The focus of Strategic Objective 2 stems from FAO’s vision for sustainable agriculture, which is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda. This evaluation assessed FAO’s efforts in promoting integrated approaches for making agriculture, forestry and fisheries more productive and sustainable. These efforts have proven to be highly relevant in countries where agriculture and food systems face urgent sustainability challenges. The Sustainable Food and Agriculture (SFA) principles, developed within the SO2 framework, have been instrumental in integrating key concepts of agricultural sustainability into FAO technical and programmatic work. To demonstrate the efficacy of the new approaches, FAO needs to further detail the new models, consolidate the progress achieved and transform these lessons learned into replicable best practices. FAO would also need to integrate analysis of potential trade-offs between sustainability and productivity in the new programmes, and strengthen global partnerships and alliances towards achievement of sustainable food and agriculture systems.
Evaluation of FAO’s Contribution to the Eradication of Hunger, Food Insecurity and Malnutrition through Strategic Objective 1 (SO1)

This evaluation examined the value added by SO1 to FAO’s efforts to promote food and nutrition security at the global, regional and national levels from 2014 to 2017. It concluded that SO1 was well designed, stressed the importance of political commitment to reduce hunger and malnutrition, promoted right-based approaches in FAO’s policy support and highlighted the need to work with ministries beyond agriculture, such as ministries of finance, health or education. A high heterogeneity was observed in the approaches followed by FAO in different countries and regions under SO1, which reflected differences in context but also portrayed insufficient communication and training efforts within FAO itself. In particular, the most innovative aspects of SO1 need to be communicated to a greater extent, especially to FAO country offices, so as to inform FAO’s activities at country level. The evaluation also found a proliferation of actors, policy initiatives, approaches, coordination spaces and knowledge products in food and nutrition security, sometimes leading to confusion and competition rather than building a critical mass for sustained progress. In this context, FAO could play a greater role in policy convergence and the synthesis of multiple data streams into narratives that make sense for decision-making.

Evaluation of FAO’s Work on Gender

FAO recognizes that rural women and men, together, hold the keys to ending hunger and extreme poverty. Rural women and girls in particular, are recognized as major agents of change. Across the developing world, women make up 48 percent of the agricultural labour force. As farmers and farm workers, horticulturists and market sellers, businesswomen, entrepreneurs and community leaders, they fulfill important roles throughout agri-food value chains, as well as in the management of natural resources such as land and water. Yet the gender gap in food and agriculture is extensive. This evaluation intends to synthesise from the five Strategic Objective evaluations how the gender dimension has been effectively mainstreamed in various strands of FAO’s work as per the FAO Policy on Gender Equality. It further intends to make suggestions inter alia on how FAO could further integrate gender issues in contextual analysis, programme design and implementation with a view to enhancing programme effectiveness and overall development contribution. Findings will be presented at the FAO Conference in 2019.

ONGOING EVALUATIONS

Evaluation of the Strategy and Vision for FAO’s Work on Nutrition

Over the 2012-2017 period, major policy developments have taken place both internal and external to FAO, with a renewed focus on a food systems approach to address malnutrition in all its forms. There is a growing awareness of the need to confront hunger and malnutrition on a global scale, and an increasing recognition that health-focused interventions are not sufficient to make progress on nutrition. Effective and sustainable strategies to address malnutrition must be multi-sectoral, with food and agriculture playing a key role. National and international actors have gone beyond nutrition-specific initiatives, placing a new focus on mainstreaming nutrition in sectoral interventions, and markedly on planning and implementation of agricultural policies. This evaluation took stock of the progress achieved in implementing the Strategy and Vision for FAO’s work on nutrition since 2012. The exercise was closely coordinated with the recently completed evaluation of Strategic Objective 1, i.e. to eradicate hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.

COMING UP IN 2019/2020

Synthesis of findings and lessons learnt from the Strategic Objective evaluations

The implementation of FAO Strategic Framework 2010-2019 has been a continuous learning process, innovation and adaptive management. This synthesis aims to extract key findings and lessons learnt from the five Strategic Objective evaluations and to extrapolate, overall, whether and how the FAO Strategic Framework was effective as a programming tool in support of greater development contribution by the Organization since 2014. The synthesis further intends to study how FAO has applied results-based management under this framework and whether further improvement would be needed in this regard to build a more robust results-based governance mechanism.

- Evaluation of FAO’s strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations
- Evaluation of FAO’s Private Sector Partnership Strategy
- Evaluation of FAO’s work in statistics
Evaluation of FAO’s Contribution to Bhutan

Bhutan is a lower-middle income country whose economy is aid-dependent, import-driven and vulnerable to shocks. The heavy reliance on export of hydroelectricity does not create broad-based employment. Bhutan’s narrow economic base and importance of the Renewable Natural Resources (RNR) put FAO in a unique position of contributing to the country’s development through the strengthening of its key economic sector. This evaluation assessed FAO’s contributions towards achieving the national development goals set out in Bhutan’s 11th Five Year Plan, which aims for “Self-reliance and Inclusive Green Socio-Economic Development”. Results show that the viable RNR sector where young people with entrepreneurial skills generate cash income could be the foundation for the higher national development philosophy of inclusive growth. Future FAO programmes could use income growth and employment generation in rural areas as an entry point for interventions. For this, FAO projects can use income and employment, instead of production, as indicators for measuring the impact. This, in turn, would help FAO to address more effectively the country’s emerging issues of youth unemployment and rural to urban migration through the vitalization of the RNR sector.

Evaluation of FAO’s Contribution to Kenya

Kenya experienced sustained economic growth over the past decade. However, Kenya remains a lower middle-income country with high incidence of poverty. Since 2006, there has been a general decline in food production characterized by deficits of main staples including maize, rice, wheat, beans, millet and sorghum. The majority of food insecure households are found in pastoral counties, which are already vulnerable to climate shocks, resource-based conflicts and poor animal conditions, and these aggravating conditions often result in famine. The evaluation was jointly conducted with the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA) and the Tegemeo Institute of Agricultural Policy and Development. Results show that FAO’s programme was in alignment
with important national development plans, strategies and policies in the areas of agriculture and food security. Moving forward, FAO should support the government towards adoption of a coherent national agricultural policy, and inclusion of natural resource management issues in county programmes.

Evaluation of FAO’s Contribution to Cameroon

In the period under review (2013-2017) Cameroon experienced an increased instability and a deterioration of the food security situation in some parts of the country due to the spillover effects of two major regional crises: in Central African Republic that led to the arrival of refugees in the eastern part of Cameroon, and the insurrection of the Boko Haram sect in north-eastern Nigeria that affected the far north region leading to the displacement of internal population and the arrival of refugees from Nigeria. The evaluation analysed FAO’s capacity to adapt its programme to respond to the changing needs of the country and it was conducted in close collaboration with the Rome-based Agencies that respectively evaluated their programmes and strategies in Cameroon during the same years. This collaboration led to a joint workshop in Yaoundé to present the results of the evaluations to national stakeholders and discuss opportunities for future RBA joint work.

Evaluation of FAO’s Contribution to Nicaragua

Nicaragua is a lower middle-income country in Central America with half of the rural population living in poverty. Family farming incorporates the vast majority of all producers in the country and comprises 90 percent of agricultural land, thus giving family farming an important responsibility in food security. Since 2013 FAO’s work has focused on technical support for public policies. The evaluation took into account the significant budget reduction suffered by the programme due to changes in the dynamics of development cooperation. At the same time, the evaluation indicates that the institutions accompanied by FAO recognize its contribution to the achievements obtained, as well as its ability to respond to the various requests for support. FAO is valued as a leading agency in the issues of food and agriculture in Nicaragua, and its position has allowed the Organization to influence policies relevant to the development of family farming and capacity building at various levels.

Evaluation of FAO’s Contribution to Guinea

In 2012 about 55 percent of Guinea’s population was living below the national poverty line. The 2014/15 Ebola crisis heavily hit the country disrupting the actions undertaken by FAO to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable populations to food security. Several unplanned projects have been implemented to respond to the country’s emergency. Achievements included: Ebola risk management capacity building at community level as well as livelihoods and livelihoods strengthening of vulnerable households in agriculture and livestock; setting up a wildlife monitoring committee to better detect the disease. Due to the quality of its institutional support and its expertise in rural development, FAO has gained credibility with national institutions and UN agencies. However, it still lacks visibility among institutions with a less direct link to the agricultural sector. In addition, the absence of a clear resource mobilization strategy are the limits to the development of a major programme beyond the emergency response.

Evaluation of FAO’s Contribution to Cambodia

Although Cambodia is rapidly transitioning to a more industrialised economy, the country is still among the poorest in Southeast Asia, and the risk of sliding back into poverty remains high, especially for rural households. The goal of FAO’s programme in Cambodia has been to contribute to the eradication of poverty, food insecurity and malnutrition while promoting sustainable natural resource management. The 2018 country programme evaluation highlighted FAO’s comparative advantage – as a trusted purveyor of data and technical advice. There is scope to leverage this position in advocating for inclusive and sustainable development, and for more investments in research and innovation. The evaluation recommends that FAO continue to promote evidence-based policy making, accompanied by clear economic arguments and analysis of trade-offs. In the context of the SDGs and UN reform, FAO could play a key role in leading such analyses, while facilitating coordination across the UN system to support policy implementation.
3. Programme/Project Evaluations

These evaluations reviewed individual programmes and projects that are funded from extra-budgetary resources or clusters of projects of particular interest. They support decision-making for future projects.

Evaluation of the Africa Solidarity Trust Fund

The Africa Solidarity Trust Fund (ASTF) is a funding vehicle for the pursuit of joint and coordinated action to defeat hunger and malnutrition, improve the livelihood of farmers, and guarantee food and nutrition security for all Africans. An evaluation of the initiative from 2012 to 2017 shows that ASTF is highly relevant and an important funding mechanism to support African countries in pursuing their set priorities and objectives, in accordance with the commitment of the Malabo Declaration to end hunger in Africa by 2025 and achieve food security. ASTF has been instrumental in funding emerging thematic areas for FAO’s work in Africa, such as youth employment, food safety and resilience interventions. The Fund has also helped FAO reinforce strategic partnerships with key regional development actors in Africa, such as the African Union and SADC. To ensure the Funds’ replenishment, there is need to develop and implement a communication and resource mobilization strategy.

Evaluation of the Project “Voices of the Hungry” (VoH)

One in eight people in the world (about 870 million) suffered from chronic undernourishment in 2010-2012. Assessing the levels of hunger and food insecurity is essential for developing and monitoring policies aimed at addressing this issue. The “Voices of the Hungry” Project was an effort to develop a global Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) forum that could be implemented by all Members. This evaluation assessed the quality and relevance of the VoH project design and progress towards results. Findings show that VoH has been very effective in achieving its desired results, especially at the output and outcome levels. A global standard for measuring people’s experience with food security was established: the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES), a robust and cost-effective indicator to measure people’s access to food. FIES is considered to
be more cost-effective and easier to include in national household surveys than other FNS indicators. By 2017, twenty-two countries had already incorporated FIES into their national household surveys.

**Final Evaluation of the Conservation Agriculture Scaling-Up (CASU) Project**

Despite widespread promotion of conservation agriculture in Zambia as a means to increase productivity and conserve soil fertility in farming systems, adoption of techniques by farmers has been limited. In an effort to address this, the Conservation Agriculture Scaling-Up (CASU) Project had the objective of sustainably increasing crop productivity and diversity through widespread promotion of the three principles of conservation agriculture across the entire country, targeting over 300,000 smallholder farmers. The evaluation found that conservation agriculture led to an increase in yields, but farmers struggled to find suitable markets, particularly for legumes. The evaluation recommends that future projects consider the entirety of the value chain, with more flexibility for locally-adapted climate-smart agriculture and sustainable intensification techniques. Further, the evaluation recommends that future projects increase the quota targets for female beneficiaries, while simultaneously including targeted activities for female beneficiaries. The handover to the Government of the Republic of Zambia of the Zambia Integrated Agricultural Management Information System (ZIAMIS) and e-voucher system, derived from the CASU model, was an unplanned but very positive outcome.

**Evaluation of the “Partnership for Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS)”**

The Partnership for Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS) is a Group of Twenty (G20) response to the global food price surges that occurred in 2008 and 2010. This evaluation assessed the support to AMIS by the World Bank Group with the Development Grant Facility (DGF). Results show that AMIS was a relevant initiative in the post-2008 food prices crisis context as most deliverables were achieved and targets attained. AMIS is also said to have made important contributions towards the outcome of FAO’s Strategic Objective 4. Through AMIS, the supply of timely and relevant market information has also increased. Although it took time and effort, activities financed through the DGF also helped encourage stakeholders to increasingly participate and contribute to AMIS, and allows its products to become progressively more accurate, relevant and appreciated. However, efforts are still needed to ensure the accuracy and regularity of data provided by the countries.
Evaluation of FAO’s Contribution to the Conservation Agriculture Thematic Cluster

Based on three principles – minimum soil disturbance, permanent soil cover and crop rotation - Conservation Agriculture (CA) is an approach that intends to increase productivity while conserving the environment. FAO’s project aimed to validate and demonstrate CA practices, boost CA adoption among resource-poor farmers and mainstream CA into agricultural policies in Indonesia and Timor-Leste. The evaluation found the project appropriate, relevant and effective in terms of reducing crop losses in rain-fed areas affected by land degradation and drought. It observed and documented cases of increased production, soil moisture conservation during drought, increased soil fertility, reduction of input costs and labour. The project could have delivered greater and sustained synergies between the two neighbouring countries. Sustaining CA introduction will require further improvement to the enabling environment and a new project focused on the broader aspects of climate-smart agriculture, with clear policy-oriented actions and adaptive research.

Evaluation of the Project “Building a Global Agenda of Action in Support of Sustainable Livestock Sector Development”

Is sustainable livestock production possible, and if so, how does it look like? Livestock sector is at the center of climate and environmental issues, and plays a major role in poverty reduction and food security and nutrition. To address these issues a multi-stakeholder initiative was created in 2011 to share good practices, build consensus towards shaping sustainable livestock production, and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. Since then, significant value and progress towards these objectives was made in the form of increased interaction and participation and Members are implementing new practices and policies. The forum now brings together 105 member organizations from Academia, Donors, International Organizations, NGOs, Private Sector, civil society, and producer organizations. Continuing such dialogue is crucial to achieve sustainability, and Members should continue collecting evidence and good practices from their experiences. Sustainability is an urgent and critical issue and should be treated with the highest importance.

Final Evaluation of the Project “Sustainable Community-Based Management and Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystems in Cameroon”

Mangrove ecosystems provide a wide range of resources and services for people’s livelihoods, which at the same time give rise to strong economic, social and demographic pressure. To address these challenges, the GEF project “Sustainable community-based management and conservation of mangrove ecosystems in Cameroon” developed strategic documents on mangroves; created platforms to promote dialogue among stakeholders; produced information on the status of mangroves in Cameroon and established a permanent
monitoring system for determining changes in these ecosystems; contributed to the launch and advancement to the final stages of processes for the classification of protected areas. While the project contributed to several outcomes at institutional level and it also increased community awareness of the importance of mangrove ecosystems, it did not achieve the expected results in support to long-term sustainability of local communities’ livelihoods. Moving forward, to see impacts there is still the need for a consolidation phase both at community and institutional level.

Final Evaluation of the Project “Forestry and Protected Area Management in Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu and Niue”

Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu and Niue are located within two of the World’s 34 “Biodiversity Hotspots” where the richest reservoirs of plant and animal life are found. The GEF-funded project, “Forestry and Protected Area Management in Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu and Niue” sought to overcome the many threats affecting biodiversity in the four countries. The results of this Final Evaluation set a sound foundation for the management of protected areas as it contributed to a substantial increase in their coverage, to improved participation of customary landowners, legal, policy and institutional frameworks and contributed to awareness raising and capacity building. Future projects in the area should further study, address linkages with climate change adaptation activities, sustainable financing mechanisms for protected areas, and clearly identify livelihoods and economic benefits that can be linked to the improved conservation of biodiversity as a compensation for land users who agree to reduce hunting and farming activities in protected areas.

Final Evaluation of the Institutional Level Component of the Project “Support for Livestock-based Livelihoods of Vulnerable Populations in the Occupied Palestinian Territory”

Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip face a protracted crisis; durable and sustainable solutions are needed to protect and promote their livelihoods beyond short-term responses. In an effort to link relief, rehabilitation and development, this project represents the institutional component of a larger programme to provide “Support for Livestock-based Livelihoods of Vulnerable Populations in the Occupied Territories”. Under this project, FAO successfully led the coordination of all developmental activities to enhance public capacities of the Ministry of Agriculture in the livestock sector by putting new systems and processes in place. In order to ensure sustainability of the project’s results, the evaluation recommends that the Palestinian Authority enact policies to make livestock product supply meet demand, that greater awareness of the importance of tagging animals is built among herders and that an assessment be conducted of the international livestock market.

Final Evaluation of the Project “Mainstreaming the Use and Conservation of Agrobiodiversity in Public Policy through Integrated Strategies and in situ Implementation in four Andean Highlands provinces”

Ecuador has been recognized as one of the 17 megadiverse countries in the world. The GEF-funded project “Integrate the use and conservation of agrobiodiversity in public policies” sought to overcome the many threats affecting Ecuador’s biodiversity while reducing rural poverty. The
Final Evaluation of the Project “Strengthening Climate Change Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction in Agriculture to Improve Food Security in Haiti after the Earthquake”

Over the past decade, the country of Haiti located in the Caribbean has been subjected to numerous natural disasters, including Hurricanes Isaac and Sandy in 2010. The agricultural and livelihoods resilience project “Strengthening Climate Change Resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction in Agriculture to Improve Food Security in Haiti after the Earthquake” sought to restore livelihoods, introduce climate-smart agriculture techniques and rehabilitate damaged land and livelihoods. The Final Evaluation found solid gains made in the area of climate change adaptation, as the project took important steps to link emergency relief efforts. The project led to sustainable outcomes for increased resilience in terms of agricultural productivity, and incomes were increased due to improved production techniques. The project did not however have a sufficient exit strategy, and more work is needed to ensure the financial sustainability necessary to achieve long-term impact.

Final Evaluation of the Joint Resilience Project in Kassala

Weather-related shocks in in Kassala, Sudan regularly affect the resilience of communities and their food security conditions. The Joint Resilience Project (JPR), designed to prevent malnutrition in order to build resilience to droughts and floods, opted to measure stunting to determine whether improved maternal and child health and nutrition as well as enhanced adaptive capacity were achieved. The initial focus on reducing malnutrition rather than building resilience reduced overall effectiveness, although the evaluation noted this shortcoming was corrected at midterm. The evaluation recommends providing feedback on results to the 75 beneficiary communities, the four targeted localities and the Kassala Government, consolidating project results by continuing collaboration among FAO, WFP and UNICEF in the field, by strengthening the capacities of national stakeholders, specifically through enhanced soft skills, and by capitalizing on lessons learned from the JRP for similar projects in the future.

Final Evaluation of the Joint Resilience Project in Kassala

Joint programme evaluations are conducted in collaboration with the Evaluation Offices of the Rome-based Agencies - World Food Programme (WFP) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) - or other UN agencies and partners.

Joint FAO/OIE Evaluation of the Global Framework for the Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases

The Global Framework for the Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs) is a joint governance mechanism of FAO and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) launched in 2004 to achieve coordinated prevention and control of transboundary animal diseases (TADs), and in particular to address their regional and global dimensions. This is the third evaluation of the GF-TADs and covers the period from 2009 to 2017. The evaluation aims to provide the GF-TADs Global Steering Committee and Management Committee with lessons learned and evidence which can be used to inform its future strategic development by providing recommendations to guide GF-TADs’ enhanced collaboration at regional and global levels and encourage improvement of the GF-TADs’ tools. The evaluation examined the added value of the GF-TADs as a mechanism to facilitate collaborative work between FAO, OIE and TADs partners in addressing global risks from TADs.
**OTHER COMPLETED PROJECTS AND PROGRAMME EVALUATIONS**

- Final Evaluation of the Project “Capacity Development of the Irrigation Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan”
- Mid-term Evaluation of the Project “Sustainable Land Management and Climate-Friendly Agriculture”

**ONGOING PROJECT EVALUATIONS**

- Evaluation of FAO’s Contribution to Building Resilience to El Niño-induced Drought in Southern Africa
- Evaluation of the FAO-WFP joint project to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable populations in Northern Mali
- Evaluation of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Project
- Evaluation of the Integrated Management of Mangrove and Associated Wetlands and Coastal Forests Ecosystems of the Republic of Congo
- Final evaluation of the project “Disposal of Obsolete Pesticides including POPs and Implementation of Pesticides Management Programme”
- Final Evaluation of the Project “Land Rehabilitation and Rangelands Management in Smallholders Agro-pastoral Production Systems in South Western Angola (RETESA)”
- Final Evaluation of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics

---

UN-Woman commends FAO for having “met” 93 percent of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Woman (UN-SWAP) performance indicators highlighting the role of evaluation: “Noteworthy substantive efforts in this area include FAO’s increasingly gender responsive evaluation methodology, including the establishment of criteria, guidelines and questions for the assessment of gender mainstreaming in evaluations.”
Other Activities

United Nations Evaluation Week 2018

In May 2018 the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) hosted the Evaluation Week 2018, the annual gathering of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) jointly organized with IFAD and WFP, the UN Rome-based agencies. 163 evaluation professionals attended the event to share lessons and best practices, and discuss inter-agency work programmes and initiatives. The Evaluation Week consisted of: a one-day Professional Development Seminar; a two-day Evaluation Practice Exchange; and an Annual General Meeting where the executive body of UNEG, responsible for its governance and strategic direction held its two-day meeting. The Evaluation Practice Exchange in particular introduced several innovations encompassed in highly interactive sessions, engaging and relevant to the interests of the audience. The EGM and AGM reports, videos, pictures and other material can be found at: http://uneval.org/mediacenter/newscenter/newsdetail/125

EVAL-ForwARD Community of Practice

Responding to a call for strengthening external evaluation capacities, enunciated both in a UN General Assembly resolution and in the Evaluation of FAO’s evaluation function, the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) led the creation of a Community of Practice on evaluation for Food security, Agriculture and Rural Development called “EVAL-ForwARD”. This initiative is jointly supported by the Evaluation Offices of the UN Rome-based Agencies. Its scope is to promote the integration of evaluative thinking into national and global SDGs review systems. It brings together evaluators, development practitioners, policymakers and researchers across national institutions, and offers for many an unprecedented opportunity to access and exchange food security-related evaluation knowledge and information. The Community uses a moderated D-group as the main channel for interaction and knowledge sharing. Participants can raise topics of interest, send contributions, share resources and information in English, French or Spanish. Regular summaries take stock of the exchanges and debates and contribute to the knowledge base of the Community. At the end of a three month pilot the community gathered over 150 members from 42 countries.

See more information and register at: www.evalforward.org
EVALUATION VIDEOS on the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations’ YouTube Channel

OED produces short videos with interviews to beneficiaries in the field and other stakeholders on some evaluations. Have a look at the video on the Evaluation of FAO Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES) in food chain crises or listen to farmers talking about FAO’s work in Myanmar. The videos are available at the [www.fao.org/evaluation](http://www.fao.org/evaluation) website.

Evaluation of the Emergency Prevention System Programme (EMPRES) in Food chain crises

Evaluation of FAO’s contribution to Myanmar