



CALL FOR PROJECTS 3

FOOD SECURITY & IMPROVED NUTRITION

JANUARY 2026

**STRENGTHENING AGRICULTURAL VALUE CHAINS
WITH IMPACT INVESTORS**



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List of acronyms

ADA	Appui au Développement Autonome
CFP	Call for projects
CSAF	Council on Smallholder Agricultural Finance
ESG	Environment-Social-Governance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
LDC	Least Developed Countries
LED	Liechtensteinischer Entwicklungsdienst
MFEA	Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Luxembourg
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SH	Smallholder household
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise
TA	Technical assistance
TAF	Technical assistance facility
SSNUP	Smallholder SustaiNability Upscaling Programme



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 CONTEXT

The Smallholder SustaiNability Upscaling Programme (SSNUP), a 10-year programme launched in 2020 that aims to improve the resilience of smallholder households through technical assistance and investment in agricultural value chains, ultimately enhancing the well-being of low-income populations. Funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Liechtenstein Development Service (LED), and the Luxembourg Directorate for Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Affairs, SSNUP works as a facility to co-finance technical assistance (TA) projects led by impact investors active in the field. ADA is responsible for coordinating the programme and managing its knowledge management component.

As of January 2026, 11 impact investors are permanent partner investors of the programme, 131 TA projects have been approved benefiting to 245 organisations supported (small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), cooperatives and financial intermediaries) with a SSNUP contribution to TA projects of € 10.8 million in total. For more information, please see [SSNUP programme document phase II](#).

1.2 RATIONALE

The call for projects (CFP) is a component within the SSNUP programme that aims to provide TA funding for impact investors that are not permanent partners of the programme, focused on specific topics, region and for a limited duration. This is the 3rd edition of the SSNUP call for projects.

The main objectives of this CFP are no different from that of the programme, therefore any project approved must contribute to the following 3 objectives:

1. **Improve the resilience of smallholder households** by enhancing their productivity, improving their agricultural practices, and improving their risk management capabilities and solutions.
2. **Strengthen agricultural value chains** by supporting enterprises and organisations to adopt more sustainable and efficient environmental and social practices in order to generate increased income and jobs and enhance food security.
3. **Facilitate additional investments and contribute to de-risking current investments** in the agricultural sectors of developing economies and support the expansion of agricultural value chains.

1.3 SCOPE

The CFP aims to contribute to the three main objectives outlined above by co-financing TA projects that support current or future investees of impact investors—referred to as beneficiary organisations in the context of SSNUP—operating to strengthen agricultural value chains in the geographical areas targeted by the SSNUP programme (Africa, Asia, and Latin America).

The CFP is open to impact investors (asset managers) currently not permanent partner of the SSNUP programme and whose investment activities are aligned with the expectations of the programme, such as members of Council for Smallholder Agricultural Finance (CSAF).

The impact investors must have a focus on agriculture, environment, climate, agroecological transition, or food security in terms of topics of intervention. While there are no requirements regarding the size of their investment portfolios or the necessity of having a specialised TA Facility, commitment to follow established TA management procedures are essential and mandatory.

The TA projects submitted through the CFP should be designed by both the impact investor and their investee or future investee (beneficiary organisation) while ensuring they contribute to the main objectives of SSNUP. The implementation of the TA projects should be led by the beneficiary organisation with support



from the impact investor, who will remain the direct counterpart of the programme. The applicant to the CFP is the impact investor, not the beneficiary organisation.

Project selection criteria are specific with regards to eligible topics, countries, type of beneficiary organisations, and budget. This third edition of the CFP (SSNUP CFP3) has a specific focus on Food Security and Improved Nutrition and will co-finance TA projects that ensure diversified, safe and nutritious food is available, affordable and accessible in adequate quantities for vulnerable populations in intervention countries. Details regarding the eligibility and evaluation criteria are provided in the following sections.

The CFP is open until **23.59 (CET) on 09/03/2026** and will be followed by the internal assessment of the batch of submitted projects, and the approval of those that best adhere to the SSNUP objectives and to the criteria of this call for projects. See complete timeline in section 4.5.

2 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

This section provides information on the eligibility criteria of the applicant, the submitted TA project and the project related costs.

2.1 APPLICANT CRITERIA

The applicant must be an impact investor (asset manager) with activities focused on the agricultural sector and in line with the following components below:

1. Investment objectives, strategy, and impact theory

The impact investor:

- Manages one or more investment funds engaged in strengthening/developing the agricultural sectors into the target regions of the SSNUP programme.
- Follows a 'triple-bottom' line approach, complying with the environmental, social, and governance lending principles set by the [Council of Smallholder Agricultural Finance](#) and promoting the adoption of sustainable farm practices and agroecological principles.

2. Experience, capacity and/or ambition with technical assistance

The impact investor has experience or is willing to offer specific TA to strengthen the impact of agricultural investments. This requires that:

- The impact investor is already staffed with at least one specialist experienced in TA management or has identified at least one staff member who will be responsible for designing and managing the TA project(s) co-funded by SSNUP.
- The impact investor has the experience or has access to expertise to identify issues and relevant solutions that could be developed/improved/delivered through a TA project.
- The impact investor is committed to ensuring a clear link between the TA projects implemented and the current or potential investments.
- The impact investor has defined or is ready to define operational procedures to manage TA projects that:
 - Ensure best value for money through diligent procurement to select best qualified service providers.
 - Enable to monitor TA projects effectively and cost-efficiently to allow for best results and achievement of expected deliverables.
- The impact investor is able to separate the investment activities from the TA activities in terms of accounting and decision-making.
- The impact investor is not currently part of the SSNUP Steering Committee.

3. Openness to impact measurement and knowledge management

The impact investor is committed to cooperate with SSNUP to identify and share results and lessons learnt in accordance with SSNUP procedures.



The applicant must have documents ready for confirmation that they meet the eligibility criteria including financial statements and any other documentary evidence that might be requested besides the application form.

Additionally, the following list of **exclusion criteria** has been defined:

- The applicant shall not have been the subject of bankruptcy, liquidation, judicial settlement, safeguarding, cessation of activity or any other similar situation resulting from a similar procedure.
- The applicant must not be involved or have invested in any of the following activities:
 - Manufacture, sale, or distribution of armaments and/or weapons or their components, including military supplies and equipment.
 - Manufacture, sale or distribution of tobacco or tobacco products.
 - Involvement in the manufacture, sale, and distribution of pornography.
 - Manufacture, sale, or distribution of substances subject to international bans or phaseouts, and wildlife.
 - Large scale industrial agriculture, gas/oil, and mining.
 - Gambling including casinos, betting etc. (excluding lotteries with charitable objectives).
 - Violation of human rights or complicity in human rights violations.
 - Use or toleration of forced or compulsory labour.
 - Use or toleration of child labour.

2.2 PROJECT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Eligible project must comply with the following criteria:

1. **Type of beneficiary organisation:** agri-SME (according to [IFC definition](#)), farmer cooperative/organisation or financial intermediary.
2. **Number of beneficiary organisations:** maximum of two beneficiary organisations per project. For a project to include two beneficiary organisations, they must be of the same type, located in the same geographical area, and benefit from similar TA activities.
3. **Relationship with the beneficiary organisation:** current or future investee of an impact investor.
4. **Country of implementation:** [DAC List of ODA recipient countries](#) from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Priority will be given to projects in sub-Saharan Africa, as well as in the [Least Developed Countries \(LDC\)](#).
5. **TA project categories:** the TA project can cover one or several of the following four TA categories, but cannot include only 5.4 – Improvement of management systems solutions:
 - 5.1. Creation/improvement/delivery of responsible **financial services** for smallholder farmers or other actors in agricultural value chains (new/adapted financial products (loans, insurance, savings, etc.), digitalisation of service delivery, climate-smart finance, gender-smart finance, distribution channels, etc.).
 - 5.2. Creation/improvement/delivery of **capacity building** solutions to smallholder farmers (income diversification, climate adaptation and mitigation, sustainable agricultural practices, financial literacy and business management training, gender smart agriculture, yield and quality improvement practices, etc.).
 - 5.3. Creation/improvement/delivery of **market access and product development** solutions (excluding financial services) to facilitate transactions between agricultural value chain actors in order to contribute to the sustainable development of value chains and created added value (certification, market linkages, new agri-product development, etc.).
 - 5.4. Improvement of **management systems** solutions for the beneficiary organisations themselves to make them more sustainable (financial management, risk management, environmental, social governance (ESG) management, traceability systems, digitalisation of internal processes, governance & leadership, credit management, quality and safety certification, financial investment readiness, business and commercial strategy, etc.).



6. **Duration:** 12 months maximum. The project must be launched before 30/06/2026 and completed before 30/06/2027.
7. **Budget:** the TA project budget should only be covered by SSNUP and by the beneficiary organisation. Dedicated budget template should be used as part of the application:
 - 7.1. **SSNUP contribution:** the SSNUP contribution is limited to € 50,000 per project.
 - 7.2. **Beneficiary organisation contribution:** the beneficiary organisation contribution must be a minimum of 20% (cash only) of the total TA project budget.

In addition to the SSNUP contribution, SSNUP will pay a management fee to the impact investor for managing the project. The management fee is calculated at 12% of the actual expenses covered by SSNUP and will be paid after the end of the project. For projects that are implemented in LDCs, an additional 2% management fee will be triggered bringing the total management fee to 14%.
8. **Priority topics:** the TA project must focus on the topic "**Food Security and Improved Nutrition**" which is one of the four priority topics of SSNUP phase II. It should clearly target food value chains with a strong and explicit focus on improving food security and/or nutritional quality. Projects not focusing on Food Security and Improved Nutrition will be rejected:
 - 8.1. Definition of the Food Security and Improved Nutrition priority topic: eligible TA projects should promote production practices ensuring agricultural biodiversity, soil health, water preservation and conservation, and climate change adaptation and mitigation in accordance with agroecological principles relating to environmental objectives (strengthening resilience and improving resource efficiency). Such practices include diversification of crops, animals, and trees; integration of crops, livestock, fish, and trees (agroforestry); minimisation of external inputs, synthetic fertilisers and chemical pesticides; biomass and nutrient recycling; use of local seeds and genetic resources as much as possible; use or production of renewable energies, etc.
 - 8.2. In addition, the TA project can target any other priority topics of SSNUP (Environment and Climate Change, Gender Equality, Fair Agrifood Systems). In any case, it should at least not prejudice any priority topics, following a "do no harm" approach. For more details about SSNUP priority topics, please see Annex 1 of this document.

9. **Exclusion criteria:** any project corresponding to one of the listed red flags below will not be financed by SSNUP:

REG FLAGS	
GMOs	Project focusing on the introduction of GMOs and associated genome-editing technologies.
Synthetics	Project focusing on the promotion of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides.
Monoculture	Project focusing exclusively on promoting large scale single cash crop production at the expense of diversified strategies. Projects supporting single cash crop production in farming areas where diversification exists, or which promote diversification are not concerned by the red flag.
Productivity	Project focusing exclusively on productivity resulting in avoidable destruction of vital ecosystems and their functions and services.
Seed systems	Project actively promoting regulations and/or actions that hamper and/or destroy local and farmer-managed seed systems.
Factory farming	Project focusing on large-scale intensification of animal production.
Extractivism	Project promoting extractive raw material production that depletes local resources over time.
Processed food	Project focusing exclusively on promoting highly processed, industrially produced foods (with low nutrient value).



Harmful products	Project focusing on promoting tobacco, alcohol, additives or any other agricultural products that are responsible for nutrition-related diseases.
Women & marginalised groups	Project excluding or actively discriminating against women and other marginalised groups.
Human rights	Project promoting approaches that violate rights, including customary rights, ignoring prior informed consent or resulting in population displacement and/or land grabbing.

2.3 ELIGIBLE COSTS

SSNUP has defined 5 categories of cost:

- **Partner personnel costs:** gross remuneration of employees involved in the TA project (only applicable to newly created positions).
- **Consultancy fees:** honoraria of consultants providing technical assistance, training, coaching, facilitation of peer-to-peer exchange, advisory services, etc.
- **Travel:** transportation, accommodation, meals during travel, visa, per diems, etc.
- **Equipment and materials:** digital equipment, minor fixed assets, materials, etc.
- **Events, communication and any other costs:** room rental, event logistics, meals during events, printing, publication, translation, document formatting, visibility materials, etc.

1. SSNUP contribution by category

The following aspects should be considered when defining the amount of the SSNUP contribution. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of items that are eligible to SSNUP co-funding.

Partner personnel costs

Beneficiary organisation staff costs: SSNUP will not cover internal staff costs of a beneficiary organisation as these are considered as existing and recurring costs. However, SSNUP can co-finance internal staff costs (limited in principle to 1 or 2 full-time equivalent) when a new permanent position/function is created in the context of the project to internalise the expertise (instead of recruiting a consultant) and/or to offer new or more services to SH clients (e.g. financial literacy training). A new job description must be provided with assurance that the position will remain after the TA project has terminated. Co-financed staff positions must be in SSNUP eligible countries. The SSNUP contribution covering internal staff costs should be decreasing over time during the project implementation.

e.g.: *Hiring a new financial literacy trainer to provide SH clients long-term.*

Managerial position: In the case of greenfield and 'immature' (defined as either/or small Tier 3 organisation, weak financial performance, slow growth path, etc.) beneficiary organisations, the temporary recruitment of a senior specialist into a managerial function to strengthen managerial systems, introduce new products/services with a strong focus to train local staff on-the-job may be far more effective compared to the recruitment of short-term consultants. The co-funding of qualified specialists in senior managerial functions is eligible up to 24 months depending on the needs and situation of the organisation. The Terms of Reference/job description must clearly highlight the objectives of building internal capacity and ensuring their function can be taken over by someone internally.

Internal experts from investors: SSNUP can co-finance the cost of internal experts to deliver TA to beneficiary organisations when specific expertise (e.g. price risk management, digital/IT, ESG, agronomy) is required which is available internally. However, this must be (1) at cost price and (2) proven to be the most efficient option, and (3a) cannot amount to more than € 15,000 of SSNUP contribution per beneficiary organisation, or (3b) cannot represent more than 20% of the total SSNUP contribution per project.

e.g.: *Mobilising an internal expert employee of the investor to deliver training on ESG practices to beneficiary organisations.*



Consultancy fees

Consultant recruitment: SSNUP will co-finance the cost of recruiting consultants for a project. However,

- Assignments allocated to consultants should always include a component of transfer of knowledge and competencies to build internal expertise and ensure ownership of the project. This can be done in a variety of ways such as for example individual coaching of managers / key staff members, trainings and workshops, shadowing the consultant on specific assignments, etc. All this requires that the consultant is able to adapt to what suits the beneficiary organisation best.
- The number of consultants and days allocated should not be excessive in comparison to the absorption capacity of the beneficiary organisation.
- No consultants shall be co-funded in case they co-ordinate and/or backstop other consultants as commonly proposed by consultancy companies.
- In general, local and regional consultants are preferred to international consultants. However, if an international consultant is required, it is advisable to also involve a local or regional consultant to support the implementation of the project and ensure the local capacity is strengthened.
- The cost of consultants must always be justified and clearly explained in the proposal. International, regional or local consultancy fees should be based on the CV of the consultant and not the nationality and place where the person is based. For instance, an EU national living in Kenya with experience only in Kenya should be considered as local while a Kenyan with experience in several countries and regions living in Kenya should be considered as international.
- The cost of consultants can be estimated in the proposal if the consultant has not yet been identified. It is advised to put a sufficiently high amount in the proposal to keep flexibility when selecting. If the consultant has been selected already, it is important to justify the reasoning for the selection.
- Opening a new position and recruiting a new qualified staff by the beneficiary organisation, instead of recruiting a consultant, to ensure knowledge and competencies are internalised, is strongly preferred in case of assignments of unlimited duration (see below *Beneficiary organisation staff costs* for more details).

e.g.: *Hiring a local agronomy expert to train field staff on agroecological production techniques. Recruiting a product manager for the development and implementation of a credit scoring model. Hiring an agency to improve the technical, environmental, and economic aspects of dairy farmers.*

Financial product development: All new or modified financial products, where SSNUP will co-fund the design, testing, and/or market introduction - must be affordable for the SH clients from the onset¹. SSNUP will not subsidise (even temporarily) the cost of financial products (including insurance premiums) or any business transactions with end clients.

e.g.: *Hiring an insurance expert to design an index-based insurance product.*

Certifications: SSNUP can co-finance first-time certification, first renewal certification (up to 50%), and related capacity building/training needed for all certifications including after first renewals.

e.g.: *First-time organic certification for SHs; training sessions for SHs on certification standards.*

¹ In the case of agricultural and natural disaster insurances, this can be feasible only, if the beneficiary organisation either offers a group insurance coverage for the clients or if an existing national/macro disaster insurance scheme is extended to cover the SHs concerned.



Equipment and materials

Fixed assets (non-digital): SSNUP will not subsidise the purchasing of fixed assets such as land, buildings, equipment, vehicles, or the establishment of laboratory or nurseries. However, for the introduction of new or improved agroecological smart practices, investments in new demo farms and seedlings for demonstration purposes only can be considered.

e.g.: *Seedlings or small tools used on demo farms for agroecological practices.*

Digital equipment (hardware and software): SSNUP can co-finance the purchasing of digital equipment necessary for the implementation of all types of projects with a digital objective (meaning the digitalisation of processes for business transactions, communications, and information sharing with SHs) up to a maximum of one third of the SSNUP contribution. In the case of software solutions developed or improved in the context of the TA project, the intellectual property rights should be clearly defined in the contract with the service provider developing the solution. There are 3 options:

1. The software solution is made a public good and is available for free (best case).
2. The property rights are shared with one or more of the following entities: funders, the coordinator (ADA), investor, and/or the beneficiary organisation.
3. The property rights remain with the developer of the solution (worst case).

e.g.: *Laptops, tablets, or mobile devices for field agents*

Travel

Transportation: SSNUP can co-finance costs related to transportation and fuel however costs related to depreciation of vehicle are not eligible to SSNUP contribution. Travels must be justified, for environmental reasons.

Events, communication and any other costs

SSNUP will cover the cost associated to project activities.

e.g.: *room rental for a training, printed materials for an event, publication for social media promotion, translation, document formatting, visibility materials, etc.*

INELIGIBLE COSTS

Recurring costs of beneficiary organisations: SSNUP will not cover recurring expenses of a beneficiary organisation. However, in some cases, like that of certifications (see above), SSNUP can co-finance these costs if there is a clear path to financial and commercial sustainability.

Banking costs, transfer fees, and other costs related to the management of the project: SSNUP does not cover these types of costs as they are considered to a part of the management fees.

FX losses: While project expenses can take place in any other currencies than EUR, SSNUP does not cover any exchange rate losses possibly encountered during the project implementation.

Studies: SSNUP cannot co-finance stand-alone or preliminary studies (such as (pre)feasibility studies, assessment of ESG practices) that condition the design of a subsequent SSNUP project.

2. Beneficiary organisation contribution

The beneficiary organisation contribution to TA projects follows the same guidelines as the above SSNUP contribution, apart from the following cases:

Fixed assets (non-digital): The purchasing or renting/leasing of fixed assets including property, equipment, vehicles, etc. can be included as part of the beneficiary organisation contribution as long as those assets are related to the project in question (category “Equipment and materials”)



Beneficiary organisation staff costs: Staff costs can only be included as part of the beneficiary organisation contribution when internal staff provide additional added-value services in the context of the project (e.g. staff of a financial intermediary offering financial literacy training to clients, project manager managing the TA project), which are backed by timesheets to document the allocated costs (category “*Partner personnel costs*”).

3 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation will be undertaken in two steps.

- Step 1: Completeness check and eligibility criteria fulfilled.
- Step 2: Assessment of the proposal to score the applications according to the following evaluation grid.

Completeness check and eligibility criteria fulfilled	
Step 1	Application - Complete
	Impact investor - Criteria met
	TA project - Criteria met
Assessment	
Step 2	Relevance to key topics and objectives
	Potential outreach / scalability / replicability / improved organisation efficiency
	Project design (feasibility, probability of success, etc.)
	Additionality of TA on investments
	Project budget (budget construction, amount, organisation contribution, etc.)
	TOTAL
	/100

The aim of the TA projects is to not only strengthen the sustainability of smallholder households but also increase the impact of investments of the beneficiaries and encourages investors to grow their debt and equity investments by de-risking investments in their respective agricultural investees.

The following additional aspects should also be considered:

- The strategy of the beneficiary organisation(s): the TA project should fit within the overall strategy of the organisation to ensure it is coherent and relevant to the objectives of the organisation.
- The TA outputs, if successful and relevant, should be integrated into the business model/case of the organisation.
- A description/understanding of the eco-system within which the organisation operates and an understanding of other relevant actors who could potentially add value to the proposal.
- Openness to share the outputs: while a lot of the outputs developed within the framework of a TA project may be too specific to the organisation’s context, some outputs (for example training curricula) could be of great value when shared with other relevant stakeholders and the wider community. This should be considered at the proposal stage.
- Project ownership: It should be clear in the proposal that it is the beneficiary organisation driving the project and thereby taking ownership. For example, the organisation could appoint a project manager whose role is to coordinate and manage the implementation of the project.



- Budget construction, size and beneficiary organisation contribution: the following elements will be considered:
 - Size of the organisation, the number of SHs supported, its current financial, social, and environmental returns/performance, and its market positioning (i.e. degree of how it can shape/influence its value chain(s)).
 - Growth potential and scalability of the organisation's business model supported by the TA and the potential outreach in reaching larger numbers of SHs.
 - TA absorption capacity of the beneficiary organisation.
 - The contribution share of the organisation should be in line with its financial capabilities.

4 PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

4.1 APPLICATION

- The SSNUP CFP3 application documents, including the 1) SSNUP CFP3 TA Project Proposal Form (Word) and the 2) SSNUP CFP3 TA Budget and planning (Excel), must be used. Request the application documents via [this online form](#) and receive them by email.
- While templates are provided in English, applications can be written in English, French or Spanish.
- All applications (application documents, together with all the necessary documentation) must be submitted before **23.59 (CET) on 09/03/2026** through the dedicated online form available in the application documents.
- After review of the projects by the SSNUP TA committee, a decision will be sent by email to the applicant (approval/rejection) in early April 2026.
- A maximum of two projects can be submitted by the same applicant.
- Only applications that follow the submission formats and include all the necessary documentation will be considered.

4.2 IMPLEMENTATION, REPORTING AND CLOSING

- The impact investor is responsible for the implementation, data collection and reporting of the TA project vis-à-vis SSNUP. The coordinator of SSNUP will be available to support these processes when/if necessary.
- A private Teams channel will be set up between the SSNUP coordinator and impact investor to facilitate the sharing of information and documents.
- The launch of the TA project must take place before 30/06/2026 and the implementation must last for a maximum duration of 12 months. Any approved projects not launched before 30/06/2026 will be annulled.
- Upon approval of the project and signature of the contract, a one-page Factsheet project will be created and published on the [SSNUP website Projects page](#).
- External communication about the selected projects will take place (e.g. social media posts, publication of project factsheet and project results).
- Reporting on the project will take place every 6 months during the project implementation and a completion report will take place at the latest 2 months after the end of the project (templates will be provided). All reports include narrative information as well as data on the financials and key performance indicators (e.g. completion report due on 15/08/2027 at the latest for a project launched on 15/06/2026).
- Based on the above report, the SSNUP Project Results document, which is a two-page presentation of the project that consolidates the results and achievements of the project as well as the lessons learnt, will be drafted by SSNUP with the support and approval of the impact investor before publication on the [SSNUP website Resources page](#).



4.3 FINANCIAL REPORTING

The financial reporting supporting documents for each of the five categories of cost of SSNUP are listed in the table below. These documents should be saved, along with any other related project documents such as the deliverables and reports, on the dedicated Teams channel that will be set up by the coordinator. The coordinator reserves the right to check the accounting documents during the duration of the partnership. This right of inspection is also valid for an external auditor during a financial audit.

Cost categories	Supporting documents	
	SSNUP contribution	Beneficiary organisation contribution
Partner personnel costs	* Employment contract (and job description when possible) * Sworn and signed statement which includes the number of days spent on the financed activity and estimated total cost	
Consultancy fees	* Contracts * Terms of Reference (TORs) * Invoices * Final reports	* Sworn and signed statement detailing the total amount * Invoices (when possible)
Travel	* Invoices	
Equipment and materials	* Invoices	
Events, communication and other costs	* Invoices, training material, training attendee list & pictures, certifications, studies, TORs	

4.4 CONTRACTING AND FINANCING

- A partnership contract between ADA (SSNUP Programme Coordinator) and the selected applicant will be signed once a TA project is approved.
- Disbursement of the SSNUP contribution to the TA budget in two tranches:
 - 80% upon signature of the contract,
 - remaining amount together with the management fees (12% - or 14% if project in LDC - of actual expenses covered by SSNUP contribution) after approval of the final narrative and financial reports by SSNUP Programme Coordinator.
- Contracts between the impact investor and the beneficiary organisation or the service provider must adhere to requirements and procedures of the impact investor.

4.5 TIMELINE

The CFP is open for submission from 26 January until 09 March 2026. The indicative timeline provided below is subject to change. Kindly monitor the SSNUP CFP webpage for up-to-date information.

26 January 2026	Application documents can be requested via this online form .
16 February 2026	Deadline for questions in writing at ssnup@ADAImpact.lu .
09 March 2026 (23.59 CET)	Deadline for submission through the dedicated online form to be shared by email upon requesting the application documents (one form per project).
Early April 2026	Decision shared by email.

For more information on SSNUP: <http://www.ssnup.org> and for any additional clarification, please contact: ssnup@ADAImpact.lu



ANNEX 1 – PRIORITY TOPICS

SSNUP encourages projects that make significant contributions to one or several priority topics. However, all TA projects supported by SSNUP, at the very least, will be expected not to prejudice (or have a detrimental effect on) the priority topics, following a “do no harm” approach.

In practice, all TA project proposals are required to justify how they contribute to, or why they will not prejudice, each of the following priority topics based on the following criteria.

These criteria have been identified on the basis of widely recognized resources and references. In particular, the **agroecological principles defined by FAO² and by the High-Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) of the Committee on World Food Security³** (both lists of principles being aligned) as well as the interventions listed in FAO’s publication on **Nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food systems in practice⁴** are used as references to define the criteria enabling to identify projects directly contributing to the four priority topics. Indeed, these principles and interventions include a **variety of environmental, social and economic aspects** that can be linked to each of the four SSNUP priority topics. Although the criteria are cross-cutting and interdependent, each criterion is linked to only one priority topic to facilitate the identification of projects contributing to each topic.

As detailed per priority topic, **any project fulfilling the listed criteria** is considered as directly contributing to the priority topic.

² FAO, 2018. [*The 10 elements of agroecology*](#).

³ HLPE, 2019. [*13 principles of agroecology*](#).

⁴ FAO, 2017. [*Nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food systems in practice*](#).



Food security and improved nutrition (CFP focus)

SSNUP aims to support TA projects that ensure **diversified, safe and nutritious food is available, affordable and accessible in adequate quantities for vulnerable populations** in intervention countries. This includes projects directly supporting the production, processing, distribution and/or consumption of diversified, safe and nutritious food (as defined by international organisations⁵) in local markets.

SSNUP relies on FAO's publication Nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food systems in practice⁶ as well as WHO's references on healthy diets⁷ to identify the projects contributing directly to "Food security and nutrition". SSNUP will also reflect on adapting the IFAD's Nutrition-sensitive value chains project design guide⁸ to measure the nutrition-sensitivity of projects in the framework of ad hoc studies and/or perception surveys.

The projects that could indirectly contribute to food security, for instance by aiming at increasing the income of local populations, will not be considered as directly contributing to food security and improved nutrition.

Any project including at least **one of the following criteria** is considered as positively contributing to "Food security and nutrition" priority topic.

CRITERIA OF DIRECT POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
Nutrition-sensitive products	Projects focusing on production, processing, distribution, marketing and/or consumption in local and regional markets of wholegrains, legumes, fruits, vegetables, meat and organ meat, eggs, fish and dairy products such as milk, yoghurt and cheese, as well as alternative plant-based proteins for human consumption (e.g., legumes, nuts, soy, rapeseed).
Urban and peri-urban agriculture	Projects focusing on growing plants and raising animals within and around cities. It includes crop production, small animal rearing, growing of non-food crops (e.g., medicinal herbs) and trees managed for producing fruits and fuelwood, including within integrated systems (e.g., agroforestry, tree-aquaculture systems).
Biofortification	Projects focusing on developing new varieties of staple crops (i.e., cassava, maize, orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, wheat, rice, pearl millet, sorghum, banana, plantain, squash, beans, lentils and cowpeas) with the explicit intent of enhancing levels of bioavailable micronutrients (i.e., pro-vitamin, iron and zinc). While biofortification is most commonly accomplished using conventional plant breeding, agronomic biofortification (i.e., application of micronutrient-rich fertilizers via soil or leaves).
Food fortification	Projects focusing on deliberately increasing the content of an essential micronutrient, i.e. vitamins and minerals (including trace elements) in a food, so as to improve the nutritional quality of the food supply and provide a public health benefit with minimal risk to health. Such a process directly enhances the nutrient composition of different foods through adding, for example, vitamins, iron, zinc, folic acid or iodine. This is done during the processing phase. Food fortification can help tackle micronutrient deficiencies through increasing the micronutrient content of staples and condiments consumed by vulnerable groups, such as pregnant women or young children.
Nutrition-sensitive post-harvest handling, storage, and processing, ensuring food quality, safety and hygiene	Projects focusing on post-harvest handling, processing and storage that contribute to maintaining a secure supply of food (and thus of nutrients) throughout the year; preserving the quality, safety and hygiene of harvested raw material as it moves along the food supply chain from the producer to the market; reducing losses; and making fresh produce available in local markets as well as in distant locations.

⁵ As defined in FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, 2022. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2022. Rome, FAO.*

⁶ FAO, 2017. *Nutrition-sensitive agriculture and food systems in practice*

⁷ WHO, *Healthy diet, recommendations*, accessed on February 9, 2025.

⁸ IFAD, *Nutrition-sensitive value chains, A guide for project design* 1 and 2

Environment and climate change

SSNUP aims to support TA projects that promote practices that are in accordance with the **agroecological principles relating to environmental aspects**. SSNUP relies on the Agroecology assessment framework⁹ defined by the Agroecology coalition (based on HLPE principles) to identify the projects contributing directly to the “Environmental and climate change” priority topic. In particular, to define the criteria the following principles were considered: 4 principles aiming at **strengthening resilience** and 2 principles aiming at **improving resource efficiency** listed in this framework.

Any project aiming at facilitating the adoption of practices fulfilling **at least one of these 6 criteria** is considered as positively contributing to “Environment and Climate change” priority topic.

CRITERIA OF DIRECT POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
Soil health	Secure and enhance soil health and functioning for improved plant growth, particularly by managing organic matter and enhancing soil biological activity. E.g., vermicomposting, permaculture, natural farming, integrated diversified farming, organic agriculture, mulching, organic matter addition, cover crops, minimum tillage, deliberate fallow periods, animal integration for manure, prevention of soil erosion (terracing, zai pits, etc.), application of organic fertiliser and pesticide.
Biodiversity	Maintain and enhance diversity of species, functional diversity and genetic resources and thereby maintain overall agroecosystem biodiversity in time and space at field, farm and landscape scales. E.g., use a diversity of nutrient-rich crops, species and varieties including of local, traditional, indigenous or ‘orphan’ crops, locally adapted breeds and varieties, conservation of forest fragments around farms, conversion of field edges into woodlands, multi-year crop rotation, measures to enhance local and natural pollinators.
Animal health	Ensures highest standard of animal health and welfare, during entire life cycle with a focus on species-appropriate environment and locally adapted and resilient breeds. E.g., eliminate/reduce actively/significantly use of synthetic feeds and hormones - increase use of organic feeds, work with resilient, locally adapted and naturally healthful breeds, controlled grazing, species-appropriate environment (free range, grass-fed ruminants, foraging fowl, outdoors ideally all year round), align number of animals to carrying capacity of the land/water, preventative approach to disease, preferably with natural remedies/approaches, no separation of mother from young, no routine slaughter of baby males.
Synergy	Enhance positive ecological interaction, synergy, integration and complementarity among the elements of agroecosystems (animals, crops, trees, soil and water). E.g., non-crop plants for ecological functions, polycultures and mixed farming, cover cropping, green manures or permanent ground cover, intercropping, agroforestry, silvopasture, crop-tree-livestock-fish integration, tree windbreaks and living fences, legumes for nitrogen fixation, integrated pest management by habitat management (planting flowers to attract bees, etc.).
Input reduction	Reduce or eliminate dependency on purchased inputs and increase self-sufficiency. E.g., eliminate or actively/significantly reduce synthetic fertilisers, synthetic pesticides and veterinary drugs, industrial/imported feed, use farm-saved seeds or community seed banks or seed saver networks, drip irrigation, rainwater harvesting, harvester ponds, reduce energy consumption and/or produce renewable energy. This criterion may apply to other activities than production (processing, transport, etc.).
Recycling	Preferentially use local renewable resources and close as far as possible resource cycles of nutrients and biomass. E.g., produce and use own compost, manure including humanure, biofertilizer, active use of food waste, wastewater (greywater) & waste recycling, rainwater harvesting, reusable or recyclable packaging. This criterion may apply to other activities than production (processing, transport, etc.).

⁹ Agroecology coalition, 2023. [Agroecology assessment framework](#).



Gender equality

SSNUP aims to support TA projects that **address gender inequalities by creating opportunities for women and/or by promoting women's autonomy and participation** at various levels of agricultural value chains. Only projects planning to **implement specific measures to act on constraints** faced by women and to **ensure women's participation** will be considered as significantly contributing to gender equality (“gender responsive” and “gender transformative” projects as defined by [UNICEF](#)), whereas simply targeting a number or percentage of women will not be sufficient to be regarded as such.

A project **must fulfil all the following criteria** to be considered as positively contributing to “Gender equality” priority topic.

CRITERIA OF DIRECT POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
Gender analysis	The project is based on a context analysis which includes a gender assessment of needs, supply and demand as well as gender-specific safeguards.
Gender equality goals	The project explicitly includes a significant or principal objective related to gender equality and/or women's empowerment.
Specific activities	The project includes specific activities aiming at acting on constraints faced by women targeted by the project and ensuring their participation to the project activities.
Gender-sensitive indicators	The project plans to monitor gender-sensitive indicators related to the gender-related objectives in project results framework.

Fair agrifood systems

SSNUP aims to support TA projects that contribute to the development of **fair agrifood systems**. Projects contributing to fair agrifood systems aim to make **systems more integrated** and to foster a **more equitable distribution of value** in food supply chains, especially for the smallholder farmers.

SSNUP relies on some of the **agroecological principles linked to social equity** defined by the HLPE of the Committee on World Food Security to identify the projects adopting a “fair value chain approach”.

Any project including at least **one of the following criteria** is considered as positively contributing to “Fair agrifood systems” priority topic.

CRITERIA OF DIRECT POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	
Fairness	Projects that support dignified and robust livelihoods for all actors engaged in food systems, especially smallholder farmers, based on fair trade, fair employment and fair treatment of intellectual property rights.
Connectivity	Projects that ensure proximity and confidence between producers and consumers through promotion of fair and short distribution networks and by re-embedding food systems into local economies. E.g., less intermediaries, short food chains and local food webs, organisation and support of local farmer markets.
Land and natural resource governance	Projects that strengthen institutional arrangements, including the recognition and support of smallholders as sustainable managers of natural and genetic resources. E.g., recognition of smallholder rights & conflict resolution in their support, integrated seed governance (including the production and use of indigenous, local seed varieties) emphasising farmer managed seed systems, land tenure that respects traditional and customary land rights and ensure equitable and secure access to land for smallholders.
Economic diversification	Projects that promote diversification of on-farm incomes by ensuring that smallholder farmers have greater financial independence and value addition opportunities while enabling them to respond to demand from consumers. E.g., diversification of production and crop rotation, safe, nutrient-preserving on-farm or cooperative-based storage agroprocessing, farm-based or local input production for distribution, farm-based non-agricultural activities.