

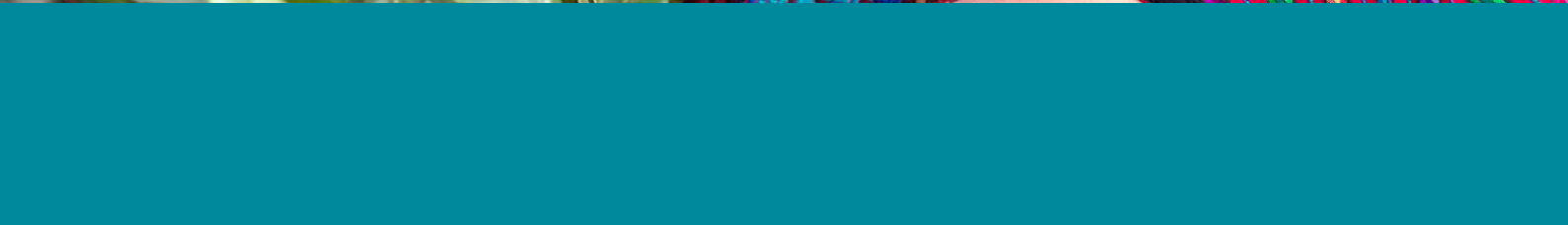


**TRIAS**

TURNING DREAMS INTO  
OPPORTUNITIES



# ANNUAL REPORT 2021



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## Introductory words by our General Director Lode Delbare

We will probably remember the year 2021 as a year of hope: the hope that we could finally return to a normal life, after an all-pervading corona pandemic in 2020.

But it is also the year that we became aware that even when this pandemic might become more manageable, the systemic flaws that are interwoven in the way we organize our global society, and that are the cause of the problems, have certainly not yet been eliminated.

It is therefore with great conviction that we have made the necessary preparations in 2021 to be able to realize our new Strategic Plan 2022–2031 – “Family Entrepreneurship - Moving towards an inclusive and sustainable society” from 2022 onwards. Making of Trias an active change agent that contributes towards an equitable economy and a just society is hereby our ultimate ambition.

An important element in this is the new multiannual program 2022–2026 that we have negotiated and was approved by the Belgian Federal Government. Trias is now the NGO that received the largest grant from the Belgian government. This is a recognition of the many efforts made over the years by the global Trias team.

We have also worked on the further development of a completely new and globally based Knowledge Management team, which will help to strengthen the three core topics of Trias’ operations and will help put Trias on the map worldwide as a knowledge center around the theme of inclusive and sustainable family entrepreneurship.

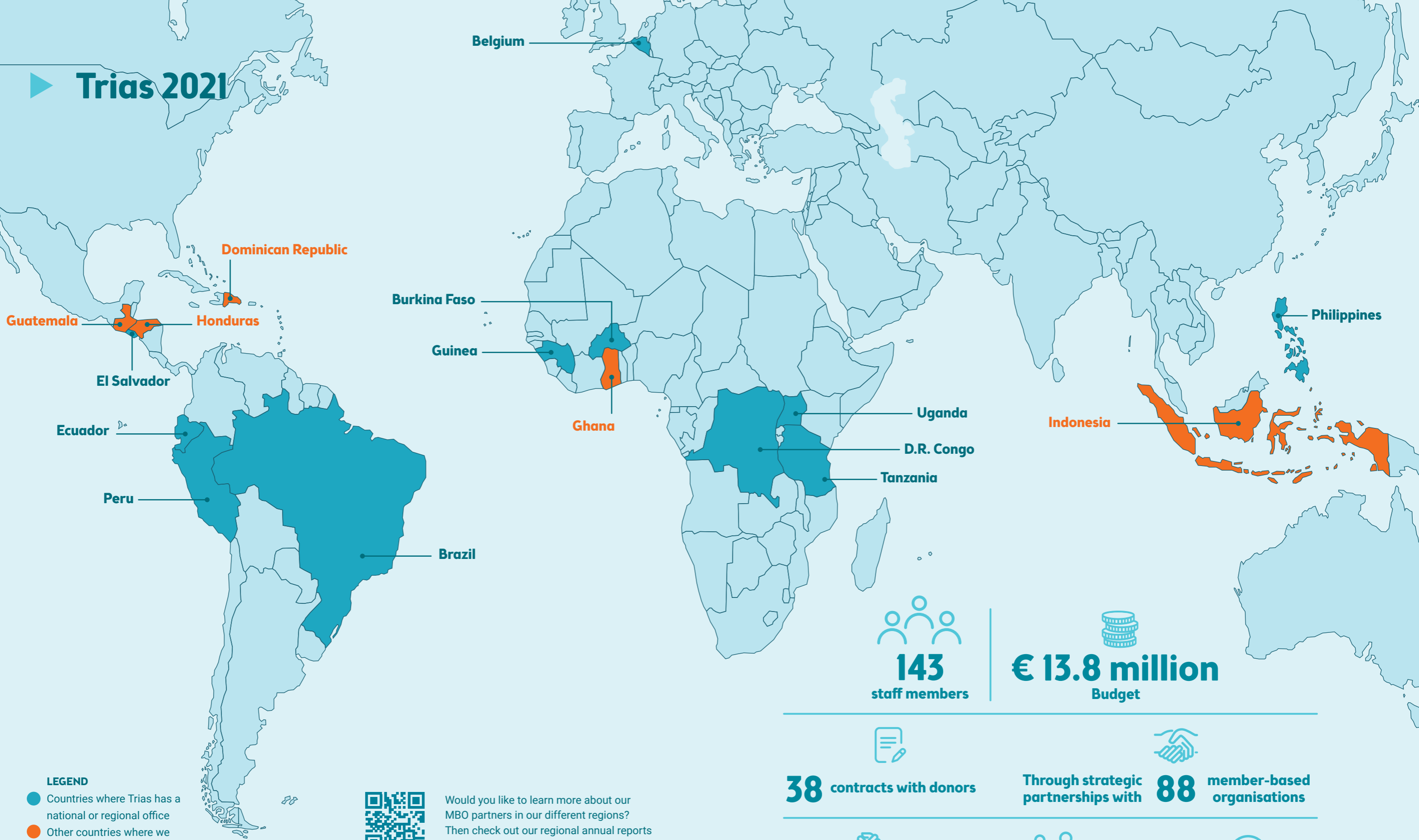
But above all, we have continued to connect to the many, many farmer and non-farmer family entrepreneurs we have supported worldwide through their 88 member-based organizations with whom we have worked together in 2021.

Warm regards

**Lode Delbare**  
General Director Trias

“  
**Our ultimate ambition is to make Trias an active change agent that contributes towards an equitable economy and a just society.**  
”

# Trias 2021



**LEGEND**  
 ● Countries where Trias has a national or regional office  
 ● Other countries where we work



Would you like to learn more about our MBO partners in our different regions? Then check out our regional annual reports by scanning the QR code!

**143**  
staff members

**€ 13.8 million**  
Budget

**38** contracts with donors

Through strategic partnerships with **88** member-based organisations

Working with more than **187,443** family farmer and non-farmer entrepreneurs directly

Reaching **7,443,664** indirectly across 15 countries

Reached directly **46%** women and **54%** youth

Our constituency MBOs in Belgium are:



# Who we are



Trias is an international development organisation with strong roots in Belgium. In 15 countries, we support the realisation of dreams of millions of family farmer and non-farmer entrepreneurs through their member-based organisations (MBOs). In that way, we offer them opportunities and generate sustainable development. Trias connects, empowers and brings about change.

Our interventions are focused on facilitating MBO's organisational strengthening and institutional development. Trias' technical support is structured around three areas of expertise:



**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT  
AND MARKET ACCESS**



**INCLUSION AND  
GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP**



**CLIMATE CHANGE  
AND ENVIRONMENT**

**In 15 countries,  
we support the realisation of  
dreams of millions of family  
farmer and non-farmer  
entrepreneurs**



## Vision

We envision a world in which prosperous, self-reliant, democratic member-based organisations of farmer and non-farmer family entrepreneurs take on a leading role in their communities to further inclusive and environmentally sustainable socio-economic development. We believe this development will produce collaborative societies that aspire to autonomy, equal opportunities and financial security for all, and in which all people exercise self-determination, solidarity and cooperation.

**Collaborative societies that aspire  
autonomy, equal opportunities and  
financial security for all**

## Our history

Trias' history goes back to 1959, when the first volunteers from the national rural youth movement in Flanders headed for the Belgian Congo and Rwanda to support farming projects. Trias was established through a merger of three Flemish development organisations: Ieder Voor Allen (founded in 1964), ACT (founded in 1985) and Form (founded in 1990). These organisations shared a fundamental belief in self-development and entrepreneurship as essential drivers of sustainable and integrated development. An extensive process to integrate their programmes took place from 1994 until the official merger in 2002. Until today, we maintain strong structural links with our stakeholders, who are actively involved in our governance. This makes Trias a unique movement-NGO with a Belgian constituency of over 350,000 individuals and their families.

**Self-development  
and entrepreneurship  
as essential drivers  
of sustainable and  
integrated development**

## Mission

**We empower organisations of farmer and non-farmer family entrepreneurs worldwide, so that they can act as powerful catalysts for social and economic change towards an equitable economy and a just society.**



**Read more about  
our work worldwide!**



# ▶ Targeting resilience in a year filled with uncertainty



## INTRODUCTION

In another challenging year, we continued to support family farmer and non-farmer entrepreneurs worldwide to overcome the difficulties caused by the pandemic. Due to COVID-19, numerous businesses were forced to close, and even when the economy finally fully reopened, the demand for goods and services generally continued to be low because of massive job losses and depletion of savings during lockdown. Travel restrictions resulted in a loss of sales for entrepreneurs, and made it more difficult for Trias and partners to organise trainings and other events. From a gender perspective, women had a particularly hard time during the pandemic, because they mainly work in the informal sector which is highly dependent on daily cash flows. We also saw an increase in gender-based violence and teenage pregnancies due to school closures, limited travel, and increased stress.

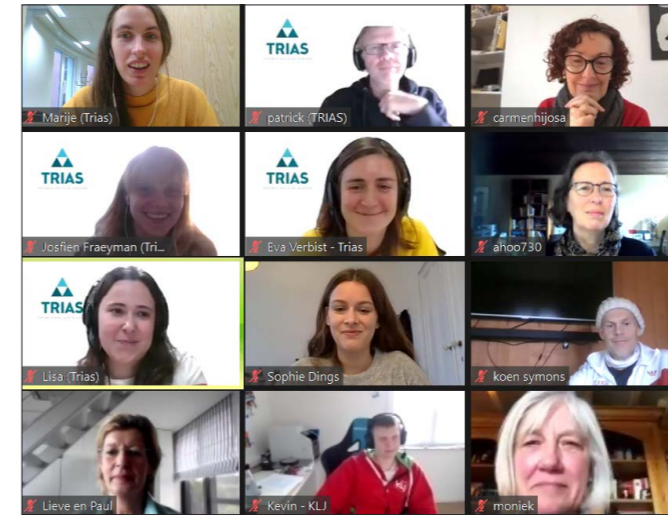
In these tough times, our teams and partners continued to stand by family entrepreneurs worldwide. We regarded these new challenges as an opportunity to improve service delivery, while expanding our ability to adapt to disruptions. From Belgium over Africa and Latin America to Southeast Asia, we look back on some examples of the challenges and activities we engaged in during 2021.

## ▶ CENTRAL AMERICA

Our team in Central America together with our partners developed interactive online trainings in the form of webinars on various topics such as: e-commerce and e-banking, digital marketing, new masculinities, institutional governance and sustainability, international cooperation and resource management, gender-based violence and COVID-19, e-commerce course, and decisions in times of COVID-19.

## ▶ SOUTH AMERICA

In Ecuador, the farmers organisation PACAT and the potato growers cooperatives AGROPAPA and CONPAPA organised local fairs and door-to-door sales of fruit and vegetable baskets, so that consumers could still access fresh products. With Unicafe Rondônia in Brazil, Trias implemented a pilot initiative on e-commerce. Through digital marketing workshops members learned and shared tips and tricks on promoting their products on social media.



## ▶ BELGIUM

Instead of physical events, our team in Belgium organised online knowledge exchanges and workshops, such as an online exchange between the Flemish youth movement KLJ and Philippine youth organisations. We also organised a webinar with agricultural journalist Jacques Van Outryve on farming and climate change, and we hosted our 'Trias Day' online.

## ▶ CENTRAL AFRICA

With the support of Trias and the PIREDD project, the cacao cooperative COOPEBAS constructed a transformation centre where producers can add value to their harvested cacao pods by drying the beans inside. The centre can transform 10 tonnes of cacao beans per week. COOPEBAS also succeeded in growing the production level of honey, which is considered a promising livelihood during this crisis.

## ▶ WEST AFRICA

Trias redirected part of its financial resources to strengthen the resilience of family entrepreneurs in the face of the crisis. Because of the greater impact on women, 28 women in Guinea who work in the pineapple processing sector received a working capital of 30,000 euro to purchase better quality packaging and 20,000 euro to purchase fresh pineapple for processing.

## ▶ SOUTHEAST ASIA

The pandemic caused a rise in teenage pregnancy, domestic violence, and mental health issues, particularly affecting women and youth. To limit the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on people's mental health, Trias Southeast Asia conducted a learning series on mental health and well-being, in which around 90 young people participated. This helped them process the ongoing effects of the pandemic.

## ▶ EAST AFRICA

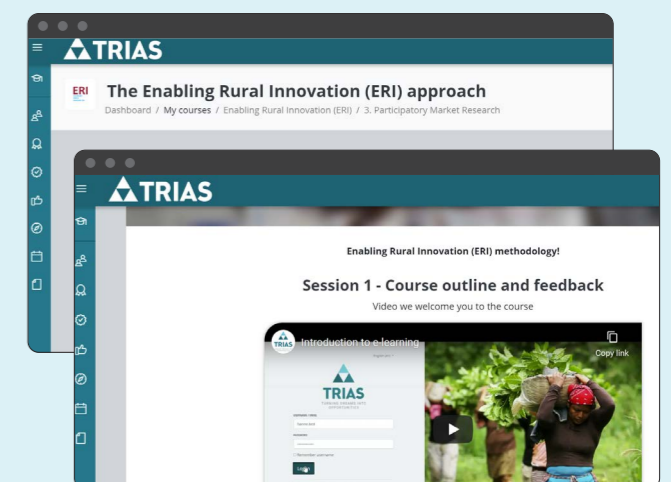
Our team in Uganda together with our partner INFOCOS in Brazil transformed our ERI (Enabling Rural Innovation) toolbox into an e-learning course. ERI is a powerful approach to support smallholder farmers in their journey from subsistence farming to commercial farming. With the e-version, the toolbox is now available anytime, anywhere.



Discover the ERI introduction session

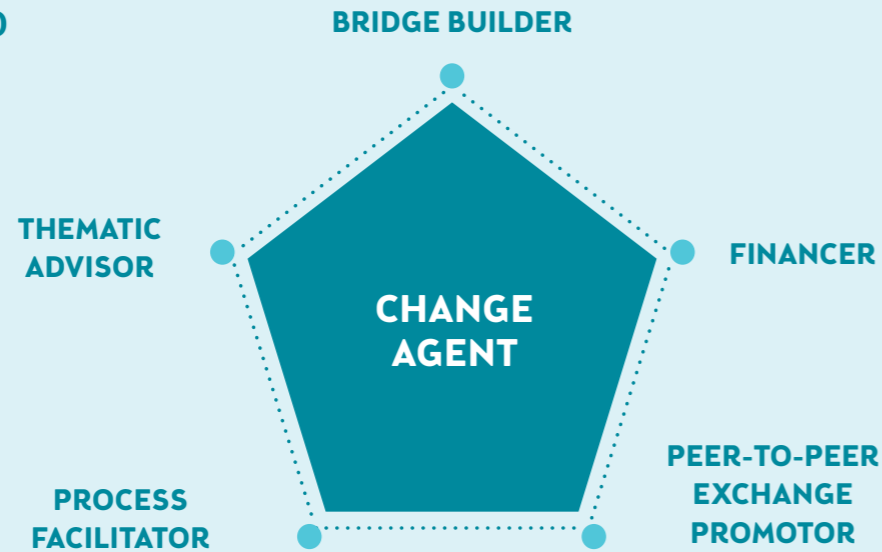


Discover the ERI website

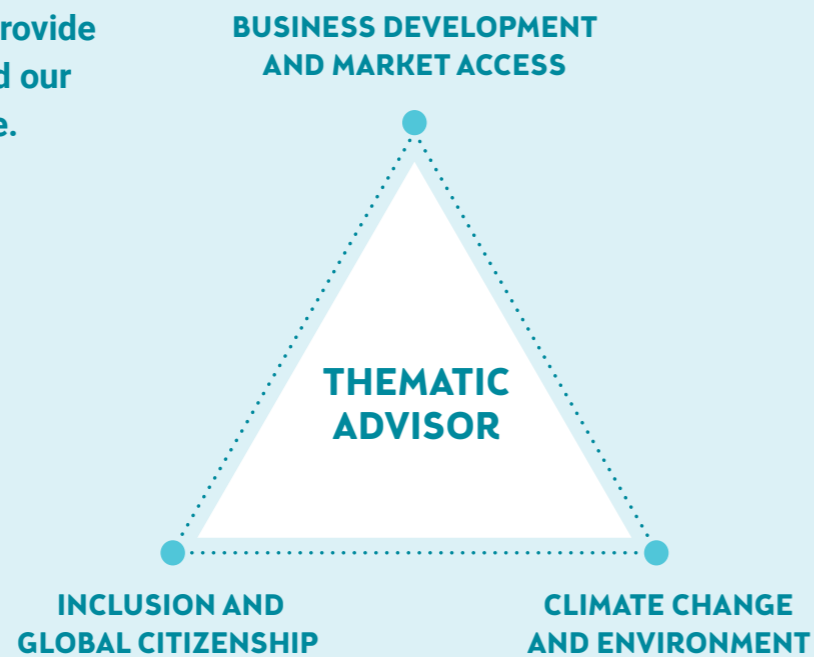


# ► Our international expertise

In our work with our MBO partners, Trias' aim is to act as a change agent. We do this by assuming different roles:



As a thematic advisor, we provide technical assistance around our three key areas of expertise.



## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND MARKET ACCESS

Trias strives to improve entrepreneurs' production, incomes and livelihoods in an inclusive and environmentally friendly way. Business development and market access are a key focus in our work to achieve this vision. Trias supports MBOs to overcome market and marketing barriers by analysing the local entrepreneurship ecosystem and brokering or providing necessary services to MBOs' members. This includes facilitating training on entrepreneurial skills, support with market access, strengthening MBOs to increase their access to financial services such as credits, savings and insurances, etc.



### ► AN EXAMPLE FROM OUR WORK IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Trias Central America supported 2,481 businesswomen and 1,239 young people to increase the use of technology in their work, and supported more than 3,000 female and young farmers in producing their crops and products in an environmentally friendly way. In addition, the team organised trainings on branding and social marketing techniques and leadership skills. These efforts have generated employment opportunities and have introduced good practices in participants' production and business processes.

“  
**I managed to increase my sales by attracting new customers online and I innovated my business by adding new products. I see a clear future for my company now.**  
 ”

Clarisa Mata, 21 years



## INCLUSION AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP



## CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT



Inclusivity is key to a world in which family entrepreneurs take on a leading role in their communities for social and economic change. Trias supports MBOs in making their organisational structures more inclusive and in providing services to different groups of members, particularly to women, youth and other underprivileged groups.

Our approach to global citizenship entails that in response to the existing unequal and unjust global system, we aim to trigger change by facilitating peer-to-peer exchanges between entrepreneurs. In this way, we want to play an active role in creating a world where benefits are more equally shared.

### ▶ AN EXAMPLE FROM OUR WORK IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Gubat Young Farmers Association (GYFA) is a young farmers' group in the Philippines. The group was inactive for a while until Trias encouraged it in 2020 to revive its work, recognising its potential in strengthening young people's role in the agricultural sector. Since then, Trias has organised training on entrepreneurship, inclusion, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation for GYFA's members. In 2021, GYFA increased its membership from seven to nearly 100. It received official recognition and awards from local and provincial governments as an outstanding organisation that supports young people and that made an important contribution to its community during the pandemic.

**In 2021, the farmer's association GYFA increased its membership from seven to nearly 100**



A sustainable approach to farming and entrepreneurship naturally has to be adjusted to today's global climate change challenge. Trias supports MBOs to develop climate change mitigation strategies, to contribute to environmentally sustainable production systems, and to strengthen the disaster resilience of MBOs and their members, including underprivileged groups.

### ▶ AN EXAMPLE FROM OUR WORK IN EAST AFRICA

Mr. Isaac Isura (52) lives a few meters from Murchison Falls National Park, the largest protected wildlife area in Uganda. He grew up hunting wildlife for food and income, an illegal practice. Because he didn't know much about alternative sources of income, he continued poaching until 2015, which led to the imprisonment and even the death of some of his relatives. In 2017, through The Uganda National Apiary Development Organisation (TUNADO) he learned that bee-keeping could be a suitable enterprise. He became a member of TUNADO and learned about all aspects of beekeeping.



“  
**I now manage more than 300 hives. In the last two years I produced an average of 450 kg of honey per season earning me around 1,400 euro per year. I was able to educate my children. Beekeeping also enabled me to engage again in crop farming, because bees scare away wild animals. All our land is now used productively!**

Isaac Isura



## ► Our projects in the spotlight



### ► CENTRAL AFRICA

## Reducing emissions and adapting to climate change

**COUNTRY:**  
D.R. Congo

**DURATION OF THE PROJECT:**  
1 year (2020–2021)

**BUDGET:** 174,495 euro

**STRATEGIC MBO AND RESOURCE PARTNERS:**  
The World Bank,  
Forest Resources Management,  
COOPEBAS, UPINO, COINDELO

This programme aimed to enhance the climate change adaptation and mitigation capacities of three cooperatives in Mai-Ndombe by using the ERI (Enabling Rural Innovation) approach. COOPEBAS also boosted its services to its members. For example, it executed a plan to build a cacao treatment facility so that members can sell their products at a higher price.

In 2021, we achieved the following:

- 550 MBO members made their agricultural production techniques more durable by using compost on their cacao and pepper fields.
- Endogenous trees are increasingly used by members of COCOMA, a cooperative in the province of Kongo Central. These trees provide more shade to cacao crops, shelter them from heavy winds, and help fertilise the soil. More than 50% of plantations visited in 2021 now use trees such as the Limba species.
- The cooperatives of Mai-Ndombe also invested in the honey value chain, and this is having positive environmental effects. Members learn how to set up beehives instead of cutting down trees when engaging in apiculture. The use of beehives encourages flower pollination by bees, which will provide more food and habitat for a range of other creatures.
- 10 members of the cooperatives and Trias engaged in a training on permaculture. This increased their understanding of how to manage land using arrangements observed in flourishing natural ecosystems.

**550 members made their agricultural production techniques more durable.**



### ► EAST AFRICA

## Transforming Tanzania's horticulture sector through networking and training

**COUNTRY:**  
Tanzania

**DURATION OF THE PROJECT:**  
5 years (2017–2021)

**BUDGET:** 1,088,587 euro

**STRATEGIC MBO AND RESOURCE PARTNERS:**  
Belgian Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGD program funding), AHA (Andreas Hermes Akademie) and FFD (Food and Forest Development Finland), Tanzania Horticultural Association (TAHA)

This concluded project included capacity strengthening of TAHA, the Tanzania Horticultural Association, on inclusivity and member empowerment, leadership and governance, networking and lobbying and improving services to their members. Among many of the results, 35 groups of onion farmers in Arusha with more than 500 members received intensive trainings in good agronomic practices, group strengthening, entrepreneurship, gender and nutrition. Furthermore, groups were linked to markets and micro-finance, and new technologies were introduced. As a result, the groups came together and formed an association of onion farmers groups. The cluster is registered and recognized by the government and has a common voice in marketing, policy advocacy and access to farm inputs. Furthermore, the onion production has increased tremendously. Joyce from Kimfa group: "Before the trainings I harvested 30 bags and sold them at around 16 euro each. Through all the knowledge gained from the trainings and adoption of TAHA technologies I now harvest up to 70 bags and sell them at around 26 euro each. I'm now able to pay for my children's school fees and we even renovated our house!" As a consequence of these and other project successes, the membership of TAHA increased and more people see the benefits of joining organised groups.

**35 groups of onion farmers in Arusha with more than 500 members received intensive trainings in good agronomic practices, group strengthening, entrepreneurship, gender and nutrition.**







▶ WEST AFRICA

## Increasing Women and Youth's Economic Resilience

**COUNTRY:**

Burkina Faso

—

**DURATION OF THE PROJECT:**

4 years (2020-2022)

—

**BUDGET:** 1 million euro

—

**STRATEGIC MBO AND**

**RESOURCE PARTNERS:**

Belgian Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGD program funding), Enabel, Rikolto, ADIMA, INTERSEB, BRS

This project supports agricultural enterprises and cooperatives to be able to offer competitive products in niche markets, ensure the inclusion of young people and women, and promote equity between economic actors. Key achievements for 2021 include:

- ▶ 151 producers and processors, including 94 women, improved their product quality by integrating hygiene measures and standards in the production and processing of soya, sesame and non-timber forest products (NTFPs).
- ▶ Producers integrated more agro-ecological practices by using organic pesticides and green energy in processing.
- ▶ More actors committed to responsible economic partnerships, as evidenced in 10 new commercial contracts that were signed. These contracts offered better selling prices for producers. For example, the price of soya increased from 210 CFA francs to 320 CFA francs per kilo, and sesame from 350 CFA francs to 550 CFA francs per kilo in the Central-Eastern region of Burkina Faso.



▶ CENTRAL AMERICA

## Amplifying female entrepreneurship and leadership

**COUNTRY:**

Dominican Republic

—

**DURATION OF THE PROJECT:**

2 years (2021-2023)

—

**BUDGET:** 567,590 euro

—

**STRATEGIC MBO AND**

**RESOURCE PARTNERS:**

Belgian Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGD program funding), AGRICORD, Agence Française de Développement (AFD), ACODEA, CLAC, BANELINO, ASOANOR, Asociación de Productores de Bananos Las Mercedes, Asociación de Cacaocultores Juan Cruz De Guaranal Altamira y Asociación de Pequeños Productores "La Santa Cruz"

As part of this project, our partners organized leadership and inclusive entrepreneurship schools with women leaders. A key achievement was the formation of a group of women trainers, who in 2022 will be carrying out replication training to transmit their new knowledge. This project also focused on strengthening inclusive working approaches and creating specialized services for the members of partner organizations. Next to the organization of the entrepreneur schools, the project achieved this by leading women and young people to establish start-up enterprises. Our implementing partners Santa Cruz, Las Mercedes and BANELINO also allocated a budget to establish a Gender Committee.

**Olga Frías** is a member of a banana-producing family and of La Santa Cruz. She participated in the School of Women's Leadership and in the School of Entrepreneurship. She shared: "Participating in the Schools encouraged me to think creatively about how we as women could become more involved in the banana chain. As a result, I started a collective business with three other women from the organization, called *Bio Fabrica*. We focus on natural fertilizers and pesticides. It is incredible for us how something that seemed impossible took shape and gained so much strength in just a few months' time".



“  
**My company Royal Negoce signed two contracts in 2021 with two cooperatives supported by the project for a volume of 98 tonnes of sesame, which I sold to Canada. Thanks to this partnership, the cooperatives were able to benefit from a more profitable and fair price.**

Fanny Kabore Zeba

”



“  
**It is incredible for us how something that seemed impossible took shape and gained so much strength in just a few months' time.**

Olga Frías

”





► SOUTH AMERICA

## Supporting women textile producers to strengthen their businesses

**COUNTRY:**

Ecuador

—

**DURATION OF THE PROJECT:**

5 years (2017–2021)

—

**BUDGET:** 81,100 euro

—

**STRATEGIC MBO AND RESOURCE PARTNERS:**

Belgian Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGD program funding), TEJEMUJERES, Centro Interamericano de Artesanías y Artes Populares (CIDAP), Cooperativa Ahorro y Crédito “Jardín Azuayo”, Municipio de Gualaceo, Fundación Crea Tu Espacio.

In this project, Trias supported 117 women through its partner TEJEMUJERES in Ecuador by providing social and business management advice, and by implementing a roadmap for inclusion. TEJEMUJERES as an organisation supports female textile producers, and these five busy years yielded some very fruitful results: the 117 craftswomen from the TEJEMUJERES association gained access to work and an income by tailoring and weaving products. The women strengthened their social entrepreneurial capacities to expand the types of products they offer to thirteen. They also diversified their marketing channels and client base. Their efforts generated sales of 76,800 USD annually. Next to producing and selling handicraft materials, the women also formed a group with their children to support internal and external communication processes. Finally, to enhance their economic resilience, they created a savings and loan fund, and they engaged in other businesses to diversify their income: next to handicrafts, they started selling products from the family garden and raising small livestock such as sheep.

The 117 craftswomen from the TEJEMUJERES association gained access to work and an income by tailoring and weaving products.



► SOUTH EAST ASIA

## Selling products through Facebook during the pandemic

**COUNTRY:**

Philippines

—

**DURATION OF THE PROJECT:**

September 2020 to June 2022

—

**BUDGET:** 13,782 euro

—

**STRATEGIC MBO AND**

**RESOURCE PARTNERS:**

Belgian Directorate-General for Development Cooperation (DGD program funding), PATAMABA

This project focused on business recovery and growth during the pandemic by creating a platform for online sales through Facebook. PATAMABA is a national network of informal workers in the Philippines, and 98% of its members are women. Many of these small-scale entrepreneurs lost their income during the pandemic, as businesses were forced to close. With the support of Trias, PATAMABA developed the Purple Market PH, a Facebook shop that offers food, accessories and household products. Through this initiative, PATAMABA members continued to generate an income despite the pandemic. Between October and December 2020, sales reached around 4,000 euro. The initiative directly benefitted women small-scale entrepreneur members, one of which is Adelia Reyes, a mother of seven who makes peanut butter.

*‘Because of the Purple Market, I was able to improve the quality of my peanut butter product and sell to more customers even during the pandemic. My income increased and this allowed me to support the daily needs of my family and save money for myself.’*

As of 2021, there are more than 150 female members from different provinces in the Philippines who supply products to the Purple Market. PATAMABA plans to continue providing product development and skills training for members to help them produce products for the Purple Market.



Check out the Purple Market online shop!

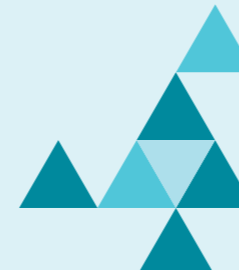
“ Because of the Purple Market, I was able to improve the quality of my peanut butter product and sell to more customers. ”

Adelia Reyes



# ▶ Financial overview

In the context of a major worldwide health, social and economic crisis, Trias in fact increased its volume of activity in 2021. We thus demonstrated real flexibility and resilience in the face of these global events.

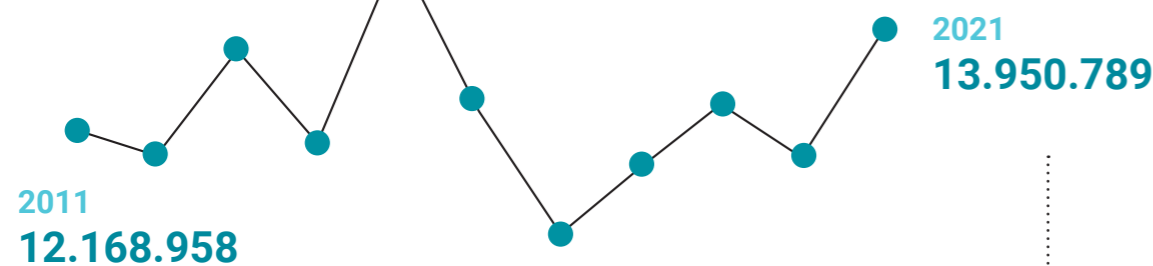


Our organisation's accounts were audited and certified by the accounting firm BDO and labelled without reserves. For more information about our annual accounts please scan the QR code or write to us on [info@trias.ngo](mailto:info@trias.ngo).

More information about our annual accounts



## Income

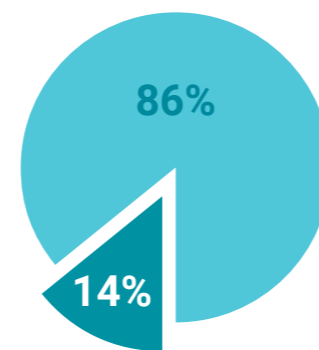


86% of our income flows directly to our projects.

The remaining 14% of our income is equally important in achieving our goals.

These funds are invested in:

- ▶ support for our regional offices regarding accounting and staff management
- ▶ quality management to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our projects
- ▶ fundraising to support as many farmers and entrepreneurs as possible



## Breakdown of expenditure per region

Belgium	25%	South America	13%
East Africa	25%	Central America	9%
Central Africa	7%	Southeast Asia	6%
West Africa	14%		



# ▶ Looking forward

Our previous organisational strategy 2013–2022 came to a close at the end of 2021. During 2021 we worked hard to create the conditions that would allow us to implement our new Strategic Note for the period 2022–2031. The new strategy note sets out our systems approach and charts our path towards the empowerment of less-privileged groups such as women, youth and the economically underprivileged.

Our vision stays unchanged: we are convinced that dynamic family entrepreneurship is an essential element of any society striving to be sustainable and inclusive. We will continue to work with individual entrepreneurs through member-based organisations, as we believe working through these democratic and representative groups is the best way to maximise our efficacy and effectiveness.

But we also need to adapt our work to new and urgent global challenges. Climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic have led to an unprecedented global health, economic and social crisis. Farmer and non-farmer family entrepreneurs' ability to adapt to these changes is crucial. This is why from 2022, we will expand our focus beyond the economic dimension of entrepreneurship to include social and ecological aspects that hinder viable and sustainable entrepreneurship. These strategic elements are already at the core of our new DGD program 2022–2026.

Another important part of our new strategy is to work with one common approach in all of our regions of operation, including

in Belgium. In our efforts to decolonise, we restructured our work in Belgium to bring it on the same level as our work in other regions. We now apply the same principle of building a strategic partnership with our constituency MBO partners in Belgium as we do elsewhere. With all of our partners, including those in Belgium, we work on the same three core themes: market access and business development, climate change and environment, and inclusion and global citizenship.

Since the start of 2022, we also make a formal distinction between the teams in the Brussels Office that provide worldwide support, and the team that is responsible for the implementation of our programs in Belgium with our constituency MBOs. This team received the status of Region Belgium Team and it operates in a way that is similar to our work in other regions. Our teams that provide worldwide support include Human Resources, Finances, ICT & logistics, Monitoring & Evaluation, Resources Mobilisation, Programme Management, Communications, Knowledge Management, and General Management. The teams continue to share the same office in Brussels.



Read our new strategy here!

# ▶ How to get involved with our work

A wide variety of national, regional and international partners help us to achieve our strategic goals towards family farmer and non-farmer entrepreneurs. They provide us with funding, ideas, additional expertise and other resources. Every day, we work closely together to support or co-create initiatives.



## ▶ Colophon

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## Become a partner and support Trias!



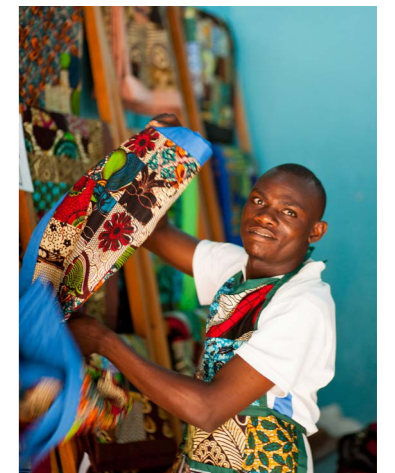
We always welcome new connections and partnerships. Come and talk to us if you see that our work makes sense to you and if you see opportunities to jointly work with democratic member-based organisations of family farmer and non-farmer entrepreneurs for more inclusive and environmentally sustainable development.

## Would you like to learn more?



While waiting for our next annual report, keep up with our activities and the amazing work of our partners by visiting the Trias website!

[www.trias.ngo/en](http://www.trias.ngo/en)



► Thank you!



AGRICORD



While waiting for our next annual report, keep up with our activities and the amazing work of our partners by following Trias on social media!



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