TERMINAL REPORT

A. OVERVIEW

A.1 PROJECT PROFILE

Country	China
Project symbol	MTF/CPR/062/CAS
Project title	"Development of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Villages" project
Resource partner	Guangfa Securities and China Agricultural Science and Education Foundation
Actual EOD	Jun 12, 2019
Actual NTE	September 30, 2023
Participating organizations (e.g. Ministry of Agriculture, etc.)	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, China

Implementing partners (list):

Name	Type (non-governmental/civil society/community-based organization/Government, etc.)	Total funds transferred (USD)
Center of International Cooperation Service, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, China (CICOS, MARA)	Government	PO#2602656 USD14,691.64 PO#2603019 USD18,498.20 PO#2603257 USD20,771.97 paid USD69,239.91 committed in total
Laifeng County Agricultural Broadcasting and Television School	Government	PO#2602756 USD33,931.67 PO#2602850 USD65,377.68
Longshan County Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Affairs	Government	PO#2602851 USD49,487.52
Meigu County Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Affairs	Government	PO#2602933 USD78,375.93
Agriculture and Rural Bureau of Baisha Li Autonomous County	Government	PO#2602934 USD41,740.24

Contribution to Programmatic Framework

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[1]	1, 2, 12
SDG Target(s)	No Poverty, Zero Hunger, and Sustainable Production and Consumption at the highest level.
FAO Programme Priority Area(s) (PPA/s)	BL2: Inclusive rural transformation: Inclusive rural transformation and revitalization of rural areas ensuring equal participation of, and benefits to poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups accelerated through implementation of targeted policies, strategies, and programmes.
Regional Priorities/Regional Initiative(s), if applicable	1) Transforming agrifood systems for sustainable production and healthy diets; 2) Supporting inclusive rural transformation for sustainable agrifood systems and equitable rural societies.
UNDAF/UNSDCF Outcome(s) (or those from an equivalent UN common country programme document), if applicable	UNSDCF for China Output 6.1: With UN analytical inputs and technical assistance, the Government and other Chinese institutions have strengthened the design and delivery of evidence-informed development and humanitarian cooperation assistance better in line with international economic, social, and environmental sustainability standards and priorities of partner countries and other stakeholders.
CPF Output(s), if applicable	1) FAO China Country Programming Framework (CPF) 2016-2020 Priority Area 2: reducing rural poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition by endowing the poor with necessary human capital, technological tools, marketing and managing knowledge and connectivity to markets. Country Programming Framework(s) Output(s): CPF Output 2.1: Decision-making, partnership-building and rural livelihoods improved and enhanced through provision of policy advice, engagement of private-sector, support to rural organizations, and empowerment of poor and vulnerable smallholders to support inclusive pro-poor development in rural and peri-urban areas of China； 2) FAO China Country Programming Framework (CPF) 2021-2025 Priority Area 2.3.: Intended development results FAO will support China to develop long-term approaches and mechanisms for solving

[1] *In order to fill in this field, please refer to the FAO Strategic Framework, considering the FAO Programme Priority Area(s) (PPA/s) to which the project contributes to and how they relate to SDGs targets. More detailed information can be found in the Medium Term Plan and Programme of Work and Budget, Annex 1 – Updated results framework.*

	relative poverty and multi-dimensional poverty, strengthen the organic connection between poverty alleviation and rural revitalization, enhance the Government's multi-dimensional poverty monitoring capabilities, and incorporate relevant cooperation into subsequent projects. FAO will focus on initiatives to promote modern agriculture production and agribusiness, and pilot agricultural operations of varying scale and form, improve specialized agricultural services and promote the integrated development of the primary, secondary, and tertiary industries in rural areas. FAO will support rural entrepreneurship and e-commerce opportunities, to encourage rural youth to return to their home areas to start businesses, to encourage farmers to seek employment or start businesses in places close to their homes, and to increase non-farming income opportunities for rural smallholders, including through agro-processing and local value addition, including by leveraging culture for rural development.

A.2 FINANCIAL DATA in USD[2]

(as at:28 Sep 2023)

Latest Approved Budget:	USD 975,137.00

A.3 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Experiencing rapid growth for over three decades, China has entered stage of "New Normal" featured demographic dividend, accumulated risks of the middle-income trap, and uncertainty of international political and economic. The project "Internet + Agriculture + Finance" poverty alleviation model is well aligned with FAO's Strategic Framework targeting the poor that will help eliminate hunger, food insecurity, malnutrition and rural poverty, and implement sustainable, ecological and efficient agricultural and food systems. The project promoted the implementation of the Rural Vitalization Strategy of Chinese government and shared innovative poverty reduction experiences with other developing countries. As a highlight of the project, it

[2] *Data source: FPMIS/Data Warehouse*

was implemented through the collaborative participation of multiple entities such as the public sector, research institutes, and the private sector. Meanwhile, it based on FAO novel practices including but not limited to the concept of SDG villages, agro-ecological approach, climate-smart agriculture, nutrition sensitive agriculture, sustainable food value chains, Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHs), FFS and ICTs + Agriculture. Furthermore, it established a sustainable and market-oriented approach to promote farmers' adoption of ecological production methods and technical updates, embracement of green agricultural systems smart agriculture.

The project activities consisted of workshop, field survey, training of the tutors of the farmer field school, financial and market connecting services. Project supporters participated in the above activities and each has their own focus. As the main implementer of the project, FAO was fully responsible for project implementation and innovatively carry out agricultural product brand and packaging design, e-commerce platform promotion and financial insurance services. CICOS, as the project coordinator, drove the success of the project government approval process, prepared and organized the project inception workshop and mid-term review workshop. GF Securities not only donated project funding but also built up online Mall and provided 600,000 RMB of financial leasing services. CASEF completed the supervision of project fund allocation and use.

By the end of 2022, the project had achieved the following results: trainings for trainers of FFS was held in 4 counties located in 4 provinces, which involved practicality and pioneering. More than 800 farm trainers, local extension employees, agricultural product enterprises were trained of safe use of pesticide technology, green agriculture development policy and rural environmental governance, support policies and case discussion of farmers' professional cooperatives, development and practice of smart agriculture, E-commerce sales and operation capacity of agricultural products and so on. The experts interacted with farmers, clarified queries and guiding production technologies.

Through the participation of multiple parties in the project implementation, the project has established a platform and working mechanism for smallholder farmers in remote mountainous areas to obtain market-oriented and sustainable technology, finance, and sales services. The local characteristic industries have received technical support from professional institutions, improved production technology and quality, and designed distinctive regional public brands.

China eliminated absolute poverty in 2020. This project helped poverty-stricken farmers to share more fruits of economic development, by access of internet, financial, and technological service platforms. FAO took its advantages of social advocacy and collaborative ability of

multiple institutes and organs to explore more diverse participation and broader innovation in the implementation of rural revitalization strategies launched by Chinese government.

B. RELEVANCE

The problem:

The comparative underdeveloped rural labour force is a major obstacle to rural economic development, limiting their ability to improve cost-effectiveness through technological transformation and industrial upgrading. After the agricultural tax-for-fee reform (TFR) in China in 2004, township level agricultural technology extension stations were merged into county-level government departments, and the functions of agricultural technology extension services became public services such as policy advocacy, statistics, and disease prevention and control. The demand for technical services of smallholder farmers has been ignored. At the same time, many agricultural products from remote mountain villages cannot be sold to mainstream markets due to the lack of standardized production management and brand operation. The smallholder farmers are still facing non-resilient livelihoods in the when poverty alleviation has been achieved.

Chinese agriculture is characterized by super large production capacity and small-scale production units. It is a long-term issue that the government is committed on the solutions to connect smallholder farmers with large market. In the view of smallholder farmers, new agricultural technologies such as green production technologies, not only have high costs but also have production risks in facing uncertainty of final product premium. Smallholder farmers need customized and systematic social services to help them to connect with the market effectively. In this regard, the government needs the support of multi-level organizational structures to meet such needs.

For the 4 counties where the project is implemented, the above issues are very prominent. For example, Baisha County, Hainan Province, is hindered by agricultural production risk facing the climate change. Meigu County is located remotely in Daliang Mountain and is relatively isolated from emerging market. Due to product standardization, especially the lack of inspection and quarantine for livestock and poultry products, as well as insufficient standardization of product packaging, the integration of Meigu's agricultural products with the e-commerce market is still in early stages. Laifeng County and Longshan County produce vine tea, ginger, citrus, and honey with local characteristics, but the products mainly enjoy a reputation and market within its province due to insufficient sales marketing and standardization constraints.

In response to the characteristics and long-term difficulties of China's agricultural development mentioned above, the project selected four poverty-stricken counties Longshan County in Hunan Province, Laifeng County in Hubei Province, and Meigu County in Sichuan Province which all have a high degree of ethnic minority settlement, low level of industrial development, and a distinctive production foundation for agricultural products, without effective brand building. Since agriculture is the main industry of the county economy, the representativeness of these four counties in addressing long-term issues such as rural revitalization, and sustainable transformation of agri-system is evident and at the key concern of China's agricultural development.

The response:

Since 2016, the FAO Representation in China has established an innovation project team to collaborate with multi-stakeholders to explore new ways to solve typical problems faced by poverty alleviation and then rural revitalization in China. The working mechanism of SDG villages project's "Internet + Agriculture + Finance" model is fully supported by private sector financially and implemented with multi-layered contributions at various levels. It was a model brought technological and conceptual literacy to the smallholder farmers not only in green agricultural production and e-commerce market embodied with internet, but also the financial intervention in facing insecurity of agricultural production and risk of climate change. Furthermore, FAO leveraged packaging design and branding service for selected leading enterprises in 4 implementation counties. Through Farmer Field School (FFS), FAO organized e-commerce training with in-kind contribution from well-known e-commerce platforms Taobao and TikTok to teach farmers how to operate online stores and promote online sales. In the design of the training course content, a combination of technical lectures given by academia, policies introduction and advocacy by governmental entities, as well as practical operations instructed by private sectors, was adopted to ensure that trainers and farmers get a comprehensive understanding of smart agriculture, green production technology, and good agricultural operating standards.

The project benefited more people, especially women, youth and vulnerable and disadvantaged smallholder farmers living in remote and poverty-stricken areas in Sichuan, Hunan, Hubei and Hainan Province, shared the achievements of economic development and social progress, enabled them to have more opportunities to understand and use agricultural green production technology, financial services, smart agriculture and so on by adopting the "Internet + Agriculture + Finance" model.

The specific outputs of the project that led to the above results are:

Output 1: Improved knowledge of agricultural ecology among rural impoverished populations (especially women, youth, and vulnerable and disadvantaged smallholder farmers) in Sichuan, Hunan, Hubei, and Hainan provinces of China. Trainers could use pesticides scientifically and master effective solutions for diseases and pests control. It provided training for farmers with agro-ecology, ICTs, marketing, and cooperatives management. The project established 8 IPM-FFS in each selected counties aimed for their main and characterized agricultural production. Toolkits has be developed in order to replicate and scaling up this approach in other region of China and in developing countries.

Output 2: Farmers are better organized, have a better understanding of financial services and agricultural product quality assurance systems by introducing diverse technology and financial services, experiencing socialized services supported by information technology, for instance, the insurance to future rubber production in Baisha backed the resilient livelihood of rubber farmers by preventing potential loss caused by natural disaster in facing climate change. To facilitate policies to support professional cooperatives and socialized services, the project carried out an in-depth financial market assessment, including supply and demand aspects, and identifying the most effective approach and mechanisms for improving financial services and promoting capital formation among farmers and entrepreneurs for agricultural products. Social service organizations such as smart agriculture, e-commerce, and technology service providers, which organize innovative practices, provide introductions and services to farmers.

Output 3: To assist construction and operation of local characteristic agricultural production and sales. Packaging design and branding service was introduced to boost rural economic and cultural prosperity and increase farmer income. This component focused on the creation of linkage via Internet +agriculture solution such as e-commerce marketing sales to eliminate the divide between traditional sales model and emerging market trends.

Output 4: Favourable conditions created for wide replication and promotion of a model of "Internet + Agriculture + Finance" in remote, impoverished areas of China. As this is the new approach, FAO launched it as one of the key activities of FAO China's programmatic plan to support rural revitalization in China. The project made strong efforts to disseminate lesson learned and promote the potential solution and measures through the workshop, media exposure,

toolkits as well as audio visual promotional materials such as videos, social medias, articles, and so on.

C. ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS

Results achieved:

Programme objective 1: Improved knowledge of agricultural ecology among rural impoverished populations (especially women, youth, and vulnerable and disadvantaged smallholder farmers smallholder farmers) in Sichuan, Hunan, Hubei, and Hainan provinces of China.

By the end of 2022, trainings for trainers were held in Longshan County, Baisha County, Meigu County, Laifeng County respectively. The trainings involved practicality and pioneering by lectures and field school. More than 800 farm trainers, local extension employees, agricultural product enterprises were trained of safe use of pesticide technology, green agriculture development policy and rural environmental governance. According to the main industrial characteristics of each county, the training content mainly includes:

- Application and progress of green crop control technology;
- Cultivation of tropical flowers and fruits;
- Whole process solutions to crop diseases and insect pests.
- Bee industry development and pollination insect protection.
- FFS: The trainer conducted on-site guidance and demonstration on local crop diseases, drug use category and operating procedures, and provided protective equipment for safe drug use for farmers.

Programme objective 2: Farmers are better organized, have a better understanding of financial services and agricultural product quality assurance systems by introducing diverse technology and financial services, experiencing socialized services supported by information technology.

In recent years, the prices of some agricultural products experienced fluctuation or insufficient demand, the production is vulnerable. The trainings planned to provided more solutions, such as effective ways to lower costs, enhancing pricing discourse through cooperatives, contact with market to adapt to changes in consumption.

- Support policies and case discussion of farmers' professional cooperatives;
- Agricultural industrial organization innovation;
- Targeting the key issues faced by each county: current situation industry of Tartary

buckwheat, tropical fruits;

These efforts improved the commodity value, enriched the brand culture. Thereby contributed to an increase in farmers income. Officers of and Quality and Safety Center, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, conducted on-the-spot research, gave guidance on the application for certification of relevant agricultural products, and carried out brand identification and packaging design for agricultural products such as orange and honey in Longshan and vine tea and ginger in Laifeng.

Programme objective 3: Pilot poverty alleviation model of "Internet + Agriculture + Finance" is to assist construction and operation of local characteristic agricultural product brands in order to boost rural economic and cultural prosperity and increase farmer income.

- E-commerce sales and operation experience sharing;
- Brand building and promotion of agricultural products;
- Development and practice of smart agriculture;

Experts of Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science, introduced the promotion of agricultural industry by e-commerce. In terms of practice, FAO invited trainers of Taobao university (Taobao is the China's largest C2C e-commerce platform) lecturer， and staffs in Auto Quicker (one of two biggest short video companies), introduced case of increasing income through e-commerce platform. They brought vivid cases of farmers to the trainees, provided important information of background algorithm, and explained specific store opening and operation skills. The expertise of Tsinghua University's Academy of Arts and Design was sought to development brand building strategies and packaging design for agri-products showcasing local features, such as crested ginger and vine tea.

Programme objective 4: Favourable conditions created for wide replication and promotion of a model of "Internet + Agriculture + Finance" in remote, impoverished areas of China.

In order to give full play to the role of communication, reflection and discussion after the training course was scheduled. The discussion of this training encouraged farmers to play the role of establishing cooperatives, and carried out participatory games and in-depth discussion. The experts divided the participants into groups, reported after each group's discussion, and the experts commented.

During the processing of implementation, inception workshop, mid-term workshop, and summary meeting have been held respectively. The workshops facilitated the effective connection between enterprises in poverty-stricken areas and the capital market. In the summary meeting, FAO technical officer suggested to establish a development strategy for the

processed product industry and agritourism to encourage young people to return to farming and contribute to rural development. All the activities including training, meeting, field surveys and field school attracted widespread attention from counterparts of agriculture and poverty alleviation organs and mass. FAO China Office has promptly released the news through the media.

D. IMPLEMENTATION OF WORK PLAN AND BUDGET

Work plan and budget

The work plan of the project included implementation of county-level and village-level Farmer Field School trainings to empower agricultural technical personnel and smallholder farmers, and packaging design and branding services to better meet the demand from e-commerce platforms and their emerging customers. The project budgeted CNY674,849 to four villages in Laifeng County; CNY679,958 to four villages in Longshan County; CNY589,954 to four villages in Meigu County; and CNY630,000 to four villages in Baisha County. A total budget of CNY1003,100 was given to Center of International Cooperation Service (CICOS/MARA) to organize inception workshop, mid-term review and final-term review workshops.

Resource partner contribution

Laifeng County Agricultural Broadcasting and Television School, as the service provider for Farmer Field School trainings, also provided additional resources and efforts in livestreaming online sales for local characteristic agricultural products. Academy of Arts & Design of Tsinghua University also leveraged resources and made in-kind contribution such as released IP to the packaging design and branding services to agricultural industries in both Laifeng and Longshan Counties.

Coordination

The project will involve diverse range of stakeholders not traditionally mechanism in the past FAO project in China. There will be a Project Steering Committee (PSC) established for the project, led by the Department of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (DIC/MARA) as the main government lead agency at the national level, to coordinate with Center of International Cooperation Service (CICOS/MARA), National Agro-Tech Extension and Service Centre (NATESC /MARA), the International Poverty Reduction Centre in China (IPRCC/MARA), Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science (CAAS), the China Foundation for Poverty Alleviation (CFPA/MARA), the China Agriculture Science and Education Foundation (CASEF/MARA), as well as GF Security Social Charity Foundation as the private sector partner providing funding for the project through CASEF. FAO will

participate in the PSC as a member, and the National Project Manager will be serving as the secretary for the PSC.

These project villages have shortcomings in agricultural production technology, processing technology, agricultural enterprise management, professional talents, and infrastructure. There is no market subject that can solve all related problems. Meanwhile, the market problems caused by the above issues have led to a lack of investment confidence in enterprises. The government's intervention is conducive to solving common and fundamental problems faced by industrial development. Each project county has received technical and marketing guidance tailored to its industry issues, and these supporters are professional, authoritative and comprehensive. Under the authoritative endorsement of the government, farmers and enterprises have a high enthusiasm for participation, and their endogenous motivation has been greatly promoted.

Risk management

Due to the relatively long implementation period, multi-objects planned and cooperation with different organs, FAO and the project team had a track record of demonstrating capacity to manage complex, long-term projects. To mitigate potential management hurdles, each partner's role had been clearly defined in the implementation plan, and institutional arrangements had been clarified from the outset. In addition, each team member had been assigned a particular role and a set of management tasks, to ensure clarity of responsibilities and significantly reduced management-related risks. In fact, the biggest unforeseen risk of project implementation came from COVID-19, which led to the failure of village-level training that required mass gathering and mobility. FAO had timely adjusted project tasks based on epidemic measures in different regions and made full use of online meetings.

In addition, governance deficiencies and political instability would impact project implementation. The project sought political support from MARA, as well as county and village governments, which then could help with internal coordination of the Chinese government. Pilot sites was identified based on the political will and commitment of the local governments. The project managers engaged with a wide variety of stakeholders to plan, to implement and to maximize the positive impacts of its capacity development activities. Through broad engagement, the team learned the strengths of different institutions and divisions, and implemented capacity development activities in a way that was transparent, effective and may benefit all of the stakeholders involved. Participating stakeholders, including local governments were required to assign focal staff to the project and formally committed to assignment and project plan. Trained beneficiaries were encouraged to disseminate their newly acquired

knowledge and skills within their unit.

The project provided the necessary hardware and software to ensure that the project objectives were achieved. The project partnered with e-commerce giants such as JD.com, Taobao, Meiriyouxian, and other small-scaled e-commerce/ICT platforms. Their expertise in technology minimized failure risks in unexpected circumstances such as pandemic.

Visibility

The project was designed and implemented as a piloting development model to help eliminate extreme poverty at initial stage and to assist rural revitalization in latter. The lessons learnt, experiences summarized and good practices documented were deemed as valuable to share with other counties in China as well as counties that have similar development obstacles in the region. For this purpose, multi-media sources had been supporting the project since its launching, included but not limited to China Internet Information Center (CIIC), Farmers Daily and the official news website of FAO.

E. SUSTAINABILITY

a. Capacity development

By introducing a new participatory learning approach that directly addresses the practical production needs of farmers, this project has formed a sustainable foundation for nurturing a cohort of local experts and industry pioneers. With the focus on developing the agricultural industry, the project has promoted the sustainable transformation and ecological agriculture, nurtured local technical experts and fostered entrepreneurial leaders, leading to dual benefits of increasing farmers' income and protecting the rural environment.

Through FFS at village level and the training on e-commerce, farmers have broadened their horizons and learned about the development trend of agriculture and rural areas. In Laifeng County of Hubei Province, over 100 accounts for live streaming sales of agri-products have been established, incubating over 20 rural live streamers. In the breeding industry, science-based breeding methods can be used to maximize the output and profit. E-commerce platforms can be leveraged to accelerate the industrialization of agriculture and expand local sales channels.

b. Gender equality

The project paid particular attention to reducing risk for the most vulnerable rural community members, in particular women and youth. The project identified and assessed the specific constraints that women, particularly those from poorer and marginalized households and women heads of households, face in accessing information, knowledge and technologies and

seek to facilitate their participation and benefit from the project interventions proactively. A gender and vulnerability analysis were conducted at the onset of the project inception to inform the design of the project's gender action plan. At minimum, the SDG Villages will aim to train both male and female farmers and adopt positive discriminatory measures, involving a large number of women to encourage entrepreneurship amongst women who are engaged in agriculture.

c. Environmental and economic sustainability

Based on the project blueprint, Dui'e Village in Yacha Town has focused on leveraging traditional agricultural industries such as rubber, betel nut, radix fici simplicissimae, local chicken, duck, and goose farming as foundational pillars. The village has also recognized the potential of agro-tourism. Rural cuisine, environment and fresh air could provide leisure services for urban tourists and drive the development of rural tertiary industries and environmental improvement, which has been geared towards increasing the villagers' income and supporting rural revitalization. Nanya village in Bangxi Town has built a modern and efficient fruit agricultural park, generating an annual output value of 20 million yuan and provided local employment opportunities. This innovation approach has effectively boosted farm's income. The above are all through external empowerment to help farmers carry out capacity building and unleash their own motivation to participate in industrial revitalization. The lecture on green techniques for citrus melanoses control has identified the cause and effective treatment strategies for a disease that has plagued naval orange growers in Longshan County, Hunan Province for years.

The project contributed substantially to the enhanced profitability of farming operations through the safe and effective use of agrochemical inputs, higher quality/safer food products and access to market and technology via ICTs and smart agriculture. The science-based and production targeting output value rather than output quantity confirmed the economic sustainability of the adoption of new technology and concept. This project is donated by the private sector and implemented with the participation of the government, multilateral organizations, enterprises, associations, cooperatives and farmers. It provided a platform and reference for attracting more private investment into the field of agricultural and rural development in the future.

d. Human Rights-based Approach (HRBA) – in particular Right to Food and Decent Work

FAO places high importance in ensuring decent rural employment, an essential component for the fight against hunger and poverty and for the creation of more prosperous livelihoods for the population at large. FAO will follow its Decent Rural Employment Toolbox to provide guidance for the project's successful implementation. SDG villages will create decent rural

employment opportunities that ensure a living wage, security in the workplace, access to social protection and respect for fundamental human rights.

The project will empower farmers with reasonable working conditions and enable them to improve their livelihoods. Rural employment tends to be precarious, poorly remunerated and even hazardous.

This project ensures that farmers will obtain the necessary knowledge and tools to forge entrepreneurship and increase productivity. Moreover, the beneficiary farmers will improve the knowledge on the use of agrochemicals, which is the most hazardous inputs in agriculture production and know-how to reduce risk to improve occupation safety. Through FFS, farmers are expected to raise awareness on the health risk associated with the handling of agrochemicals and necessary knowledge to improve safer and healthier working conditions while dealing with such chemicals throughout their production cycle.

Selection of the beneficiary farmers should be selective with strong consideration to their livelihood and vulnerabilities. Given the vision offered by SDG of a fairer, more prosperous, peaceful and sustainable world in which no one is left behind, the project will also give due attention to child labour in particular for elimination of the worst form of child labour in agriculture sector, as well as people with disabilities making sure that equal opportunities will be provided if they are participating FFS as beneficiary.

The sustainable aspect of the project and its long-term vision ensures long-term safety of farmers, while equipping them with new way of engaging with markets and consumers directly improving their options to connect market with little to no risk of falling back into the poverty trap.

e. Technological sustainability

The training was structured into thematic and specialty class. Thematic class was designed based on project objectives, while specialty class based on the unique local resources and focused on teaching participants how to effectively promote and sell agri-products via live e-commerce platforms. In other words, the purpose of training is to transform the mind-set of farmers engaged in agricultural production, from focusing solely on production to focusing on the entire industrial chain from ecology to the market, and to strengthen the connection with the market and consumption. In this way, a mechanism for continuously iterating and upgrading technology is established. Technologies that were incorporated into the training activities included IPM, green prevention and control, animal husbandry technique, orchid cultivation technique, beekeeping technique and so on. However, the limitations to this project in terms of continuing usage of technologies were the uncertain enforcement and absence of long-term monitoring.

F. LESSONS LEARNED

Lessons learned – elements of success

Based on the project results and findings, the motivation for farmers to adopt green production technology requires not only government pesticide legislation and quality supervision, but also the establishment of a high-quality and cost-effective market mechanism. Quality supervision is fundamental, which means that the government's market access standards for quality are the basic conditions, and more detailed level standards are needed. At the same time, the methods and ways of quality supervision should be feasible and simple, and should not significantly increase production costs and social costs. From a production perspective, some green production technologies can reduce costs, while others may increase costs, and farmers must benefit through a quality premium mechanism. That is to say, market mechanisms and government regulation should be effective jointly to establish a mechanism for "high quality and high price". Brand and local standard construction can achieve product quality grading. Therefore, to promote high-quality development of agricultural production, production, ecology, pest and disease control, standardization of production operations, and brand building should be integrated into a comprehensive plan.

The construction of regional public brands for agricultural products requires the participation and cooperation of multiple entities such as the government, leading enterprises, agricultural industry organizations, and farmers. This requires a clear understanding of the responsibilities and obligations of different entities in the construction process. Leading enterprises are the leaders and biggest beneficiaries of regional public brand construction for agricultural products, and they are willing to participate in brand construction. Agricultural industry organizations and multilateral organizations are bridges for communication between government and enterprises, and farmers are the foundation for the construction of regional public brands for agricultural products.

In addition, the environmental governance driven force also motivated the private sectors to provide additional voluntary financial and in-kind contributions to meet the requirement of social responsibility and publicity. In this regard, it is suggested to include policy instruments such as environmental governance, information and communication influence which supplement the traditional “command-and-control” governance.

Lessons learned – impediments/constraints

In China, poverty alleviation projects are usually implemented and funded by government departments. “Development of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Villages” project

created a new project model with private sector donations, multilateral organization coordination, and joint participation and execution by the public and private sectors. The institutional framework and coordination were implemented by Project Steering Committee (PSC), which led by the Department of International Cooperation of the Ministry of Agriculture. Meanwhile, the project objectives and content balanced the goals of poverty alleviation and the concerns of all stokeholds involved. For example, GF Futures launched the natural rubber "insurance + futures" pilot project in Baisha, Hainan, to help 23,565 rubber farmers (including 10,666 poor households) in Baisha County, and to preserve the value of 1,000 tons of rubber in 2020. The project improved the ability of smallholder farmers to cope with climate change and market price fluctuations, guaranteed the income of rubber households. GF Securities makes full use of the platform resources to set up a special “welfare points” area in the GF Securities APP to sell agricultural products from the project area. Enterprises had also opened up product markets and established a reputation in rural areas. On the other hand, it is difficult to evaluate the market prospects and the effectiveness and accuracy of sales strategies for poverty alleviation projects based on industries. The project tried to minimize government intervention in the market, paid more attention to solving basic and common problems faced by industrial development. The project provided a platform for government coordination, while avoided government intervention in the market.

G. FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS FOR GOVERNMENT ATTENTION

As explained above under the stakeholder section, the research and extension institutes under MARA is the main government counterpart with FAO for technique support. The local government departments of agriculture in Hainan, Sichuan, Hubei and Hunan provinces were core implementing partners. Local government indicated willingness to provide supports in terms of technology, brand building, market supervision for the second and third year in order to scale up and expand the initiative. With this regard, the project became a link for establishing long-term cooperative relationships between local government and technical organs of national level. SDG villages placed environmental sustainability as one of the first priorities. The project was implemented to teach, promote, and encourage the use of sustainable methods for agricultural production. The benefits of agro-ecology and the sustainable use of resources were emphasized. Farmers obtained access to valuable knowledge that ensured environmental sustainability. In this respect, government intervention greatly contributed in improving efficiency in terms of using resources and promote the conservation, and made a plan from the comprehensively perspective of agricultural economy, rural sustainable development, and ecological environment governance.

Most importantly, a working mechanism for projects fully donated by private sector and implemented in multi-collaboration was established. It was a milestone for resource mobilization in collaboration with private sectors for additional sustainability-orientated projects that are in line with national development strategy and 2030 UN Agenda.

Even it was a jointly established project, the key concern was always at the smallholder farmers, their needs were surveyed and analysed for solutions. For example, the orange cooperatives in Longshan County were seeking Geographical Indications consent for better reputed production and economic revenue, the project team consulted with China National Intellectual Property Administration for detailed application and identification requirements and procedures, and shared with local agricultural authorities with comprehensive instructions.

H. HUMAN INTEREST STORY

Yi famers getting rich expressway in 5 years recently

Meigu County, Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture, is the hinterland of the origin and development of Yi culture. Meigu County is mainly in mountain area, and the agricultural product market system and agricultural industry foundation was so weak that overall development of the agricultural industry is still in a self-sufficient stage, and market poverty alleviation and industrial poverty alleviation have just started. The SDG project commissioned China Agricultural University to conduct a "Smallholder farmers' Connecting with Large Market Research". It found that most commodity transactions only stayed in simple market buying and selling, with obvious constraints from external environment and outdated ideological concepts. Due to the weak production foundation and lack of external investment and business entities, Meigu County needs to build a local talent training base, including professional talents required for agricultural production technology, agricultural product processing technology, agricultural enterprise management, and e-commerce operation. Corresponding talent attraction mechanisms or self-cultivation mechanisms are needed. The project helps enterprises connect with the agricultural and rural departments of Meigu County, and helps Yi farmers develop characteristic industries. Meigu has focused on developing industries such as Tartary buckwheat, Chinese prickly ash, goats, and ecological black pigs, encouraging farmers to build Yi ethnic characteristic homestays, developing leisure agriculture, and promoting the integration of industry and village collective development.


联合国可持续发展目标示范村”村级培训班结业仪式

Appendix 1

LOGFRAME MATRIX - ACHIEVEMENT OF INDICATORS

Please indicate, to the extent possible, how the results contribute to the SDGs and related targets, in particular, through the Impact[3]

Results chain	Indicators				If not achieved, explain why[4]	If applicable/ follow-up action to be taken
	Indicators	**Baseline**	**End target** (*expected value at project completion*)	**Achieved**		
Impact	**Economic Empowerment**: Strengthen and support a new wave of farmers who are technology-literate and endowed with management and marketing knowledge, capacity building work and sharing of experiences and results in Hubei, Hunan, Sichuan and Hainan provinces. **Sustainable Agriculture**: Educate farmers with IPM, ICTs, and model of "Internet + Agriculture + Finance" to enhance local communities and networks of smallholder farmers in ecologically-based agriculture and sustainable solutions to agri-system transformation.					
Project Outcome Risk management in agircultural production through the promotion of a model of "Internet + Agriculture + Finance".	Adopted information technology and financial interventions to help reduce risk during agircultural production	"Internet + Agriculture + Finance" model was applied in piloted villages	Model practice was introduced through Farmer Field School to smallholder farmers, particularly whom worked in rubber industry	Insurance on rubber production was provided to smallholder farmers in Baisha county, in order to prevent economic loss from climate change and natural disaster		Evaluate the practice and introduce to other developing countries
Output (1)	Number of tutors and	Farmer Field School training		1) 130 tutors and 300 farmers were		Consolidate the training materials and

[3]*The impact level should always reflect the higher programmatic outcome to which the project contributes. For example, at the country level, this is expressed as the CPF outcome to which the project contributes and can also reflect other elements of impact that are defined at a higher programmatic level (UNDAF/UNSDCF/national goals/FAO Strategic Framework/SDGs).*

[4]*Any substantial difference between planned and actual number of beneficiaries/stakeholders should be further explained.*

Agroecology literacy among the rural poor increased; farmers with good knowledge in technology, marketing and management trained	farmers trained, number of indirect beneficiaries shared with the training materials	session was provided to project villages	Training materials were dispatched to tutors and farmers through Farmer Field Schools, relevant workshops were held for knowledge sharing	trained in Meigu County with 1000 training materials shared to beneficiaries 2)more than 70 tutors were trained in Baisha County 3) 70 tutors and 400 farmers were trained in Laifeng County during FFS and 200 farmers attended e-commerce training 4)400 persons including tutors and farmers were trained in Longshan County		summarize training experiences and good practices for future training reference and knowledge sharing with additional beneficiaries from other provinces in China and from the region
Output (2) Improved the capabilities of local producers on agricultural packaging design and branding, enabling promotion and sales of local agricultural products.	Number of branding and packaging design kits released to local agricultural cooperatives	Four kits of branding and packaging designed for four agricultural products in two piloted counties	Branding and packaging design services were provided to local agricultural cooperatives to better align with emerging e-commerce market demand and add value to local agricultural products	Series of branding and packaging design services were provided to Liye Orange, Longshan Honey, Laifeng Vine Tea and Laifeng Ginger with intellectual property released to local cooperatives for free use		Promote the branding of agricultural products from piloted villages to connect broader market

Output (3) Experiences and lessons learned on FFS training are shared.	Number of workshops held for project review and evaluation	Two workshops were held for implementation review and results evaluation	Mid-term review workshop, final-term review workshop and agricultural products exhibition were held at different stages of the project for outcome consolidation and evaluation	Mid-term review workshop were held online due to pandemic situation, final-term review workshop and agricultural products exhibition were held in Laifeng County, Hubei Province, with over 100 participants from four project provinces gathered, reviewed and concluded the project		Consolidate outcomes and lessons learned from the project implementation and continue improve the FFS training scheme in line with national development strategies such as rural revitalization

Appendix 2

DOCUMENTS PRODUCED DURING THE PROJECT

N/A

Appendix 3

PROJECT STAFF

		Dates of Service	
Name	**Function**	**Starting Date**	**Concluding Date**
International staff			
Aziz Arya	LTO	1 Mar 2019	10 Mar 2020
Yanoma Yukitsugu	LTO	10 Mar 2020	04 May 2022
Kim Shinjae	LTO	04 May 2022	30 Sep 2023
National staff			
Dong Le	Programme Officer	12 Jun 2019	30 Sep 2023
Gao Jingya	Programme Associate	1 Aug 2019	30 Sep 2023

Appendix 4

TRAINING AND STUDY TOURS

Number of Participants	Title of Study/Training Tour	Place	Date
70	Project inception workshop	Beijing	12 Jul 2019
8	Field survey for FFS	Longshan Hunan and Laifeng Hubei	29-31 Jul 2019
8	Field survey for FFS	Meigu Sichuan	29 Aug-1 Sep 2019
8	Field survey for "Internet + Agriculture + Finance" model	Baisha Hainan	9-11 Sep 2019
70	FFS county level training	Laifeng Hubei	6-8 Nov 2019
400	FFS in field training	Laifeng Hubei	6-8 Nov 2019
5	Field survey in Laifeng for branding and packaging design services	Laifeng Hubei	10-12 May 2021
400	FFS county level training and in field training	Longshan Hunan	13-17 May 2021
430	FFS county level training and in field training	Meigu Sichuan	20-24 Jun 2021
8	Field survey for FFS	Baisha Hainan	18-21 Jul 2021
70	FFS county level and village level training	Baisha Hainan	25-30 Sep 2021
50	e-commerce training	Baisha Hainan	25-30 Sep 2021
40	Mid-term review workshop	Beijing	26 Jan 2022
219	FFS village level training/e-commerce training	Laifeng Hubei	20 Apr – 31 May 2022
280	FFS village level training	Meigu Sichuan	8-12 May 2022
100	Final-term review workshop	Laifeng Hubei	28 Aug-1 Sep 2023

Appendix 5

MAJOR ITEMS OF EQUIPMENT PROVIDED

N/A

Appendix 6

THE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Criteria	Subcriteria	Rating of subcriterion (A-D)	Overall rating of criteria
1. Relevance	Relevance of the project to the problem identified at project identification and formulation	A	A
	Alignment and strategic fit[5]	A	
2. Achievement of results	Contribution to impact	A	A
	Achievement of outcome	A	
	Achievement of outputs	A	
3. Implementation of work plan and budget	Timely implementation of activities	B	A
	Implementation of activities within planned budget	A	
	Application of risk management strategy	A	
4. Sustainability	Capacity development	A	A
	Environmental sustainability	A	
	Gender equality	B	
	HRBA	A	
	- *Right to Food*	A	
	- *Decent Work*	A	
	Technological sustainability	B	
	Economic sustainability	A	

Score	Meaning
A	Performance is excellent (exceeds expectations)
B	Performance is on track
C	Performance is problematic. Some corrective action needed
D	Performance presents serious deficiencies. Major corrective action, reorientation or early termination required

[7] *Alignment/strategic fit with CPF/UNDAF/UNSDCF Outcome(s)/PPAs/SDGs/contribution to impact/SDGs and SDG Targets.*

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

	Scorecard				
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**NA[6]**
1. Relevance (Will aid you in filling out Section B of the Report)					
1.1. Relevance to problem to be solved					
1.1.1. How adequately was the project design in ensuring effective management for results?	A				
Quality assurance was provided in all realms regarding project management and result-based implementation					
1.1.2. To what extent has the project provided solutions of a technical nature that are new and/or were not known by the beneficiaries/stakeholders and that only the technical expertise provided through the project could have brought?[7]	A				
Insurance on agricultural production to prevent potential loss from natural disaster was first time introduced through "Internet + Agriculture + Finance" model					
1.2. Alignment and strategic fit (SDGs/ CPF outcome/UNDAF/UNSDCF outcome/national priority/Programme Priority Area(s) (PPA/s)/other))					
1.2.1. To what extent has the project contributed to the relevant Country Programme Framework (CPF) result/ United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF/UNSDCF) outcome/national priority/Programme Priority Area(s) (PPA[s])/other, as relevant?	A				
The project contributed to above mentioned initiatives and priorities in line with China's national strategy of rural revitalization which made a comprehensive and localised approach on sustainable agri-system transformation					
OVERALL	**A**				

[6] *NA = not applicable*

[7] *Indicate which new technical skills were acquired by each group of beneficiaries (e.g. farmers, administrators/national services/policy-makers) and what type of expertise (e.g. FAO technical officer/international consultants) were used by the project to bring about this knowledge transfer.*

	Scorecard				
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**NA[6]**
2. Achievement of results (Will aid you in filling out Section C of the Report)					
2.1.1. Extent to which a contribution to impact has been made towards the achievement of SDGs and their targets.	A				
Achievement was aligned with No Poverty, Zero Hunger, and Sustainable Production and Consumption at the highest level.					
2.1.2. Extent to which the expected Outcome has been achieved.	A				
Achieved with best value for money as well as high-quality					
2.1.3. Extent to which the expected Outputs have been delivered.		B			
Expected outputs were delivered efficiently except two village level trainings in Longshan and Baisha were cancelled due to pandemic situation.					
OVERALL	**A**				
3. Implementation of work plan and budget (Will aid you in filling out Section D of the Report)					
3.1. Work plan and budget					
3.1.1. To what extent were activities implemented on time?	A				
All LoAs were initiated, monitored, implemented and closed according to FAO policies					
3.1.2. To what extent were activities implemented within planned budget?	A				

	Scorecard				
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**NA[6]**
Contract budgets were carefully formulated and managed.					
3.2. Risk management					
3.2.1. To what extent were the risks to the project actively managed (i.e. risk log updated regularly and progress on addressing key risks regularly reviewed)? (self-assessment)	A				
3.2.2. How would you rate the project's performance in managing environmental and social risks caused by the projects (including unexpected risks)?	A				
Any potential fraud or risks were prevented through approved SOPs, ensured performance at highest level of efficiency and appropriateness					
OVERALL	**A**				
4. Sustainability (Will aid you in filling out Section E of the Report)					
4.1. Capacity development					
4.1.1. To what extent do the relevant policies and legal framework in place or under development support the sustainability of the project outcome?	A				
FAO manual section 507 and AP provided fully support to the project in terms of polices and legal framework					
4.1.2. How far is the project embedded in organizational structures that are likely to survive beyond the project and that are committed to sustainability of results?	A				
Deeply embodies as the first trust fund project fully funded by private sector in China					
4.1.3. To what extent were partnerships and alliances created or strengthened that will contribute to the project's sustainability?					

	Scorecard				
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**NA[6]**
Set a successful model for FAO-private sector collaborations in China					
4.1.4. To what extent did the project have a solid exit strategy and clearly defined follow-up actions?	A				
Experience sharing to other developing countries with the same or similar development model falls in line with several FAO initiatives such as HIHi					
4.2. Gender equality					
4.2.1. Have the activities met the needs and priorities of women and men beneficiaries/ stakeholders as identified at the design stage?		B			
The project tried to involve more female during implementation, but not as much as expected due to the structure of rural population					
4.2.2. Have women and men equitably benefited from the results achieved by the intervention? Particular attention should be given to whether the project contributed to the achievement of one or more objectives of the FAO Policy on Gender Equality (equitable participation in decision-making; access to and control over decent employment, income, land and other productive resources, goods, services and markets; and reduction in women's work burden).	A				
Yes, FAO and UNWomen in China jointly launched a report on rural women economic empowerment which contributed to the mentioned areas					
4.3. Environmental sustainability					
4.3.1. How would you rate the project's performance in mainstreaming environmental sustainability ?	A				
The project was implemented with full concern of environmental awareness					

	Scorecard				
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**NA[6]**
4.4. Human Rights-based Approach (including Right to Food and Decent Work)					
4.4.1. To what extent did the project contribute to the achievement of human rights, how did it promote human rights principles (i.e. PANTHER: participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment, rule of law) in decision-making processes and to what extent has it strengthened the notions of rights and obligations?	A				
4.4.2. How did the project contribute to the implementation of the Right to Food Guidelines adopted by FAO in 2004?	A				
4.4.3. To what extent has the project contributed to the creation of gainful employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for rural youth, women and other targeted groups in the project?	A				
4.4.4. To what extent has the project contributed to the improvement of labour conditions in rural areas (e.g. reducing child labour, improving occupational safety and health, reducing excessive hours of work)?	A				
The project trained farmers with traditional agri-production models, as well as emerging commercial trend in agri-trade, which linked more with technology, digitalization and e-commerce, it contributed directly to rights to attain more resources and thus improve working conditions and livelihood					
4.5. Technological sustainability					
4.5.1. How appropriate/flexible is the technology used/introduced by the project?		B			
Technology support for e-commerce livestreaming was provided by e-commerce platform as in-kind contribution, local smallholder farmers need a long-term scheme for this service acquisition.					
4.5.2. To what extent has the project contributed to the development of local knowledge/capacity/resources/ good practices?	A				
Farmer Field School has set out a successful framework for knowledge sharing and future incubation of more agricultural experts and leaders of cooperatives					
4.5.3. How would you judge the capacity of stakeholders and beneficiaries to pursue the project activities without further technical assistance?	A				

	Scorecard				
	A	**B**	**C**	**D**	**NA[6]**
All services and materials were provided without technological intervention, since the rural infrastructure is well established both physically and intellectually.					
4.6. Economic sustainability					
4.6.1. To what extent have additional financial resources been allocated/mobilized to the sector or subsector programme as a result of the project?		B			
More resources tangible and intangible are deemed as essential to run the FFS training system sustainably					
4.6.2. To what extent are the products and services developed by the project affordable to beneficiaries and stakeholders?	A				
All services, trainings, study materials and tool kits were provided by the project without fee charge.					
OVERALL	A				