

Thematic evaluation series

# **Evaluation of the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector**

## **ANNEX 1. Terms of Reference**

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**  
**Rome, 2019**



# Contents

<i>Acronyms and abbreviations.....</i>	iv
<b>1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1    Background and context.....	1
1.2    Evaluation purpose .....	1
<b>2. Evaluation objectives and key questions.....</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1    Objectives of the Evaluation.....	2
2.2    Scope of evaluation .....	2
2.3    Evaluation questions.....	3
<b>3 Methodology.....</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1    Evaluation design .....	5
3.2    Review of secondary data .....	5
3.3    Primary data collection: interviews of FAO stakeholders, counterparts and partners ..	6
<b>4 Management arrangements.....</b>	<b>7</b>
4.1    Roles and responsibilities of the evaluation team.....	7
4.2    Stakeholder engagement.....	7
4.3    Deliverables.....	9
4.4    Evaluation timeline.....	9
<b>Appendix 1. Country case study selection .....</b>	<b>11</b>

## **Acronyms and abbreviations**

CPF	Country Programming Framework
EM	Evaluation Manager
EOI	Expression of Interest
EQ	Evaluation Question
ET	Evaluation Team
ETL	Evaluation Team Leader
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
OED	FAO Office of Evaluation
PC	Programme Committee
RO	Regional office
ToR	Terms of Reference

# **1. Introduction**

## **1.1 Background and context**

1. These Terms of Reference are for carrying out an evaluation of the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector. The FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector has been developed within the context of the FAO Organization-wide Strategy on partnerships.<sup>1</sup> The latter covers the broad range of partnerships in general terms and calls for elaboration of specific strategies related to key categories of partnership, including the private sector. The FAO Strategy for Partnerships with the Private Sector (hereinafter referred to as Strategy) was endorsed by FAO Governing bodies in 2013 and progress on its implementation has been regularly reported to FAO governing bodies.

## **1.2 Evaluation purpose**

2. This evaluation is part of the rolling work plan for evaluations and has to be presented at the 127<sup>th</sup> session of the FAO Programme Committee<sup>2</sup>. It is anticipated that the evaluation findings and recommendations will inform further development of the mechanisms and policies in support of Partnership Strategy implementation.

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.fao.org/3/a-bp169e.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/bodies/Progr\\_Comm/PC\\_125-documents/MY401e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bodies/Progr_Comm/PC_125-documents/MY401e.pdf)

## **2. Evaluation objectives and key questions**

### **2.1 Objectives of the Evaluation**

3. The main purpose of this evaluation is to provide FAO management and governing bodies with an objective assessment of the progress made by FAO towards implementing its Strategy for partnerships with the private sector. Namely, the evaluation intends to examine the extent to which the Strategy has contributed to FAO SO and results through promotion of partnerships with the private sector.
4. It will seek to examine the appropriateness of the design of the Strategy and its supporting mechanisms and approaches, assess the Strategy's implementation modalities and report on the achievements resulting from private sector partnerships. In addition, the evaluation aims at determining the reasons why the expected results of the strategy did or didn't occur. The evaluation will also aim at identifying good practices and lessons learned during implementation of the Strategy to assist in decision-making around the formulation of future partnership development approaches.

### **2.2 Scope of evaluation**

5. The period covered by the evaluation is 2013-2019, i.e. the period since the adoption of the new strategic framework and the approval of the Strategy. The evaluation scope will encompass all processes, mechanisms and other arrangements established by FAO for effective implementation of the Strategy, including Country Programme Frameworks, relevant policies and guidance, tools, capacities and resources deployed. The results achieved will be assessed at the global, regional and country levels, under the following categories of key areas of work defined in the Strategy:
  - Knowledge management and dissemination
  - Norms and Standards setting
  - Mobilization of resources
  - Development and Technical Programmes
  - Policy Dialogue
  - Advocacy and Communication
6. The evaluation scope will acknowledge the fact that while FAO partnership unit has a key role in implementing the strategy, by brokering partnerships and mitigating risks, all FAO units and decentralized offices are involved in delivering results which involve private sector actors. Therefore, while the partnership unit remains the main counterpart for the evaluation, and the scope will primarily be on its areas of work, the evaluation will, where possible, assess results arising indirectly from the Strategy.
7. The evaluation applies the same definitions of 'partnerships' and 'private sector' used by FAO in its Strategy. This focuses the scope on the private sector partnerships formalized through a legal agreement such as Memorandum of Understanding, Partnership Agreements and Exchange of Letters. The other numerous collaborations that FAO has with private sector entities, especially at country level, are not assessed in their entirety as they are not directly linked to the Strategy's implementation and their coverage is beyond the capacity of the evaluation team. However, some examples of such collaborations are analysed in the report in as much as they provide contribute to answering the evaluation questions, and can provide valuable lessons for FAO.

## 2.3 Evaluation questions

8. The evaluation will aim to address the main questions presented below. The evaluation team will modify these based on information received during initial scoping interviews.

### I. Strategic relevance

**Evaluation Question 1: To what extent has the formulation and implementation of the Strategy responded to the global development priorities, needs of member countries and provided strategic direction and guidance to FAO units?**

- 1.1 To what extent has the Strategy been relevant to the needs of Member states and been responsive to global development priorities and trends?
- 1.2 To what extent has the implementation of the strategy affected FAO's positioning versus its partners and stakeholders?
- 1.3 How does the implementation of the Strategy intend to contribute towards the achievement of SDGs and global commitments?

### II. Effectiveness and contribution to results

**Evaluation Question 2: To what extent have FAO partnerships with the private sector contributed to results (Strategic Framework results, results at regional and country level)?**

- 2.1 How does the implementation of the Strategy contribute to the achievement of FAO strategic objectives and results (outcomes)?
- 2.2 What are the anticipated and unanticipated results that can be associated with the strategy implementation?
- 2.3 That extent were the results arising from private sector partnerships sustainable?

### III. Efficiency of partnerships development modalities and approaches

**Evaluation Question 3: Does the strategy and its implementing mechanisms provide coherent framework to promote private sector partnerships?**

- 3.1 What are the success and limiting factors that affect the results arising from private sector partnerships?
- 3.2 To what extent is the Due Diligence and Risk Management system conducive to successful partnership building?
- 3.3 To what extent have FAO's technical and human capacities, contributed to the quality and effectiveness of partnership development processes?
- 3.4 To what extent the results pertaining to the implementation of the Strategy and their relevance effectively assessed, monitored and reported upon, with lessons informing decision making and partnership development?

### IV. Cross-cutting issues

**Evaluation Question 4: To what extent are cross-cutting issues (governance, gender, nutrition and climate change), outlined in the Strategic Framework, effectively integrated into Strategy's design and implementation?**

- 4.1 To what extent have FAO's private sector partnership initiatives integrated gender-responsive initiatives? Were women and men distinguished in terms of participation and benefits from these initiatives?
- 4.2 To what extent have FAO's private sector partnership initiatives integrated climate change adaptation and resilience?

- 4.3 To what extent have private sector partnerships led to potential public discourse or action on governance-related issues?
- 4.4 To what extent have FAO's private sector partnership initiatives integrated nutrition-sensitive initiatives?

## 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Evaluation design

9. Addressing the key questions underpinning the evaluation will require breaking down each question into more detailed sets of questions. During the inception phase, the evaluation team will further develop the evaluation methodology and elaborate additional evaluation questions and sub-questions. The methodology will take into account the logic of the Strategy and its objectives; any limitations that evaluation may encounter, as well as potential budget and timing constraints. An **Evaluation Matrix** will be formulated in line with the Evaluation Questions, to elaborate on how each of the sub-questions will be addressed, specifying: the criteria and indicators to be used, possible benchmarks if available, data collection tools to be used and related sources of information, as well as any triangulation plan. The data and information that will be uncovered through the evaluation inquiry will build the evaluation evidence based, to form findings, from which conclusions and recommendations will derive as appropriate. The evaluation matrix will thus serve as a central tool guide the inquiry throughout the Evaluation.
10. The evaluation will seek to present the results of its inquiry and analysis with clear reference to evidence gathered and ensure findings, conclusions and recommendations logically derive from one another. The evaluation will generally seek to reach international norms and quality standards for evaluation, as defined by the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) and applied by the FAO Office of Evaluation (OED). In addition, independence and rigor of analysis will underpin the whole evaluation process: the team members will apply their own technical judgement in the assessment of the work.
11. The credibility of evaluation findings will also hinge on a constant effort to validate the evidence gathered through the systematic triangulation of information sources, founded on explicit endeavors to consult with various stakeholders, to ensure the assessment is based on a comprehensive understanding of diverse perspectives on issues, performance and outcomes.

### 3.2 Review of secondary data

12. The evaluation will attempt to take advantage of existing data as an initial source of information; and will thereby draw from FAO information systems; publications and reports availed by relevant FAO divisions, including evaluation reports; and from other relevant documentation sources. This will be useful to inform all evaluation questions.
13. In particular, the following desk-based data sourcing and analysis is envisaged:
  - 1) **Mapping of the FAO Partnerships with the Private Sector**, to provide a general overview of projects and initiatives covered by the Strategy, and of the resources and the modalities of implementation;
  - 2) **Mapping of data on results achieved** from monitoring and reporting systems at HQ, regional and country level (including reports to FAO Governing Bodies, Corporate monitoring and reporting systems, project progress reports and Service Level Agreements;

- 3) **Country case studies** to support understanding of achievements at country level for countries where sufficient secondary information is available
- 4) **Synthesis of evaluation findings** relevant to development of private sector partnerships - from FAO evaluations undertaken between 2013 and 2018;
- 5) **Use of on-going evaluations** of relevance including Country Programme or project evaluations;

### **3.3 Primary data collection: interviews of FAO stakeholders, counterparts and partners**

14. Based on the identified areas of inquiry that may not be adequately covered through the analysis of secondary data, the evaluation will need to collect primary data from stakeholders who are directly or indirectly connected to establishment of partnerships, and from relevant counterparts and partners of FAO's work at national and international levels.
15. The evaluation will conduct **semi-structured interviews** to further refine the team's understanding of the modalities of Strategy implementation and collect evidence of that may inform the evaluation findings on the strategic value, emerging results, and implementation dynamics. Face to face interviews will be complemented by interviews through teleconferencing, whenever feasible and most appropriate.
16. Face-to-face interviews will take place at **FAO headquarters** and in a **sample of countries** where FAO has country, regional or sub-regional offices. The selection of countries visited for in depth data collection was guided by the necessity to cover a variety of areas of work encompassed by the Strategy, as well as a need for contextual diversity..
17. The criteria for country visits selection included the following elements:
  - Number of private sector partnerships linked to the strategy implementation;
  - The size of programme resources linked to collaboration with the private sector
  - Representation of different modalities of private sector engagement
  - Representation of the five regions covered by FAO work
18. The evaluation team's visits to countries will be complemented by visits to some of the FAO **Regional offices**, when practical and appropriate. These visits will offer an opportunity to examine regional programs for private sector engagement and types of support provided by partnerships units established at regional level.
19. If feasible, the evaluation team will undertake a review of experiences of selected comparator organizations in supporting private sector engagement in relevant thematic areas. This exercise will pay due consideration to the significant differences in the mandate and governing structure of the compared organizations as well as their approaches to private sector engagement across the compared organizations. Potential comparator agencies may include Rome-based UN agencies (IFAD, WFP), WHO, UNICEF, and/or other relevant organizations.

## **4 Management arrangements**

### **4.1 Roles and responsibilities of the evaluation team**

20. The evaluation will be undertaken by a team led by a senior evaluation officer of FAO assisted by other evaluation officers, and supported by the technical contributions of several independent experts collectively covering key areas of relevant work.
21. **The OED team of evaluators** will bear the responsibility for designing and organizing the evaluation, including defining the roles of technical experts and managing the team. OED evaluation officers will take part in the evaluation data collection and will lead the analysis and evaluation report drafting process, based on the contributions of team members, as agreed during the inception phase. The main responsibility for the report content will ultimately lie with the OED senior evaluation officer.
22. **Independent experts** will contribute to the evaluation from its inception phase, initially providing technical expert advice on the evaluation design, including on the evaluation data collection tools (interview guides). They will participate in the data collection phase by taking an active part in the interviews and some of the desk review work, as per assigned responsibilities during the preparatory and inception phases. All team members will not be travelling to all countries visited by the evaluation, and each will be expected to cover other areas of work for which she/he does not have the lead during missions when the lead expert is not part of the mission. Ultimately, experts will provide technical contributions to the overall analysis based on the evidence gathered, and offer written contributions on defined areas of inquiry, also assigned during the preparatory and inception phase. The division of labour between technical experts will only be possible once the team is identified.
23. The independent experts should have experience in undertaking strategic-level evaluations, and familiar with issues related to the partnerships in the international development arena, including, but not limited to :
  - Strategic management of partnerships;
  - Private-public sector partnerships;
  - Sustainable business practices and responsible investments programmes
24. Specific responsibilities of each technical expert will be defined in the individual job descriptions of each expert once the team is formed.

### **4.2 Stakeholder engagement**

25. The evaluation team will ensure **key stakeholders of FAO** are consulted at various key stages of the evaluation process, to make the most of their internal knowledge and understanding of the programme and offer them opportunities for ensuring the evaluation may provide the most valuable results to their work.
26. The key stakeholders of this evaluation include:
  - (i) **FAO internal stakeholders**: including FAO's Governing Bodies, in particular, the Programme Committee to whom the report will be submitted; FAO's senior management; FAO staff working on promoting engagement and partnerships with private sector organizations in decentralised offices as well as at headquarters; and

- other relevant units within FAO with activities that are related to partnerships with the private sector.
- (ii) **FAO's external stakeholders:** including both those directly involved in FAO's private sector-partnerships, such as private companies, and those indirectly associated with FAO's work on private sector partnerships, such governments, resource partners, multilateral organizations, UN agencies, academia and research organizations, NGOs and Civil Society Organizations and the communities and farmers. External stakeholders will include the perspective of beneficiaries.

**Table 1: An overview of the interest of different stakeholders in the evaluation**

Stakeholders	Interests in the evaluation	Implications for the evaluation
<b>Internal stakeholders</b>		
FAO Governing Bodies Programme and Finance Committees	- Evaluation is requested by the Programme Committee - Better understanding of strategic importance of the Partnership Strategy and possible guidance of future orientation and strategic directions	- The report will be submitted to FAO members at the 2019 Fall session of the PC.
FAO senior management	- Strategic directions - May have views to share on communication and feedback they hear Areas for improvement	- The report will be submitted to senior management for the management response - Senior management will be consulted during the evaluation
FAO staff at HQ and in decentralized offices	- Strategic directions - Better understanding of the role of FAO in private sector partnerships - Areas for improvement	- Staff involved in private sector partnerships will be consulted at various stages of the process, including representative staff from various departments and decentralized offices
<b>External Stakeholders</b>		
Direct beneficiaries of FAO's services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Government and parastatal agencies directly involved with or affected by FAO's work</li><li>• Communities and groups targeted by FAO's work</li><li>• Global initiatives targeted by FAO's work</li></ul>	-Recommendations of the evaluation should result in improvements in work related to private sector partnerships and more generally in improvements in the way the Organization works.	- Representatives of the main beneficiary groups will be consulted mostly during country visits.
Partners in FAO's work with the private sector: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Private sector entities</li><li>• International organisations/UN agencies</li><li>• International processes/initiatives</li><li>• FAO resource partners</li></ul>	- Can benefit from clarification on FAO's role with the private sector and from improvements in how FAO collaborates with partners.  - direct interest for those funding private sector-related activities	- Representatives of the main partners of FAO will be consulted during the evaluation, with attention to balance standpoints and possible vested interests  - Consultations with key relevant partners - Report will be circulated to resource partners

#### 4.3 Deliverables

27. The evaluation will produce the following main products, including some intermediary documents<sup>3</sup>:
- ToRs;
  - Evaluation Matrix
  - Short notes synthesizing key information drawn from meetings and team discussions at the end of the inception meetings;
  - Comparator study providing an analysis of FAO's private sector partnership in relation to other UN agencies
  - Synthesis of previous evaluation reports from FAO Office of Evaluation and other Evaluation offices
  - Final Evaluation Report

#### 4.4 Evaluation timeline

28. The evaluation will be organized according to the following sequenced phases of work and will be presented to the 127<sup>th</sup> session of the FAO Programme Committee in the autumn of 2019:
29. **Preparation and organization of the evaluation.** During this phase, ending with the finalization of the present TOR, the evaluation management team will work on identifying and hiring the team members; organizing country visits in liaison with FAO country stakeholders; arranging labor distribution within the team; continuing the background research and desk review work; developing and refining evaluation tools and developing reporting formats
30. **Evaluation inception and main data collection.** The inquiry phase of the evaluation will start with an inception meeting whereby the team will gather in FAO headquarters to get a common understanding of the evaluation subject, objectives and approach, and organize the data collection work. This will be followed immediately after by interviews of key stakeholders.
31. The inquiry phase following will comprise the main part of the data collection work. It will include desk reviews of specific areas of work, country and institutional visits and interviews of key informants. The evaluation team will separate into smaller teams who will be assigned to various visits and tasks, and report according to the templates provided.
32. **Analysis and validation.** Once the data collection will be done, the teams will gather again into one in FAO headquarters to undertake required follow-up meetings, seeking to validate some of the evidence gathered in the field or through the interviews; and start assembling the evidence together into evaluation findings, and emerging conclusions and recommendations.
33. **Preparation of report.** While the final report is ultimately the responsibility of the team leader, drafting the report will be a collaborative team endeavor. Each team member will therefore provide inputs to the overall report, as per the responsibilities they will have been assigned at early stages.

---

<sup>3</sup> Some of the above products will be public documents once the evaluation is finalized.

34. A more detailed **tentative timeline** is provided below:

<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
Preparation and organization of the evaluation	Final TOR, tools and reporting formats	Up to Mid -February 2019:
Evaluation Team hire		March-May 2019
Evaluation inception	Data collection tools: evaluation matrix, interview guides, analysis frameworks, reporting templates	May-June 2019
Main data collection, missions in countries and regions	Country reports, case studies, meta-evaluation	June-July 2019
Analysis and validation	Draft findings and debriefing presentation	July 2019
Report writing, follow-up interviews and validation	Draft evaluation report	July-August 2019
Finalization of report	Evaluation report	August 2019

## Appendix 1. Country case study selection

**Note:** In addition to country visits listed below, evaluation team has undertaken interviews with FAORs, HQ and regional office staff covering FAO's work globally, in all regions.

Region	Mission/desk review	Country
Africa	Mission	Kenya
	Mission	Tanzania
	Mission	Ghana
Asia-Pacific	Desk review	Bangladesh
	Desk review	China
	Desk review	India
	Desk review	Indonesia
	Desk review	Lao PDR
	Desk review	Pakistan
	Desk review	Philippines
	Desk review	Samoa
	Desk review	Sri Lanka
	Mission	Thailand
Europe and Central Asia	Desk review	Vietnam
	Mission	Georgia
Latin America and Caribbean	Desk review	Tajikistan
	Mission	Argentina
	Desk review	Brazil
	Mission	Chile
	Mission	Ecuador
	Desk review	El Salvador
	Desk review	Haiti
	Desk review	Nicaragua
Near East and North Africa	Desk review	Panama
	Desk review	Morocco
	Desk review	Egypt