops he can grow. He now farms the whole year round, also including vegetables such as tomatoes, peppers, and cucumbers. He would like to further expand his farm infrastructure as well as to create new employment opportunities for the local youth.

In short, Mr Lihinga considers the FFS work has had a strong impact, and proudly says that "I am now a better farmer". But he is also pleased to see that he is not the only one: he and his neighbors encourage other farmers to embrace the new sorghum varieties, and with them enhance their resilience and food security. And at the same time, as he is able to demonstrate, secure a higher income.

OUTCOME 2: FARMER SEED ENTERPRISES

During the past five years this component of the programme has boosted the capacity of indigenous peoples and small-holder farmers to produce and market a wide range of high quality seeds that suit their preferences. Experimenting with various smallholder farmer seed production and marketing interventions, we hoped to gain insights into “what works and in what contexts”. Working to diversify livelihoods, we aimed to integrate farmers’ seeds into the markets, and strengthen farmer managed (local) seed systems.

Farmer Seed Enterprises and Farmer Field Schools

Since 2019 the programme worked to strengthen pre-existing farmer organizations and initiatives, building on the lessons drawn in the past. After a series of scoping visits and feasibility studies, different Farmer Seed Enterprises (FSEs) in Guatemala, Nepal, and Zimbabwe were selected. As officially recognized farmer organizations, these FSEs predominantly functioned within the formal seed sector, while also offering farmer varieties in the informal sector. Next to this, a series of Farmer Field Schools focusing on seed production and marketing (SPM) were also introduced in 2021, offering more farmers the opportunity to develop their skills.

The programme supported a total of nine FSEs, all of which included (i) a centralised approach, as in Zimbabwe, (ii) three community seed bank cooperatives in Nepal, (iii) three potato farmer cooperatives and a bean growers’ committee in Guatemala, and (iv) the Rong Yan Farmer Cooperative in the Guzai village, in China, participating as a “linking and learning” partner. At the same time, and responding to the need to strengthen local value chains, 77 FFSs on seed production and marketing (SPM) were established during the programme, engaging farmers who had previously joined the FFSs focusing on participatory plant breeding (PPB) and/or nutrition. In contrast to the FSEs, these FFSs were informal farmer groups.



Ruixiang Ru showing some of the seeds stored in the local seed bank. Photo: FSN & Qiubi

Both the FSEs as the FFS developed their technical expertise in seed production and marketing. This covered areas such as packaging, branding, quality assurance, gross margin analysis, business plan formulation, seed storage, record-keeping, organic fertilizer manufacturing, market analysis and negotiation tactics. Standardized training sessions on seed production and marketing were coordinated by the global team: during the COVID-19 pandemic this was done through an online course. The master trainers and facilitators trained during the Training of Trainers sessions (TOTs) then cascaded their knowledge to participating farmers. A total of 32 master trainers and 70 facilitators have been trained.

At the organizational level, the FSE structures were strengthened and business plans developed and implemented, furthering their professionalization. At the FFS level, although informal, group structures in the form of different committees focused on research, seed inspection, marketing, or production were established. The structures allowed members to gain specialized knowledge and were often a point of contact with breeding institutions, buyers, and other outside entities. In Zimbabwe, where both an FSE and FFS were implemented, the empowering nature of the experiential learning approach is highlighted by the agency exercised among FFS members to produce and market seeds for the FSE Champion Seeds in 2022, and then independently supplying the local markets in 2023. The local-level presence of the FFS

and the trust built within the community presented different emerging opportunities as FFS members were able to “keep a finger on the pulse” of what local farmers need and want. Ultimately activities within this component have expanded farmers’ market opportunities.

These efforts led to notable increases in quality seed production and sales, such as in Nepal, where production rose from 34.9 tons in 2019, to 450 tons being produced by 454 farmer seed producers in 2023. In Guatemala, the FSEs made seed available in more than 100 communities in the departments of Huehuetenango, Quiché, San Marcos and Sacatepéquez. At the start of the programme in Peru, seed producing farmers could only produce enough potato tubers for their own consumption and next year’s planting needs. A few years later, different seed committees, representing 4 seed-producing FFSs and 67 growers, are selling a mixture of native and certified potato to smallholder farmers, commercial growers, and industry. It is estimated that the FSEs and FFSs have made available quality seed to 35,000 farmers. Seeds of more than 100 varieties have been sold, contributing to crop and dietary diversity. As commercial seed producers, participating farmers have also been able to earn a significant income.

Adoption and scaling up

Different agro-ecological factors or the political environment shaped results, and it does not always work to replicate a model within or across countries. In all countries, farmers’ preferences for crops and varieties are evolving. Climate change significantly influences this shift, prompting a greater demand for drought and pest-tolerant, early maturing varieties. While interest remains in highly nutritious and high-yielding varieties, some countries such as Zambia and Nepal also witnessed a transition towards more resilient varieties, even if yields were lower.

Seed policy and regulatory environments in the different countries differed and significantly shaped the type of models adopted. While the programme has had some “wins”, considerable progress remains to be made in terms of policies and regulations. For instance, in Zambia and Zimbabwe, seed marketing regulations requires a registration process responding to specific criteria, favoring the formal seed sector and constraining the range of crops and varieties that can be produced and sold by farmers.

“Farmers cooperatives and FFSs advocate for the right to access biodiversity resources and to access, produce and market high quality seeds. Enjoying their rights, this increases farmers’ food security and incomes”

**Nibha Shrestha, acting country director,
Oxfam Nepal**

In Zambia, a five-year grace period exempting farmers from royalties for the use of registered varieties created a more conducive environment for emerging seed entrepreneurs. Despite restrictive national regulations, other collaborative efforts also yielded positive outcomes. Overall, all countries managed to navigate intricate seed laws to either meet the inspection requirements or establish the necessary legal and organizational frameworks for certified seed production. Fortunately, as also seen in Zambia, policy proposals are being submitted: a draft framework proposing an alternative variety registration system, aimed at enhancing farmer involvement and facilitating the commercialization of a broader range of crops and varieties, is being discussed.

During the programme, the FSEs in Zimbabwe developed and effectively executed a sustainability strategy. By the end of the programme, less than 10% of the FSEs’ operations relied on programme funding. Within the FSE and FFS, a dilemma emerged between financial sustainability and addressing community social needs, shaping the evolution of interventions. Nonetheless, they have showed that achieving broader social benefits doesn’t necessarily compromise long-term sustainability. A self-assessment conducted by the FFSs revealed that despite their short programme life, all of them reported being sustainable, planning to continue their seed production and marketing activities beyond the project. SD=HS has shown that a key aspect of sustainability lies in staying responsive to farmers’ evolving needs in the face of climate change. Continuous variety selection emerges as a crucial step, exemplified by the FSE in China, where seasoned members persist in selecting varieties and equipping the FSE with adapted, high-quality planting materials.

Participation and partnerships

Following SD=HS's overall approach to participation, special care was taken to maximize inclusivity in terms of gender, age, and socio-economic status during the selection of all beneficiaries and all training sessions. Despite these efforts, women's meaningful participation in the programme continued to be a challenge in some cases. Responding to these difficulties, two separate efforts hoped to inform future programmes. The first was a thorough analysis of women's access to land and seeds, based on a rapid assessment in the context of 31 FFSs in Peru, Uganda, Zambia and Nepal. This study highlighted the existing gender disparities in terms of land ownership, and the serious consequences this can have. Next to this, a pilot initiative on the commercialization of local food plants was carried out in Zambia and Zimbabwe in 2023, where most of those joining the FFSs on food and nutrition were women. With this initiative, female farmers working in nutrition FFS gained basic understanding of markets, worked on creating demand and learned to produce seeds of cleome, amaranth, and other local food plants.

Encouraging youth participation also remained difficult: young people are in general more interested in quick earnings and innovative projects, yet lack of access to land and capital. Young women are especially affected in this regard, being even less likely to own or acquire land (e.g. as inheritance). Young people's interest in the production of seeds appeared overshadowed by, among others, experimenting with high-value crops (Nepal) or even migrating to the cities (Guatemala). A hopeful initiative was seen in Peru, where youth entrepreneurs set up eight different businesses based on local food plants and native potatoes. Currently, the sales of products that include native potato ice cream and various yoghurts and jams are generating income and employment opportunities.

Community Seed Banks (CSBs) played a special role and were used for seed storage, inspection, bulking, as locations for trainings and as centers for distributing seeds to other members of the community, for the conservation and promotion of local food plants and more. Being anchored in the community, CSBs were also key ingredients for a sustained continuation of all activities. But there are other important factors required for the sustainability of these efforts, including the availability and continued training of master trainers and facilitators, strong relationships with various actors from breeders to buyers, the continued provision of extension services from agricultural officers, access to foundation seed, the continued existence of quality control, marketing and other FFS committees, and policy that recognizes farmer varieties. In Zambia, different FFSs want to form a cooperative together to increase their bargaining power, capitalizing on some of the advantages of being legal entities. In Peru, SD=HS partners expect that formal contracts (which stipulate purchase volumes and prices) will help ensure continuity and give direction in how much land and which varieties to use for seed production. In Nepal, FSEs are already working to leverage finance from local governments. Partnerships with local organizations has therefore been essential for expanding the programme's reach and ensuring its sustainability.

FSEs served as a one stop shop for their farmer members, facilitating access to foundation seed, technical capacity building, linkages to extension and seed certification services for both farmer registration and seed certification and ultimately the market. In the context of the FFSs this role was played by the programme's NGO partners, hence making the FFSs potentially more vulnerable. To mitigate this risk, partners supporting the different FFSs took steps to institutionalize the FFS approach, engaging with the extension and seed services in their respective countries. In Peru and Guatemala, partnerships established with private food companies facilitated technical support packages including seeds and agro-inputs in return for being able to buy guaranteed production by cooperative-affiliated farmers.

Main achievements

Outcome	Planned	Achieved
Indigenous peoples and smallholder farmers with increased market access to high-quality seeds	15,000 households have access to high quality seeds	It is estimated that up to 59,000 households were reached and had access to quality seeds in the five -year period. A total of 3,734 MT of seed of 39 crops (100 varieties, including farmer varieties) was sold.

Output	Planned	Achieved
Between four and six FSE models are piloted and strengthened with capacity to increase farmers' market access to diverse, good quality and adapted seeds	Scoping studies	In 2019, scoping visits were carried out to Guatemala, Nepal, Uganda and Zambia to ascertain capacity to implement FSE work. Building on these visits, 4 feasibility studies helped proceed with implementation in Guatemala, Nepal and China. 9 FSEs were strengthened and 77 FFSs established: one FSE in China, 3 FSE and 25 FFS in Nepal, 4 in Guatemala, 1 FSE and 21 FFSs in Zimbabwe, 13 FFSs in Uganda, 10 FFSs in Zambia and 4 FFSs in Peru
	Business plan development, exploring partnerships	5 business plans were developed (1 in China, 2 in Guatemala and 3 in Nepal). In Guatemala, the 3 potato cooperatives developed a joint business plan, while a separate business plan was developed for the bean association. Three separate business plans were developed and implemented in Nepal for the 3 FSEs
	Strengthening existing farmer-led seed enterprises	A feasibility study was completed, together with the development of a business plan and capacity building plan for the 9 FSEs. Business development support and training was provided, focusing on entrepreneurship and business skills market promotion activities, access to finance and insurances
	Continued support to Champion Seeds in Zimbabwe to enable it to achieve financial independence	As an FSE established in phase I of SD=HS, the support to further professionalize the FSE Champion Seeds in Zimbabwe was intended to support its pathway to sustainability by the end of phase II. A Sustainability strategy was developed and successfully implemented. Financial support to the FSE declined as a consequence. While maintain its farmer grower base in 5 districts, this FSE diversified to include indigenous vegetable seeds and animal fodder
Indigenous peoples and small-holder farmers, including at least 50% women, have strengthened their capacities to produce and market seeds	Involvement of key stakeholders – including women and youth – in the design and development of FSEs	A total of 12,035 farmers were trained in seed production and marketing in the last five years. Within the FFS in particular, women's participation was high, on average around 60% and as high as 99% in Nepal. Figures were lower in the FSEs, averaging around 47%. Youth participation was significantly lower and ranged between 15% to 30% over the same period. To better understand the bottlenecks women face in terms of access to land as a key resource in seed production, an assessment and webinars were held on "Women, Land and Seeds". Greater emphasis on women's economic empowerment was placed through the pilot on the commercialization of local food plants based on the nutrition FFS in Zambia and Zimbabwe
	Trainings at different levels - development of entrepreneurial and marketing skills of women and youth	Training at the level of FSE growers was provided yearly to ensure farmers gained improved skills ensuring the high quality of FSE seed crops. This training included seed production, quality assurance and extended to farmers gaining a basic understanding of markets. Trainings were provided in the context of FFS as well. TOT sessions were organized annually with continuous training carried out throughout the cropping season. A total of 32 master trainer and 70 farmer facilitators were trained. An Online Course on seed production and marketing was developed and implemented during the COVID period, based on the FFS Field Guide on Seed Production and Marketing and the illustrated module for the Analysis of the seed market and crop selection
	Organization and registration of farmers as seed producers	At the farmer level, support was provided for the formal registration of FSE growers as commercial seed production plots. This was a regulatory requirement in all programme countries. Without this registration, the seed plots of FSE growers were not eligible for seed inspection and registration. Within the FFSs, key organizational structures such as a production, quality assurance and marketing committees were put in place as key governance structures as

		stepping stones towards evolution of FFSs into formal entities in the medium to long term
Farmers' organizations have strengthened their capacity to meet commercial standards	Technical, marketing and institutional support for seed certification	Seed certification requirements in all countries followed formal seed law regulations and standards. Farmers in both the FSE and the FFSs were therefore trained in the technical requirements ensuring that more than 95% of seed plots in the programme passed seed inspection
National and global institutions have supported development of FSE models	Multi-stakeholder consultations – exploring and developing linkages with investors, finance and credit institutions	Both FSE and FFS established partnerships with various value chain actors from international research, gene banks, community seed banks, seed certification authorities, extension, private sector, local government authorities and producers at different levels of operations. Access to good quality early generation/foundation seed remains a key bottleneck for many smallholder farmers wanting to engage in commercial seed production. In this regard a strong outcome of the programme has been its brokerage role in the establishment of linkages with national research
Experiences with various models of farmer seed enterprises are documented and shared	Documentation and publication of experiences	2 studies were conducted during the program, in 2021 and in 2023. Two years into implementation of the FSEs, a review showed that the FSEs had reached a point of takeoff but still needed capacity building in marketing and governance. At the end of the programme in 2023, the follow up analysis sought to determine what model works best and under what conditions. This analysis showed that the FSEs have had a positive impact in terms of availability and access, while also providing incomes, but that results are largely context specific
	Exchange between project partners and others	In addition to in-country exchange visits, webinars and online training sessions were the main avenue through which cross country learning and exchange was facilitated. The in country exchange visits facilitated peer to peer learning among farmers. The webinars and online sessions supported the capacity building steps for trainers and facilitators

Key lessons

- The political economy of seeds and socio-cultural factors shape the seed business intervention feasible at a country level. Consequently, a “one size fits all” approach cannot be taken; context specificities that determine farmer preferences, agro-ecological factors and national policies are important in decisions on what model to adopt.
- Establishing sustainable FSEs takes time and requires financial commitment given the high risks of seed business, and the cash flow challenges inherent in the sector. Equally important is to think of capacity building efforts at the organizational and farmer level, ensuring that growth at the farmer level is aligned with the organization.
- For sustainability, establishing relationships with key value chain actors is critical irrespective of whether smallholder farmers are organized as formal FSE or FFS on SPM.
- Formal entities like the FSE are important for linking smallholder farmers to diverse markets. However, the FFSs on SPM are important for local level markets; their significantly low operating costs make seeds more affordable.
- The experiential learning approach of the FFS proved a highly preferred and appreciated approach by farmers in the programme. This was demonstrated by the participation of numerous FSE farmers in FFS on SPM, even though they were already part of FSE and had been undergoing technical capacity building through more traditional methods. .
- FFSs proved to be a strong approach for building social cohesion and trust among farmers seeking to self-organize and build working relationships. Consequently, the FFS on SPM proved to be a good starting point in the trajectory towards formalization.

FROM COOPERATIVE TO FARMER SEED ENTERPRISE

The Janawatawaran Saving and Credit Cooperative, originally established in 2013 in the Kailari rural municipality in western Nepal, has seen many changes since 2019. Initially, this was a savings and credit cooperative, providing services to its members. A few years later it ventured into the production and marketing of seeds, although this was not officially authorized. In 2020, as part of SD=HS, Janawatawaran became a Farmer's Seed Enterprise (FSE) – with a broader focus and with many more results.

Responding to the interest of its members, the cooperative transitioned into a multi-purpose entity, amending its constitution so as to include the production and marketing of seeds and the commercialization of inputs, and also providing tools and other services. SD=HS played a crucial role in facilitating this process by training its leaders and members, focusing on the governance structure and on management issues, providing technical expertise for seed-related activities, and establishing strong linkages with different agencies. By the end of 2023, the FSE had seen the number of shareholders almost double to 616 – with 60% of them being women.

While volunteers ran the cooperative in the past, it now employs four full-time staff to manage the daily operations. These run smoothly, with efficient and transparent procedures that benefit from the introduction of computerized accounting systems. As all members recognize, the FSE has seen an enormous improvement in terms of its governance mechanisms, in the efficiency of the services it delivers, and it is now also better able to mobilize resources. The seed transactions for rice and wheat varieties increased substantially, and Janawatawaran is now recognized as a successful example, integrating the benefits of a participatory plant breeding process into its operations.

In terms of volume, seed transactions grew from 5.8 tons per year in 2018/19 to a total of 120 tons in 2022/23. The commercialization of seeds is now the primary source of income (largely surpassing that coming from the savings and credit services or from the fertilizer and agri-tools businesses), helping the FSE see a net profit of more than one million rupees (approx. US\$ 7,500). The profits have gone to new credit services, shareholder bonuses and into its seed

fund: the Janawatawaran FSE now has a seed fund of 1.3 million rupees for its new operations.

Strong partnerships

SD=HS connected the FSE to other institutions, securing resources from the local governmental agencies. Leveraging support from the Agriculture Knowledge Centre in Kailali, the cooperative received equipment valued at more than NPR 6 million (approximately US\$ 45,000). It also acquired large-sized threshers, a transportation tractor, seed grading machines and storage materials, all of which is helping minimize the harvest and post-harvest losses. Custom hiring services were also introduced, and a series of agreements with technical schools and municipal offices have provided technical support for all seed-producing farmers.

The Janawatawaran cooperative has successfully expanded its markets and outreach, trading seeds in the district and region. It invested in the conservation of ten local rice varieties and led the varietal registration process for the "Jhumka" rice landrace, now officially registered as a farmer's variety. Producing 5 to 7 quintals of Jhumka rice seeds every year, the FSE is now one of the key entities promoting local crops and varieties, and supporting the region's biodiversity.

The changes seen during the past few years can be measured in terms of incomes, employment and social capital. They show the benefits of working to secure farmer's rights at different levels, and of promoting a resilient local seed system that fosters the growth and prosperity of a community. Most important, Janawatawaran's transformation from a cooperative into a successful FSE shows the crucial role played by its male and female members.

OUTCOME 3: NUTRITION AND LOCAL FOOD PLANTS

As a result of the different teams' efforts, the SD=HS implementing communities turned to local food plants and diversified their food sources. More than 230 local food plants were promoted as part of the second implementation phase of SH=HS, with very positive results. This was especially relevant between 2019 and 2023, when the world's food systems faced significant difficulties. The unprecedented challenges that the world saw during the past five years led to higher prices, and many of the crucial inputs for food production became unaffordable, affecting producers and consumers all over the world.

Nutrition improvements and the food scarcity periods

In 2023, SD=HS concluded the planned activities to improve dietary diversity and food security and laid the foundations for these activities to be institutionalized and sustainably integrated into the communities. By the end of this final year, more than 21,500 households had benefited from more diverse and healthy diets, compared to an initial total of 715 in 2019. This was the result of the work of the 342 established FFSs which focused on identifying and addressing the bottlenecks of local food plant consumption. By the end of 2023, these FFSs had trained more than 12,300 men and 9,140 women.

The increased utilization of Neglected and Underutilized Species (NUS) and local food plants has substantially boosted food availability, particularly during the food scarcity periods. This is evidenced by a 23% reduction in the duration of these scarcity period among households surveyed between 2019 and 2023. Additionally, more than 9,200 households enhanced their dietary diversity during the final year of the programme, while the positive trends in improving food security and dietary diversity are expected to continue, as communities have increased knowledge on NUS, nutrition, and the management of local food plants. In particular, Zambian farmers have learned to utilize local food plants, and report a significant reduction of the length of these periods (from 5-6 months to 3-4 months). This positive trend is accompanied by the fact that households with year-round food reserves in Zambia increased from 9.2% to 34.1%, showcasing improved food security. In Zimbabwe, the proportion of households experiencing food scarcity reduced from 79% to 55% while the consumption of local food plants increased, particularly among men and youth, leading to improved dietary diversity and heightened demand in both local and urban markets.

Similarly, in Uganda, farmers managed to reduce the scarcity period by diversifying, through preservation techniques, and by increasing the consumption of local food plants such as eboo, akobokobo, emalakany and Bambara nuts. In Guatemala, NUS are better known by families and have been integrated into the local diets, while in Peru the new recipes with local food plants are widely accepted and often consumed twice a week. In Nepal, the acknowledged importance of local vegetables in diets, especially during the lean season, has led to an increasing trend in their consumption and a



Local food plants are showcased in Chikankata and Rufunsa during food fairs themed "My food is African." Photo: CTDZ Zambia

surge in their cultivation and utilization. The FFS work in Laos has resulted in a 15-20% increase in food security, through greater availability of edible plants and an improved variety of consumption. Notably, the introduction of shade houses and wild plant plantations has saved women about 20 to 30% of their time spent searching for food in the jungle.

Knowledge and experience sharing

Over the period from 2019 to 2023, the consumption of local food plants was significantly influenced by the analysis and sharing of diverse experiences. Five illustrated guides were developed and published, focusing on key modules of the FFS activities. These guides provide detailed insights into the work of indigenous people and smallholder farmers and serve as inspiration for future nutrition and local food plant programmes. In parallel, a two-season household survey was conducted to assess the impact of food scarcity on food security and dietary diversity. The FFS diagnostic tool was analyzed in conjunction with the household survey, leading to the creation of eight (national) briefing notes. These analyze the research results per country, and provide a solid base for communities to address malnutrition challenges using local food plants. In an effort to display the diversity of wild food plant and knowledge about said diversity by smallholder farmers and indigenous peoples, a book was published highlighting 100 local food plants. For every plant we specify the species botany, nutritional qualities and highlight practices from the people who grow, collect, and use them.

Countries have also shared lessons and recommendations in various ways. For instance, in Nepal, our partner created videos and flyers on traditional foods and NUS cultivation practices. In Uganda, knowledge reached over 20,000 individuals through video documentaries and radio discussions on the significance of local food plants. In Zambia, project beneficiaries utilized multiple platforms, like seed and food fairs, farmer exchange visits, and led workshops reaching 29,499 farmers, with a focus on women and girls. In Zimbabwe, knowledge-sharing occurred at seed and food fairs, field days, and various community events, impacting over 6,500 farmers. During these events, farmers highlighted the benefits of local food plants in family diets. The Guatemalan team conducted a

comprehensive diagnosis of local food plant species, leading to the creation of a manual covering identification, knowledge, and diverse methods of preparation, and benefiting 500 FFS participants directly and 2,500 indirectly. In Peru, trade fairs and demonstration days on NUS were conducted, in collaboration with public and private institutions, reaching 78 participants directly and hundreds more indirectly, ensuring collaboration for sharing and replicating recipes. In both countries, these materials will be shared widely in events such as food fairs, field days and social media platforms.

“I never cooked okra for my family before as it was expensive. I thought it only grew wildly and disliked its slippery nature. In 2022, I learned about its health benefits and nutritional values through farmer field school training. We can cook it in various ways, as I discovered during cooking demonstration classes. It can be dried and used in powder form, mixed with different foods or drinks. We even make coffee from its seeds! After this, I obtained seeds from my grandmother and planted a whole plot. Now, regardless of the season, I can provide my family with a balanced diet”

Teopista Mazira, 38, smallholder farmer from Adjumani district, Uganda. Quoted in *Vice Versa*

Partnerships to improve nutrition using local food plants

By the final year of the programme, two more partnerships were established, adding to a total of 59 since 2019. In Zimbabwe, the Marondera Agricultural University of Sciences and Technology partnered with the Community Technology Development Trust (CTDT) to introduce improved varieties of cleome gynandra, a nutritious local food plant. Joining different FFSs, farmers selected four varieties with good taste, quick

cooking times, and suitability for off-season garden cultivation, enhancing household food diversity. The collaboration also facilitated the commercialization of both cleome seeds and vegetables, creating income opportunities for the community. This initiative influenced the inclusion of local food plants in the national assessment tools for tracking consumption and addressing malnutrition. In Uganda, NUS women networks established agreements with local governments and garnered interest from various institutions and district leaders in local food plants. Cooking demonstrations and experiences sharing by farmers were organized, leading to inter-institutional cooperation agreements.

In Peru, collaborative efforts were established with key institutions, including the Regional Health Directorate of Junín (DIRESAJ) and the Pre-Professional Practices Unit of the Peruvian University Los Andes (UPLA). A robust connection with the Acobamba Health Network was forged, strengthening the capabilities of health personnel and community agents through the involvement of the NUS in preventive and promotional activities. In Nepal, LI-BIRD entered into a MoU with the Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture, and Cooperatives (MoLMAC) in Sudurpaschim, outlining joint initiatives focused on conserving and promoting local food plants. This partnership facilitated the integration of the FFS on local food plants, resulting in the organization of eight seed and food fairs. These events, attended by around 2000 participants, including provincial ministers, Agricultural Knowledge Center (AKC) chiefs, local leaders, farmers, students, and media personnel, successfully showcased local crop diversity, seeds, and traditional cuisines. The positive outcomes have led local governments to embrace and celebrate these fairs as festivals, particularly on significant occasions like World Food Day, National Agrobiodiversity Day, and World Environment Day. It is envisaged that this will increase consumption of local food plants.

Main achievements

Outcome	Planned	Achieved
Strengthened coping strategies of communities through the use of local food plants	Increase the number of households benefitting through their participation in FFS.	More than 21,500 households benefit from more diverse and healthy diets, compared to 715 in 2019.
Output	Planned	Achieved
SD=HS has identified major problems associated with food and nutritional security, as well as coping strategies that people use in the project sites in relation to the availability, access, utilization and stability of food	Conduct baseline analysis and participatory rural appraisals and organize focus group discussions in this context	Focused group discussions and rural appraisals on the role of local food plants for improved nutrition were organized and conducted as part of the FFS activities in all the 7 countries.
	As part of the baseline analysis, conduct household and dietary surveys with the families in SD=HS, both in the affluent and scarcity periods	The baseline study, including the dietary surveys, was conducted in both the scarcity and sufficiency seasons for all implementing countries and the results are analyzed and shared with partners and SD=HS network.
	Form alliances with research organizations to determine and spread information on the nutritional content of priority NUS	In countries like Zimbabwe and Laos, the project collaborated with universities, and in other countries our partners engaged local authorities and national food and nutrition commission to promote the use of local food plants.
IPSHF, including at least 50% women, have strengthened their capacities in the management and sustainable use of NUS	Apply the FFS approach to NUS, to research in particular the conditions under which NUS grow and promote experimentation on their management and adaptation to climate change.	A total of 342 FFS on local food plants, NUS and nutrition were established between 2019 and 2023. A total of at least 12321 men and 9141 women participated in the FFS between 2019 and 2023, compared to 2540 and 1730 in 2019, respectively. The

		number of young participants also increased since 2019 from 582 to 2761.
	Improve and apply specific FFS modules on NUS, nutrition and diets, complementing Pillar I type activities (which focus on the major crops)	Five modules on NUS were developed applied in FFS to guide the learning and implementation of activities.
	Include in curricula the participatory assessment of more affordable and highly nutritional diets with local NUS	An assessment of the nutritive of selected plant species was carried across the countries
	Perform a market survey on food prices to calculate the costs of nutritionally adequate diets in each site	No market survey was conducted due to time and budget limitations (but a pilot initiative run as part of P2).
The knowledge and role of farmers – particularly women – in the sustainable management and use of NUS and their importance for nutrition is documented, recognized and shared	Document, mobilize and promote farmer's knowledge on NUS, including the role of NUS to strengthen the coping strategies and reduce the duration of the hunger period, as well as their sustainable management and use, through a participatory assessment that takes into account the associated social, cultural, economic and political constraints	Farmers' knowledge on NUS, the role of NUS to strengthen the coping strategies and reduce the duration of the hunger period, as well as their sustainable management and use, were documented through the diagnostic exercise and the two-round household survey. The results were packaged into briefing notes and shared with partners and the wider community.
	Mobilize and promote the uses of farmers' knowledge on NUS processing and cooking	Promotion of the use of local food plants was conducted through recipe documentations, the creation of recipe books, cooking demonstrations in open events and fairs, as well as through videos and documentaries.
	Research and raise awareness on intra-household access to and consumption of nutritious food	A baseline survey collected information on the seasonal variations of the consumption of local food plants, dietary diversity and food security, which was documented in eight reports and shared with country partners and broader SD=HS network.
	Encourage the creation of networks of seed and information exchange emphasizing the participation of women	SD=HS reached 8,194 households through women seed networks established at country level distributing seed for local food plants and diverse seasonal vegetables enhancing production and consumption. Community Seed Banks networks and nurseries were supported to multiply and supply seedlings of local NUS.
	Promote the social status of NUS and the development and promotion of dishes prepared with them	In Peru, Guatemala, Uganda, Nepal, Zambia and Zimbabwe, the project participated in events such as UN World Food Festival Celebration Day, food fairs, seed and food caravan, radio shows to promote social status of NUS.
Support policies and legislation that promote the knowledge, use and management of NUS	Promote the role of NUS – with a gender perspective – among policy and decision makers	Through pillar integration, the project strategically focused on creating an enabling policy environment in countries by conducting policy sensitization at local to national levels, actively participating in policy formulation, and enhancing farmer's capacity in agrobiodiversity (including NUS) conservation, management, and

		sustainable use. Engaged various stakeholders from local farmer organizations and municipal offices to national entities like the national gene bank, National Agriculture Research Councils, the project addressed policy issues related to farmer's seed systems, and the mainstreaming of Community Seed Banks, thus contributing to securing farmer's rights. This resulted in policy makers initiating policy changes, for example in Zimbabwe, local food plants were included in the national food assessment studies and now considered part of the food basket.
	Advocate for the implementation of FAO's Voluntary Guidelines for Mainstreaming Biodiversity	This was not done due to time and budget limitations

Key lessons

- The experience of growing, processing, and selling local food plants in countries like Zambia, Zimbabwe, and Uganda highlighted the importance of commercializing these crops to improve livelihoods and sustainably drive consumption. By investing in the local food production chain, particularly in rural areas, we not only empower communities economically but also promote healthier dietary practices. This lesson brings attention to the interconnectedness between economic development and sustainable agriculture, emphasizing the transformative impact of prioritizing local resources for the benefit of both communities and the environment.
- The lesson learned from studying local food plants is the vital role they play in diversifying diets and ensuring the intake of a wide range of nutrients in rural households. Indigenous people and smallholder farmers hold valuable knowledge about these plants, closely tied to the biodiversity of their surroundings. The lesson emphasizes the importance of safeguarding biodiversity for both environmental sustainability and the nutritional well-being of communities. The wide array of local food plants in rural areas can contribute significantly by alleviating food scarcity and enhancing the nutritional content of local diets.
- During prolonged periods of drought, communities often resort to consuming available local food plants. We continued to promote the processing of local food plants using hygienic methods like solar drying so that food is available during these difficult times. Local food plants play a critical role during periods of scarcity as they provide alternative and affordable sources of micro-nutrients. They offer a solution to the failure of the world's dominant agri-food systems which are largely driven by an industrial logic of economies of scale, intensification, specialization, and uniformization. These systems are not providing food security or adequate nutrition for low-income rural consumers and farmers, and there is a need for funders and development partners to invest more in opportunities of local food plants.
- Networking and collaboration increased knowledge and understanding of issues around local food plants, including their cultural, socio-economic, and nutritive values and this has increased their consumption. Commercialization of both seed and products of local food plants generated an opportunity to earn more income.

RURAL WOMEN PLAY A KEY ROLE

Lucinda Quispeayala Salvatierra used to work as regional spokesperson for a political party and now serves as president of the Regional Agrarian Federation of Junín, in central Peru. Joining many of the meetings organized by SD=HS partners led to a “renewed interest” in advocating for change and in addressing the inequalities that are prevalent in the Andes - in addition to the day-to-day work in her farm.

Lucinda’s farm is found in the rural community of Shicuy, in Peru’s central region of Junín. As elsewhere in the Andes, family farmers face many challenges, with insufficient access to capital, inputs or information. Their yields are low, and the changes in temperatures and rainfall patterns lead to dire situations. And while this affects all farmers, women face additional difficulties: they spend many more hours taking care of their families, they have less opportunities to go to school or to attend training courses, and considerably less time and possibilities to have their voices heard, and to be part of the political decision-making processes at all levels.

Lucinda sees herself as one of the growing numbers of rural women who take an active role in demanding change and takes matters into their own hands. At the moment she represents the National Agrarian Confederation and is part of the Steering Group of Agricultural Leaders, GRILAJ, and through it she contributed to the design of a public policy proposal to support family farming and traditional seed systems, highlighting the role of native seeds.

GRILAJ co-organized the second National Forum on Native and Local Seeds, discussing the importance of the local seed systems. Joining other civil society organizations, this was part of a national campaign to modify Peru’s General Seed Law No. 27262 and make it recognize the value of native species and the local biodiversity, as well as the traditional ways in which seeds are shared, sold or exchanged.

Lucinda Quispeayala also played a key role in a meeting that brought together spokeswomen and representatives of unions and farmer groups from different parts of the country. The purpose was to identify the impacts of climate change in different region, to share the adaptation and resilience strategies of Andean and Amazonian women, and to articulate a common agenda to engage with the national



Lucinda Quispeayala is either working on her farm with her partner or active in her community to raise awareness. Photo: Leslie Searles.

authorities. Representing different groups, she is now part of the Multisectoral Family Farming Roundtable, working to tackle the issues faced by the sector.

This may look like a tall order, especially when the country’s social and political context is so uncertain, but Lucinda is convinced that they will succeed. To her, advocacy means “starting in our own community, within our home, sharing our knowledge and ideas, and working together with the local and regional governments to scale up our efforts to the national level”. She likes to highlight the important role that women have had in the use and conservation of local seeds, and the role they can have now as farmers, leaders, and members of different organizations and advocacy groups.

OUTCOME 4: AN ENABLING POLICY ENVIRONMENT

The SD=HS programme has strongly invested in the development of an enabling policy and institutional environment for farmers' seed systems and the implementation of Farmers' Rights. This has resulted in 46 national policy changes (20 planned) and 8 international policy changes (5 planned), which range from the adoption of new seed laws or regulations that support farmers' seed systems to the prioritization of Farmers' Rights political agendas. One successful example is the institutional change that was achieved in Zimbabwe, where the government is changing both its policies and practices by embracing the programme's FFS approach as a vehicle for delivering its agricultural extension services.

Such institutional changes also show the strong interlinkages between the different programme pillars. In Laos, for example, the adoption of the new [Decree on Plant Varieties](#) in 2020 promoted the further development of a provincial release system for new plant varieties, including farmers' varieties. This system is more accessible for farmer breeders, who can register more diverse varieties contributing to agrobiodiversity and nutrition security in the country. Farmer breeders benefit as they are now recognized for their breeding activities, while seed producers can fetch higher prices in the market now that the seed they produce can be certified. Other farmers benefit from improved access to quality seed of a bigger diversity of well-adapted varieties.



Farmers' Variety Registration System Workshop, March 2023, Addis, Ethiopia. Photo: Bram de Jonge

Such important country learnings have been captured by the SD=HS team in the Netherlands in [academic publications](#) and shared with the international community through various events such as international [webinars](#) or side events during the FAO [Plant Treaty meetings](#). The different lessons drawn in one country have inspired policy proposals in other (programme) countries. The registration process of farmers' varieties in Laos and Nepal, for example, have served as important [inputs](#) for the development of a similar system in Uganda and [Ethiopia](#). In Uganda, farmers from the programme's FFSs have tested the proposed variety registration framework ('Schedule X') and [discussed their findings](#) and concerns with the relevant government agencies.

Policy sensitization for farmers, farmer sensitization for policymakers

To facilitate such bottom-up policy influencing, programme countries have invested in building the capacities of farmers and community leaders. In Zambia, for example, programme partners have organized radio campaigns to raise awareness about Farmers' Rights and agro-ecology. In Peru, 164 leaders of various local and national organizations were trained in policy advocacy. As a result, the organizations have successfully influenced congressmen and public officials to commit to the establishment of a Technical Working Group on Seeds, which became responsible for addressing the problems of traditional seed systems that are not recognized in the current seed law.

Awareness raising amongst policymakers is another important prerequisite for realizing policy change. In Nepal, the programme has (co-)organized 12 workshops engaging 1184 individuals from various

stakeholders, ranging from municipal offices to national institutions like the national gene bank, NARC, and the Seed Quality Control Centre. The meetings have contributed to the development of a clear registration format for farmer varieties, the development and endorsement of a CSB manual, and the adoption of the Sudurpaschim Provincial Seed Act 2022 that mainstreams participatory plant breeding, CSBs and FSEs.

Also internationally, multiple efforts have been made to increase awareness amongst decisionmakers about the critical role of smallholder farmers and indigenous people in the management of the world's agro-biodiversity and of local seed systems, which are essential for realizing seed, food and nutrition security in the face of climate change. The SD=HS team in China supported the involvement of smallholders and indigenous people in the international negotiations for the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, for example by co-organizing a two-day [“High Level Policy Dialogue on the Role of Communities, Science and NGOs in Biodiversity Conservation and Utilization”](#) in Kunming. The [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#) which was

eventually adopted sets an ambitious plan to halt and reverse the loss of the world's biodiversity by 2030, and includes strong recognition for the contributions and rights of indigenous peoples and local communities.

Similar [efforts](#) were made in relation to the ONE CGIAR reform process, in which the principles of participatory plant breeding remain largely absent. A possible solution to this persistent exclusion of smallholder farmers' roles and interests in seed sector development and crop innovation was [tabled](#) by SD=HS partner CTDZ Zimbabwe as part of the UN Food Systems Summit (FSS) in 2021. Together with the Norwegian government, they proposed a framework that prioritizes farmers' and indigenous peoples' access to crop diversity in (inter)national policies for seed and food security. In parallel, other SD=HS programme partners co-organized the [People's Counter Mobilization to Transform Corporate Food Systems](#) to counteract the highly contested corporate-driven agenda and the lack of transparency and meaningful participation mechanisms of the UN FSS.

Policy change – a long-standing effort

In some countries, policy changes could not be realized on the national level due to the lack of political will of the ruling parties or political status quo. In Guatemala, the programme focused instead on subnational governments which resulted in the formulation of 2 Municipal Policies on Food and Nutritional Security in Todos Santos Cuchumatán and Aguacatán, as well as 2 on Local Economic Development, in Petatán and San Miguel Acatán. The policies recognize the importance of farmers' seed systems and support local food producers and income generation. They were developed in a participatory and inclusive manner, involving farmers, indigenous communities, cooperatives, and various municipality commissions. These successes also show the importance of alliance building, in which all programme partners invested heavily.

Internationally, Oxfam Novib has continued its efforts to ensure that smallholder farmers can continue their traditional practices of using, exchanging, and selling farm-saved seed, including of protected varieties, to improve their seed security and livelihoods. The European seed industry [endorsed](#) this position and together, and on the basis of multiple stakeholder consultations, a [proposal](#) was made to broaden the freedom to operate of smallholder farmers within the UPOV 1991 Convention. A UPOV [Working Group on Smallholder Farmers](#) was formed as a result, but [discussions](#) continue as some countries and the International Seed Federation remain worried that the proposed changes will undermine the seed

“As a result of the government’s bold commitment to adopt the FFS as one of the key extension methodologies in 2022, there is a need for the government to utilize this pool of FFS master trainers to achieve the government plan of setting up 35000 FFS in Zimbabwe. The target is to have an FFS in each village so that farmers become self-sufficient in terms of seed”

Professor Jiri from Ministry of Land in Zimbabwe

industry's interests. Through the No Patents on Seeds! (NPOS) network, Oxfam Novib shared views and demands from programme partners and contributed to framing European debates on seed access, intellectual property right regimes and seed patenting. It has informed several European and Dutch Parliamentary positions and resolutions opposing the patentability of both plants resulting from conventional breeding processes, as well as plants resulting from new genomic techniques. Advocacy by and with the NPOS network has contributed to the European Patent Office's (EPO) Enlarged Board of Appeal to decide that plants resulting from essentially biological processes are not patentable.

Similar stalemates as within UPOV can be witnessed within the negotiations of the FAO International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA). Discussions on improving its Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-Sharing, so important for farmers and breeders alike, were halted in 2019 due to the entrenched positions of various stakeholders and country blocks, and only resumed 3 years later. Negotiations related to Farmers' Rights were equally arduous as negotiators could not agree on the formulation of legal measures for the implementation of Farmers' Rights. The final inventory of best practices and [Options for Encouraging, Guiding and Promoting the Realization of Farmers' Rights](#) does, however, include many concrete and promising examples to which several SD=HS partners have actively contributed.

Key achievements

Outcome	Planned	Achieved
Policy makers and other stakeholders support an enabling policy and institutional environment for farmers' seed systems and the implementation of Farmers' Rights	20 national policy changes	46 national policy changes
	5 international policy changes	8 international policy changes

Country	Policy changes SD=HS has contributed to:
Uganda 9 policy changes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 6 MOUs have been signed between FFS Networks and the District Councils of Nebbi, Omoro, Soroti, Apac, Adjumani and Amuria. These are intended to bring the different FFS actors together and promote the institutionalization of the FFS methodology at both local and national level. 7. The programme has contributed to the development and evaluation of a draft framework for the registration of farmers' varieties ('Schedule X'). 8. Regulations governing the production and sale of Quality Declared Seed have been developed and approved (indirect contribution). 9. First national guideline on 'Standard operating procedures for community seed bank establishment and management in Uganda' has been developed (indirect contribution).
Zimbabwe 10 policy changes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Government of Zimbabwe pronounced a policy that puts traditional cereal producer prices at par with maize. In addition, the Government now insists that farmers grow traditional cereal and legume crops in agro-ecologies receiving low rainfall. 2. The National Gene Bank has developed a Genetic Resources Policy and Strategy document to encourage the utilization of PGRFA. 3. A CSB manual was developed in collaboration with the SADC Plant Genetic Resources Centre. The manual was instrumental in setting up CSBs in other areas by CTDI and other like-minded organizations. 4. The programme popularized PPB in Zimbabwe to the extent that almost all breeding institutions have adopted PPB in their breeding programmes. CBI in Zimbabwe for example has gradually adopted a demand-led breeding approach which puts the needs of the farmer at the center. 5. The government has adopted the FFS approach as an extension methodology. As a result of this, the FFS on PPB will be part of the 35,000 FFS the government has targeted to establish. 6. CTDI contributed to the incorporation of the FFS concept in the curriculum of the 8 Government Agricultural Colleges. 7. The SD=HS programme has engaged the National Vulnerability Committee (ZIMVAC) and managed to include local food plants in the national assessment tools for tracking their consumption and contribution to reducing malnutrition.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. A total of 33 FFS (close to 900 farmers) participated in trials to evaluate the performance of two sorghum and one pearl millet varieties, collecting evidence for their registration. The Ministry of Agriculture has confirmed the need to support the drafting of legislative frameworks for the registration of farmer varieties, and other programmes and organizations are now building on the SD=HS work on this topic. 9. CTDI contributed to the development and finalization of the Food and Nutrition Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025, which pays due attention to the importance of nutritious crops and local food plants. 10. CTDI contributed to the development and finalization of the National Strategy and Action Plan for PGRFA 2021–2032, which prioritizes on-farm conservation of agrobiodiversity and the realization of Farmers’ Rights, including the recognition and protection of farmer’s varieties.
Nepal 10 policy changes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The programme supported the development and endorsement of a five-year Agro Biodiversity and Organic Farming Development Strategy in Gandaki Province in 2023. This initiative aims to guide and promote sustainable practices in agrobiodiversity and organic farming within the province. 2. In collaboration with the Centre for Crop Development and Agricultural Biodiversity Conservation (CCDABC) and the National Gene Bank, the project has developed a Community Seed Bank (CSB) operationalizing manual. This manual is gaining recognition and promotion by the government of Nepal as a guiding document for establishing and managing CSBs in the country. 3. LI-BIRD contributed to the validation and adoption of a new registration format for farmer varieties (i.e. Schedule D), through which farmers can themselves register their farmers’ varieties. So far, the project has contributed to the registration of 5 landraces, while 3 more proposals have been submitted and 2 are in the process of submission. 4. The project contributed to the development of the Nepal Seed Act 2022, which now includes a provision for farmers’ variety registration at the provincial level. 5. The project made substantial contributions to the revision of the National Seed Regulation, which now includes a separate provision for registering exotic extant varieties in order to prevent further misuse of Schedule D by foreign, non-farmer actors. 6. LI-BIRD signed a MoU with the Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture, and Cooperatives (MoLMAC) of Sudurpaschim Province. This MoU creates an enabling environment for mainstreaming FFS on PPB, resource leveraging for FSEs, and FV registration at the provincial level. 7. Another MoU was signed with Far Western Agriculture University to foster partnership for action research, technology transfer, and knowledge exchange, and initiated a master’s graduate internship programme with the Seed Development and Horticulture Section. 8. The project played a crucial role in the drafting and adoption of the provincial-level Seed Act 2023 in Sudurpaschim province. 9. A Letter of Agreement (LOA) was established with the regional agriculture training center (ABPSTC), focusing on capacity building for government staff to conduct FFS on PPB. 10. The FFS approach, farmer’s seed enterprise, and CSB model have been incorporated into the strategic development programmes and plans of Gandaki province and Karnali province.
Guatemala 4 policy changes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The programme contributed to 2 Municipal Policies on Food and Nutritional Security, in Todos Santos Cuchumatán and Aguacatán, as well as 2 Municipal Policies on Local Economic Development, in Petatán and San Miguel Acatán. The policies incorporate measures to institutionalize support for farmer seed producers, NUS and CSBs.
Zambia 3 policy changes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ZAAB has become a member of the National Biodiversity Committee, which is in the process of revising the National Biodiversity Strategy and Plan of Action to implement the Global Biodiversity Framework. 2. CTDI Zambia has successfully build awareness about the need for farmer variety registration amongst policy makers and the government is exploring modalities for the development of such system in the country. 3. ZAAB, in collaboration with PELUM Zambia, has convinced the government to develop a National Agro-ecology Strategy and are part of the technical working group that has been established to spearhead the strategy development process.
Laos 4 policy changes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adoption of the Decree on Groups and Unions, which allows for the establishment of the first official Lao Farmer Network, which is one of the implementing partners of the programme in Laos. 2. Adoption of the Decree on Plant Varieties, which recognizes the role of farmer breeders and allows for the registration of farmers’ varieties (extension varieties) through a decentralized process. The project supported the registration of 12 farmers’ varieties so far (which were selected during seed fairs where farmers presented the results from their FFS on PPB). 3. Following this Decree, the project contributed to the development of four Ministerial Decrees (guidelines) to support its implementation. Those are: (i) guideline on rice seed certification and

	<p>register of quality rice varieties; (ii) guideline for certification of extension varieties; (iii) guideline on seed business and (iv) guideline of inspection of seed qualification.</p> <p>4. The FFS approach is recognized by the Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Offices and incorporated into farmer cooperative forms that are prioritized by the government for the production of agricultural products in the future.</p>
Peru 6 policy changes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Potato Park was recognized as the first agrobiodiversity zone in the country. 2. ANDES secured the incorporation of the concept of 'Biocultural Heritage' in the agrobiodiversity zone procedures. 3. Establishment of the Peasant Support Fund that allows small producers to have credit to continue their activities despite the impacts of the pandemic. 4. Extension of the moratorium on GMOs until 2035 5. Together with a broad coalition of organizations, the SD=HS programme partners presented a "Seed Massification Plan" that proposes modifications to Peruvian seed laws. The plan was adopted by several ministries and national and local trade organizations and a Technical Working Group on Seeds was established. 6. Establishment of a fund for "Rural and Indigenous Women's Entrepreneurship", which promotes the protagonism of women agricultural producers as subjects of rights and promoters of change.
China 1 international policy change	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The SD=HS team in China has contributed to the strong recognition for IPLCs in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
Global 7 international policy changes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) adopted the Guidelines for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Farmers' Varieties and Landraces. 2. EU parliament adopted a non-legislative Resolution that calls the EU Commission to convince the European Patent Office (EPO) not to grant patents to products obtained from essentially biological processes. 3. The European seed industry endorsed the proposal to allow smallholder farmers to exchange and locally sell farm-saved seed of plant varieties protected by plant breeder's rights under the UPOV 1991 Convention. 4. The UPOV Council established a Working Group on Smallholder Farmers to discuss the proposal (the 'flowchart') submitted by Plantum, Oxfam and Euroseeds. 5. The Enlarged Board of Appeal of the European Patent Office decided that plants resulting from conventional breeding (essential biological processes) are not patentable. 6. The CGRFA commissioned research on the impact of seed laws on farmers' ability to access sufficient, affordable and adapted planting materials, including farmers' varieties. 7. The Governing Body of the FAO Treaty adopted a Resolution that includes the "Options for Encouraging, Guiding and Promoting the Realization of Farmers' Rights as set out in Article 9 of the International Treaty", which several SD=HS partners have actively contributed to.

Key lessons

- To change policy and regulatory frameworks often is a complex and long-haul process, in which many different factors play a role. This means that sustained, timely and strategic advocacy (e.g. awareness raising with key populations about an issue, accompanied by capacity building of key stakeholders, and alliance building across public and private actors) is needed to achieve the intended change. Whereas changes in the national (legislative) context usually have the biggest impact on the lives and positions of smallholder farmers, in some countries we strategically and pragmatically chose to focus on (as for feasibility) changing subnational regulatory frameworks.
- Linking national or subnational policy advocacy efforts to global advocacy and vice versa has in some instances proven difficult. Whereas advocacy at the global (UPOV) or EU-level (patent legislation) are of major importance to (the position of, and access to plant genetic resources for) smallholder farmers in the Global South, the programme could have linked, elaborated and collaborated in more depth on this with farmer and civil society groups in the programme countries.

COORDINATING A GLOBAL INITIATIVE

The implementation of the Sowing Diversity=Harvesting Security programme spanned eight countries, with activities carried out by partners and Oxfam offices. The global team, based at Oxfam Novib in the Netherlands and also in Zimbabwe, coordinated all activities and facilitated the exchange of lessons and insights between the different teams. The team also prepared the field guides that were used in the field, published briefing notes and research results based on the teams' data.

One of the last documents completed and shared was the book describing the nutritional qualities of "[One Hundred Local Food Plants](#)", presenting them as species which can help reduce the length of the food scarcity period and micronutrient deficiencies. With inputs provided by all teams, this was presented as a very good example of SD=HS' coordinated efforts.

The global team also promoted a space for learning and for sharing ideas and insights. Representatives of the different country teams shared their results and the main lessons drawn during online sessions that took place regularly, with debates and discussions that continued asynchronously. The programme's monthly newsletter also served a platform for all partners to share updates and additional information, complementing its website: sdhsprogram.org. This now includes a unified [repository](#) with all the documents published and shared.

In general, these efforts responded to the need to strengthen the exchange of insights and ideas, as recommended the Mid-Term Review. Additionally, and also in response to the review, efforts were made to integrate the programme pillars, such as using varieties from the Pillar 1 participatory plant breeding efforts in the business development efforts promoted by Pillar 2. Similarly, the successful identification of local food plant completed as part of Pillar 3 served to start a pilot initiative looking at the possibilities for generating incomes with the commercialization of NUS and local food plants. Looking beyond the

programme, the team took on the issue of land rights, mentioned as a real obstacle for women, in a brief study on "Women, Land, and Seeds". All these integrations and publications make up a strong foundation for future initiatives – supported by additional advocacy efforts in the Netherlands, as another of the tasks taken by the team in The Hague (as highlighted in the Pillar 4 section).

The Seeds Academy

Oxfam Novib partnered with Wageningen University & Research and the Norwegian



SD=HS representatives at the Seeds Academy course in Wageningen, the Netherlands. Photo: Catalina von Hildebrand

University of Life Sciences to shape and deliver a course on "[Smallholder Engagement in Seed Systems](#)", inviting practitioners to join postgraduate students and lecturers. Seven SD=HS colleagues traveled to the Netherlands to present case studies on seed systems and farmers' needs, successfully bridging practice with research. The initiative was well received, and plans were immediately made to consider new courses and new participants.

GENDER AND YOUTH

Many different documents and reports highlight the important role that women play producing food, in terms of household food and nutrition security, seeds and biodiversity – but also the enormous challenges they face and the difficulties to perform and expand these roles. Other reports emphasize the loss of traditional knowledge and skills caused by young people migrating to the urban areas. SD=HS was able to show many positive results during its first phase, encouraging the participation of both groups in the programme, supporting women as leaders of many of the Farmer Field Schools, and strengthening their role as managers of the local agrobiodiversity. However, there is still a lot to do: as the 2019-2023 plans mentioned, all over the world, young men and women lack prospects in the rural areas and are less and less interested in agriculture. And in most cases women are still seen as “invisible farmers” who do not get the recognition or support they need, whose needs and challenges are not taken into account, and whose voices are not considered. This is especially true when talking about extension services or plant breeding processes.

SD=HS planned to continue applying an engendered approach and strengthen the position of women in households, communities and institutions. Its general objective was to empower women to take leadership positions and fully participate in the decisions regarding food and nutrition security in their homes and communities. The target was that at least 50% of all those working with the programme would be women and girls, and that this would be sought in the work of the four pillars. The gender-transformative agenda was to pay attention to the impact of climate change and the general context in the intra-household food security levels, the food procurement and coping strategies, the need to consider gender-disaggregated crop and trait preferences, women’s entrepreneurship and leadership skills, and their rights in general. The teams also intended to provide more space to young men and women in their communities and in tailoring all activities to their needs and interests. This was all put into practice in different ways.



*Rekha Chaudhary, one of the many master facilitators in Nepal, addressing all FFS members.
Photo: Oxfam Nepal*

A multi-faceted approach

Based on the lessons drawn from Phase I, SD=HS focused first in its training materials, and developed a plan to integrate female leadership in its existing methodologies and learning and research tools. Building on Oxfam’s Gender Action learning System (GALS), special attention went into the FFS field guides, highlighting the need to ensure that the selection and breeding process would focus on the varieties and traits valued by women, and the importance of strengthening their technical and leadership skills. In some cases, GALS was added to the training-of-trainers sessions, with many FFSs developing their own gender action plans. In other cases, the teams opted for targeted initiatives, like starting a seed production project with groups of women, as in Zimbabwe, or providing childcare services as a way to enhance women’s participation during the FFS sessions, as seen in Nepal and Peru.

As from 2021, some countries also followed the Gender Journey Module (GJM). Inspired by GALS, this was a training module developed in order to help facilitators and farmers to reflect on gender issues and promote women’s leadership and the equal participation of women and men in their FFSs. While the focus of the module was on improving FFS operations and results, it was expected that the discussions in the FFSs would have an impact on communities and households. The tool also served to create space to

discuss broader inequalities (e.g. access to resources). In contrast to GALS, the GJM required less time (something which all teams requested) and could easily be linked to the ongoing SD=HS FFS curriculum.

In parallel, the eight teams also tried different initiatives to engage young people. In Uganda, for example, the team organized a series of cross-generational dialogues, and supported the creation of the Youth Network for Neglected and Underutilized Species. A lot of effort went in Laos and Zambia into the use of social media, using different platforms for sharing ideas and information. The team in Zimbabwe started a few youth-led FFS, while the one in Peru worked together with the formal education sector, organizing sessions and courses and ensuring that these would be officially recognized.

Positive results

The teams found that it was not always easy to start same-sex or age groups, as most communities preferred mixed FFSs. In many cases, access to land was also a barrier, preventing many women and young people from joining the project's activities, or from implementing their own decisions. The general participation of women was strongly influenced by the context: in a country like Nepal, where millions of men migrate in search of a job, the percentage of female participants and facilitators was much higher than the average – but this had to be combined with many other tasks and responsibilities. In countries like Peru, in contrast, their participation continued to reflect the traditional division of roles between men and women, with men being in charge of the farm and production, and women taking care of the family. The most serious difficulties were seen during the pandemic: it was even more difficult for women to travel or leave the house, most of them felt less willing to join large groups, and all of them had less time and more responsibilities. The widespread adoption of online tools and platforms also hindered their participation.

“This seed programme is solving more than just seed challenges, it is also solving many gender issues”

Acan Asianut Winnifred, small-scale farmer in the Amuria district, Uganda

In spite of the difficulties, the joint efforts of women, men and young people to set targets and join the different FFSs helped improve the FFS sessions themselves, and contributed to the results shown in the previous pages. By deliberately engaging women in the different FFS groups, women gained more confidence and were able to take leadership roles, even in communities where social norms usually prevent them from this. The six-country evaluation of the Gender Journey Module showed that the number of women in leadership positions increased in Zimbabwe and Uganda, while the best results in Nepal were that women felt encouraged to voice their input during FFS sessions and gained more confidence. The module itself had a positive impact on the different FFS operations and improved the local efforts on PPB, seed production and marketing and nutrition. More women were able to join FFS activities because meeting times were adjusted to household duties. And the awareness of gender imbalances resulted in the successful implementation of Gender Action Plans. Women's access to land and land rights were recurring themes that came up during FFS sessions. To address this need and respond to the MTR recommendations, SD=HS collaborated with the ONL land rights specialist and organized two webinars to explore the links between women, seeds and land. The brief [“Women, seeds and land – experiences from SD=HS FFS on seed production and marketing”](#) provides an overview of the current situation and also recommendations for further programmatic action.

SD=HS easily met the target that at least 50% of all those working with the programme would be women and girls. And with only a small dip during the COVID years, these percentages even grew. Women made up to 58.6% of all direct beneficiaries in 2021 and 59.6% in 2022. Although different in every country, the number of female facilitators and master trainers was also significant. But, as highlighted in the MTR report, “the approach to gender equality has frequently gone beyond the number of women participating... The focus on gender equality and women's empowerment is explicit throughout the programme... Many examples of gender-sensitive criteria included in foundational documents of FFS and measures intended to increase women's participation in the FFS have been designed and implemented throughout the programme”.



GROW

Over the past five years, the landscape in which we operate has undergone dramatic transformations. The COVID-19 pandemic laid bare the fragilities of global supply chains, disproportionately affecting the safety, job security, and working conditions of the most vulnerable groups, especially women. This vulnerability was exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, which further deepened the cost-of-living crisis. It prompted increased calls for protectionist trade measures and a shift towards shorter, more resilient supply chains, and expanded fossil fuel investments as nations scrambled to secure alternative energy sources. The political climate has been marked by the rise of right-wing and populist parties in Europe and Latin America, and potentially again in the U.S., leading to more restrictive civic and labour rights policies. These compounding crises present formidable challenges to advocating effectively for climate action. The issue of climate change has increasingly become part of the culture wars, most recently playing into the hands of protesting farmers across the EU. These developments underscore a lack in much needed, immediate and bold action to remain well below the 2C in global warming and avert cataclysmic consequences.



Image from Oxfam's Climate Inequality report 2023: "Dharvi is typically 6 degrees hotter than its richer immediate neighboring area in Mumbai". The area surrounding the Bandra Kurla complex in Mumbai is a mixture of extreme wealth and extreme poverty. Johnny Miller/Unequal Scenes in Oxfam's Climate Inequality report

And yet, as the UN Youth Representative Ida Simonsen said, when things get as bad as they are, this shines a spotlight on people who have been doing extremely well at being adaptive and regenerative". Over the past five years, we have succeeded as a collective of actors to drastically raise the honesty, ambition, and level of action from corporations and governments towards justice. In 2022 and 2023, a coalition of civil society organizations, spearheaded by the Climate Action Network (CAN) and actively supported by Oxfam, galvanized global attention and action on climate justice, notably escalating the focus on compensating for loss and damage in 2022, which, arguably, pivoted discussions and outcomes at COP27 towards the creation of a Loss and Damage Fund. The momentum continued into 2023 with the "war on fossil fuels", culminating in a landmark commitment at COP28 to transition away from fossil fuels. These critical movements have not only shaped international climate policy but also underscored the power of collective advocacy in steering global leaders towards climate commitments.

Between 2018 and 2022, Oxfam's flagship campaign Behind the Barcodes/Price (BtBP) spotlighted the suffering of farmers and food workers in supply chains, calling for increased corporate accountability on human rights in the food sector. With a focus on some of the largest global retailers, Oxfam published global Supermarket Scorecards, ranking the Supermarkets based on their policies on human rights. We see that since the 2018 launch, most supermarkets have started to take human rights in their food supply chains seriously. For example, in 2021, Amazon published a sustainability report that aligns its policies and commitments with international human rights standards. Ahead of the Scorecard publications every

year, we see that retailers update their companies' policies and practices – in 2020, 7 supermarkets improved their score by over 20% since 2018, and by 2022, 4 supermarkets scored more than 55%.

These 5-years of global, systems-change programming reconfirmed that the leverage and legitimacy we can have at the global level is only possible because of the links to the communities on the ground. And it is through this linkage that we can claim impact. Our local to global approach has made it possible to prioritize the topics that have most impact on people's lives, and simultaneously recognize and push back on greenwashing and false solutions. In Uganda, after years of advocacy and campaigning for the rights of the Kiryandongo communities evicted from their land, a breakthrough was reached when the President of Uganda issued a decree to halt illegal evictions and ensure fair compensation in 2023. This was achieved by combining national level advocacy, media outreach, public engagement, and a Land Rights Now Global Campaigning to highlight the plight of these communities and reach a global audience. Oxfam has now been asked by the Ugandan Government to play a mediating role with private companies and communities to agree on the terms of compensation.

Another example of how local and global coordination can have impact on the ground was shown in Brazil. Oxfam Brazil together with rural workers and their unions, successfully advocated for an increase in living wages for rural fruit workers in Rio Grande do Norte, a crucial region for fruit production and export. This win was possible because Oxfam at global level in coordination with Brazil stakeholders influenced supermarkets in the Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom and in the United States to stop employers in Brazil from reducing wages of workers in the rural unions in Rio Grande do Norte, which led these supermarkets to contact their suppliers in Brazil. The impact of this coordinated effort has been phenomenal, with more than 10,000 workers now having wages that can buffer the rising costs of energy and food. Furthermore, an impact study that was conducted in Brazil in 2022, demonstrated that, as the collective agreement is a nationally applied agreement, areas in which the Sida2GROW programme was implemented were statistically more likely to comply with this salary increase than areas in which the programme was not implemented.

When we speak of impact, we speak of those evicted communities who will finally receive compensation, and those rural workers who now have wages that ensure they can meet their basic livelihood needs. We also know that because of improved policy, compliance and budget amendments, there is a stronger chance that the impact is not one-off and relegated to the communities we have directly worked with, but that it is scaled and amplified to other regions and communities, with lasting effect. That is the power of a system-change vision spearheaded by a global collective.

“After decades of evasion, COP28 finally cast a glaring spotlight on the real culprits of the climate crisis: fossil fuels. A long-overdue direction to move away from coal, oil, and gas has been set. Yet, the resolution is marred by loopholes that offer the fossil fuel industry numerous escape routes, relying on unproven, unsafe technologies”

Harjeet Singh, head of global political strategy at Climate Action Network International

OUR RESULTS



PATHWAY 1: GLOBAL PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS

Between 2018 and 2022, the Behind the Barcodes/Price (BtBP) campaign was Oxfam's flagship campaign to end the suffering of farmers and food workers, specifically women, by improving companies' respect for human rights in the food sector. It challenged some of the biggest retailers worldwide to adopt stronger social and environmental sourcing policies. Initially, the BtBP campaign utilized the Supermarket Scorecards as a tool to evaluate and publicize the performance of major supermarkets with respect to the OECD guidelines and the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs). The first scorecards revealed poor compliance rates among top retailers, which underscored the urgent need to address this gap.

The campaigns drew over 700,000 actions and successfully raised awareness and pressured companies to rethink their operational and sourcing policies. The Behind the Barcodes/Price campaign reached millions of people globally and mobilized hundreds of thousands through our digital campaigning and petitions. One of the significant early victories was the enhanced transparency among European and American supermarkets. Giants like Albert Heijn, Jumbo, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, Superunie, and Tesco began disclosing their first-tier suppliers—a practice that was virtually non-existent before BtBP's intervention. Furthermore, Jumbo and Lidl set a higher benchmark by revealing details across all tiers of their high-risk supply-chains for a number of specific products.

Concurrently, the campaign advocated for living incomes and wages. By 2022, leading German supermarkets such as Aldi North, Aldi South, Lidl, and REWE Group had pledged to work towards ensuring a living income for the producers and living wages for workers at the beginning of their supply chains. In the UK, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, and Tesco publicly committed to implementing living wages, marking a pivotal advancement in promoting workers' rights. Our campaigns were illustrated by [cases of workers' rights and women's rights abuses](#) in the seafood industries in Indonesia and Thailand, [corporate human rights analysis](#) in Brazil, amongst others. Oxfam Thailand and its partners targeted Thai supermarkets with an adapted scorecard [in 2018](#), and a Brazilian scorecard was published for the first time in 2021, supported by a number of [campaign materials](#).

In all of Oxfam's asks to supermarkets there was a strong focus on the role and position of women (workers or small-scale producers). The focus of Oxfam's 2021 BtBP campaign spike, featured gender inequality prominently in press releases, case studies and publications, highlighting Oxfam's recommendations for food retailers to address gender inequality in global supply chains. The recommendations were developed on the basis of extensive literature review and consultations with



*About 150 women who live and work on farms with members of the Women on Farms Project marched to Distell in Stellenbosch, South Africa.
Photo: Ashraf Hendricks*

Women Rights Organizations (WROs) and Oxfam colleagues in Sida programme countries (Brazil, India, Pakistan, Thailand and South Africa), and were notably included in Oxfam's [Women's Rights Recommendations](#), and the publication "[Not in this Together](#)".

These efforts to show the importance of women's (economic) empowerment and gender equality in the supply chain paid off. Lidl not only developed a gender policy but also ensured that 30 of its subsidiaries adhered to the UN Women Empowerment Principles while eight supermarkets now have gender policies or strategies in place: Albert Heijn, Aldi North, Aldi South, Jumbo, Lidl, Rewe, Sainsbury's and Tesco. The gender focus was part of Oxfam's broader strategy to embed gender justice deeply into the corporate policies of major global retailers, reflecting a significant shift towards more inclusive and equitable business practices. For a lively version of the key achievements, see our BtBP video: <https://www.oxfam.org/en/take-action/campaigns/end-suffering-behind-your-food>.

Making commitments is only the first step. The true measures of success are improvements in the lives of people living in poverty and protections for our environment and natural resources. The programme included direct engagement with companies and their supply chains on implementation of their commitments, and country-level convening and monitoring of progress. Oxfam advocated for the adoption of Human Rights Impact Assessments (HRIAs) as a crucial tool for enhancing transparency and accountability in supermarket supply chains. This tool helps engage directly with women workers and small-scale producers to improve their living conditions and work environments. Prominent supermarkets including Albert Heijn, Aldi North, Aldi South, Jumbo, Lidl and Tesco have implemented and published HRIAs for high-risk commodities in various countries, collaborating with labor unions and civil society to identify and mitigate potential risks. Oxfam's 2023 research "[Towards Meaningful HRIAs](#)" analyzed the commitments that Dutch, German and U.K. supermarkets made and together with the Ethical Trading Initiative organized a webinar attended by more than 200 retail representatives to support learning, and identify best practice efforts and points of improvement.

The collaboration with Brazil (2019-2023), South Africa (2022-2023), and Thailand (2019-2021) on Pathway 1, has been crucial to achieve these objectives at global level and contributed to having women, small-scale farmers, and frontline food workers in and affected by food value chains exercise more power. In Brazil, a country in which agribusiness industry is one of the biggest in the world and is built on the exploitation of workers, farmers, and natural resources, Oxfam Brazil worked with communities and rural workers for better working conditions in global food value chains. This was done by advocating for changes in business policies and practices, more regulation of corporate accountability and the protection of those affected. Next to that, in Brazil, the [Brazilian BtBP Campaign](#) primarily targeted the top two supermarkets—Carrefour Brazil, and Grupo Pão de Açúcar. Key successes include:

- A groundbreaking move by Carrefour Brazil in response to the campaign's pressure by [publishing comprehensive lists of its fruit suppliers](#), a first in the region. This action set a precedent that encouraged other retailers to follow suit. Grupo Pão de Açúcar unveiled its first Human Rights and Value Chains policy, which was a direct result of the campaign's influence. This policy aimed at improving labor conditions across its operations and was a significant step

"Thousands of women have developed agricultural practices since ancient times. It is clear that women are the ones making food, and they deserve their labour rights being respected"

"Recognizing that the contributions of women rural farmers are from seed to feed. We are not asking, we are claiming a feminist food system"

Natércia André António and Sarita Bhusal, participants from Mozambique and Nepal, during the founding meeting held in Mozambique in 2023

towards ethical sourcing. The campaign's focus on labor rights led to enhanced dialogues between supermarkets and local labor unions.

- Labor inspections in the coffee harvesting sector helped 304 coffee workers, 213 of which were being subjected to forced labor; In Minas Gerais, working with the rural union network ADERE-MG, Oxfam identified potential cases of forced labour during the coffee harvest season, leading to 40 complaints being made to the Brazilian government's labour inspection service. With [supporting evidence](#) and accompanying [documentary](#) Oxfam was able to reach this important milestone.
- Women workers on coffee plantations provide guidance on working conditions which were included in the agenda on collective bargaining: a powerful outcome of Oxfam facilitating women workers to come together, organize themselves, build understanding of their rights and create a case on the specific working conditions relevant to women. Beyond the adoption of the guidelines in with the union, the engagement enhances representation and leadership within these spaces, often dominated by males.
- Brazilian unions prevented the reduction of workers' wages in the Rio Grande do Norte state for more than 10,000 workers represented by these unions, which are considered to be amongst the poorest 20% in Brazil. For more details see case study.

Oxfam South Africa has been running the Food Retail Sector Campaign, using creative and innovative ways to document the lived experiences of women casual workers working in the food retail, manufacturing, and agriculture, including the informal sectors on labour rights violations. The relevance of this work is foregrounded by the vulnerabilities experienced by women in the food retail sector. Women on Farms, a long-term partner of Oxfam, supported the analysis underlying the set-up of BtBP Campaign already back in 2018 (before Sida funding), and already at that time grapes from South Africa figured as one of the supply chains illustrating the need for change in our [Ripe for Change foundational report](#) to build the Campaign, by showing how women casual workers in South Africa face the brunt of labour rights abuses in the country, and their of voice and agency. Specifically, analysis has shown that the wine industry is exploitative of (women) workers on wine farmers. Through the Food Retail Sector Campaign in the two years that South Africa has been part of the Sida2GROW programme (2022-2023):

- Women workers have influenced collective bargaining mechanisms in their respective workplaces demanding for fairer, transparent recruitment processes, decent work and improved dispute resolution mechanisms, including mobilizing their colleagues to attend information sessions that they organized to educate them on labour rights. As evidence of this success, some of these women are, for the first time, members of the employee committees.
- Women on Farms with Oxfam strengthened the advocacy capabilities of female farm workers, which, among other things, led to a [march on Distell's headquarters](#), a leading producer of beverages, demanding better human rights compliance on their supplier farms. The march and subsequent pressures resulted in Distell committing to address these issues, showcasing the direct impact of collective action.
- The Women's Budget Collective was established, advocating for gender-sensitive budgeting and greater participation of women in economic decision-making, and aiming to reduce dependency on social grants and increase their economic independence. This was achieved in partnership with Oxfam South Africa and UBUNTU Rural Women and Youth Development.
- Fisherwomen engaged with the Ministry of Forestry, Fisheries and Environmental Affairs, advocating for inclusive policy adjustments that would grant women access to fishing permits and quotas for the first time. OZA and UBUNTU supported this effort, which included training in business practices and exploring alternative livelihoods amidst environmental challenges, empowering these women to secure sustainable economic futures.

The Makhadzi Feminist Food Collective: co-creating a campaign from the ground up

In the context of increasing pressures on land, on communities, on the way our food is produced more and more in global large-scale supply chains, and in the context of Oxfam's ambitions to decolonize and put activists more in the driving seat, Oxfam began supporting a bottom-up feminist food collective, to

amplify the voices of these women and find joint ways of making our collective voice heard. This initiative responded to the findings from the MTR as well.

In 2022, Oxfam launched the Makhadzi Feminist Food Collective, a new unbranded, bottom-up campaign, and towards a broader, more inclusive and Southern-led model for intersectional and transnational organizing. The Collective builds a strong, informed, and united front that champions the rights of women and marginalized communities, aiming to transform the global food systems into equitable structures that promote not just productivity but also fairness and environmental sustainability.

It also launched with a visioning session featuring speakers from Mexico and South Africa and quickly moved to a [foundational meeting](#) with over 60 persons from 30 countries, in Mozambique in March 2023. This meeting confirmed the collective's commitment to tackling system failures driving hunger and human rights abuses, and led the way to the development of 9 key principles for feminist movement building. Throughout the year, the collective held multiple sessions focusing on land rights, pesticide use, and climate-resilient food systems, spreading their findings and feminist strategies globally. We foresee this space taking an increasingly prominent role as Oxfam's campaigning model.

Key achievements

No.	Intermediary / Targeted Outcome	Short term outcome
Global level		
1.1.	Worldwide, the campaign has reached 9 million people and mobilized 225,000 people to demand a fairer and more sustainable food system	<p>52 million people reached by the BtBP Campaign around the world with 230,000 people signing the petition</p> <p>Almost 200 food activists in Africa, Asia, Europe, South America joined the Makhadzu Feminist Food Collective who developed 9 key principles to feminist food movement building research. The Makhadzi Collective ran sessions at the World Social Forum in Nepal in February 2024</p>
1.2.	At least eight food companies that operate globally have made commitments to change policies or practices, in response to Oxfam's campaign	<p>A high number of retailers targeted in the Behind the Barcodes made commitments to change policies and practices across a number of issues related to respecting human rights in their supply chains, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 German, Dutch and UK supermarkets listed on the BtBP scorecard (all supermarkets expect PLUS) have made explicit commitments to uphold the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and report against them • 8 supermarkets now have gender policies or strategies in place • 3 large seafood companies in Thailand made relevant commitments on workers' rights and • Fruit producers in Brazil collectively agreed to adjust wages to cover inflation rates <p>While none of the supermarkets had published information of their suppliers before 2018, supply chain transparency has now become the norm rather than the exception.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 supermarkets have published their 'first-tier' suppliers. Jumbo and Lidl have published names and addresses of all tiers in at least three high-risk supply chains • 6 supermarkets have published one or multiple "Human Rights Impact Assessments" (HRIAs)

National level		
1.3	In Brazil, India and South Africa, the campaign has reached 4,5 million people and mobilized 25,000 consumers to demand a fairer and more sustainable food system	<p>In Brazil, almost 9 million people were reached by the BtBP Campaign and 130,000 consumers were mobilized to demand change via the online petition</p> <p>In South Africa, 2 million people were reached by the Food Retail Sector campaign and more than 25 000 consumers were reached through online petitions, marches to wine farms and key companies and wine regulating institutions such as, WIETA</p> <p>In Thailand, 5,611,686 people reached, including 674,300 engaged, through reactions to the Dear Consumers social media campaign</p>
1.4	Strengthened (formal/informal) multi-stakeholder platforms with active participation of leading retailers, consumer organizations and food producer companies to improve policy and practice	<p>In Thailand, a Chicken-Mazie Multistakeholder Platform was convened by Oxfam, with 6 new members, to deliver policy recommendations on chicken and chicken feed supply chains</p>
1.5	At least 4 national retailers located in or sourcing from Brazil and South Africa have made commitments to change policies or practices, to contribute to more equal and more sustainable food value chains	<p>In Brazil, Grupo Pão de Açúcar published their first Human Rights and Value Chains policy and Carrefour Brazil committed to divulge its first and second tier fruit suppliers</p> <p>In South Africa, Eastern Cape supermarkets (such as, Boxer) committed to purchased maize from local smallholder farmers</p> <p>In Thailand, Makro and Tops have both announced public commitments to make Thai oranges safer for consumers. Additionally, Makro also directly implied that they will improve their traceability/QR code on all orange products as the petition asks.</p>

Lessons learned

- The BtBP campaign public engagement success showed that when stories about the suffering of women food workers and farmers are told and large corporates are held to account, these have a strong mobilizing power and rally many people around the issues that food workers face.
- The results achieved with the retailers confirm the Campaign theory that supermarkets are susceptible to public pressure and incentivized by a “race to the top” on a Scorecard and on HRIA, in particular when they are targeted in multiple markets (Europe, US, Brazil, Thailand, etc.).
- Following a successful Campaign to make commitments, it is crucial to plan for the accountability phase early, ensuring resources are in place to monitor compliance with commitments on living wages, gender, and workers' rights.
- The Scorecard created a standard that supermarkets could build their strategies on, could all work towards and helped create benchmarks which investors liked.
- This type of scorecard is highly labour-intensive and uses a lot of resources, but at the same time building a solid methodology and providing annual consistent data hugely increased Oxfam's and the Scorecard's credibility. We started seeing for example, is that supermarkets were adjusting their actions to match with the scorecard timeline.
- Successful campaigning in-country is not possible without working closely with local rural unions and women collectives. In Brazil, by supporting their regular activities like mobilizing workers, collective bargaining and building greater understanding of value chains, their capacities are strengthened to influence and leverage for more rights, and provides a strong model for sustainability.

- Crucial for success has been investment in movement building to strengthen rural labour unions in their regular activities plus supporting them in breaking isolation and get connections to other players in the value chain, getting involved in the human rights due diligence debate, in certifications etc.
- Effective change in value chains requires simultaneous action at both the consumer and worker ends, pressing all stakeholders, including companies and labour unions, to move together. Establishing a connection between company due diligence, certification accountability, and local collective bargaining processes is essential for sustainable change.
- Transformative change at the start of value chains shouldn't rely solely on private sector initiatives; integrating public policy dimensions is crucial when opportunities or needs arise, such as addressing forced labour or enhancing supply chain due diligence. This flexible approach, combining both private commitments and public policies, is necessary to address complex social issues effectively.
- A four-year period significantly enhanced Oxfam's ability to refine and integrate its value chain strategy effectively, allowing time for ongoing projects to absorb and implement learned lessons, thus fostering a more consolidated approach.
- Global campaigns require localization to resonate with and mobilize a local audience effectively (e.g. in South Africa, Brazil and Thailand); this means adapting narratives, timing, and targets specifically for the local context. It's also crucial to map and mitigate civic space issues and risks unique to the Global South, ensuring campaigns are both relevant and feasible.
- Integrating a gender justice approach into our research and campaign materials — specifically highlighting women's issues — was a foundational step, but alone, it was insufficient for transformative change. To address this, we focused on commodities with higher female employment (melons, grapes, mangos, coffee) and worked collaboratively with male-dominated farm worker sectors and local organizations, sensitizing them to the importance of gender justice in value chains and human rights without imposing our agenda, which organically encouraged our partners to prioritize and develop robust gender justice strategies.
- Women are not always available to attend meetings, workshops, dialogues, etc., it is worth exploring using various modes of communication that they can access even when the project has ended, such as, developing content that can be shared using WhatsApp, community radio stations, TikTok, podcasts, audio books.
- In the case of closing space in Brazil during the Bolsonaro years, our experience shows that being a national NGO that is member of a well-known international confederation brought less risk. Also, targeting big private sector companies, multinational ones, or companies with big consumer brands, tends to be relatively safe. It is down the supply chain where risk are higher, for the workers and local organizations (unions, movements, etc.) who can be targeted. We were threatened with lawsuits early in the project, only from local producers and agrobusiness associations, never by supermarkets. This shows that companies who are more concerned with ESG (environmental, social and corporate governance) issues and their image in society are better targets regarding risks.

GENDER AND YOUTH REVIEW

Gender and Youth have been at the core of how Oxfam designs and develops its research, tools and advocacy priorities throughout the programme. In this section we provide a summary of how this was not only integrated but framed the priorities and the approaches followed.

In Brazil,

- **Research and Advocacy:** Initiatives such as "Coffee Stain" and "Sweet Fruits Bitter Lives" showcased the gender pay disparities in rural areas, with evidence that women often receive lower wages due to being placed in less productive roles during harvest seasons, like packaging rather than fieldwork. This research was used to inform advocacy efforts that encouraged supermarkets and other value chain actors to develop gender-sensitive policies.
- **Women's Movement Building:** There was a focus on creating permanent groups for women within rural labor unions, which allowed them to politically articulate and gain decision-making powers. This structural change within unions has empowered women, enabling them to push for quotas in traditionally male-dominated roles like tractor operation.

In South Africa,

- **Women's Budget Collective:** This initiative, formed with UBUNTU Rural Women and Youth Development, aims to amplify women's voices in budgetary decision-making processes. Women actively participate in public demonstrations to influence gender-sensitive budgeting and advocate for more economic opportunities in sectors like renewable energy and agriculture, helping them gain economic independence and address gender disparities.
- **Support for Fisherwomen:** OZA supported fisherwomen to advocate for their inclusion in fishing permit allocations and projects. This involved traveling to Cape Town to present their concerns to government officials, applying for fishing quotas, and receiving business training, helping them explore alternative livelihoods.
- **Photovoice Project:** This project documented the daily lives of women in various sectors, using powerful images and stories to raise awareness about gender gaps in labor outcomes. The narratives highlighted the

continuous work and challenges women face, supporting advocacy and fundraising efforts aimed at gender equality.

- **Gender Agriculture Agro-processing Master Plan (AAMP):** Oxfam South Africa contributed to this plan, focusing on transforming agriculture and agro-processing sectors to enhance food security, competitiveness, and employment. The AAMP emphasizes fair working conditions, access to markets, and sustainable resource management, aiming to integrate women's needs into broader economic and policy frameworks.

In Bangladesh,

- **Community Engagement and Advocacy:** The grassroots meetings exclusively for women aimed at creating a safer space for them to voice their concerns. This approach led to increased participation of women in public forums, where they could discuss climate change impacts and advocate for better support.
- **Youth Empowerment in Climate Action:** Youth climate activists participated in workshops that identified key actions for addressing climate change locally and nationally. These activities helped build a network of informed and active young individuals who contribute to climate advocacy at multiple levels.

In Uganda,

- **Environmental Protection Campaigns:** Campaigns like the one to save the Bugoma Forest involved mobilizing youth and farmers to oppose large-scale land acquisitions for sugarcane growing. Youth environmental lawyers also played a critical role by taking legal action to protect these ecosystems.
- **Strengthening Women's Land Rights:** Initiatives such as the "Stand for Her Land" campaign focused on enhancing women's land rights. Training and conferences were used to amplify women's voices and demands for land rights, fostering a stronger coalition at both national and grassroots levels.

In our local to global engagement,

- **Corporate Engagement for Gender Policies:**

The document highlighted efforts to push major corporations like Lidl and Jumbo towards adopting and implementing comprehensive gender policies. For instance, Lidl committed to developing a gender policy and most of its subsidiaries signed up to the UN Women's Empowerment Principles.

- **Youth Leadership in Climate Summits:**

Youth leaders like Hilda Nakabuye from Uganda played a significant role in global climate advocacy, participating in events like the Africa

Climate Summit and using these platforms to speak against fossil fuels and advocate for equitable climate policies.



The Makhadzi Feminist Food Collective Meeting in Mozambique, 2023.

Photo: Oxfam

These examples underline the strategic use of research, advocacy, community engagement, and corporate engagement to address gender disparities and empower youth, providing a comprehensive approach to gender mainstreaming, combining grassroots activism, direct policy engagement, and strategic documentation to tackle gender inequality and create a more inclusive and equitable environment for women in various sectors, particularly where inequalities are extreme. The overall strategy seeks to integrate the needs and interests of women into broader economic and social policies, promoting sustainability of our youth and gender actions.

PATHWAY 2: INTERNATIONAL AND GLOBALLY RELEVANT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

This pathway was built on the premise that if one international financial institution (IFI) could be moved in the right direction, others would follow suit. The Sida2GROW project has used this tactic both at the policy level, for more transparency and accountability from the IFIs, as well as in case work to obtain remedy for communities negatively impacted by the investments made by the IFIs.

As the research commissioned by Fair Finance International had shown, policy-level progress was especially needed with regards to the IFIs' transparency and disclosure policies and practices. Indeed, the increasing role of the IFIs and their financial intermediaries in delivering development outcomes requires due diligence, transparency and accountability, to ensure that communities are not negatively affected, and that they know who is financing activities on their land and how to claim their rights. Considering that IFC is one of the largest IFIs worldwide and that FMO is the Dutch development bank, and with both of them being long-term advocacy targets of Oxfam, the Sida2GROW project took to improve these banks'

transparency and disclosure policies and practices with success. Through research, private engagement and public pressure, Oxfam contributed to incremental improvements in both cases.

In the course of the Sida2GROW project, IFC announced the mandatory disclosure of its financial intermediary clients for high-risk projects, and IFC made critical commitments to

boost transparency of investments of its financial intermediaries representing 63% of its total portfolio by requiring its financial intermediary clients, including commercial banks, to report details on their investments annually. And from their side, FMO has improved on transparency matters by adopting its new Customer Disclosure Policy and its Position Statement on Impact and ESG of Financial Intermediaries. Oxfam and partners have engaged intensively with FMO on both policies.

On the one hand, this policy-level work is crucial for large long-term impact. On the other hand, on-the-ground casework is also needed: to underpin the policy work and – more importantly – because people on the ground need support from and collaboration with non-governmental organizations such as Oxfam to claim their rights. In numerous cases, the investments made by IFIs lead to violations of people's rights. A notorious case was the Upper Trishuli-1 project in Nepal. Dragging on for years, this case had not only seen numerous violations of the indigenous Tamang people's (land) rights, but then also a flawed Free,



Consultations with the indigenous Tamang people in the case of the Upper Trishuli-1 hydropower project in Nepal, funded by IFC. Photo: Oxfam

Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) process, including a protracted non-implementation of the FPIC agreements. IFC and FMO, acting as financiers in this project, had for too long not given the right attention. Through research, private engagement with IFC and FMO, and public pressure, Oxfam has contributed to raising the attention of these two banks, as well as other financiers.

Another emblematic case was the FirstRand/Bea Mountain Mining Corporation case in Liberia. FirstRand, a financial intermediary of DEG, Proparco and FMO, had invested in a mining project in Liberia that negatively impacted neighboring communities. To demand accountability from these IFIs and justice for the communities, Oxfam and its partners supported a formal complaint through the IFI's Independent Complaints Mechanism. Not only has this complaint put pressure directly on the mining company to provide remedy to the communities, but it has also allowed civil society organizations to test the complaints mechanism and learn along the way, and it allowed Oxfam to highlight the implications for FMO of not having a policy on Financial Intermediary Lending – which FMO later adopted. We have engaged with FMO on this by investing in research, private engagement, and public pressure.

Completed in December 2021, Sida2GROW financed the development and publication of [a database of high-risk projects](#) financed by commercial banks that are clients – or “financial intermediaries” – of IFC and FMO. This database served to support advocacy for better disclosure practices. An update process started in 2023, planned to continue in 2024. Oxfam Novib engaged with FMO to deliver its advocacy messages regarding the Customer Disclosure Policy as well as its Position Statement on Impact and ESG of Financial Intermediaries, both in private consultation processes (see [this submission](#) for example) and through public statements (such as [this joint statement with Both ENDS, Recourse, and SOMO](#)). While the final text of FMO's Position Statement on Impact and ESG of Financial Intermediaries, published in October 2022, showed that there is still more to be done, it did reflect some of the points Oxfam Novib and its partner organizations had advocated for (as also reported in [FMO's Consultation Report](#)).

On the positive side, FMO did effectively start disclosing sub-investments of the funds in which it holds equity (see for example [here](#)). IFC has made several important commitments to improve its practices with regards to more transparency in its financial intermediary lending processes. In 2022 we monitored IFC's disclosure practices to ensure that they effectively implement their commitments with the use of the database of high-risk subprojects as what we expect to see. IFC then started disclosing the sub-projects' information of some of its commercial bank financial intermediaries, becoming the first DFI to ever disclose this type of information.

IFC and FMO in Nepal

Main activities by Oxfam for this second achievement were also research and private engagement, and all this in partnership with Community Self Reliance Centre (CSRC) from Nepal. We commissioned a technical [report](#) on the FPIC process and used that as leverage in discussions with IFC and FMO to move them to

“With more than 30 hydro projects either operating, in construction, or planned on the Trishuli River (Nepal), the project would have no transformational impact. It faces severe climate and disaster risks, would deepen Nepal's overdependence on climate-vulnerable hydro, and would have significant impacts on indigenous communities and the environment that have not been adequately studied or addressed. There is also no assessment of the project's vulnerability to earthquakes, despite the area being highly seismic”

**Open letter to the Green Climate Fund
signed by over 300 civil society organizations
to stop the investment back in 2017**

increase their engagement with the Upper Trisuli-1 case. CSRC mostly invested in on-the-ground work, supporting and working with the Tamang communities to raise awareness and strengthen their capacity to take part in negotiations to claim their rights. They also engaged regularly with the hydropower construction company, its lenders, and Nepalese authorities at various levels.

Key achievements

No.	Intermediary/ Targeted Outcome	Short term outcome
Global level		
2.1	Leveraging progress within one IFI to encourage more IFIs to follow suit	<p>IFC, the private sector investment branch of the World Bank) and FMO (the Dutch development bank) have improved their transparency and disclosure policies and practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2021 a database of high-risk projects financed by commercial banks that are clients – or “financial intermediaries” – of IFC and FMO was published and used for advocacy purposes. • Oxfam Novib engaged with FMO to deliver its advocacy messages regarding FMO’s Customer Disclosure Policy as well as its Position Statement on Impact and ESG of Financial Intermediaries, both in private consultation processes (see this submission). • FMO started disclosing sub-investments of the funds in which it holds equity (see for example here). For example, and through public statements (such as this joint statement with Both ENDS, Recourse, and SOMO). • IFC started disclosing subprojects information of some of its commercial bank financial intermediaries becoming the first DFI to ever disclose this type of information on its own project portal. <p>IFC and FMO have increased their engagement in Upper Trisuli-1 case in Nepal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfam commissioned a technical report on the FPIC process and used that as leverage in discussions with IFC and FMO to move them to increase their engagement with this case • Liberian communities launched a formal complaint through the IFI’s Independent Complaints Mechanism.

Lessons learned

- We are seeing that with local level engagement of communities and local actors in countries we are able to reach and influence a broader umbrella of DFIs. For example, the complaint submitted in Liberia also involved and ultimately held DEG and Proparco, the German and French DFIs, accountable, while the FPIC research in Nepal links to investments made through the Asia Development Bank and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, two major DFIs.
- Long-term commitment and engagement at both policy and community level is critical to bring about change. Oxfam’s experience with linking local-to-global shows there is a strong link with the importance of having good policies in place, being transparent about investments, and making pleas for compliance. The cases developed show clear alerts to wrong situations at the

local level on which financial institutions –through their compliant mechanisms – can be urged to take action.

- As communities are willing to take a lot of risk, it is critical to guide them through risk mitigation measures and to use secure communication platforms. Confidentiality is a crucial element, as are short links with different stakeholders in order to monitor and react quickly. Security risks are faced by communities and local partners, as well as Oxfam, when engaging in litigation matters between communities and corporations/ financial stakeholder. The tactics to mitigate these risks have included softening or even restricting the messages and communication, having the advocacy done by partners who are less at risk, relying on the global level to convey stronger messaging, and dedicating the necessary time and resources to build strong and irrefutable evidence.
- There have been challenges in bringing together the voices of affected people and communities. In Nepal, this was evident during the negotiation process for an effective free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) procedure, while in Liberia this was experienced during the dispute resolution process itself. Starting in 2023, the coordination of affected peoples and communities has been prioritized through a broader structure of support, through events and other programs. example, Oxfam Novib hosted a session on community engagement at the LANDac Conference in 2023
- The engagement with FMO has been an important strategic decision, working to leverage on one DFI to influence others. FMO is a DFI directly covering a portfolio of multiple billions of EUR worldwide, allocated in over 100 countries, is a big financial player internationally, and it profiles itself as a front runner. The approach Oxfam adopted allowed for in-depth high-level engagement with one DFI – something which requires time, trust building, and expertise, which then ensures that changes at FMO are a catalyst for change across other DFIs. FMO invests in many loans together with other DFIs, including DEG, Proparco, CDC, and we are witnessing how one can influence the other in raising the bar and standards in contracts and the financial intermediate lending.

BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS IN BRAZIL

In 2019, during the Behind the Barcodes campaign, we uncovered serious labor violations among rural workers in Rio Grande do Norte, Brazil. These workers, involved in the production of fruits like mangoes and melons, were connected to major supermarkets in Europe and the USA. Rio Grande do Norte is a crucial export region, making the implications of these violations significant on a global scale.

By 2021, the situation escalated when local fruit producers, suppliers to these international markets, proposed a 5% wage reduction during the annual collective bargaining. This was in stark contrast to the workers' demands for wage adjustments in line with inflation. The proposal led to a deadlock, with producers unwilling to negotiate, effectively stalling the bargaining process.

Recognizing the urgency, FETARN partnered with Oxfam Brasil, CONTAR, and Repórter Brasil to strategize a response. Repórter Brasil was tasked with bringing local media attention to the issue, while Oxfam reached out to its network to pressure the supermarkets sourcing from the region.

Oxfam's Northern affiliates—OUS, OGB, ONL, and ODE—joined the effort by leveraging a letter penned by Oxfam Brasil to confront their respective target supermarkets about the issue. This led to significant engagement with major players like Morrisons, Tesco, Aldi, and Ahold Delhaize, who in turn, communicated with their suppliers, including Agricola Famosa, the world's largest melon producer.

The collective pressure was effective. It prompted the local producers' association to issue a commitment to reach a collective agreement without reducing wages. By the end



Fruit company workers on a mango plantation. Photo: Tatiana Cardeal/Oxfam

of the year, an agreement that aligned with inflation and upheld other previous provisions was successfully negotiated.

This series of actions not only protected the livelihoods of around 20,000 regular and seasonal workers but also demonstrated the power of coordinated advocacy to uphold labor rights in global supply chains. It also highlighted the responsibility of international supermarkets to ensure ethical practices, marking a significant victory for labor rights advocacy in the country.

PATHWAY 3: MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS AND FORA, AND GOVERNMENTS

Under Pathway 3, Oxfam and partners advanced policy influencing and public campaigning in the areas of climate justice and land rights, pushing for greater accountability and ambition of global actors in these fields. Oxfam engaged in major global fora, especially the climate COPs, and the SDG-related fora in the UN, strategically focusing on: (1) Keeping up the pressure on the richer countries to meet their joint pledge to contribute 100 billion USD per year of climate finance, and (2) Holding the international community to its ambitions to boost respect for and promotion of land rights as laid out in the SDGs.

Developed countries have long ago committed to mobilizing US\$ 100 billion of climate finance every year as from 2020. However, the goal is not aligned with the actual needs of developing countries and communities, and even with this modest target, developed countries have failed to fulfil their commitment. The definition of climate finance has also remained unclear, allowing space for contributing countries to include grants, loans, guarantees and export credits, and have been untransparent about the climate relevance of the finance reported. Oxfam published

Climate Finance Shadow Reports in [2020](#) and [2023](#) (as well as an interim-report in [2022](#)), supported by Sida2GROW. These reports have significantly influenced the discourse on climate justice and have played a crucial role in ensuring that rich countries remain answerable within the UNFCCC space. Notably, in 2023 there is a direct mention of Oxfam in the [letter from the incoming COP27 President](#) and the invitation extended to Oxfam to join the 5th High Level Ministerial Dialogue on Climate Finance at COP27, to [provide an intervention](#) (0:57:25) among a selected panel of Ministers from different countries. In addition, the UNFCCC reached out to Oxfam to better understand the shadow report methodology that Oxfam uses to measure the “true” level of climate finance allocated, to include the figures in the [Standing Committee on Finance technical report](#) on progress towards the \$100 billion commitment published at COP27 (Oxfam’s 2020 Shadow report analysis is referenced on pages 31, 45 and 140).

The Shadow reports have also contributed to the advocacy work on Loss and Damage. Oxfam was one of the earliest voices calling for inclusion of loss and damage finance in the agenda of climate negotiations, and for developed countries to make financial commitments towards supporting developing countries to deal with climate damages, particularly since the Fiji-led COP23 (2017), with the publication of “[Uprooted by Climate Change](#)” (supported by Sida2GROW). In 2022, loss and damage finance was the key demand of Oxfam’s public campaigning, supported by the report “[Footing the bill: fair finance for loss and damage in an era of escalating climate impacts](#)”. It was also the central issue for Climate Action Network and several other advocacy networks, as well as a priority for developing countries in the UNFCCC negotiations of that



The 4 protagonists of the Make Rich Polluters Pay Campaign, highlighting the reality of climate change in the Philippines, Peru, Vanuatu and Kenya at COP28. Photo: Oxfam Novib

year. This resulted in the COP27 (Sharm-el-Sheikh, 2022) decision to establish a Loss and Damage Fund, followed up by a more operational decision at COP28 (Dubai, 2023).

This work has been complemented by a range of public campaigning initiatives:

- The launch of an [open letter](#) from Kenyan climate activist Elizabeth Wathuti, calling on the COP president to establish a loss and damage fund. The letter garnered over 140,000 signatures and was handed over to world leaders during COP27 in Egypt. Prior to the COP, Ms. Wathuti travelled across Europe, meeting with governments to convey the realities of climate change in Africa and urging them to take bold and ambitious action
- [The African Climate Caravans](#), an unprecedented mobilization effort that rallied climate movements in over 25 African countries, involving over 150 civil society organizations. National caravans visited various climate-affected communities, organized lobby events, media outreach, and mobilized people. The local demands and solutions were then taken to continental caravans at the pre-COP in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Climate Change Summit in Senegal, and at COP27
- [The Make Rich Polluters Pay campaign](#) leading up to COP28, called for the biggest polluters, who have been raking in record profits over the last years, to pay for the costs of the climate crisis they created. The campaign was led by four prominent climate activists from four corners of the globe, who have co-created the campaign with Oxfam. The petition was signed by more than 500,000 individuals, a great achievement in such a timeframe, and linked to the Loss and Damage campaign the year before and to the wider climate finance discussion at COP. The four protagonists of the Campaign attended COP28 in Dubai where they handed over the petition.

These efforts contribute to a narrative shift that Oxfam has pursued for the last years – that of linking climate change to inequality and injustice, with a focus on inequality in responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions. A number of reports were published in these years on inequality and climate: [“Confronting carbon inequality”](#) (2020), [“Confronting carbon inequality in the European Union”](#) (2020), [“Carbon inequality in 2030”](#) (2021), [“Carbon Billionaires”](#) (2022), and the latest flagship report, [“Climate Equality: A planet for the 99%”](#) (2023).

The momentum towards justice is happening. The 2023 Climate and Inequality report had more than 5,000 media hits globally – more than twice as much as Oxfam’s previous record for any previous climate publication or action. According to The Guardian, the Climate Equality report got over 3 million views, spanning both the global North and South – making it one of their most-read climate projects last year.

The presidents of France and Kenya have recently announced the establishment of a “Taskforce on international taxation to scale up development and climate action”. At the Summit for a New Global Financing Pact in Paris, 22 June 2023, French president Macron called for [“an international taxation deal to finance climate efforts”](#). At the initiative of President Ruto of Kenya, the [Nairobi Declaration](#) of the Africa Climate Week, in September 2023, included a call for international taxation for climate action. Such political momentum building towards a declaration on tax at the Brazilian G20 (November 2024) that includes taxing the income and wealth of the richest individuals is a truly progressive policy whose time has come. Oxfam generated some impressive and influential media coverage – especially in Brazil and France – that really helped create the political mood for this progress. International media coverage like the ones from [CNN](#) and [The Guardian](#) demonstrate the historic deal we could see on the table at this year’s G20.

“We are in an increasingly unequal world. We need to treat this with as much priority as the climate issue, because otherwise we may end up with a planet with a very good climate and people continuing to die of hunger in several countries of the world”

President Luis Inacio Lula Da Silva, Brazil, at the Summit for a New Global Financing Pact, June 2023

Undoubtedly, Oxfam has contributed to the popularization of the concept of “Climate Justice”, and to increased awareness of the need to address inequality and injustice at the same time as addressing climate challenges. We have also made an important contribution to creating a Climate Movement, which is now very much alive and kicking, is more aligned, more diverse and inclusive. Through the SeedsGROW project, Sida has contributed significantly to the above research, lobby work and campaigns, as part of a bigger strategic approach together with other funders such as the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the E.U. The spirit of joining forces and aligning resources to support a common, greater purpose, has been key to driving impact, and will be taken forward as an approach in future programming such as Cultivating Change.

Oxfam's work on Land Rights intrinsically links to the impact that the climate crisis is further having on land access, use and management and on the climate resilience of communities. The importance of considering land rights at negotiations on climate change has been raised with national and global actors, backed by an evidence base that includes Oxfam's [research](#), [publications](#) and [analysis](#). We have been able to effectively use these to influence the Transitional Committee on the operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund and governments.

Thanks to the efforts of the last 5 years, global actors, national governments and civil society organizations are more aware of the progress made halfway into the 2030 Agenda on SDG on land rights targets and what needs to be done to achieve them. Oxfam and its allies have been engaging in this space with [research](#) and [evidence-based advocacy](#) and regular parallel events at the UN High Level Political Forum and SDG Summit 2023.

Another strategic space for land advocacy in the last years has been the Generation Equality Forum. The issue of women's land rights lies at the crossroads of justice, gender equity, and human dignity. Oxfam has been influencing its design process and has championed the need for protecting women's land rights. The [Global Acceleration Plan for Gender Equality](#) that was launched in June 2021 strongly supports women's land rights under both the Climate Action and Economic Justice Action Coalitions. There is clearer understanding amongst all members on the need to adopting transformative women's leadership approaches and of using “transformation” as one of the three principles of the Generation Equality Forum to secure women's land rights and achieve gender justice. The [collective women's land rights commitment](#) which Oxfam and its allies led, was presented at the Generation Equality Forum in Paris in June 2021, and forms part of the Global Accountability Framework that will drive action on gender equality globally for the next 5 years. In our recent [paper](#), we scrutinized the commitments made under the SDGs and Generation Equality Forum Action Coalitions, revealing large disparities between the ambitions and the recommendations made for achieving these targets.

With the advocacy and campaigning support provided by Oxfam and the [Land Rights Now campaign](#), communities have been equipped to demand greater accountability and protection of land and their land rights. Some of the key achievements include the [landmark ruling](#) of the Supreme Court of Peru granting land titles to the Nuevo Andoas community, and ordering payment of oil easements by Plus Petrol and compensation by the State for giving indigenous territories to oil companies without consultation or payment of oil easement. Another is a [direction](#) to stop illegal evictions by the President of Uganda and a declaration that the eviction of communities from their lands in Kiryandongo to make way for a sugarcane plantation is illegal and the Land Ministry taking steps to provide compensation to the affected communities. Some of the critical issues related to the protection of land rights in Timor-Leste have been urged before the UN Committee on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the [Concluding Observations](#) of CEDAW have made specific recommendations for the government to address.

In Uganda, the members of an ever-stronger youth and CSO climate network, built through the years, have helped see important wins. CSOs and youth movements have petitioned the Speaker of the national parliament to take quick action on the enactment of the climate change law, which was then tabled, and in May 2020 we witnessed the first reading of the law in parliament. When different stakeholders were invited to provide inputs to improve the bill, Oxfam mobilized young people and representatives of small-holder farmers organizations and traditional institutions, all of whom contributed in different ways. The bill passed in April 2021 and ascended to the president. At the same time, Sida2GROW supported a set of

national consultations for the review of Uganda’s NDCs, and in 2021 Uganda submitted its revised NDCs to the UNFCCC with Civil Society Validation. Uganda has also focused on restoring and preserving biodiversity, with a campaign initiated in 2020 which has led to partnerships with the National Forestry Authority on planting and protecting trees with local communities. Land rights have been increasingly at risk in the past years – with massive evictions by land grabbers. In January 2022, a Kiryandongo Land Rights Crisis Campaign was launched, focusing on the plight of people affected by massive land evictions by government agencies. The campaign involved airing a documentary, creating policy briefs, holding press conferences, using social media influencers, and participating in strategic meetings for alliance and movement advocacy. The government ordered the halting of evictions, revisions of compensations, and settlement of those affected.

In Bangladesh, Sida2GROW ran between 2022 and 2023, partnering first with the Centre for Natural Resource Studies and then with Uttaran. Bangladesh has raised awareness, mobilized communities, influenced policy and decision-making at local, national, and international levels to address climate change issues. The set of activities included grassroots meetings, consultations, public hearings, or a review of gendered needs in the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), with local and national stakeholders (through the pre-COP workshops with potential global climate ambassadors, its participation in COP28, the organization of a Gender-Responsive Budgeting Workshop with the national government, the Global Adaptation Week in 2023, and the Rivers Rights Resilience Forum 2023). All of this created a space for better access to climate finance for vulnerable groups, including women small-scale food producers. The project has also built evidence and communicated the learnings through an assessment of the drivers for a just transition in agriculture, it reviewed the National Adaptation Plan to find the policy gaps, and completed an economic valuation of the loss and damage in agriculture. At the same time, one of the prime and most engaging activity was developing a web-based dashboard for visualizing loss and damage cases, guiding 75 community volunteers to report the losses and damage seen in their communities, and then reporting more than 9,000 cases.

Key achievements

No.	Intermediary/ Targeted Outcome	Short term outcome
Global level		
3.1	Improved quantity and quality of (global) climate finance to women small-scale food producers	<p>Oxfam released two pivotal reports which have significantly influenced the discourse on climate justice and played a crucial role in ensuring that rich countries remain accountable within the UNFCCC space.</p> <p>Climate Finance Shadow Report 2023 exposes the gaps in delivering much-needed finance to communities in the global South.</p> <p>Climate Equality – A planet for the 99% goes beyond the \$100 billion narrative. It reveals that by holding the world’s wealthiest individuals—largely responsible for the climate crisis—accountable, the world could potentially mobilize close to \$9 trillion.</p> <p>Oxfam has been one of the earliest voices calling for inclusion of loss and damage finance in the agenda of climate negotiations. This has contributed to the COP27 (Sharm-el-Sheikh, 2022) decision to establish a Loss and Damage Fund, followed up by a more operational decision at COP28 (Dubai, 2023). Oxfam has also contributed to the popularization of the concept of ‘Climate Justice’.</p>
3.2	Greater global accountability to uphold	With the advocacy and campaigning support provided by Oxfam and Land Rights Now campaign, communities have been equipped to demand greater

	international benchmarks on land rights is built	<p>accountability and protection of land and their land rights. Some of the key achievements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The landmark ruling of the Supreme Court of Peru granting land titles to the Nuevo Andoas community and ordering payment of oil easements by Plus Petrol and compensation by the State for giving indigenous territories to oil companies without consultation or payment of oil easement. • A direction to stop illegal evictions by the President of Uganda and a declaration that the eviction of communities from their lands in Kiryandongo to make way for a sugarcane plantation is illegal and the Land Ministry taking steps to provide compensation to the affected communities
National level		
3.3	Impacted communities in Bangladesh, Pakistan South Africa and Uganda are better able to have their voices heard and influence decision makers, leading to more inclusive policies and practices	<p>In Bangladesh, at least 1,173 vulnerable community representatives, across different climate hotspots, were mobilized. At least 50% of these communities were represented by grassroots women leaders. They participated in the following activities: grassroots meetings, consultations, public hearing, review of gendered needs in National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)</p> <p>In Uganda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfam mobilized Civil Societies Organizations, traditional institutions, religious leaders who were able to present their view on the climate change bill principles development and Formulation in parliament • 1,000 Youths under the Go Green umbrella petitioned the speaker of Parliament for the expeditious enactment of the Climate Change law • Small holder farmers in 12 districts mobilized their representatives to voice their concerns on the country's NDC and the Climate Change <p>In South Africa:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm workers and dwellers in Witzenberg engaged the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development on farm evictions. The department followed up with the 39 evicted families • 200 women farmers were mobilised by Oxfam's partner organisation Women on Farms to march to Distell, the biggest alcohol producer and marketer in South Africa to call them to ensure human rights due diligence throughout their supply chain • 220 women attended UBUNTU Rural Women and Youth Development's Land, Food and GBV Conference held in Stellenbosch in 2022. Following the event, women were empowered and are more confident to participate as active citizens in the decision-making processes at all levels around land issues <p>In Pakistan, in Thatta, Karachi and Badin, more than 20,000 community members demanded increasing climate finance.</p>
3.4	The broad urban public in Uganda and Bangladesh encourages their government to take bolder action to protect affected communities against climate change impact	<p>In Bangladesh, the different research on loss and damage, key drivers for just transition in agriculture and access to climate finance, have strengthened the participation in national and international discussions (such as the participation in the International conference on mainstreaming land rights in climate discussions 2023, Women's Earth Alliances, Feminist Food Convening 2023), helping to highlight the importance of land rights, especially for small scale growers and women within the broader context of climate strategies</p> <p>In Uganda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Communities in Buganda Kingdom were mobilized to participate in the call for climate action and protection of vulnerable ecosystems • 1000 youth from universities, secondary and primary schools were mobilized under the GROW campaign during the international climate strike

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 600 University and Secondary School Youth were mobilized through a public dialogue on climate change representatives in the 5 districts of the Rwenzori subregion, • Leaders and community representatives were mobilized and launched a campaign to save the receding snow on Mount Rwenzori, called the Mount Rwenzori Greening campaign, aiming to plant 5 million trees in 5 years (about 3 million trees have been planted to date) • The Oxfam GROW campaign for 3 years consecutively has partnered with the Climate reality partners in Uganda and other young climate activists to call for a climate and environmental action week during Earth Day (2020 - 2023) <p>In South Africa, some donors who attended the Regional Food Symposium reached out to Oxfam South Africa to explore how they can fund the small-scale farmers. Oxfam South Africa was invited on various platforms, including local, regional and global policy dialogues (COP28, the 20th Celebration of the Maputo Protocol, African Business and Human Rights) to share its knowledge on climate finance, Just Transitions and women's economic empowerment.</p> <p>In Pakistan, more than 10,000 people planted 40,000 mangroves in Karachi and Thatta, and raised demands for mangrove preservation. The provincial government of Sindh included LAPA recommendations in its provincial and district annual budgets for 2021.</p>
3.5	The governments of Bangladesh and Uganda have developed bottom-up, pro-poor and gender-sensitive climate adaptation planning, and have dedicated corresponding budgets, from national and/or donor resources	<p>In Bangladesh, the local government of Satkhira and key climate ambassadors from the national government were influenced through dialogues and workshops for a bottom-up, pro-poor and gender sensitive planning and budgeting.</p> <p>In Uganda, 6 laws were revised, and 6 new ones were passed as a result of the Land and Inequality Report which was pointing out shortcomings in the land sector and advocating for changes to legislation. Oxfam has been in charge of the land-related operations under SDG Land.</p>

Lessons learned

- Climate finance delivery has increased over the programme period, but not to the extent needed, and it is hard to tell what would have happened without Oxfam's advocacy and campaigning. To what extent have our actions actually helped to increase climate finance? It remains difficult to measure. On the other hand, we can confidently say that our work has contributed to transparency of climate finance delivery and reporting, which in turn is helping developing countries to hold developed country parties to account.
- The COPs are changing and becoming harder to influence, since they are increasingly political, and also increasingly dominated by powerful political and commercial interests. This has caused Oxfam to look at other angles, away from the COPs, such as exposing inequalities and highlighting the potential of the super-rich to contribute to footing the ever-growing climate finance bill. Another angle is, learning from its actions at country level, to focus more on boosting climate ambition through individual country climate plans, such as through the work on NDCs, or in tracking national climate finance flows.
- The mobilization of non-contracted movements in Uganda, including the private sector, has facilitated public campaigning for climate change protection. Political opposition Members of Parliament have been strong allies in advocating for fragile ecosystems and environmental policies. Climate-induced migration is increasing, causing pressure on land worldwide.

SUSTAINABILITY

Together with a list of the objectives and the description of the activities that were going to be implemented, one of the key elements presented in the original project proposal was the intended sustainability of the processes and results that would be supported. There were clear references to the development of specific skills and abilities, and to the empowerment of men and women as managers of the local crop diversity; to the need to enhance the local organizations' managerial capacities, to the importance of strengthening the capacities of the district, provincial and national government institutions, to building networks and supporting the existing alliances, and to the need and intention to work together and collaborate with all stakeholders. While the plans mentioned the importance of a long-term commitment and of solid relations with all partners, references were also made to the need to secure the resources needed so that the activities started in 2019 would continue after 2023.

This was all revised in detail during the Mid Term Reviews, where the emphasis was both on the sustainability of the processes in place (the extent to which different stakeholders had the commitment and capacity to continue working to demonstrate the viability of the Theory of Change outlined at the beginning), and the sustainability of the results that had been achieved by then, and of those that were still expected to come. There were references to the "adverse global conditions" and to the (at the time) ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as factors that were having a negative effect. The evaluators also described the project's Theory of Change as "a long term one", and that, as a result, "after nearly three years of programme activity, the various components are far from sustainable, even in the case of countries where the programme was active during the first phase...". But the same MTRs analyzed the different steps taken by the different teams, as those that would ensure a continuous process and long-lasting results. They described many positive indicators, with points that only became stronger during the next two years.

Farmers as breeders

Considering the time that it takes to release a new crop variety or to develop the conditions for it to be sold, or the time needed to re-direct farmers' attention to a particular crop, promoting its consumption, it is clear that the sustainability of these efforts depends on a long-term commitment and dedication, and on the capacity of the different stakeholders to maintain their involvement over time. Many of the steps in this direction were taken at the very beginning, of the programme, for example with the selection of the partner organizations. These were not only "the world's leading civil society organizations with a firm track record in the field of plant genetic resources to empower smallholder farmers". They also proved to be uniquely positioned to work with their countries' breeding institutes, with the local authorities, and with the local farmer organizations and associations. Their teams were able to complete what was planned and were also able to raise additional funds, planning concrete activities that helped broaden the scope of the programme.

Another key decision was developing guides and training materials, and the steps taken so that that these would be easily available, easy to use and easy to translate when needed. As mentioned elsewhere in this document, SD=HS was able to prepare and share documents like the [Farmer Field School Guide on Farmer Seed Production and Marketing](#), or the ones focusing on special topics such as the [Facilitators' Guide for Farmer Field Schools on Local Food Plants for Nutrition](#) (all of which were shared in many different ways, and also remain available to all those interested in the SD=HS website's repository). These were all used during the FFS sessions, guiding the steps that each group was following. And these materials also helped the teams reach out and support other initiatives: the team in Nepal, for example, translated the SD=HS guides into Nepali and provided training materials to the government agencies, supporting the PPB training processes that they got started. In a similar way, the Spanish version of the SD=HS guides were used in the training courses organized for the staff of the national research institute (INIA) in Peru. A step that still needs to be implemented is one recommended by the MTR: to better monitor the use of all these guides and materials, and support their broader dissemination.

A lot of attention was also given to the need to raise awareness, and show the results of the activities that were being implemented, demonstrating the benefits of the FFS approach and the successes seen in the field – and in this way making even more people interested and convincing policymakers. A set of Briefing Notes shows the results of the PPB processes in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Uganda, describing the traits in which farmers were more interested, the steps taken for each crop and the results of each evaluation – and also presenting the opportunities to improve (local) policies. But long before these Notes were ready, the teams relied on different dissemination methods: there was a dedicated website, a monthly newsletter and the regular use of social media, sharing information and also helping the teams connect with each other. In Zimbabwe, the team relied on field days, seed and food fairs, traditional food festivals, radio programmes, regional and national workshops, and also on lectures at universities and agricultural colleges, making its work well known. Similar efforts were seen in Uganda and Nepal, with a strong presence in some cases during the World Food Day celebrations or as part of the National Agro Bioversity Day. In addition to organizing field days, the teams in Guatemala and Peru completed a comprehensive analysis of their programme (as a “systematization” process), sharing their results with representatives of the ministry of agriculture and with other NGOs.

“Ultimately, its sustainability will depend on the level of institutionalization discussed above and on the level of ownership felt by the community. In this sense, it is noteworthy that the high relevance of the project as perceived by the communities (including facilitators) makes their level of ownership very high”

MTR report, 2022

Also mentioned elsewhere in this document is the teams’ regular interest in working with other institutes and organizations to amplify the findings and results. In Zimbabwe, SD=HS worked with the Crop Breeding Institute (CBI) and ICRISAT, and with the University of Zimbabwe and Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences. As in Zambia or Peru, it was the national research institutes which provided germplasm to the different FFSs for their PPB work, as part of a collaboration agreement that is expected to continue. The team in Guatemala was able to join different participation spaces established by the local municipalities, while the one in Nepal went further with the signature of a detailed Memorandum of Understanding with the regional office of the Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives (MoLMAC). Oxfam Novib has also started working together with the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development (CIRAD) and the Collaborative Crop Research Programme (CCRP), funded by the McKnight Foundation, to continue developing the “farmer-researcher partnership model”, and continued developing the “Cultivating Change” project proposal, as a general framework for collaborative initiatives.

The establishment of strong partnerships and agreements led to the adoption of the FFS approach and of PPB as a way of working – as seen for example in the Zambia Agricultural Research Institute or in the regional efforts supported by the national authorities in Nepal. As shown by the MTR report, the best results in terms of institutionalization may be the one in Laos, where the project’s approach is fully integrated into the country’s national framework: “In this country, PPB is embedded in the national breeding program, and collaboration among stakeholders, including SD=HS, led to two new varieties³⁰ based on traditional varieties, but with double yield, that are now distributed in 5 of the biggest rice producing provinces”. A powerful element in this direction are the policy changes reported above: the approval of guidelines and regulations in Uganda, the decision to include PPB in the national extension programme in Zimbabwe, or the proposed modifications to Peruvian seed laws.

The biggest contributing factor, however, may be the skills and abilities developed by all those involved in the programme, and their commitment and willingness to continue. On average, 75% of all those interviewed at the end of an end-of-season evaluation mentioned their interest in being part of a new FFS process, feeling empowered to do so. There are now hundreds of master trainers and facilitators in the districts and provinces where SD=HS worked, with many of them already providing services to other projects and initiatives. And there are thousands of farmers who are now convinced of the enormous

contribution they make themselves, and who want to continue befitting their communities and themselves.

Beyond the BtBP Campaign

The combination of broad public awareness and mobilization, the policy changes at corporate level, and a strengthened collective of organized actors, whether these are labour unions, women groups or alliances, are important elements of sustainability as they establish a new frame, new rules for how the system functions. The policy and practice change of supermarkets, the inclusion of women in management roles in labour unions, the passing of inclusive, gender policies, are all examples of this. Additionally, the impact of some influencing efforts, such as the influence Brazilian unions had on adjusting the wages in the fruit sector in face of pressures on wages by fruit producers, ensures a long lasting effect of one action, on the living conditions of many. The combination of factors that allowed this to happen, such as Oxfam's existing relations with the fruit workers' union in Brazil, the public engagement generated by the campaign, Oxfam's partners in Brazil seizing the opportunity, and Oxfam's global network, is a formula that can be replicated in the coming years to reach further equality and fair retribution.



Wheat seed storage house of Janawatawaran cooperative.

Photo: LI-BIRD, Nepal.

We therefore see key elements of sustainability in the approaches that GROW has used in these past years. Partnering with local rural labor unions as key allies was key to deepen their involvement in the value chain processes beyond their traditional collective bargaining. By supporting unions in using certifications and collaborating strategically with supermarkets and food companies, their influence has broadened without deviating from their core activities.

It has also been important the targeting of large Brazilian supermarkets, as a policy win in these corporations has large reverberations across the industry, impacting their whole supply chain. These wins, go beyond the sustainability of an intervention, creating the momentum to change a number of policies at different levels, because of one policy change with one actor. We now also have, in countries such as Brazil and South Africa, a strong online supporter base among the public, who is both aware of the issues and committed to change. They represent a resource for future engagement. Finally public policy changes and amendments to government budgets, to increase labour inspections, or for aiding workers, both happening in Brazil and South Africa, have been other ways of ensuring sustainability.

Establishing a foundation for the future

These sustainability measures ensure that the impacts are enduring, with enhanced local capacities, strengthened community roles, and comprehensive policy integrations.

Oxfam's work on climate finance, with a biannual investment in the Shadow Climate Finance report, represents a lasting legacy which not only represents value for money, but has been recognized and used by a very wide spectrum of actors (and representatives of Climate Action Network and Demand Climate Justice, two broad alliances, both told Oxfam that this work is essential). The COP27 presidency also singled out the findings of Oxfam's shadow climate finance report. In 2023, at COP28, the first ever Global Stocktake on progress in the global fight against climate change, also referred to Oxfam's climate finance report.

The Land Rights Now campaign, whose coordinator has been hosted by Oxfam Novib since its inception more than 10 years ago, is, since 2023, hosted by the International Land Coalition. More recently, the African Climate Caravan was organized by Oxfam and 2 African partners organizations to build up pressure towards the African COP in Africa in 2022. It started with [national caravans](#) in over 25 African countries with over 150 civil society organizations these different countries taking part. A representative of the national caravans was invited to join COP27 and share their experiences and the steps taken to influence decision makers, with the results summarized in the [African Climate Caravan declaration](#). It was the first time for many of these organizations to work together in such a way, and most continued working together after 2022. Oxfam's role is very minimal these days, showing that we were able to make connections between CSO and they are now self-organizing and financing.

Similarly, at a national level, as seen in Uganda, partners have been crucial in reaching our common goals, and this build network is strong and can sustain itself beyond the project period. We have strengthened our partners' capacities to advocate, petition the government, and effectively interact with officials. Additionally, we have made investments in creating community structures that can promote and advocate for their rights.

There are also a set of methodologies and tools that Oxfam has invested in and shared with communities, national and local governments, and also with different organizations, all of whom are expected to develop them further. This includes, for example, gender action methodologies and the community engagement tools that have helped keep communities involved in Uganda, the openly accessible loss and damage dashboard in Bangladesh, now made more community friendly; or the People's NDC consultation process and the evaluations completed in Uganda and Bangladesh, all of which put in place a process of inclusion in institutional frameworks such as the NDCs.

Importantly, together with our partners, we took part in policy changes and policy formulations, for example with the Climate Bill in Uganda, but also worked to see policy changes in IFC and FMO, all of which are inherently sustainable because they have been institutionalized. These policies show an increased level of transparency and accountability. The support provided to communities in Liberia and Nepal will also strengthen them in the long term. The mediation and negotiation processes that they are part of, will hopefully yield compensation and solutions that will resolve their complaints definitively.

In general, the Sida2GROW project fostered a space where discussions which consider the perspective of all community members, particularly women, became common, addressing issues such as production, prices, nutrition, the general lack of rights over resources, and loss and damages. The women and youth who were part of the different dialogues continue to voice their demands and are interested in staying connected – and we have worked with government and private sector to better institutionalize these inclusive practices. Initiatives like plantation for embankment protection and climate-smart entrepreneurship in the community suggest an understanding and commitment to sustainable environmental practices. Maintaining the connections and engagements from communities will depend on the supporting efforts of the government and of private sector stakeholders.

GOVERNANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

While the implementation of the SeedsGROW programme was a joint responsibility of the team in The Hague, the different Oxfam country offices and our partner organizations, the contracting organization and recipient of the Sida grant was Oxfam Novib, and we were thus accountable for the results and deliverables, for all expenditures, and for all other contract obligations. Oxfam Novib signed detailed Partner Agreements (OPAs) with the country offices, and they signed annual contracts with the organizations running the different activities in every country, or with those implementing the national plans or influencing strategies.

As shown in the map in this same document, all activities were implemented in different parts of the world. The SD=HS project, with activities grouped around four pillars, ran at a global level and in eight countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America – namely Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Nepal, Laos, China, Peru and Guatemala. Only in 2023 the registration authority in China did not approve the project activities and funding, so work in China ended earlier. GROW also had a global focus, with in-country operations running first in Brazil, Pakistan, Thailand and Uganda, and in the last two years in Brazil, Bangladesh, South Africa and Uganda.

The programme was governed by the Sida Programme Governance Group (S-PGG), as the team responsible for making sure that the programme would follow the contract signed with Sida, providing guidance and ensuring synergies between the different components. Convening annually, this group reviewed and signed the inception plan, the annual plans, budgets and progress reports, and held the separate Steering Committees accountable for the implementation of all activities. The S-PGG was also to act as last resort in case of unforeseen issues or problems.

SeedsGROW also worked with an Account Manager, acting as the entry point and as the person responsible for all communications with the donor. Her role was to manage the partnership with Sida, to ensure that both projects were donor compliant, and to manage the overall risks. She served as the first point of contact for both projects.

Steering committees and PMUs

The SeedsGROW programme had two separate Steering Committees: one for SD=HS and one for GROW. In both cases, their role was to provide management guidance and oversight of the projects' progress, holding the Project Management Unit (PMU) and the main stakeholders to account. The Steering Committees monitored the regular progress made and the quality of all activities, approving the Annual Plans and the budget for each year, and also approving the annual progress reports. They also reviewed the reports made by the external evaluators (the Mid Term Reviews) and oversaw Oxfam's responses.

These committees met twice every year, following the agenda prepared by the chair and the project manager. In some cases, it was necessary to have an additional meeting, such as in 2020, when the annual plans needed to be updated to address the impacts of the COVID pandemic. A special session was also needed when SD=HS decided to discontinue its relationship with the partner organization it had been working with in Peru, or when GROW had to select new countries for the program, when two of the original countries closed the Oxfam country offices, as part of Oxfam's geographic re-prioritization.

In both cases, the day-to-day management of the project was the main responsibility of the PMU, as the team that brought the project manager, the financial officer, the MEAL officer and the person responsible for all communications together. The PMU ensured the successful completion of all activities, remaining permanently in touch with all country offices and partner organizations.

Risk management

Oxfam Novib has a quality management system in place that complies with various external quality standards, such as ISO 9001-2015 or the PARTOS standard for the development cooperation sector in The Netherlands, and which guided the SeedsGROW processes and procedures. It complies with the Good

Governance code of the Dutch Cooperating Philanthropic Branch Organizations (SBF) and is a member of Accountability Now, a cross-sector platform for civil society organizations operating in different countries. Needless to say, it also uses internal audits to monitor compliance with its own policies and procedures, and is periodically subject to external audits. As described in this document, all expenditures have been audited every year.

Oxfam Novib also maintains a risk register which identifies the internal and external risks, classifies them, and defines and monitors the necessary mitigation management measures. At a country level, risk management is part of the strategic planning process, and SeedsGROW was no exception. As was outlined in the original project proposal, the intended approach was to “actively manage risks in ways that allow staff to remain present and effective in their work”. A detailed risk analysis was conducted in each of the project countries, analysing the main differences in perception, exposure and consequences. Every annual plan included a list with the potential internal and external risks, giving values to their likelihood and possible impact, and also detailing the risk measures to take. The first risk analysis considered the possible lack of political will, the opposition of the commercial seed sector or of other stakeholders, a lack of interest of consumers to participate in some campaigns, a decreasing level of governmental support and a shrinking space for civil society organizations, or the insufficient technical capacities in the programme teams. The teams closely monitored the political situation in every country in coordination with the local partner organizations, and could adjust the steps to take. We planned to engage all stakeholders, collecting evidence and demonstrating the added value of the different steps. Only in 2023 in China the programme could not be continued due to absence of approval of activities by the Chinese registration authority.

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In situ evaluation, feeding the PPB training process in Uganda.

Photo: Joshua Enyetu

Key governance moments

Together with the whole world, we were taken by surprise by the COVID pandemic in 2020. The measures put in place by all governments made it very difficult to travel or to hold meetings and public events, and therefore limiting most of the activities that were planned. These also carried the risk of putting staff and participants at risk, so it was necessary to update the 2020 operational plan and to adjust the ways of working. All travel plans were cancelled and most face-to-face meetings and events were replaced by online sessions. It was necessary to reallocate budgets and to rely on the programmes, platforms and services available to hold webinars, training sessions and team discussions virtually.

Another continuous risk was that of natural hazards and the consequences of climate change. Many of the farmers who joined the different Farmer Field Schools saw their fields flooded or went through periods of severe drought, being unable to continue with their trials and losing their crops. While our work was meant to respond to climate change and to support the rural communities that will be most affected, it was not always possible to complete the steps that were planned when these same communities were already being so severely affected.

In Sida2GROW, there has been a transition in countries of implementation after 2021, due to the closing of the Oxfam country offices in Pakistan and Thailand. The work done in 2019-2021 in these countries was transitioned to partners and allies who continue the work. Three new countries were included in the annual plan of 2022 (India, South Africa and Bangladesh), after a comprehensive selection process designed to ensure that the countries selected hit the ground running and were able to deliver tangible results in 2022. India, South Africa and Bangladesh were chosen because of robust existing national campaigns, and a stronger fit with Oxfam's new Global Strategic Framework.

The India country office and partners were meant to work on the food value chains in tea plantations. However, as was reported in the Annual Plan for 2023 and in meetings with Sida and other colleagues, the Oxfam India Country Office was denied the renewal of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act license by the Government at the end of 2021. This license is a requirement to receive foreign funding. Despite attempts to reverse the decision, and to find alternative solutions to continue the planned operations, we could not reach a feasible outcome, and therefore activities could not take place. These incidents are further evidence of how fragile the space for civil society has become in recent years and how important it is to remain vigilant and intentional in supporting and advocating for those that are impacted by laws and actions to shrink civic space. The budget allocation that was meant for Oxfam India was re-allocated to other activities, mainly related to the implementation of the MTR recommendations.

We also saw staff rotations and changes in the teams, with inevitable delays and difficulties in the general contract management processes, transfer of funds, or audits and reports. And while we foresaw a shrinking civil space and general difficulties for individuals and organizations to express their voice, the degree of political instability seen in many countries during the past few years exceeded the teams' initial forecasts. While different factors were involved (the COVID pandemic and the general economic crisis that followed it, the war in Europe and the changes it brought to the international value chains), it was their combined effect which had a very negative impact.

But while we were not fully prepared for such a difficult context, it is also possible to say that our risk management strategies worked, and helped us not just respond to the challenges and difficulties, but also ensure positive results that are presented in this report. This was largely because of the guidelines and procedures in place, working hand-in-hand with the new communication tools and platforms available. Most of all, this was because of the interest and commitment of all those involved.

SYNERGIES

Both SD=HS and GROW worked towards a common vision: a global food system that is just and sustainable, that supports the rights of small-scale producers, that guarantees food and nutrition security and that promotes the sustainable management of the world's natural resources and biodiversity. Both were meant to contribute to several of the Sustainable Development Goals (especially Goal 2, to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture) and were shaped by Sida's objective of ensuring that the most vulnerable are empowered and increase their quality of life. This was the framework that shaped all activities.

But in addition to sharing a common view, as mentioned in the original project proposal, the intention was that both components would work together in different ways. One of these was to elevate the voices of the communities we worked with to advocate for and participate in shaping policy that affected them. An example of this is the story of Margaret Masudio – the small-scale farmer from Adjumani in Uganda who was one of the facilitators at the local Farmer Field School and who joined the COP26 in Glasgow, emphasizing the importance of local knowledge and diversity for food security and as the best “ingredient” against climate change. The story of Margaret is that of thousands of men and women who were part of the different Farmer Field Schools in eight countries, which we tried to capture through our documentation, advocacy and communications work, helping Oxfam and our partners organizations, to position ourselves and argue for change at different levels.

A broader picture

The plans and activities that were part of SD=HS and GROW also benefitted from and contributed to other Oxfam Novib projects. During the first years, the list included the Right to Food Program, as part of a strategic partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Together Against Poverty (TAP) project funded by the Gates Foundation, and the Gender Transformative and Responsible Agribusiness Investments in South East Asia (GRAISEA), funded by Sida. Later on, in 2021, SD=HS and GROW supported Oxfam's engagement with the Committee on World Food Security and the Global Adaptation Summit.

The SeedsGROW activities also helped shape different tools, methods and approaches, later tried and followed by other projects: those aiming at a better understanding of the consequences of unequal power relations, those helping strengthen the capacities of national teams to implement and monitor evidence-based campaigns, or those to address women's needs and preferences in a project, such as the Gender Action Learning System (GALS). Just as important, the lessons and insights emerging also helped Oxfam Novib shape new project proposals, and ensure that they were successful. One of these proposals led to the “Fair for All” project, focusing on the development of value chains in 13 countries; another one took shape as the “African Activists for Climate Justice” project. Two years later, and also building on the main lessons shared during the Mid Term Reviews, Oxfam completed and started piloting its “People's Landscape Approach”, with a strong focus on a region's local agrobiodiversity, land tenure issues and climate finance- elements that brought SD=HS and GROW themes together in one approach.

Lastly, and especially after the Mid Term Reviews, both projects shared information and worked together in the development of a common action plan. Some key areas of synergy that were identified were the “People's NDCs”, which was piloted in 2023 and followed up by multi-country research. The aim is to work towards NDCs that provide climate finance to farmers and communities for a just agricultural transition. Other areas of synergy are between farmers and the Makhadzi Food Campaign, in which rural women and their priorities are at the center. An area that was identified already by the Makhadzi collective for action is, for example, a pesticides campaign. These different initiatives and ideas came together in a joint concept note which, under one Theory of Change, a common vision and an integrated results framework, presents a set of interventions to support the rights of small-scale farmers and indigenous communities, a path to defend their land rights, and a strategy towards climate justice. This culminated in the development of an integrated, multi-donor program titled “Cultivating Change in a Warming World” which has been shared with Sida and other donors.

FINANCE

In the period between 2019-2023, the SeedsGROW project had a total expenditure of EUR 21,694,375, including ICR. Compared to the total income received (EUR 22,258,134), represents 97% absorption, excluding closing cost and including currency exchange gains (see exchange gains and losses table). The tables below show the consolidated overview per outcome. Accounting principles used by Oxfam in projects are on a cash basis, unless specified otherwise. The high expenditure rate is in part explained by the flexibility provided by Sida in allowing a no-cost extension due to the impact of COVID, and having closure costs included for the period January-June, 2024. Additionally, the opportunity of working on a program with an extended duration (5 years), following a first phase, allowed for a level of continuity, predictability, and learned experience which was reflected in progressive improvements in budgeting and expenditure.

Cash flow and foreign exchange gains and losses

During the implementation of the project Oxfam Novib received SEK 235,000,000 equivalent to EUR 22,258,134, disbursed by SIDA along the years of the project.

During the implementation period of the project, there were ups and downs in the exchange rates between SEK and EUR. Despite this, as for December 2023, an accumulated exchange rate gain has been registered (EUR 77,167).

Considering the above-mentioned exchange rate difference, up until the end of year 5, and actual expenditure for both program components, the cash-flow balance remaining on 31 December 2023 can be calculated as EUR 563,759. This amount includes the budget for closing, forecasted as EUR 462,941 (including ICR), and returning currency change gains (EUR 77,167) leaving then an expected final cash-flow balance of EUR 23,651.

Table 1. SEEDSGROW FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	Budget 2019-2022 EUR	2019 Audited actuals EUR	2020 Audited actuals EUR	2021 Audited actuals EUR	2022 Audited actuals EUR	Balance 2019-2022	Original Budget 2023	2023			
								Adjusted Budget EUR (approved)	Actuals EUR	Variance to Budget	Absorption
SD=HS											
Direct contract management cost	2,490,296	551,972	604,671	507,553	620,725	205,375	667,326	667,326	660,247	3,449	99%
MEAL	672,402	48,499	101,887	264,029	251,256	6,730	531,264	531,264	298,063	233,201	56%
Outcome 1: Farmers crop diversity management.	3,664,758	582,329	765,740	1,041,614	996,631	278,444	798,324	798,324	643,991	154,333	81%
Outcome 2: Farmer seed enterprises	1,424,749	241,955	254,209	428,078	557,647	(57,140)	501,769	501,769	372,952	128,817	74%
Outcome 3: Nutrition and local food plants	1,979,507	246,421	464,519	518,751	568,061	181,754	419,412	419,412	441,086	(21,674)	105%
Outcome 4: An enabling policy environment	1,161,841	155,681	258,331	346,718	464,612	(63,501)	381,905	381,905	397,240	(15,335)	104%
Total SDHS	11,393,553	1,826,858	2,449,358	3,106,744	3,458,931	551,662	3,300,000	3,300,000	2,813,579	482,791	85%
GROW											
Direct contract management cost	626,956	143,945	164,940	153,069	149,800	15,202	159,038	209,038	189,910	19,128	91%
MEAL	268,763	14,633	32,587	63,377	107,566	50,599	92,590	83,449	19,636	63,812	24%

Outcome 1: International campaigns											
Pathway 1: Global private sector actors	925,490	169,177	230,038	226,399	232,457	67,418	188,824	192,205	209,399	(17,194)	109%
Pathway 2: International and financial institutions	328,232	66,567	82,929	68,757	71,414	38,565	91,671	101,950	76,398	25,552	75%
Pathway 3: National governments multi. fora	892,043	238,445	199,646	220,825	267,305	[34,178]	286,050	326,994	345,026	(18,031)	106%
Outcome 2: National campaigns											
Pathway 1: Global private sector actors	1,481,065	217,794	397,891	356,724	269,754	238,902	254,498	279,885	268,547	11,338	96%
Pathway 2: International and financial institutions		-	-	-	-	-		-	-	-	
Pathway 3: National governments multi. fora	974,542	231,926	246,924	281,725	285,291	[71,324]	296,729	311,647	284,680	26,967	91%
Small campaign opportunities fund		-	34,143	-	-	[34,143]	-	-	-	-	
Total GR0W	5,497,091	1,082,487	1,389,099	1,370,878	1,383,587	271,040	1,369,400	1,505,168	1,393,596	111,571	93%
Total SeedsGR0W Direct expenditure	16,890,644	2,909,345	3,838,456	4,477,621	4,842,518	822,704	4,669,400	4,805,168	4,207,175	594,362	88%
Indirect expenditure: adminfee7%	1,182,345	203,654	268,692	313,434	338,976	57,589	326,858	336,362	294,502	41,605	88%
Grand total SeedsGR0W	18,072,989	3,112,999	4,107,148	4,791,055	5,181,494	880,293	4,996,258	5,141,529	4,501,678	635,968	88%

Table 2. CASH FLOW

	Grants to receive (budgeted exchange rate)		Grants received (actual exchange rate)		FX result on donor grants
	SEK	EUR	SEK	EUR	EUR
2019					
SD=HS	26,981,927	2,566,548	26,981,927	2,576,101	9,553
GROW	13,018,073	1,238,292	13,018,073	1,242,901	4,609
Total 2019	40,000,000	3,804,840	40,000,000	3,819,002	14,162
FX rate		10.51		10.47	
2020					
SD=HS	35,413,779	3,368,594	35,413,779	3,348,245	(20,349)
GROW	17,086,221	1,625,258	17,086,221	1,615,440	(9,818)
Total 2020	52,500,000	4,993,853	52,500,000	4,963,685	(30,167)
FX rate		10.51		10.58	
2021					
SD=HS	38,550,074	3,667,942	38,550,074	3,794,857	126,915
GROW	13,949,926	1,327,300	13,949,926	1,377,836	50,536
Total 2021	52,500,000	4,995,242	52,500,000	5,172,693	177,451
FX rate		10.51		10.15	
2022					
SD=HS	27,218,372	2,589,039	27,218,372	2,551,121	(37,918)
GROW	17,781,628	1,691,406	17,781,628	1,682,733	(8,673)
Total 2022	45,000,000	4,280,445	45,000,000	4,233,854	(46,591)
FX rate		10.51		10.57	
2023					
SD=HS	30,150,000	2,751,414	30,150,000	2,726,163	(25,251)
GROW	14,850,000	1,355,174	14,850,000	1,342,737	(12,437)
Total 2023	45,000,000	4,106,588	45,000,000	4,068,900	(37,688)
FX rate		10.96		11.06	
Total funds received up to Dec. 2023	235,000,000	22,180,968	235,000,000	22,258,134	77,167

Table 3. EXCHANGE RATE DIFFERENCE IN SEK

Overall spending	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Cumulative
SD=HS direct programme spending	1,826,858	2,449,358	3,106,744	3,458,931	2,813,579	13,655,470
GROW direct programme spending	1,082,487	1,389,099	1,370,878	1,383,587	1,393,596	6,619,647
ICR (7%)	203,654	268,692	313,434	338,976	294,502	1,419,258
Overall spending (EUR)	3,112,999	4,107,149	4,791,056	5,181,494	4,501,677	21,694,375
Overall spending (SEK budgeted rate)	32,726,727	43,178,142	50,353,988	54,472,661	49,329,389	230,060,907
Overall spending (SEK actual rate)	32,605,370	43,440,561	48,629,208	54,753,427	49,786,300	229,214,866
Exchange-rate difference on actual spending in SEK	121,357	(262,419)	1,724,780	(280,766)	(456,911)	846,041

Table 4. BALANCE OF INCOME VERSUS EXPENDITURES CUMMULATIVE

Balance of income versus expenditures as per 31 December 2023	TOTAL EUR
Total donor income received	22,258,134
Total actual expenditure (direct plus indirect)	21,694,375
Balance	563,759

ANNEX 1:

SD=HS RESULTS IN 2023

Activities in 2023 were planned as part of a one-year extension of the programme, as an opportunity to consolidate the results seen so far. The general intention was to follow the recommendations made by the 2021 Mid Term Review, and to ensure the long-lasting impact, scale and sustainability of the programme. In short, the teams set out to strengthen the level of coordination and integration among the different pillars; to strengthen the programme's policy practice influencing component; to maximize the programme's demonstrative value; and to ensure a degree of continuation and sustainability. Only in China, unfortunately, did the programme had to close prematurely, as the registration authority did not approve the plans that were made by the team.

OUTCOME 1: FARMERS CROP DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

During the last year of the programme, all those who were part of the different FFSs running in different countries were able to consolidate, and in some cases expand, their achievements, sharing seeds of improved varieties and lines with other FFSs in other regions, including some newly established ones. A considerable flow of materials from the formal breeding programmes to the FFSs kept feeding new cycles of farmer-led processes (evaluation/selection trials), strengthening farmer/breeder collaborations. At the same time, following a trend which had already started in the previous year, many of the PPB/FFS embarked upon seed production and marketing pilot initiatives, to render their selection and breeding efforts sustainable into the future. The work of the numerous CSBs was further upscaled thanks to the creation or strengthening of CSB networks and/or collaborative agreements with local/national institutions. In a number of countries, the FFS methodology is now being adopted and is becoming the "normal" way of working of those working with farmers and their seed systems. Most importantly, new or improved seed diversity has been injected or disseminated into the local seed/food systems, empowering farmers to truly enhance their livelihood options and adapt to climate change.

Outcome	Planned	Achieved
Resilient indigenous and farming communities reached	12,700 households were planned to be reached by the benefits of the work under Outcome 1.	27,234 households (with at least 50% women and girls) were reached in 2023 – excluding data from Uganda. Of these, 16,939 households had better access to/use of diverse seeds thanks to the PPB activities (data from Uganda and Peru missing). China did not implement any activity in 2023.
Output	Planned	Achieved
Expansion of the network of FFS	Consolidation of existing FFS, e.g. by looking at sustainability beyond PPB activities. A small number of new FFS (~10) to formalize institutional partnerships, for example with the national breeding institutes in Peru and Zambia	982 FFS have been established by now, of which at least 360 during 2023, according to the data received from countries. Women constitute over 60% of the total. Many of the PPB FFS embarked on seed production and marketing pilot initiatives, to render their selection and breeding efforts sustainable into the future.
	Formal graduation of the 667 facilitators from TOTs, of which at least 60% are women	At least 260 new facilitators were trained in 2023, the number being likely higher due to missing data from some countries.

Institutional support (key stakeholders contribute to farmers' access to new plant genetic resources)	Agreements on collaboration / institutionalization of the FFS approach for eight countries	<p>At least 14 cases of public sector institutions adopted or institutionalized an FFS approach. In Zambia, an MOU was signed with the national public research institute, ZARI, that has provided for participation of breeders in PPB and access to early generation seed (EGS) for use in PPB and FFS seed production. The MOU also includes access to national genebank germplasm and information.</p> <p>In Zimbabwe, CTDI signed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with ICRISAT, CIMMYT, Ministry of Lands Agriculture, Fisheries, Water Climate and Rural Development and Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (MUASt). In Uganda, MOUs have been signed between district farmer field school networks and district local governments to establish and strengthen relationships with research institutions like NaCCRI.</p> <p>In Peru, partnerships were formalized with public and private institutions to promote the operation of FFS and the training of FFS facilitators. In 2023, Nepalese Ministry of Agriculture, with whom LI-BIRD had entered an MoU in 2022, allocated approximately 2 million rupees for FFS on PPB, demonstrating a continued commitment. Three TOTs on FFS on PPB have been conducted in government training centers, targeting AKC chiefs and field technicians</p>
	Over 250 climate-resilient segregated populations and stable lines distributed to FFS from breeding and research institutions, gene banks, community seed banks and farmers' fields	Over 800 between stable lines and segregating populations were distributed to FFS on PPB in 2023 from a variety of sources
Capacity to adapt to climate change	New varieties developed by FFS with the traits needed to cope with flooding, drought, salinity, pests and diseases	56 local varieties or landraces were improved through PVE in a variety of crops across countries, and 28 stable populations of sorghum or pearl millet were obtained through PVD in Zambia and Zimbabwe. These results span more than just 2023, since both efforts last longer than one year. The main traits that farmers targeted in their breeding efforts were indeed climate adaptive traits
IPSHF have established and strengthened community seed banks	Over 35 community seed banks in eight countries strengthened	A total of 32 new community seed banks were established in 2023. This does not include the CSBs from Peru and Uganda – the total number of CSBs is therefore even larger. In some countries, such as Guatemala and Nepal, considerable effort was spent on strengthening the existing CSBs and/or creating a stronger network for their operations

OUTCOME 2: FARMER SEED ENTERPRISES

In 2023 the country teams in Guatemala, Nepal and Zimbabwe continued supporting the different Farmer Seed Enterprises they had been working with, with various strategies to professionalize and strengthen all operations. The teams running different Farmer Field Schools completed the implementation of a second season of activities, further enhancing the capacities of all participants and developing the

necessary structures to govern each group. The total number of FFSs grew to 77, drawing from the already-established FFSs on PPB or nutrition. The different FSE and FFS models supported the production of 1,906 MT of seed which was sold through various market channels. The development of strong partnerships between key value chain actors remained central to both FSE and FFS operations. Central to this were efforts to support the sustainability of all interventions beyond the programme's timeframe, in particular ensuring their access to foundation seed. A thorough analysis of the steps taken and the results seen with both FSEs and FFSs was completed and validated, documenting the different teams' experiences in implementing the different seed production and marketing models. Pillar integration saw the completion of a local food plants pilot initiative in Zambia, Uganda and Zimbabwe. This pilot, while short, included capacity building sessions for master trainers, facilitators, and participating farmers. A briefing note and two webinars on "women, land and seed business" were carried out to share insights and lessons.

Outcome	Planned	Achieved
Indigenous peoples and smallholder farmers with increased market access to high-quality seeds	Indigenous people and smallholder farmers enhance their livelihoods, income and seed security through improved production and market access	An estimated total of 25,000 households were reached and had access to appropriate good quality seeds. A total of 1,906 MT of seed was produced and sold within the FSE and FFS responding to market demand
Output	Planned	Achieved
Piloting and strengthening FSE models	Strengthened technical and organizational capacities in the existing FSEs	Nine FSEs strengthened on seed production and marketing established: one in China, 3 in Nepal 4 in Guatemala and one Zimbabwe. Support focused professionalization of the FSE covering business skill training, market promotion activities, access to finance and insurance from financial institutions for seed value chain operations
	Documentation/case study of FSE models China, Guatemala, Nepal and Zimbabwe	One study conducted to gain insight into what model works best and under what conditions. This analysis showed that the achievements permissible are context specific and that in their respective contexts the FSE have had a positive impact on the seed availability and access, while also providing an income to participating seed growers
	Commercialization of neglected and under-utilized species (NUS) piloted and documented in Uganda and Zambia	NUS commercialization pilot conducted and documented in Zimbabwe, Uganda and Zambia. With this initiative, female farmers working in the nutrition FFS gained basic understanding of markets, worked on creating demand and learned to produce seeds of cleome, amaranth, and other local food plants
Strengthened capacities of farmers to produce quality seeds	1 Illustrated guide module on seed business / Revision of FFS Guide and Toolkit	An illustrated module was developed on the Analysis of the seed market and crop selection for easier use by FFS facilitators.
	Revised seed production and marketing FFS guide and toolkit implemented in Nepal, Peru, Zambia, Uganda and Zimbabwe	The FFS Field Guide on Seed Production and Marketing was revised and made accessible on the SD=HS website. Country teams translated and adapted this guide as needed, and it was used during the country TOTs and throughout the FFS season
	Online capacity development trainings (Master Trainers and Facilitators)	One online training and 2 in-country training courses were completed, in addition to a refresher Training of Trainers (TOT) session in all FFS countries

Strengthened capacity of farmers' organisations to meet commercial standards in seed processing, storage, quality control, packaging and distribution	30 existing PPB FFSs now engaging in seed production and marketing, improving local level seed supply	A total of 77 FFSs on seed production and marketing implemented: 25 in Nepal, 21 in Zimbabwe, 13 in Uganda, 10 in Zambia and 4 in Peru
	2,500 farmers trained in processing, storage and distribution of quality seeds	A total of 3,567 farmers trained in seed production and marketing, ensuring high quality seed production and successful seed inspection and ultimately marketing and distribution
National and global institutions have supported development of FSE models	At least five partnerships supporting smallholder farmer seed production and marketing in respective countries	Eleven partnerships across countries maintained with various value chain actors, strengthening opportunities for participating partners beyond the project period
Volume (tonnage) of seeds produced and distributed (including farmer varieties)	No fixed target	1,906 MT of seed were produced and sold, diffusing both registered improved varieties and farmer varieties into the market. This included select local food plants. Varieties coming out of PPB work were also successfully marketed locally

OUTCOME 3: NUTRITION AND LOCAL FOOD PLANTS

The year 2023 marked the end of the implementation of work on local food plants and nutrition. During the year, focus was on consolidation of FFS work through refresher trainings and knowledge sharing. To strengthen the capacity of more than 325 facilitators and master trainers, a total of 5 simplified guides were finalized and shared with country partners and SD=HS networks. We shared with partners and published the results of the diagnostic exercises and baseline studies. These results, compiled in 8 briefing notes, revealed valuable information regarding the importance of local food plants and their impact in the implementing communities. The team published a book describing the 100 most important underutilized local food plants. We hope the book is going to contribute to increased attention on the role of local food plants for healthy and affordable diets, and improved nutrition of indigenous peoples and smallholder farmers in Africa, Asia and Latin America. It is expected that communities will get insights of what is available in their local environment, what is found in other regions and how these local food plants are used. All these efforts laid the foundation for the institutionalization and sustainable integration of the different steps taken to support the production and consumption of local food plants.

Outcome	Planned	Achieved
Strengthened coping strategies of communities through the use of local food plants	Increase the number of households benefitting through their participation in FFS	More than 21,500 households benefit from more diverse and healthy diets, compared to less than 13,000 in 2022
Output	Planned	Achieved
Identification of major problems associated with food and nutrition insecurity, as well as coping strategies in SD=HS project sites	Assessment of importance of local food plants for nutrition, based on diagnostic and baseline studies (as input for 3.3)	The baseline and diagnostic studies were analyzed and the results on the importance of local food plants were compiled in 8 briefing note reports, shared with the country partners and published on the website

Strengthening the capacity of IPSHF (including at least 50% women) in the management and sustainable use of NUS	Country visits and consolidation of national pool of master trainers and facilitators to hand over tools and processes	More than 325 facilitators and master trainers received refresher training and field guides to consolidate their capacity so that they can continue with the work when the project ends
	Illustrated guide modules will engage partners and allow them to continue after 2023	Five illustrated guides on the FFS modules were finalized and shared with the country partners and with the SD=HS network
	Consolidation of 308 FFSs on local food plants	A total of 318 FFS on local food plants and nutrition were consolidated through refresher trainings, and strengthening sustainability frameworks
	Support for community seed banks, concerts, and food fairs	More than 12,500 households participated in community seed banking activities, and UN World Food Day celebrations. A seed and food caravan was also organized in Uganda to raise awareness and to promote consumption of local food plants
The knowledge and role of farmers – particularly women – in the sustainable management and use of NUS and their importance for nutrition is documented, recognized and shared	FFS end of season evaluation workshops (cross-pillar)	End-of-season evaluations at the FFS and national levels allowed communities and partners to assess the FFS's progress towards achieving their set objectives, comprehension, and challenges with the curriculum, FFS functioning and development of sustainability plans. Cross-generational dialogues were also held to enable knowledge sharing. Food and seed fairs, exchange learning visits, radio talks were also used to share knowledge
	Impact analysis, examining the importance of local food plants for nutrition, based on diagnostic and baseline surveys	The results of the baseline and diagnostic analyses revealed valuable information regarding the importance of local food plants and their impact in the implementing communities
	Book on underutilized local food plants developed and published	The book describing the 100 most important underutilized local food plants was finalized and published. This is now available online

OUTCOME 4: AN ENABLING POLICY ENVIRONMENT

Two policy changes were achieved in Nepal, where LI-BIRD supported the development and endorsement of a five-year Agro-Biodiversity and Organic Farming Development Strategy in the Gandaki province, and also contributed to the drafting and adoption of the provincial Seed Act 2023 in the province of Sudurpaschim, which mainstreams participatory plant breeding, community seed banks, and farmer seed enterprises. Programme partners from Guatemala, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe joined the 10th Governing Body meeting of the FAO Treaty, presenting best-practices and lessons-learned from the programme and lobbying their country negotiators to strengthen (inter)national support for Farmers' Rights. Unfortunately, some farmer representatives from Uganda and Nepal did not receive an entry visa and could therefore not share their needs and experiences with the international community gathering in Rome.

Outcome	Planned	Achieved
Policy makers and other stakeholders	25 for 2019-2022 programme period	The Nepal team achieved 2 policy changes on the provincial level: It supported the development and

support an enabling policy and institutional environment		endorsement of a five-year Agro-Biodiversity and Organic Farming Development Strategy in Gandaki and contributed to the drafting and adoption of the provincial Seed Act 2023 in Sudurpaschim
Output	Planned	Achieved
The consequences of existing policies and laws on smallholder farmers, and effective strategies to change them, are analysed and documented	Flowcharts that visualise both the bottlenecks and possible solutions in national variety release and seed certification procedures will be developed for use in all pillars for learning and influencing	Based on country learnings from Nepal, Laos, Zambia, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, flowcharts were developed and presented during various international meetings, including GB10 . An academic article on 'Developing a Registration System for Farmers' Varieties' has been submitted and will be used to support policymakers and other stakeholders interested in implementing such system
Improved awareness, capacities and/or political will of policymakers and other stake-holders to support an enabling environment for farmers' seed systems and Farmers' Rights	SD=HS country teams will share local and national challenges and learnings, based on programme implementation, with an international audience of policymakers and seed experts during GB10. The programme will lobby for an improved Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-Sharing and stronger implementation of Farmers' Rights	Several programme partners participated and shared their experiences during GB10 in Rome. ASOCUCH from Guatemala has been part of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Farmers' Rights, which was reconvened at GB10 and tasked to prepare and review the assessment of the state of implementation of Article 9 of the International Treaty . The Zambia programme team and its experiences and best practices implementing Farmers' Rights were presented by the Zambian FAO focal point during the Global Symposium on Farmers' Rights in India
Strengthened capacities of IPSHF and their organizations to claim a role in policy making	Programme countries will continue to invest in trainings for smallholder farmers to build a larger constituency of 'policy champions' to voice their needs and demand recognition of their rights	The Uganda team organized a seed caravan and policy discourse to provide a platform for experiential learning, dialogue, knowledge sharing and policy influencing, bringing many farmers and (local) policy makers together. Lucinda is one of the farmers that was trained by the programme in Peru. She is now demanding change and contributed to development of a public policy proposal that supports family farming and traditional seed systems, highlighting the role of native seeds
Innovative strategies and solutions to improve policies and practices developed	The programme will continue its efforts to convince UPOV members about the need to create legal space for smallholder farmers to use, exchange and trade farm-saved seeds of protected varieties, to improve their seed and food security	UPOV member countries failed to take significant steps to expand the exception for small-scale farmers regarding the use of protected seeds for private and non-commercial use, as Oxfam has been advocating for. During its annual meeting in Geneva, the contracting parties did not reach an agreement after one and a half years of negotiations on this topic. This is a missed opportunity to bring this international convention more in line with global sustainable development and human rights goals
Existing policies and/or new solutions implemented through pilots or other means	A cross-country working group will assess lessons learnt of the various country pilots on the registration of farmer varieties	The cross-country and cross-pillar policy working group met several times online, and come together in Ethiopia to share the programme learnings regarding the registration of farmers' varieties in Laos and other countries
Building alliances for stronger support for Farmers' Rights and farmers' seed systems	A new global alliance will be explored to promote farmers' access to gene bank materials of the CGIAR and participatory approaches within its breeding programmes	Together with CGIAR, Oxfam and CDTT Zimbabwe organized a webinar on improving smallholder farmers' and NGOs' access to gene bank materials . A follow-up meeting was organized during GB10 with the aim to establish stronger links between CGIAR and FOs and NGOs

ANNEX 2:

GROW IN 2023

The 2023 plan was shaped by a fast-changing external context, influenced by the persisting COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine and the deepening climate crisis. But it was also shaped by the steps taken during the previous years and the results seen, and the main lessons drawn. And it also followed the recommendations given by the Mid Term Review. In short, this considered (i) our interest in remaining persistent and consistent in speaking out against policies, practices, and investments that contribute to climate change, food insecurity and land rights violations, and doing this from a space of knowledge, expertise and representation of those most impacted, and by offering alternatives; (ii) the need to evolve GROW's strategies and tactics where this would allow us to increase impact; and (iii) the intention to implement the MTR recommendations and apply the lessons and recommendations drawn from the Gender and Youth review.

PATHWAY 1: GLOBAL PRIVATE SECTOR ACTORS

The first pathway aimed to influence and reform food systems globally, focusing on policy changes and practices by private sector actors. A key milestone in 2023 was the establishment of a Feminist Food Collective following the "Feminist Food Convening 2023" in Mozambique. This collective includes over 60 activists and social movements from 30 countries, continuing to meet bi-weekly to drive systemic change in food systems. The group's focus has been on ensuring a just agricultural transition for women and communities, and several members participated in the World Social Forum in Kathmandu in 2024. Additionally, Oxfam's advocacy led to significant commitments from major U.K., U.S. and European food retailers for fair labor practices, notably a living wage for workers, and stronger gender policies. The campaign's efforts extended to the national level in Brazil and South Africa, mobilizing millions and prompting commitments from local retailers to adopt fairer and more sustainable practices.

National efforts in Brazil and South Africa were particularly notable. In Brazil, public campaigning reached over 200,000 people and led to policy commitments from major retailers such as Grupo Pão de Açúcar and Carrefour. In South Africa, the Agriculture Agro-processing Master Plan (AAMP) was the focus of action with Oxfam monitoring its implementation by government. Commitments were secured from local supermarkets to support smallholder farmers, and public awareness campaigns engaged millions to demand a more equitable food system. These national-level successes demonstrate the tangible impact of Oxfam's advocacy in promoting systemic changes within food value chains.

Intermediary outcome	Planned	Achieved
Global level		
1.1 A food influencing alliance is established with an active network, to improve policy and practice of private sector actors	A food influencing alliance is initiated with an active network, to improve policy and practice of private sector actors	Over 60 activists, social movements, and women food producers from over 30 countries gathered in March, in Mozambique for the " Feminist Food Convening 2023 ". They agreed to form a Feminist Food Collective and continued to meet every 6 weeks .
1.2 At least six food companies that operate globally are implementing	At least one food company with global links will either make new commitments to change policies or	Nine major UK food retailers announced on 1 st March 2023 their commitment to a living wage for banana workers in their supply chains

commitments to change policies or practices, in response to Oxfam's campaign	practices or implement its commitments in response to Oxfam's advocacy	<p>The Superlist Social (a supermarkets' scorecard largely based on the BtBP methodology) in the Netherlands was published in May 2023 by Oxfam with Questionmark and Solidaridad. Oxfam Novib has been asked to provide inputs into the double materiality analysis for four supermarkets and one company following the new EU CSRD legislative requirements</p> <p>The Lieferkettengesetz filed a complaint against Edeka and Rewe for workers' rights abuses in their banana supply chains. Aldi and Lidl decided to rather engage with Oxfam and its partner labour unions in Ecuador and Costa Rica to seek to jointly address the issues raised</p> <p>A cocoa influencing strategy meeting took place in Accra in September 2023. This meeting fed into a coordinated influencing strategy, with CSOs in Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire as well as in the global North</p>
National level		
1.3 In Brazil (India), and South Africa, the campaign has reached 4.5 million people and mobilized 25,000 consumers to demand a fairer and more sustainable food system	In Brazil, national public campaigning actions will reach 120,000 people. The actions from the Regional Food Security Summit will translate to broader public awareness on a just food transition.	<p>The campaign in Brazil reached more than 200 thousand people https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xK6CGD6rjM https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-2CX7pauzI</p> <p>10,000 people took action via the e-book strategy. https://materiais.oxfam.org.br/dignidade-na-comida-ja-trabalho-escravo https://materiais.oxfam.org.br/dignidade-na-comida-ja-agrotoxicos</p> <p>Oxfam Brazil developed a series of news articles and podcasts on fruit production and its impacts in Brazil and also on the connection of big investors and Brazilian agribusiness. In South Africa, 2 million people reached globally by the campaign</p>
1.4 Strengthened multi-stakeholder platforms with active participation of leading retailers, consumer organizations and food producer companies	South African Government implements the Agriculture Agro-processing Master Plan (AAMP) and the plans of the department are aligned with the AAMP	Oxfam South Africa carried out the following influencing opportunities: (a) monitoring the implementation of the Agriculture Agro-processing Master Plan (AAMP), (b) monitoring of the Presidential Poverty Alleviation Acceleration Plan, (c) development of the Care Policy, and (d) development of South Africa's BHR Shadow Report. These activities will inform a roundtable with government and supermarkets on the AAMP.
1.5 At least four national retailers located in or sourcing from Brazil and South Africa have made commitments to change policies or practices, to contribute to more equal and sustainable food value chains	<p>At least one supermarket in Brazil will either make new commitments to change policies or improve its practices in implementing its commitments in response to Oxfam's advocacy.</p> <p>In South Africa, at least one retailer commits to change policies or improve practices for more equal and sustainable value chains</p>	<p>In Brazil, a petition was delivered to Carrefour and with Grupo Pão de Açúcar in December 2023. As a result, Grupo Pão de Açúcar presented to Oxfam a 5-point plan on issues they would improve in their policies in the near future. Carrefour began disclosing their fruit suppliers and started by disclosing those suppliers they use in their own branded products.</p> <p>In South Africa, the Supermarkets Committee committed to buying maize from local smallholder farmers (Access to markets).</p>

PATHWAY 2: INTERNATIONAL AND GLOBALLY RELEVANT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

The second pathway focused on leveraging progress within International Financial Institutions (IFIs) to encourage responsible investment and climate action. In 2023, significant strides were made with indigenous communities in Nepal, particularly the Tamang people, who negotiated compensation for the impacts of the Upper Trishuli hydropower project. Oxfam and its partner, the Community Self Reliance Centre (CSRC), provided crucial support through advocacy, awareness campaigns, and direct negotiations with IFIs like the IFC and FMO. This advocacy led to increased transparency from FMO, which began disclosing its private equity fund investments annually.

This year, Oxfam also heightened awareness among climate funders about the adverse effects of industrial monoculture tree plantations. Collaborating with the Global Forest Coalition and the Centro de Estudios Heñoi from Paraguay, Oxfam conducted research and organized webinars to highlight the environmental and social impacts of these plantations. These efforts included publishing briefing papers, conducting a strategic letter campaign against FMO's investments, and initiating a strategic paper on the issue. These actions collectively aim to shift investment policies towards more sustainable and socially responsible practices.

Intermediary outcome	Planned	Achieved
Global level		
2.1 Leveraging progress within one IFI to encourage more IFIs to follow suit	Indigenous communities in Nepal are able to conduct negotiations for an effective FPIC process in relation to the Upper Trishuli hydro project financed by multiple IFIs	<p>In 2023, indigenous Tamang people of Rasuwa district in Nepal that have been negatively impacted by the Upper Trishuli hydropower project, were able to conduct negotiations to claim compensation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oxfam has provided financial support to and has continuously strategized with Community Self Reliance Centre (CSRC) CSRC has directly supported Tamang communities through awareness raising & training sessions CSRC and Oxfam have advocated with the hydropower construction company and its lenders IFC and FMO on behalf of the Tamang communities CSRC and Oxfam have published research reports, have engaged with media in Nepal, and have had numerous in-person and online meetings with representatives of the company, IFC, and FMO
	FMO's transparency policies and practices are improved	<p>In 2023, FMO started disclosing, once per year, investments of private equity funds it has equity in.</p> <p>Oxfam commissioned follow-up research with Profundo on FMO's transparency & disclosure policies and practices regarding their investments in financial intermediaries. The first phase of the research has been completed in 2023, but the resulting briefing note was not sufficient for an advocacy follow-up, so a second phase in 2024 was planned</p>
	Raised awareness amongst climate funders of the negative environmental and social impacts of specific investments in industrial monoculture tree plantations	<p>In 2023, Oxfam undertook several initiatives to increase awareness of the Green Climate Fund and FMO on the negative environmental and social impacts of industrial monoculture tree plantations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Together with the Global Forest Coalition and the Centro de Estudios Heñoi from Paraguay, Oxfam conducted research and advocacy on monoculture tree plantations Oxfam conducted a webinar on monoculture tree plantations

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heñoi and Global Forest Coalition published a briefing paper and a call for an end to the financing of false climate solutions • Together with five other organizations, Oxfam wrote a critical letter to FMO about their investment in Arbaro Fund • Oxfam wrote a critical letter to FMO about their proposed investment in Suzano • Together with Milieudefensie and Environmental Paper Network, Oxfam started drafting a strategic paper on monoculture/ industrial tree plantations
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PATHWAY 3: MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS AND FORA, AND GOVERNMENTS

In 2023 Oxfam mobilized 11 countries, including Bangladesh, to analyze civil society participation in climate plans and documented best practices, as part of its work on advocating for a “People’s NDC”. The global campaign report “Climate Equality: A Planet for the 99%” gained extensive media coverage, with more than 4,900 media outlets in 96 countries across the world. It was the year that at COP28 civil society’s advocacy of many years, including that of Oxfam, secured nearly \$800 million for the Loss and Damage Fund. Between COP27 and COP28, Oxfam continued lobby and advocacy with negotiators and policy makers towards the operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund, and put out new information on the lack of funds available, through the [Climate Finance Shadow Report](#), the Loss and Damage to Land paper, as well as the report “[Forgotten Frontlines](#)”, focusing on climate finance going to fragile and conflict-affected states. Additionally, the “Make Rich Polluters Pay” campaign garnered over 500,000 signatures, pushing for taxing the rich to pay for the climate transition.

Oxfam’s research on land rights underscored the link between land rights, climate change, and food security, building a strong case for the need to address these in an integrated way if we want to be climate resilient. Publications like “Loss and Damage to Land: Voices from Asia” and a paper on women’s land rights under the SDGs highlighted the importance of securing land tenure for climate resilience. Despite setbacks, such as a legal defeat in Peru, advocacy continues to push for stronger land rights from governments and international bodies. Oxfam has equipped civil society actors with evidence and tools to hold governments accountable and advocate for land rights in the climate crisis context. In Bangladesh, Oxfam amplified the voices of climate-impacted communities, including ethnic and marginalized groups. Through consultations, 190 individuals, mostly women and young girls, identified their climate vulnerabilities and solutions. Oxfam engaged 51 young climate workers to discuss local climatic problems. Marginalized fishers and dairy farmers advocated for fair shares in the supply chain through private sector engagements. Public awareness campaigns reached over 25,000 people, to increase public engagement on climate issues.

In Uganda, Oxfam enhanced community capacity to raise their voices and hold the government accountable. Activities included land awareness campaigns, workshops on feminist movements, and advocacy against land evictions. Oxfam’s interventions led to demonstration gardens, tree planting, and sensitizing pupils in schools, resulting in the planting of over 200 fruit and medicinal trees. These efforts promoted environmental restoration and awareness among young learners. Oxfam’s continuous support and strategic advocacy have been pivotal in driving climate justice and sustainable land management in Uganda.

Intermediary outcome	Planned	Achieved
Global level		
3.1 Improved quantity and quality of (global) climate finance to women small-scale food producers	<p>CSOs are equipped to hold their governments accountable on developing and implementing adequate and inclusive national climate plans, and on mobilizing and adequately spending climate finance.</p> <p>At least two countries providing climate finance have made new commitments, including for loss and damage finance.</p> <p>At least one Global North government supports the UNFCCC's new climate finance goal to have separate sub-goals on adaptation finance, loss and damage finance, and/or grants-based finance</p>	<p>In 11 countries (including Bangladesh) Oxfam mobilized country teams to analyze weaknesses in civil society participation with completed case studies on NDC inclusion. Oxfam also documented 3 national good practices through past Oxfam interventions (including work by Uganda under Sida2GROW).</p> <p>Oxfam published its global campaign report Climate Equality. A Planet for the 99%. The report was covered by more than 4,900 media outlets in 96 countries across the world.</p> <p>The Make Rich Polluters Pay campaign has run from early summer until COP28. Central to the campaign was the petition 'Make Rich Polluters Pay' that was signed by over 500,000 people globally.</p> <p>A total of nearly \$800 million contributions were announced for the Loss and Damage Fund. A major outcome of COP28 was the operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund that had been agreed at COP27</p>
3.2 Greater global accountability to uphold international benchmarks on land rights is built	<p>Civil society actors have access to a stronger evidence base on the nexus between land rights, climate change and food security, and are better equipped to advocate for policy changes at local, national and global levels on the need for strengthened land rights in the context of the climate crisis</p> <p>At least one government makes a concrete commitment to recognize community land rights and adheres to international land rights benchmarks as a result of the LRN campaign and complementary advocacy by Oxfam and partners</p> <p>Civil society actors have access to a stronger evidence base on the nexus between land rights, climate change and food security, and are better equipped to advocate for policy changes at local, national and global levels on the need for strengthened land rights in the context of the climate crisis</p> <p>Progress in the implementation of land rights targets and commitments in international frameworks such as SDGs and the Generation Equality Forum are strengthened.</p>	<p>Oxfam's research and publications have contributed to demonstrate the need for stronger land rights to respond to the climate crisis and improve climate resilience of local communities. Oxfam published a paper titled "Loss and Damage to Land: Voices from Asia" and blog featuring key lessons and stories from Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Timor-Leste. Oxfam in Timor-Leste's published 'Community Experiences of Climate Change and Its Impacts in Timor-Leste'.</p> <p>Findings and recommendations were shared at several events such as the Global Solidarity Summit in Wales, UK, conference on Mainstreaming Land Rights in the Narrative on Climate Change held in Bangladesh, LANDac conference in the Netherlands. Oxfam organised a webinar titled 'Strengthening Collective Tenure Rights in the Context of the Climate Crisis' bringing together youth groups from across Africa.</p> <p>The Land Right Now Campaign supported the legal strategy of the community and created public mobilizations and visibility to the issue and the importance of respecting internally recognized benchmarks on land rights. Unfortunately, the Court of Loreto's ruling in August 2023 found against the community and community is planning to appeal to the higher court.</p> <p>As a result of Oxfam's intervention at the CEDAW sessions, some of the critical issues relating to the protection of land rights in Timor-Leste have been included in the Concluding Observations of CEDAW along with specific recommendations for the government to take actions to address these issues.</p> <p>Oxfam launched two briefing papers titled "Progress Towards the SDG Land Rights Commitments Half Way into the implementation: Where Are We at 2023?" and "Progress Towards SDG Land Degradation and Restoration Commitments". Oxfam launched a paper titled "Grounding</p>

		Women's Land Rights: Towards Equity and Climate Justice which scrutinized commitments made under the SDGs and Generation Equality Forum Action Coalitions
National level		
3.3 Impacted communities in Bangladesh, South Africa and Uganda are better able to have their voices heard and influence decision makers, leading to more inclusive policies and practices	<p>In Bangladesh: Communities, ethnic and marginalised groups, rights-based CSOs, community-based organizations (CBOs) and activists from climate-impacted districts have a stronger voice in climate policy development, and an improved understanding about their natural resource rights CSOs, CBOs, youth leaders, and climate-vulnerable community representatives use feminist principles in relation to influencing economic and ecosystem policy making Climate change-impacted smallholder farmers and fisher-folk discuss a more just and sustainable share of benefits with buyers in the supply chain</p> <p>In Uganda: Enhanced capacity of communities and CSOs in raising their voice to hold government duty bearers accountable on the delivery of climate justice, and in negotiating with private investors for more gender-sensitive land acquisition. Climate change losses and damages documented by Oxfam and partners to inform policy development and implementation. Land investors adopt clean business practices, which are more responsive to the demands of community members and women leaders on land acquisition. Multi-stakeholder processes and key institutions in the field of investment, report and reflect on the impacts of new land-based investments in rural areas, and/or integrate principles of responsible land-based investment into their policies.</p>	<p>In Bangladesh:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Findings from the community and CSO consultations through 2 consultations were shared with district-level government officials, who are actively involved in the district-level budgeting process. 190 individuals, mostly women and young girls, have identified their underlying climate vulnerabilities, intersectional impacts, and possible ways to overcome them. 51 young climate workers/ambassadors were engaged to facilitate in-depth discussions and exchange of local climatic problems 35 marginalized fishers and dairy farmers have engaged in discussions with 5 private sector representatives to advocate for their fair share of the product. 4 feminist campaigns were organized involving women from climate change-impacted areas of Shyamnagar, Assasuni, Tala of Satkhira district, and Jagannathpur of Sunamgonj district. <p>In Uganda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Lango sub-seventh region held a land awareness week from August 28 to September 1, 2023. Increased number of citizens (how many?) acquire certificates of customary ownership on their customary lands. A position paper was written by Oxfam Uganda and Ke Kwaro Acholi team proving the rightful owners of the land in an effort to stop such egregious land evictions and inequalities in land and put an end to this protracted conflict. On September 20, 2023, Oxfam in Uganda and the Wellsprings Foundation held an experience-sharing workshop to strengthen feminist movements and leadership in the Women's Land Rights Movement <p>In South Africa:</p> <p>OZA was able to facilitate the participation of community activists, CBOs, rights based CSOs and grassroots organizations to participate in the 2023 Alternative Mining Indaba which took place in Cape Town titled "A Just Energy Transition: Unlocking Community Potential and Participation".</p> <p>During the Regional Food Symposium n Cape Town in June 2023, Climate change impacted communities (smallholder farmers, farm workers, fisher women), youth activists, academics, CSOs & CBOs made recommendations on how the food, agriculture and aqua value chains can be transformed to ensure a more just and sustainable share of benefits in the supply chains and conservation of the environment and indigenous knowledge. The donors</p>

		<p>present at the symposium made a commitment to sharing open calls to opportunities with the audience.</p> <p>5 infographic explainers were produced to showcase the recommendations and focused on priority areas: (1) Loss & Damage; (2) Just Transition; (3) Global Stock Take; (4) Climate Finance; (5) NCQG - New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance. These were used to inform the key asks and messages for OZA and partner organizations.</p> <p>Oxfam South Africa and South Africa Climate Action Network held a Consultative Meeting with CSOs and CBOs in preparation for COP28 (Johannesburg, Nov. 2023)</p>
<p>3.4 The broad urban public in Uganda and Bangladesh encourages their government to take bolder action to protect affected communities against climate change impact</p>	<p>Public awareness around loss and damage cases and sustainable food systems in Bangladesh is increased, with 25,000 people reached through interactive media campaigns and communications.</p> <p>More youth and women-based climate change alliances and movements participate in public calls to action on climate issues and demands for protection of fragile ecosystems.</p> <p>Increased urban community involvement in greening campaigns for the restoration of degraded ecosystems, and for proper waste management</p>	<p>In Bangladesh:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 11,949 people were directly connected through 25 coverages of building public awareness on climatic challenges in the food systems, loss and damage and climate finances by 16 newspapers (local and national), an approximate number of 25,000 people have been reached. 28 climate-vulnerable communities, comprising a total of 673 grassroots leaders, with 58% of women, have taken the initiative to raise awareness at different events, aiming to exert influence on the government and private sector. <p>In Uganda:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In September 2022, the President of Uganda, through the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA), issued a directive to stop wetlands encroachment and restore Bugoma forest cover On April 17, 2023, Oxfam in Uganda, the Community Integrated Development Initiative, and Climate Reality Leaders of Uganda organized World Earth Day in Kampala Capital City to promote "Restoration and Investment in Mother Earth" Oxfam, with partners, held a school action which took place on April 19, 2023, with Luzira Primary School being the host. The major activities undertaken included the establishment of demonstration gardens, tree planting, and sensitization of pupils Oxfam in May 2023 supported campaigning advocacy activities during the Joint Effort to Save the Environment Summit in the Rwenzori Region in western Uganda
<p>3.5 The governments of Bangladesh and Uganda have developed bottom-up, pro-poor and gender-sensitive climate adaptation plans</p>	<p>In Bangladesh:</p> <p>The loss and damage impacts on two climate-vulnerable districts are assessed through novel self-reporting mechanisms, along with the "Earth Observation" technique.</p> <p>Relevant government ministries amend current NDCs to align with asks from the People's NDC.</p>	<p>In Bangladesh, loss and damage related to crop production has been evaluated for two climate vulnerable locations. Overall loss and damage evidence from 12 vulnerable locations of the country has been collected through the lossanddamagewatch.com dashboard.</p> <p>Bangladesh has been part of the multi-country research on the People's NDCs, providing the evidence for building an influencing strategy on increasing participation and resource allocation for climate resilience of communities.</p>

ANNEX 3:

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW 2023

In 2023, the SeedsGROW project had a total expenditure of EUR 4,501,678, including ICR. This, compared to the most recent approved budget (EUR 5,141,529), represents 88% absorption, excluding closing cost and currency exchange gains throughout the years. The expected final cash-flow balance is EUR 23,651. The tables below show the consolidated overview per outcome for 2023. Accounting principles used by Oxfam in projects are on a cash basis, unless explained otherwise.

SD=HS

The project SD=HS presented in 2023 a total expenditure of EUR 2,813,579 (excluding ICR) against an operational budget of EUR 3,300,000. This represents an absorption of 85%.

SD=HS 2023 budget stayed the same as the proposed budget 2023. A revision was not done considering some factors: 1) the expected absorption of the budget was kept at 89-90%; 2) the funds received were less than the budget (this was known and agreed as Oxfam would use the rollover amounts from 2022 to cover the gap); 3) the exchange rate EUR/SEK of the funds received was lower than the budgeted one, causing the received funds in EUR being less than expected. It was necessary to keep a balance between ambitions and availability of funds. Also, we agreed with SIDA to include closing costs in the 2023 budget (estimated as 342,627 for SD=HS, including ICR). To absorb this, some counterbalance actions were taken, like reducing all country and partner budgets, global PMU costs, mainly on international meetings.

Also, activities under the different outcomes accelerated, some overspending was seen in consultancies, this is a consequence of hiring consultants to cover for staff on long term sick leave. Expenditure for contract management remained within budget, with an absorption of 99%.

GROW

The GROW project had in 2023 a total expenditure of EUR 1,393,596 (excluding ICR) against an adjusted operational budget of EUR 1,505,168 (excluding ICR), which represented 93% absorption.

The table below summarizes the expenditures of all partners for the 12-months period. The 2023 operational budget included partial rollover from 2022 (from a total of 271,040 EUR, an amount of 32,000 EUR was not absorbed in the adjusted budget, considering we agreed with SIDA to include closing costs in the 2023 budget (estimated as 120,314 for GROW, including ICR). Part of the rollover was used to cover the original budget gap for 2023 and the impact of the exchange rate on the received funds, being the rest used in the implementation of planned activities, and to respond to the MTR findings and recommendations. Human resources in Pathway 1 and public campaigning in Pathway 3 have some overspent, compared to budget. For Pathway 1, the overspent can be mostly explained by the shift in influencing practice from public campaigning which ended in 2022 to policy advocacy, an area that requires primarily staff time. For Pathway 3, the higher costs of the public campaigning line were compensated with lower expenditures in advocacy and research, two lines that are inextricably linked, which makes it difficult to categorize all activities at the start. Expenditure for contract management remained within budget, with an absorption of 91%.

Table 5. SD=HS FINANCIAL SUMMARY, JAN–DEC 2023

	Budget as submitted to Sida 2023	Operational budget 2023	Audited actuals	Balance	Absorption
A. Direct contract management costs	667,326	667,326	660,247	7,079	99%
Human resources	554,731	554,731	578,288	(23,557)	104%
Other costs	112,595	112,595	81,958	30,637	76%
B. Other direct programme costs					
Inception period					
C.MEAL	531,264	531,264	298,063	233,201	56%
Outcome 1: Farmer crop diversity mgmt.	798,324	798,324	643,991	154,333	81%
Activities	192,477	192,477	159,155	33,322	83%
Consultancy	87,535	87,535	118,493	(30,958)	135%
Equipment	931	931	-	931	0%
Human resources	399,846	399,846	272,777	127,069	68%
Office costs	20,431	20,431	16,919	3,512	83%
Travel	27,891	27,891	35,731	(7,840)	128%
Workshops	69,213	69,213	40,916	28,297	59%
Outcome 2: Farmer seed enterprises	501,769	501,769	372,952	128,817	74%
Activities	148,061	148,061	113,673	34,388	77%
Consultancy	62,992	62,992	30,207	32,785	48%
Equipment	4,241	4,241	1,622	2,619	38%
Human resources	227,700	227,700	195,977	31,723	86%
Office costs	6,824	6,824	6,084	740	89%
Travel	19,102	19,102	12,675	6,427	66%
Workshops	32,849	32,849	12,714	20,135	39%
Outcome 3: Nutrition and local plants	419,412	419,412	441,086	(21,674)	105%
Activities	118,373	118,373	116,377	1,996	98%
Consultancy	40,508	40,508	80,918	(40,410)	200%
Equipment	3,151	3,151	3,996	(845)	127%
Human resources	217,369	217,369	202,971	14,398	93%
Office costs	11,308	11,308	10,388	920	92%
Travel	20,470	20,470	19,142	1,328	94%
Workshops	8,233	8,233	7,294	939	89%
Outcome 4: Enabling policy environment	381,905	381,905	397,240	(15,335)	104%
Activities (including flex-fund)	89,364	89,364	118,893	(29,529)	133%
Consultancy	96,064	96,064	96,323	(259)	100%
Equipment	6,400	6,400	4,479	1,921	70%
Human resources	118,525	118,525	108,077	10,448	91%

Office costs	2,638	2,638	7,866	(5,228)	298%
Travel	28,532	28,532	34,634	(6,102)	121%
Workshops	40,382	40,382	26,968	13,414	67%
D. Total programme costs	3,300,000	3,300,000	2,813,579	486,421	85%
ICR7%	231,000	231,000	196,951	34,049	85%
TOTAL	3,531,000	3,531,000	3,010,530	520,470	85%

Table 6. GROW FINANCIAL SUMMARY, JAN–DEC 2023

	Budget as submitted to Sida 2023	Operational Budget 2023	Actuals	Balance	Absorption
A. Direct contract management cost	159,038	209,038	189,910	19,128	91%
Staff costs	144,038	144,038	151,255	(7,217)	105%
Other costs	15,000	65,000	38,655	26,345	59%
B. Other direct programme costs					
Inception period					
Outcome 1. International campaigns	566,546	621,150	630,823	(9,673)	102%
1.1 Pathway 1: Global private actors	188,824	192,205	209,399	(17,194)	109%
1.1 Human resources	137,824	137,345	166,416	(29,071)	121%
1.1.1: Public campaigning	19,000	22,378	10,289	12,089	46%
1.1.2: Advocacy and research	32,000	32,482	32,694	(212)	101%
1.2 Pathway 2: Int. and fin. instits.	91,671	101,950	76,398	25,552	75%
1.2 Human resources	64,671	73,270	49,028	24,242	67%
1.2.1: Public campaigning					
1.2.2: Advocacy and research	27,000	28,680	27,370	1,310	95%
1.3 Pathway 3. Nat. gov. multi. fora	286,050	326,994	345,026	(18,031)	106%
1.3 Human resources	195,850	193,791	196,831	(3,039)	102%
1.3.1: Public campaigning	34,200	61,568	79,864	(18,296)	130%
1.3.2: Advocacy and research	56,000	71,635	53,153	18,482	74%
Outcome 2. National campaigns	551,227	591,531	553,227	38,304	94%
2.1 Pathway 1: Global private actors	254,498	279,885	268,547	11,338	96%
2.1 Human resources	103,636	103,986	101,920	2,066	98%
2.1.1: Public campaigning	110,129	118,857	118,053	804	99%
2.1.2: Advocacy and research	40,733	57,042	48,574	8,468	85%
2.2 Pathway 2: Int. and fin. instits.					
2.2 Human resources					
2.2.1: Public campaigning					
2.2.2: Advocacy and research					

2.3 Pathway 3. Nat. govs. and fora	296,729	311,647	284,680	26,967	91%
2.3 Human resources	146,443	152,884	127,687	25,197	84%
2.3.1: Public campaigning	61,300	61,778	56,876	4,903	92%
2.3.2: Advocacy and research	88,986	96,984	100,118	(3,133)	103%
Total other direct programme costs	1,117,773	1,212,681	1,184,050	28,631	98%
Small campaign opportunities fund/to be allocated					
MEAL	92,590	83,449	19,636	63,812	24%
Total programme costs	1,369,400	1,505,168	1,393,596	111,571	93%
ICR7%	95,858	105,362	97,552	7,810	93%
Total	1,465,258	1,610,529	1,491,148	119,381	93%

Table 7. BALANCE OF INCOME VERSUS EXPENDITURES 2023

Budget as per 31 December 2023	TOTAL EUR
Balance as per December 2022	996,537
Installment received 2023	4,068,900
Expenditures 2023	4,501,678
Balance	563,759

The difference between the budget balance (Table 1) and the cashflow balance (above) is due to the fact that the budgets were not adjusted considering the expected less expenditures in countries.

Table 8. COUNTRIES TRANSFERS AND EXPENDITURES

SEEDS	Balance 2022	Transfers	Expenditures	Balance
Guatemala	18,044	279,000	275,530	21,514
Peru	2,204	214,900	235,615	(18,511)
Nepal	193,105	80,000	265,335	7,769
China		-		-
Uganda	7,053	61,299	208,774	(140,422)
Zimbabwe	0	259,898	273,350	(13,452)
Zambia	16,618	215,800	225,137	7,281
Laos	17,317	149,756	201,123	(34,050)
TOTALS	254,341	1,260,653	1,684,865	(169,870)

GROW	Balance 2022	Transfers	Expenditures	Balance
Brazil	0	189,440	182,443	6,997
Bangladesh	22,462	111,296	96,618	37,140
Uganda	14,917	150,287	163,513	1,691
South Africa	34,863	13,100	65,611	(17,648)
OI	15,712	176,764	165,891	26,585
ICR (7%)	203,654	268,692	313,434	1,419,512
TOTALS	87,954	640,887	674,076	54,765

Note:

Balances will be adjusted after final audit. Funds that have not been used to cover closure costs will be returned.

