IFDC East and Southern Africa

Market Systems for Agribusiness • Resilience, Climate Adaptation, and Mitigation • Last-Mile Input Delivery • Scaling Technologies • Soil Fertility Management • Seed and Fertilizer Sector Development • Enabling Environment • Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting

Founded in 1974, the International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) is a non-profit public international organization that combines science-backed innovations with policy-enabling and market systems-based approaches. IFDC has been working to support food security and the economic development of smallholder farmers in Africa since 1975. In 2009, IFDC established its regional office in Nairobi and expanded its portfolio to include soil and crop management, input policy, output markets, and agribusiness development. IFDC has implemented activities in Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia and currently has six country offices in the region. Through collaboration with national and regional partner organizations, governments, and donors, IFDC's work in East and Southern Africa has focused on bringing new technologies, partnerships, and markets for small-scale agriculture by supporting initiatives to develop competitive and sustainable agricultural value chains and create an enabling environment for agricultural intensification and private sector development.

Recent Key Work in East and Southern Africa

Building Resilience and Inclusive Growth of Highland Farming Systems for Rural Transformation (BRIGHT) – Uganda

2022-2026 – €13 million, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

BRIGHT is building the climate and economic resilience of highland farm households by enabling inclusive farm planning and decision-making, introducing appropriate climate-smart agriculture technologies to strengthen local farming systems, ensuring natural resource conservation, and developing strategic value chains. The project draws on IFDC's expertise in these interventions that have been successfully deployed in Burundi, Mozambique, and South Sudan. BRIGHT expects to increase the resilience and income of 100,000 smallholder farming households and convert 100,000 acres of farmland to sustainable use. As of 2023, integrated farm planning is progressing in seven districts, with 33 village committees selected.

Accelerating Agriculture and Agribusiness in South Sudan for Enhanced Economic Development (A3-SEED) – South Sudan

2021-2025 – €8.5 million, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

A3-SEED seeks to enable South Sudan to transition from humanitarian relief support to a commercial, sustainable, and adaptive agriculture sector. Through partnerships with private sector seed companies and outgrowers, A3-SEED aims to improve seed production practices and input marketing and distribution to ensure availability of quality seeds down to the last mile. A3-SEED seeks to reach more than 100,000 farming households that will see a doubling of income from marketable surpluses. In less than two years, seed production has increased by a factor of 2.5, from 2,000 metric tons, covering 30 different sorghum varieties by working with 45 agro-dealers.

Triple Resilience (3R) – Mozambique

2023-2027 – $20 million, Embassy of Sweden

3R aims to integrate a market systems development approach with a locally led development philosophy, building the capacity of communities and civil society organizations to direct private sector investments in sustainable and resilient agriculture and livelihoods while strengthening social cohesion to promote resilience and sustainability. This initiative will target an estimated 42,000 individuals (including women and youth), with the potential to scale to an additional 100,000 beneficiaries by leveraging partnerships with the anchor private sector.

Soil Fertility Stewardship Project (PAGRIS) – Burundi

2020-2024 – €8.5 million, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

PAGRIS is an innovative project in Burundi aiming for ecologically sustainable land management through three key approaches: (1) implementing integrated land stewardship strategies at plot level in collaboration with farming households; (2) enhancing slope and watershed management through collective community action; and (3) fostering an enabling institutional environment for improved fertilizer availability and utilization. A total of 93,000 households are now applying integrated farming practices, covering 19,000 hectares of land, and over 50,000 households have received access to lime with the support of seven new knowledge centers.

Toward Sustainable Clusters in Agribusiness through Learning in Entrepreneurship (2SCALE) – Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, South Sudan, Uganda

2012-2018, 2019-2024 – €190 million (€62.5 million through public funding), Netherlands Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) and private sector and financial institution co-investment

2SCALE is the largest incubator of inclusive agribusiness in Africa, building networks that connect farmers, small-scale entrepreneurs (buyers, and support service providers), enabling them to build and grow businesses. It focuses on 23 commodities, such as staple crops, oilseeds, and feed and fodder, and plans to mobilize €50 million in co-investments. Phase 1 saw 600,000 farmers increase incomes, 2,500 entrepreneurs improve sales, and finalization of 69 agribusiness partnerships, with over €50 million co-invested by the private sector and €10.3 million in financially inclusive contracts. Phase 2 aims to improve access to nutritious food for 1 million base-of-the-pyramid consumers, improve the livelihoods of 750,000 smallholders (50% women; 40% youth), and support 5,000 micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises.

AfricaFertilizer – Africa-wide

2009 – ongoing – $1.38 million, multi-donor funding

AfricaFertilizer is the premier source for statistics in the key fertilizer markets of sub-Saharan Africa. It is hosted by IFDC and supported by several key partners, including the International Fertilizer Association (IFA), Argus Media, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and Development Gateway. Since 2009, AfricaFertilizer has maintained an extensive network of fertilizer industry actors in the main fertilizer trade corridors and collects key information on the major producers and agricultural services – labs, research, creditors, and warehousing/storage services. AfricaFertilizer drives partnerships and data-sharing mechanisms in two primary areas: (1) fertilizer statistics, such as production, trade, consumption, prices, and production capacities, by crop; and (2) fertilizer market intelligence, including fertilizer policies and regulations, subsidies, business and product directories. Currently, the platform offers eight country dashboards and 18 country fact sheets.

Feed the Future Sustainable Opportunities for Improving Livelihoods with Soils Space to Place (SOILS-S2P) – Ghana, Malawi, Niger, Tanzania, and Zambia

2023-2025 – $27 million, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

SOILS-S2P is a collaborative effort led by the USAID Bureau for Resilience, Environment, and Food Security. In partnership with IFDC, U.S. universities, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service, and international and national soil experts. SOILS-S2P has developed a low-cost Space to Place approach that leverages digitized soil maps (Space) and farm(er)-level characteristics (Place) to deliver spatially appropriate soil fertility management recommendations, fostering the adoption of effective agronomic technologies and fertilizer recommendations while maintaining or surpassing current productivity levels. The project seeks to provide localized and improved recommendations for key mixed production systems in sub-Saharan Africa, encompassing maize, cereal-root crops, and highland and agropastoral systems, targeting a reduction of fertilizer wastage by 60% for smallholder farmers over the next two to three cropping seasons, to achieve optimal returns.

Feed the Future Soil Fertility Technology Adoption, Policy Reform and Knowledge Management Project – Bangladesh, Nepal, Myanmar, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Ghana, Niger

2015-2018, 2019-2023 – $15.26 million, USAID

Through this project, IFDC worked to bridge the gap between scientific research and technology dissemination to smallholder farmers; develop, pilot, and scale up soil fertility and agricultural productivity practices and technologies, such as the SMaRT approach to balanced fertilizers – Soil testing, Mapping, Recommendations development, and Transfer to farmers; support policy reforms and market development (e.g., fertilizer platforms and subsidy policy); and led the SOILS Consortium within the Soil Intensification Innovation Lab (SIIL).

Potato Capacity Building (PCB) Project – Kenya

2018-2024 – €2.3 million, Embassy of Ireland

PCB aims to enhance productivity by promoting new technologies, including certified seed potatoes, improved agricultural practices, and better farm management and market access. The project facilitated linkages between anchor firms and lead farmers, offering capacity building to over 12,000 small farmers, covering 33,800 metric tons of clean

seeds. It also set up nine private sector partnerships, including ones with major domestic and international processors such as Sereni Fries Ltd., Corteva, and Syngenta, and additional partners, such as public sector entities, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions, leveraging €1 million. With 55% adopting better practices, the project has helped increase farm productivity 166% and reduce post-harvest losses from 40% to 8%.

Transfer Efficient Agricultural Technologies through Market Systems (TEAMS) – Mozambique

2021-2022 – €3.6 million, Embassy of Sweden

TEAMS facilitated sustainable last-mile input systems for farmers by collaborating with local agro-dealers, input companies, and the government for improved inputs and agricultural practices, including soil fertility management and climate-smart agriculture, benefiting 8,788 farmers. Additionally, TEAMS diversified farming systems to include horticultural crops, resulting in a significant rise in net annual income. Two unique features that created broader socio-economic impact are gender mainstreaming efforts, which enabled 5,085 women to access labor-saving technologies and low-cost irrigation systems, and the reintegration of 610 ex-guerillas and their families through training in climate-smart agriculture and business skills in collaboration with the Peace Process Secretariat. Notably, five ex-combatants established input retail shops, enhancing access to improved inputs, while nine secured leadership positions in farmer groups.

Private Seed Sector Development (PSSD) – Burundi

2018-2024 – €7.7 million, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

PSSD seeks to rapidly grow the market for quality seed and establish commercial seed production and marketing in Burundi as a self-sustaining business supported by client-oriented seed services. The project aims to increase the production and incomes of 178,000 farmer households. PSSD works with public and private sector partners to promote the development of a private sector-led seed industry that can provide farmers with sustainable access to high-quality seed and agricultural advisory services. As of 2021, 97,394 smallholder farmers had purchased seed from PSSD partners, a ninefold increase from 2019. About 1,958 mt of seed was sold in 2021, an increase of 37.3% compared to 2020, for a total of 3,742 mt thus far. More than 5,700 demonstration fields have been established, and trainings on good agricultural practices have been provided to 64,180 smallholder farmers, 45% women. In addition, the project supported the Ministry of Agriculture approving the national seed plan, which has significantly reduced the analysis time of dry seeds from 31 to 5-6 days.

Supporting Agricultural Productivity in Burundi (PAPAB) – Burundi

2015-2019 – €33.5 million, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

PAPAB aimed to increase food production sustainably by promoting climate-resilient agricultural techniques and strengthening farmer-market linkages for enhanced profits and investments. This involved two main components: improving soil fertility and increasing farm productivity and market access. The project utilized an integrated farm planning approach to foster inclusive household decision-making, ensuring ownership and sustainability. As a result, PAPAB significantly boosted agricultural productivity and income for 865,666 farming households through Component 1 and 59,575 through Component 2. In Burundi, the integrated approach improved the well-being of 69.1% of trained households, particularly benefiting women-headed households with a 98% income increase and men-headed households with a 100% increase, highlighting the project's impact on income growth compared to nonparticipating farmers.