

case studies

FAO TRUST FUNDS AT WORK

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THE DECENTRALIZED COOPERATION PROGRAMME:

Promoting city-to-city and region-to-region partnerships

The Dois Irmaos Water Control Project in North-East Brazil

Funding modality

Co-financed by the Italy–FAO Decentralized Cooperation Programme (GDGP).

Partners

The Government of Italy, the region of Tuscany, nine municipalities of Bahia and Piaui, Italian Civil Society organizations (Cooperazione per lo sviluppo dei paesi emergenti [COSPE], Unitá e cooperazione per lo sviluppo dei popoli [UCODEP], Lega delle Cooperative Toscane, the Associazione Arte Continua), Brazilian trade unions.

Geographical area

Serra de Dois Irmaos, between the states of Bahia and Piaui, Brazil.

Services provided

Capacity building, technical assistance and partnership building.



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<http://www.fao.org/tc/DCP/>

Increasingly cities, regions and other local institutions in developed countries are reaching out to their counterparts in poorer countries to help tackle poverty and food insecurity.

The FAO Decentralized Cooperation Programme (DCP) was launched in 2002 to promote participation of non-state actors in the development process and to strengthen local government institutions with the aim of addressing hunger and malnutrition. Direct city-to-city or region-to-region partnerships are promoted with FAO acting both as a catalyst and provider of technical and operational support.

In the framework of the “Fome Zero” Programme, the Brazilian government gave priority to the provision of fresh water to Brazil’s driest areas, in the North East of the country. The region of Dois Irmaos (“two brothers”), lying across the states of Bahia and Piaui is threatened with food insecurity, particularly during the dry months of the year. Rural households generally lack sufficient access to water resources, rainfall is erratic and food production in the region is based on subsistence farming. At the request of the Government, FAO and the Region of Tuscany established a partnership to

develop a water control project with the overall objective of improving access to water resources both for domestic use and small scale farming.

The project focused on rainwater harvesting - through the provision of 1 850 water tanks for household and village consumption - as well as on training. However, its most significant result was to develop a sense of community across the states of Piaui and Bahia which led to an integrated rural development scheme in the Dois Irmaos area.

The project supported income-generating activities such as backyard animal rearing, food processing, medicinal plants and apiculture. All activities were conducted at community level so that lessons learned could be reproduced by other families in the area. The project also aimed at addressing women’s empowerment by relieving them of time-consuming water collection and promoting women’s associations.

From its original budget of USD 600 000, contributions from private and public sources resulted in a total budget close to USD 1.4 million. The project developed a sense of community and facilitated entrepreneurship in the area.

CODEX ALIMENTARIUS:

International food standards for safer food and fairer trade



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Globalization has increased trade in food and agricultural commodities but it has also complicated the task of keeping them safe. The safety of food throughout the food chain is of serious concern to consumers, farmers, processors, retailers and governments alike. Recent outbreaks of Avian Influenza and concerns about genetically modified foods have exposed the growing need for clear food standards based on scientific research.

The Codex Alimentarius is an international food code that serves as the basis for many national food standards to protect the health of consumers and to ensure fair practices in the food trade. It covers aspects such as food labelling, food additives, residues of pesticides and veterinary drugs, food contaminants, food hygiene, nutrition and foods for special dietary uses, food import and export inspection and certification systems and methods of analysis and sampling, in addition to more specific commodity related issues. The Codex is an important international reference point for consumers, food producers and processors, national food control agencies and the international food trade.

Administered jointly by FAO and the World Health Organization (WHO), the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its 170 members meet every two years to set standards and guidelines. By providing an international focal point for informed dialogue on issues relevant to food, the Codex Alimentarius Commission fulfils a crucial role in sensitizing the global community to the danger of food hazards as well as to the importance of food quality and to the need for food standards. FAO, often in collaboration with WHO, convenes with health professionals and scientists, including academics, researchers, nutritionists and other experts to alert and give advice to the Codex system on specific issues such as animal feeding and food safety, biotechnology, organic foods, probiotics and compliance with food trade agreements. Health professionals can also alert national authorities on emerging issues in food production, processing, packaging and transport.

The agreements reached during the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade negotiations (1986-94) and the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO) brought trade in agricultural and food products under

Funding modalities	Donors	Geographical area	Services provided
The FAO/WHO Codex Multi-lateral Trust Fund for the normative work. 7GCPs, TCP grants and UTFs for capacity building projects.	Australia, Canada, European Community, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United States of America.	Worldwide.	Standard setting, scientific knowledge, technical expertise, capacity building, policy assistance.

global rules for the first time. Since Codex standards and texts have been recognized as the internationally relevant and scientifically justified norms, they are accepted as the benchmarks against which national measures and regulations are evaluated. A WTO member country whose food-safety measures are in harmony with Codex standards is considered in compliance with WTO rules and can have easier access to international markets.

Through funding from its core budget and extrabudgetary resources, FAO provides technical and policy assistance to member countries for the implementation of Codex-related activities and the application of Codex standards, guidelines and recommendations. Project activities are based on a prior assessment of a country's needs and tailored to the local institutional and developmental conditions of that country, its food industry and of the other operators in the food chain.

FAO also supports governments and food enterprises to become more competitive in international markets by providing capacity building assistance to improve the quality and safety of food

and agricultural products and promoting their export. Activities include national and regional training workshops and seminars on food safety related matters and the development and dissemination of manuals, guidelines, training materials and other tools needed to support food control and food safety development programmes.



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▲ As a result of food crises such as mad-cow disease, Codex has developed a Code of Practice for Good Animal Feeding. It covers among many things how animal feed is handled on the farm. Farmers' organizations have been contributing to the development of this Code.