Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

EU-STREIT PNG Programme: Accelerating digital transformation

Eva GalvezNogales, FAO RAP

14 September 2023, Panel Session#6

Structure of the presentation

- Key facts about the EU-STREIT PNG Programme:
  - Introduction
  - Key achievements as of June 2023
- Digital transformation: ITU-FAO collaboration
  - Policy-level support
  - Digital services for farmers and agrifood MSMEs
  - E-learning management systems, resources centres and digital literacy
- Lessons learned on digital inclusion
  - Challenges
  - Best practices

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Project overview

Basic information

- Full name: Support to Rural Entrepreneurship, Investment and Trade in Papua New Guinea
- Funded: European Union
- Duration: 2020 – 2024
- Implementation: UN Joint Programme under the leadership of **FAO**, partnering with **ILO, ITU**, **UNCDF** and **UNDP** and in close collaboration with the **Government** and **local partners** inc. local agripreneurs.

Objective

To improve the lives of the people by increasing sustainable and inclusive economic development of rural Sepik, through:

- Improving economic returns and opportunities from cocoa, vanilla and fishery value chains.
- Strengthening and improving the efficiency of value chain enablers, including the business environment (**ICT** and financial services), climate-proof transport and alternative energy solutions.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Key achievements as of June 2023

Reached out
435 000
Individuals

Benefited
72 600
Families

Supported
730
Groups

Trained
23 300
Farmers (F/M)

Renewable Energy

Installed
5 PV
solar systems at public facilities

ICT Services

Developed
2
e-agri strategies
4 digital r. centres

Cocoa

Upgraded
520 nurseries
and budwood gardens

Planted
1 100 000
CPB-tolerant seedlings

Vanilla

Provided
111 700
healthy vanilla vines

Supported
2 000 vanilla
HHs with planting & harvesting tools

Fisheries

Distributed
40 000
healthy fingerlings

Procured
90 fishing
dingies, canoe, and freezers

Transport Infrastructure

Maintained
185 KM of
farm-to-market roads

Contracted
11 rural roads
rehabilitation
projects (170 KM)

Access to Financial Services

Opened
93 500 new
bank accounts

Established
204 new
financial access
points

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

ACCELERATING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Threefold approach to fostering digital inclusion

Upgraded policy frameworks

Digital agricultural services

Digital connectivity and skills

Policy support to digital inclusion

- Enhancing the roll-out of the national e-agriculture strategy and developed provincial-level e-agriculture strategies for East and West Sepik.
- In close collaboration with the National Information and Communication Technology Authority (NICTA), conducted Network Coverage Assessment & developed Telecommunication Quality of Service (QoS) rules and regulations.
- Ongoing assessment on enhancing access, speed and affordability of network coverage.

[ITU-led activities]

Provision of tailored digital agricultural services

- Digital advisory services and e-marketplaces targeting farmers and local MSMEs in the Programme area:
  - Introduced the Agricultural Meteorological Advisory Monitoring and Services (AMAMAS) system in the Sepik region for informed decision-making using digital weather and climate forecasts and advisories specific to crops of interest.
  - Ongoing development of tailored e-marketplace.
  - Enhanced access to digital financial services to rural communities, leading to digitalized payment flows in the value chains.
  - Ongoing development of digitally-enabled Management Information System (MIS/FIS) and Learning Management System (LMS) for cocoa, vanilla and fisheries.

[ITU-led/ITU-FAO collaboration]

Digital literacy and digital resource centres

- Establishment of 10 digitally-enabled resource centres in East and West Sepik Provinces: 4 already established and 6 underway. These centres of excellence offer farmers access to internet connection and ICT facilities where community training and information acquisition take place digitally.
- Build the digital and financial skills of over 500 master trainers, who in turn are becoming digital champions that train farmers in the targeted areas, ushering a new era of digital empowerment for local farmers and agripreneurs.

[ITU-FAO-UNCDF collaboration]

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

LESSONS LEARNED ON ACCELERATING DIGITAL INCLUSION

Challenges faced by farmers and MSMEs to go digital

- The Programme baseline showed a striking digital gap:

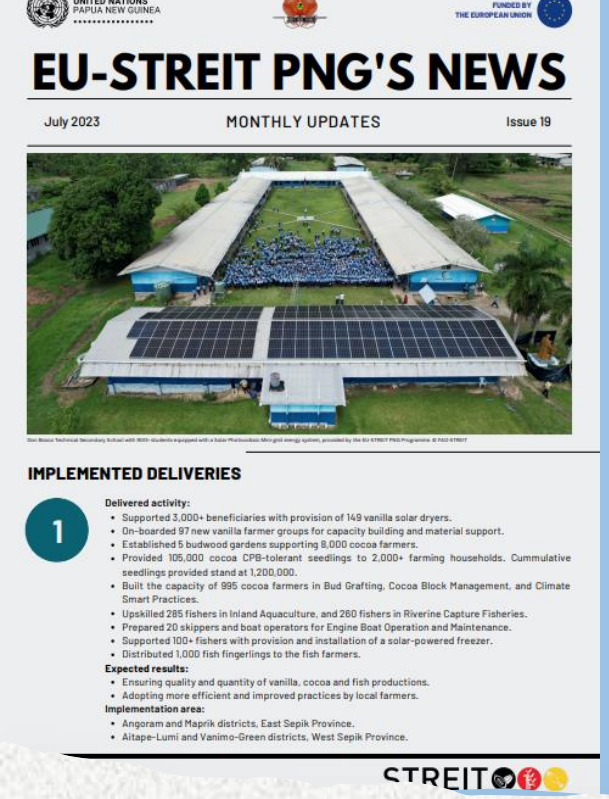
- To address these gaps, the Programme is implementing a holistic approach that needs: closed coordination (UN agencies, PNG Government, telecommunication companies, beneficiaries, etc.) over several years, and a solid exit strategy.

Best practices for digital inclusion in agrifood systems

- Importance of having a clear baseline and targets.
- Understanding that different agrifood chains, and actors within them, adopt digital technologies and business models at varying speeds and so require tailored digitalization strategies to leave no one behind.
- Efforts to expand connectivity in rural areas must be accompanied by skills training in digital- and business-related topics such as e-commerce and financial literacy, financial support and the development of productive infrastructure required for e-commerce, and complementary initiatives that specifically target vulnerable farming communities.
- Design of exit strategy to ensure long-term sustainability of digital support.

Best practices for digital inclusion in agrifood systems

- Accelerating the digital inclusion of farmers and agrifood MSMEs requires building synergies among:
  - UN Agencies (Joint Programme) and other interventions in targeted area.
  - Government:
    - The digital resource centres are located in public secondary schools and are linked with GoP's line departments.
    - The Programme's digital skill trainings are closely linked with PNG Out Digital Transformation Centre in PNG.
    - The Programme's Government to Citizen (G2C) component is aligned with PNG Digital Government and GovStack.
  - Private sector: e.g. public-private partnerships linking telecommunications and banking service providers, and e-commerce platforms.
  - Research and academia institutions: e.g. support to digital resource centres.



Thank you!

Further information available at: www.fao.org/in-action/eu-streit-png/en

Eva.GalvezNogales@fao.org