



## Component 2.2.

# Increasing uptake of INRM for sustainability and resilience in production landscapes and agro-ecosystems through advisory services and “farmer field schools”

## The Global Farmer Field School Platform - strengthening provision of advisory services for integrated natural resource management of smallholder systems

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### What approach did the team take to achieve the impact



**Set-up the Global Farmer Field School platform** (website and team) as an one-stop information hub on participatory advisory services (over 600 documents, thematic pages, 1000 visits per month).



**Develop and strengthen global, regional and national networks of practitioners, including:** financial support to East African FFS hub, creation of Anglophone West Africa FFS network, formalization of West and Central Africa Francophone network, development of global partners' network, development of global FFS online discussion group with 140 countries and 1500 practitioners.



**Through consultation with practitioners, identify key knowledge and skill gaps at different stages of implementation of participatory advice services.** In particular, we developed resources and support on digital advisory services, supporting the uptake of INRM (agroforestry, agro-pastoralism, and agroecology), formulation and implementation of quality programmes (including project formulation, basic principles, planning training programmes, MEL).



**The Platform provided key services** to fill those gaps through collaborations with networks and partners.



**Collate evidence from the field and support adaptation and uptake of participatory advisory services for INRM.** Research to document impacts of FFS was done in collaboration with major research centres (Wageningen University, CIRAD).





## What impact did the effort have and on/for whom?



### The Global FFS platform promoted the institutionalization of FFS and related approaches

In particular, **two regional FFS networks were developed in West Africa, funds were mobilized to support activities of the Eastern Africa FS Hub.** At global level, celebrations for 30 years of FFS were used to leverage further support from FAO, resulting in institutional support for maintenance of the global FFS platform hub and team and the development of FAO's high impact initiative on FFS.

Moreover, a **partner's network of 20 organizations was created** (Oxfam Novib, IFAD, CARE, DIG, CIP, Bioversity, JICA, Action Against Hunger (ACF), Access Agriculture, African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Systems (AFAAS), Association des Producteurs de Coton Africains (AProCA), Agronomes et Vétérinaires Sans Frontière (AVSF), Belgian Development Agency, SOFT, Development in Gardening (DIG), Eastern Africa Field Schools Hub (EA FSH), Farmers' Integrated Development Association (FIDA), FFS promotion services, FAO E-learning academy, Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research (PAR), Practical Action).

**6 peer-reviewed papers were published documenting the impact of FFS alongside two policy briefs on potential for support of forestry, agro-forestry and agroecological systems.** FFS and participatory advisory services for INRM were presented at COP26 along with several other high-level and technical events, raising the profile of the role of advisory services in INRM.



### The platform improved the capacity of network members across the region

(extension agents, producer organization members, partner organizations) in formulating and implementing good quality farmer advisory projects for INRM. In particular, the platform organizing over 20 events reaching 2000+ practitioners

#### Developed online learning courses reaching 3000+ practitioners

**Carried out two stocktakings on experiences of advisory systems** for agroecology and forestry/agroforestry

**Developed 6 technical manuals** on: digital advisory services, integrating climate change adaptation into FFS, integrating agroecology in FFS, integrating local indigenous knowledge in participatory advisory services, COVID-19 times implementation, MEL of FFS, alongside 5 additional technical documents (women's empowerment, 30 years of FFS, local ecological knowledge for climate change, stocktaking on Forestry FFS, technical note on FFS for ecological restoration).



## What were the main ingredients that led to the impact?

- **Partnerships with key organizations** involved in participatory advisory services globally, spanning different types of actors.
- **Flexibility in adapting the approach/advice to the needs and contexts of specific actors** - guided by non-negotiable principles of farmer field schools.
- **Receptiveness to needs of practitioners** and capacity to identify key gaps through networks at different scales.
- **Use of digital technologies to improve reach** (e.g. self-directed online learning, digital monitoring of activities, - balanced with understanding of the ingredients that cannot be digitalized (e.g. group learning, experimenting in the field).
- **Efforts to promote ownership of the global FFS platform and approach** by the FAO.

