EVALUATIONS IN FAO

Evaluations in FAO aim to give member countries a more in-depth understanding and objective basis for their decisions at the policy and operational levels, and to contribute to FAO’s corporate learning, providing a sound basis for improvements of the Organization’s planning and programming in terms of relevance to countries, definition of objectives, design and implementation. Moreover, evaluations provide the basis for Members’ cooperation with FAO’s programmes and, in alignment with FAO’s agreed goals and strategic objectives, with a view to achieve food security for all. Evaluation is critical for promoting accountability and learning, to understand what we are doing right and what we might be getting wrong. In FAO there are three main types of evaluations: 1. Thematic or strategic evaluations, 2. Country programme evaluations and 3. Programme and project evaluations. This document outlines the most recently completed, ongoing and planned evaluations for each category.

1. Thematic and Strategic Evaluations

In 2016 the Office of Evaluation initiated a new series of evaluations to review FAO’s contribution to its five Strategic Objectives, introduced in June 2013 as part of the Revised Strategic Framework 2010-2019. The first evaluation in this series, finalized at the end of 2016, assessed FAO’s contribution to increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises (Strategic Objective 5) and it was. In 2017, the Office assessed FAO’s contribution to rural poverty reduction (Strategic Objectives 3), and to enabling inclusive and efficient agricultural food systems (Strategic Objective 4).

RECENTLY COMPLETED

**Evaluation of FAO’s contribution to rural poverty reduction through Strategic Programme 3**

FAO’s new approach to rural poverty reduction builds on its long-standing work on smallholder agriculture, while addressing such areas as social protection and decent rural employment. While this approach has supported the formulation of multi-sectoral responses, better targeting of the capacity building activities is needed and a systematic poverty analysis should be completed to inform programme design. To upscale the work in these promising areas, the FAO should devise a tailored resource mobilization strategy and engage more with new partners who are working in these areas, as well as cross-cutting issues such as gender equality.

**Evaluation of FAO’s contribution to Inclusive and Efficient Agricultural and Food Systems (Strategic Programme 4)**

In today’s interconnected world, with globalized food trade and resource flows across different regions, ‘systems thinking’ is needed for sustainable consumption and production patterns. FAO’s SO4 programme is about broadening perspectives - from a focus on production to a holistic agricultural and food system approach. It seeks to optimize resource efficiencies in the production and delivery of cost-effective, healthy and safe products for all, while ensuring the inclusion and integration of smallholder producers, vulnerable consumer groups and economically weaker countries. The evaluation found the programme highly relevant, yet its food systems approach was not well understood. FAO is well-positioned to support countries in developing sustainable food systems; however, it needs to better communicate its value offering and ensure that the skill sets are in place to collaborate with a wider range of stakeholders. Innovative approaches for resource mobilization should be pursued for significant impacts.
ONGOING/PLANNED EVALUATIONS

The evaluations of FAO’s contribution to elimination of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition (Strategic Objective 1) and sustainable agricultural development through integrated natural resource management (Strategic Objective 2) are currently ongoing and will be finalized in the second and fourth quarter of 2018, respectively. The Office of Evaluation is also working on the following reports:

Synthesis of lessons learned in application of the Country Programming Framework

The Country Programming Framework represents a unified approach toward common development goals around food security and nutrition, rural development, agriculture and climate change at the country level between FAO and the host government. This synthesis intends to examine the quality of the Country Programming Framework by identifying challenges related to planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of its activities. It will generate lessons for enhancing the quality and relevance and impact of the Framework on promoting cooperation, partnership and sustainable results. The final report will be presented to the governing bodies in spring 2018.

Synthesis of findings and lessons learned 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 in order to build a more robust results-based governance mechanism. It will be presented to the governing bodies in spring 2019.

Evaluation of FAO’s work on gender

This evaluation will assess FAO’s success in mainstreaming the gender dimension into its programmes, and synthesise findings from the five Strategic Objective evaluations, as per FAO gender policy. In addition, the evaluation will suggest 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. It will be presented at the FAO Conference in 2019.

Country programme evaluations aim to identify lessons learned and provide recommendations on how to better orient FAO’s programmes at country level (*including country-groups or territories that have equivalent programmes), in order to make them more relevant to the needs of the country and to strengthen the impact of the organizational efforts towards achieving the members’ goals. These evaluations are usually carried out during the perennial year of the country programme to optimize the use of evaluation results in the next planning cycle.

Evaluation of FAO’s contribution in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Pakistan has more livestock than people, and FAO can help to harness this immense resource for greater food security. For the eradication of animal diseases, FAO is well-positioned to assist the federal and provincial governments in reforming related legislation and allocating the required resources. The Organization demonstrated a successful model of cooperation between federal and provincial authorities to control some animal diseases. This model should be applied to the control of other diseases throughout the country and other important constraints to livestock production. The recent government decentralization in Pakistan made its provincial government responsible to strategize, plan and manage resources. FAO, which still predominantly operates out of the federal capital, needs to open provincial offices to work closely with provincial counterparts to provide technical support and influence their decision-making.
Evaluation of FAO’s contribution in Côte d’Ivoire

The decade of political and military crises has significantly affected Côte d’Ivoire despite the high economic growth since. Poverty and malnutrition remain high. Conservation of forests in a growing economy, where commercial agriculture is expanding, presents a major challenge. Land tenure issues need to be addressed to ensure agricultural development and social cohesion in the aftermath of the crisis. In Côte d’Ivoire, FAO has high visibility thanks to its strong commitments to key areas of work in this context; the Organization promoted dialogue among partners and led the sectoral working group on agriculture; on land tenure, it supported government’s actions at the policy and institutional levels; on protection of natural resources and sustainable development, it supported initiatives that increased political engagement and inclusive processes by involving all key players (civil society organizations, timber industries and the research community) in discussions; and on nutrition, it was a key actor in the Scaling Up Nutrition initiative promoting a multi-sectoral approach to fighting malnutrition.

Evaluation of FAO’s contribution in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

Myanmar has been undergoing a rapid political transition and started the development path experienced by other countries in the region. Yet, the majority of its population lives in rural communities, and nearly three-quarters of them remain in poverty. Natural disasters and prolonged conflicts affected livelihoods and food security of the poor and the displaced. With FAO support, marginalized fishing communities learned to safeguard their fishing rights and become economically viable. Community forest producers established an effective national organization, leading to the marketing of their products with forest product companies. The innovative use of drones in geo-mapping allowed better identification of disaster-affected and disaster-prone areas, and improved assistance to affected population. Building on these successful initiatives, FAO should increase its strategic and integrated support to the country, linking upstream and downstream aspects, and building long-term resilience.
Evaluation of FAO’s Country Programme in Guatemala

Guatemala hosts the highest proportion of indigenous people in Mesoamerica, most of them living in rural areas and suffering from chronic malnutrition. FAO has been supporting farmers in Guatemala since 1964 and now has the second largest country programme in the region. Although the recent political crisis presented a challenging context, FAO has successfully engaged at the highest political level to influence key decisions and policies. Reaching out to local and non-traditional partners enhanced FAO’s leverage and broadened its programme coverage. This allowed FAO to help more farmers increase productivity and income, support small rural enterprises and achieve other important results. FAO should further adapt its interventions to address gender inequity and social exclusion, which remain major challenges in the country.

Evaluation of FAO’s contribution in the Arab Republic of Egypt

Egypt experienced unstable political situation during the past years. This affected its food security. FAO’s programme focused on sustainable agricultural development for food security and nutrition. Enhancing food security also requires addressing socio-economic aspects, particularly the role of women. With FAO support, the Law Governing Agricultural Cooperatives was reformed to revive its function, reducing the control of the government and collaborating with the private sector. This was critical for extending effective support to small farmers. Animal health and disease control was up-scaled to reduce the threat to livelihoods. Wheat sector was reviewed, and the reforms will start with the local bread (Baladi) production. The 1.5 Million Feddan Programme, to which FAO provided policy advice, is shaping the agricultural development of the land. Throughout the country programme however, the role of women in food security was not sufficiently considered and the project design was not systematically gender-mainstreamed. In the future, FAO could focus more on policy advice and food-security reform initiatives.

Evaluation of FAO’s Programme in West Bank and Gaza Strip

The population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and particularly those who live in rural areas, face multiple risks and recurrent threats. For decades they have lived under restrictions on land, water and trade, with few livelihood opportunities and little government capacity to provide support. This evaluation found that FAO has been exceptionally capable in this challenging context to engage on different fronts by exploiting its own comparative advantage and working as a broker between institutions, covering the United Nations aims of responding to humanitarian needs and supporting institutions through development cooperation, while remaining within its mandate as a technical agency.

Evaluation of FAO’s contribution in the Republic of Niger

In Niger, agriculture and pastoralism are the main source of livelihood for the population. Recurrent droughts, as a result of climate change, are affecting the production and malnutrition rates remain high. FAO has introduced several innovative approaches and good practices in the country to address these challenges. Producers have increased access to quality agricultural inputs thanks to the creation of input shops in rural areas; women are more involved in community decisions thanks to the DIMITRA listeners’ clubs, and social cohesion has been improved. Not least, the farmer field schools approach was replicated by development partners as an effective mechanism for uptaking of innovations by farmers in other countries. FAO is recognized as a key partner that strengthens organisational capacities of farmer organisations, improving their access to credit and facilitating their participation in decision-making policy processes. FAO should build on its past achievements and propose integrated interventions for strengthening resilience.
3. Programme/Project Evaluations

These evaluations reviewed individual programmes and projects that are usually funded from extra-budgetary resources or clusters of projects of particular interest. Below are short descriptions of some recent programme and projects evaluations.

Final evaluation of the Global Programme to Support the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (2012 – 2016)

The Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests (VGGTs) provide principles and best practices for governance of tenure. Since their adoption in 2012, FAO has implemented various projects to support the VGGTs being applied to improve governance of tenure. The evaluation shows that through awareness raising, combined with high quality capacity development interventions, FAO has empowered various actors who can now influence the policy debate on tenure. While awareness raising and capacity development will always be needed, improved governance of tenure is more likely to be achieved with interventions that aim more specifically at strengthening the institutional and operational frameworks and through specific support at local level, where tenure mechanisms are applied. Since resources are limited, it is also very important to carefully select countries and ensure continuity. The evaluation defines some criteria that can be used for country selection.

Mid-term Evaluation of the Sustainable Management of Tuna Fisheries and Biodiversity Conservation in the Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (ABNJ)

Tuna fisheries are an important transboundary industry with complex issues and stakeholder interests. The project’s focus on ecosystems and sustainable production was very relevant to the Tuna Regional Fisheries Management Organization’s mission and its member states. The “Port State Measure” helped member states fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activities, contributing to sustainable production. The technical information provided to mitigate by-catch of sharks, seabirds and turtles was highly regarded by stakeholders. Although some key stakeholders did not present the required level of interest in project activities, the strong commitment by the steering committee and the project team led to early outcomes and the signs of potential impact.

Evaluation of the FAO Emergency Prevention System Programme (EMPRES)

In today’s inter-connected world, trans-boundary animal/plant diseases and pests are becoming a greater concern. Countries are increasingly investing in policies and regulations to manage old and new trans-boundary diseases that threaten health, markets and the safe production of food. FAO is uniquely positioned to assist countries to scale up their capacities and manage these threats. The EMPRES programme for emergency prevention systems, built on its animal health and locust programmes, now covers plant pests and diseases, aquatic diseases, food safety and forest health under one framework. Each programme component has produced positive results where support was extended. However, the programme rarely offered countries cohesive support covering all the relevant areas. A more cohesive multi-sectoral approach would enhance visibility and allow countries to better understand the range of assistance provided, leading to better and more relevant support to countries.
Final evaluation of “Progressive Control of Peste des Petits Ruminants in Pakistan”

Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) is an animal disease which has become endemic in Pakistan since its first appearance in 1991. It spreads easily among herds and across borders and is often fatal for the sheep and goats it affects. With almost 100 million small ruminants, Pakistan’s livestock sector is highly vulnerable, with poorer households being disproportionately affected. In 2013 the Government of Pakistan and FAO set up a PPR control project, building on previous experiences in disease control. This has shed light on the extent of the problem and made the initial steps towards control. Surveillance of outbreaks has improved and vaccine production was boosted, while vaccination and information campaigns have increased awareness. This evaluation targets farmers, veterinarians and key players to assess progress, identify success factors and shortfalls, and provide recommendations for further control of this disease.

Final evaluation of the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) – Uganda: Agricultural Adaptation to Climate Change project

Improved knowledge and capacities for climate change adaptation, better access of livestock and crops to water for production, and increased resilience of agricultural production systems in the cattle corridor are fundamental components of addressing the Global Climate Change Alliance in Uganda. As a result of the uptake of climate smart crop cultivation, farmers are growing different types of fruits and vegetables throughout the year, as well as increasing their incomes by selling their products. Based on these results, the GCCA project should be supported through a second phase, with continued focus on capacity development, partnership development (including public-private research), access to water and use of the farmer field schools approach within the cattle corridor.

Mid-term Evaluation of the Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems

Governments continue to face challenges in promoting innovation that meets the needs of small farmers, agribusiness and consumers. The project “Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems” (CDAIS), funded by the European Union, aims at establishing a global mechanism to promote, coordinate and evaluate capacity development approaches to strengthen Agricultural Innovation Systems at national level. The evaluation found the project’s focus on functional capacities highly relevant. Through the validation of the Common Framework in the eight pilot countries, the project has built individual and organizational capacities.
creating the potential for change; niche partnerships now have the capacities to prioritize challenges and develop action plans to address them. However, to ensure the sustainability of its early outcomes the project should better communicate its added-value. Capturing and synthesising learning with and across pilot countries would enhance its visibility and allow donors and other Governments to better understand the benefits of the CDAIS approach.

Final evaluation of Capacity building for South African Professionals in the Field of Agriculture and Food Security

Since 2007, increasing capacities in the areas of agriculture, forestry and fisheries has been a priority cooperation area for FAO and South Africa. The project worked to equip government officials with technical skills, and to pilot support packages to emerging smallholder farmers in Kwazulu Natal and Mpumalanga. The evaluation reviewed the project’s alignment with the needs of government and smallholder farmers, results achieved and sustainability mechanisms. The evaluation found that a notable achievement of the project was the creation of a university programme to train professionals in areas of scarce skills, the result of a multi-stakeholder negotiation brokered by FAO with government and the academic sector. Limited effectiveness of support to smallholder farmers was found, as preliminary interest and capacity were insufficiently considered during project design. The evaluation recommended increasing policy support for government to better tailor support for emerging farmers.

Final evaluation of the project: “Support for livestock-based livelihoods of vulnerable populations in the occupied Palestinian territory – institutional component”

The Palestinian livestock sector contributes to 46 percent of agricultural income, and small ruminants are a significant asset for Palestinian families, while herders are among the most food insecure communities in both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The EU-funded project supporting institutions to enhance productivity of the sector was found by the evaluation to be very relevant to the aim of better serving consumers while enhancing income opportunities for herders.

On the other hand, end users failed to understand the rationale of the project, affecting their compliance, a key to successful outcomes. Consideration of context-specific challenges and a preliminary assessment of the livestock market would have increased relevance and effectiveness of the project. In order to ensure sustainability, the evaluation recommended engaging in widespread awareness campaigns among herders, and establishing effective coordination on the ground among all actors.

Final evaluation of the project: Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit for Somalia (FSNAU)

Somali food, nutrition and livelihood security needs to be strengthened at the household and community level, thereby ensuring greater resilience to shocks such as those caused by conflict, drought, flood, disease or economic crisis. A broad range of stakeholders and Somali institutions should be provided with timely and relevant gender-disaggregated information on the food, nutrition and livelihood security situation of the Somali population, in order to improve emergency and longer term responses, and to ensure that communities, agencies and authorities in Somalia, as well as the international aid community, are empowered to respond. This evaluation covers the period from 2013 to 2016.

Final evaluation of Sudan Food Security Policy and Strategy Capacity Building programme

This evaluation assessed the value of the Food Security Policy and Strategy Capacity Building programme to identified stakeholders in South Sudan from inception in 2012 to date. The objective was learning about FAO’s capacity development approach for food and nutrition security, and accounting for the achievement of the FSPS-CB outcomes and objectives. The project promoted food and nutrition security policy action at state level, with key innovations that resulted in good examples of integrated, inclusive and evidence-based decisions. The evaluation recommends that with support from FAO’s Regional Office for the Near East, FAO Sudan should reinforce support to the food and nutrition monitoring, research and policy information systems in the country.
Joint FAO/OIE evaluation the Global Framework for the Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases (GF-TADs)

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.

Final evaluation of integrating climate resilience into agricultural production for food security in rural areas of Mali

The agricultural sector in Mali is adapting to climate change while continuing the struggle to alleviate poverty and to improve rural livelihoods in a conflict-affected environment. FAO supports the Malian government and a large number of development partners on the ground by integrating climate resilience in the policies and practices of the agricultural sector. Farmer Field Schools have proven to be the favorite and most successful route in Mali for learning, exchange and experimentation by farmers on productivity improvement and integrated pest management methods. Climate resilience has become an integral part of the trainings. Drought-resilient short-cycle seeds have been selected and propagated through small-scale seed multiplication and dissemination. FAO should further support Mali by negotiating governmental and/or climate funding for sustainability of the farmer field schools agricultural extension system, by upscaling the current project in other areas, and by integrating gender and social inclusion into the policies and practices in the agriculture sector.

ONGOING PROJECT EVALUATIONS

- Building a Global Agenda of Action in Support of Sustainable Livestock Sector Development
- Sustainable Community Based Management and Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystems in Cameroon
- Cluster evaluation: Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity, Forests, Soil and Water to Achieve the Good Living (Buen Vivir / Sumac Kasay) in the Napo Province; Mainstreaming of the use and conservation of agrobiodiversity in public policies through integrated strategies and in situ implementation in three provinces in the Andean highlands; Management of Chimborazo’s Natural Resources
- Integrated Management of Mangrove and associated wetlands and coastal forests ecosystems of the Republic of Congo
- Sustainable Land Management and Climate-Friendly Agriculture in Turkey
- Africa Solidarity Trust Fund
- Increased Household Food, Income and Nutrition Security through Commercialization of an Integrated and Sustainable Smallholder Livestock Sector in Zimbabwe
- Enhancing Food and Nutrition Security through the Promotion of Conservation Agriculture
- Reducing Disaster Risks caused by changing climate in Nusa Tenggara Timur (NTT) and Nusa Tenggara Barat (NTB) Provinces in Indonesia

EVALUATION VIDEOS on the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations’ YouTube Channel

For some evaluations a 10 minute video was realized in different languages to present in a different format some of the findings and recommendations. Have a look at the OED website to find out which are the most recent ones:

www.fao.org/evaluation/en