

Thematic Evaluation Series

**Evaluation of FAO's contribution to
Sustainable Development Goal 2 –
“End hunger, achieve food security and
improved nutrition and promote
sustainable agriculture”**

Annex 1. Terms of Reference

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
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1. Overview

1. At its 125th session, the FAO Programme Committee requested an evaluation of FAO's contributions to Sustainable Development Goal 2 - "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture", and recommended FAO to integrate relevant UN agencies and development partners in the process.¹
2. These Terms of Reference (ToR) ought to guide the entire evaluation of FAO's role in supporting Member Nations' efforts towards the achievement of SDG2 (in short, "the SDG2 evaluation"). They were developed based on the outcomes of a scoping exercise that included a thorough documentary review and consultations with a broad group of stakeholders within and outside FAO.
3. The FAO Office of Evaluation (OED) will report the SDG2 evaluation to the Programme Committee in two parts: i) at the 128th session (spring 2020); and ii) at the 129th session (autumn 2020). The first part will focus on FAO's programmes and delivery mechanisms, i.e. some of the transformative elements of the 2030 Agenda. The second part will focus on FAO's external dynamics, i.e. the collaborative elements of the 2030 Agenda.
4. This evaluation aims to be formative and "developmental".² As such, it will adopt a consultative and flexible approach, and the methodology and methods here described will be progressively refined as the evaluation progresses.

¹ CL 160/3 - Report of the 125th Session of the Programme Committee (Rome, 12 – 16 November 2018), FAO 2018.

² Developmental Evaluation is an approach that can assist social innovators develop social change initiatives in complex or uncertain environments. See for instance:
https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/developmental_evaluation

2. Background

2.1 Genesis of the SDGs

5. In September 2000, the General Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration.³ In 2001, the Secretary-General presented the “Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration”,⁴ which introduced eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) along with 18 targets and 48 indicators⁵ with an end line set in 2015. The MDGs faced some initial resistance but ended up being widely accepted by multilateral and bilateral agencies, national governments and non-governmental organizations alike, in spite of being the product of a top-down and expert-led process.
6. In 2012, the Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) called for an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process to institute a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to replace the MDGs.⁶ The UN Secretary-General launched a series of consultative, participatory and bottom-up processes to discuss the “post-2015 agenda” as it was then called,⁷ including a UN System Task Team, a High Level Panel of Eminent Persons, and an inter-governmental Open Working Group.
7. These parallel processes ultimately converged into 17 goals and 169 targets, with a target date set in 2030. These were approved by the UN General Assembly in September 2015, and came into force on 1st January 2016.⁸ In March 2016, the UN Statistical Commission agreed with a global indicator framework for the targets.⁹ In July 2017, 232 indicators were endorsed by the General Assembly.¹⁰ This framework of indicators is scheduled to be reviewed in 2020.
8. The 2030 Agenda is very ambitious, and its accomplishment will require changes of unprecedented magnitude. In fact, “transformational change” is the watchword for the new development agenda,¹¹ and this is one of the most significant differences when compared to the MDGs.
9. Further differences are underlined in Table 1, such as the focus on “leaving no one behind” as opposed to just reducing the incidence of various social ills, and the stronger emphasis placed on the environmental sustainability, reflecting growing concerns about climate change and loss of biodiversity. A growing focus on partnerships, notably with the private sector,¹² is also deemed crucial to enhance access to resources, investment, markets, data, knowledge and technologies.

³ A/RES/55/2 - UNGA Resolution 55/2 - United Nations Millennium Declaration. New York, United Nations, 2000.

⁴ A/56/326 - Road map towards the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. New York, United Nations, 2001.

⁵ In 2005, additional targets and indicators were added (e.g. on HIV/AIDS treatment), and some were revised or reallocated (e.g. on decent work), leading to a final framework of 21 targets and 60 indicators.

⁶ A/RES/66/288 - Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 27 July 2012. The future we want. New York, United Nations.

⁷ It is now called the “2030 agenda”.

⁸ A/RES/70/1 - Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UNGA, 2015.

⁹ Statistical Commission. Report on the forty-seventh session (8-11 March 2016).

¹⁰ A/RES/71/313 - Work of the Statistical Commission pertaining to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New York, United Nations, 2017. This global indicator framework is still evolving, according to the report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) to the Statistical Commission, presented in March 2019.

¹¹ As highlighted by the General Assembly in its Resolution A/RES/70/1 – Transforming our world.

¹² Both large international corporations and the myriad of small-medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that make up much of the world’s economy especially when it comes to SDG2 related issues.

Table 1: Main differences between the MDGs and SDGs

Characteristics	MDGs	SDGs
Formulation	Top-down	Bottom-up
Main thrust	Human development	Sustainable development
Responsibility	Public sector	Public sector, civil society, private sector and consumers
Targets	Halve and reduce	Eradicate and eliminate; "leave no one behind"
Geographic scope	Mainly for LDCs and LMICs	Universal, i.e. also valid for high-income countries
Interconnections between targets	Some complementarities and synergies between goals	Strong interlinkages and complex trade-offs; 2030 agenda is seen as a coherent whole
Resources	ODA, "funding"	"Financing", "blended finance"
Types of support and interventions	Quantitative expansion of social services	Qualitative and quantitative improvements in services, policies and governance
	Address basic needs	Improve livelihoods and expanding economic and social opportunities while safeguarding and strengthening the natural environment; address the root causes that generates and reproduce social, economic and environmental problems
	Sectoral approach	Multisector approach
Impacts sought	Large scale and long term	Systemic, "transformative", as well as large scale and long term

10. In addition to being more ambitious than the MDGs, the SDGs are intrinsically connected and interdependent as a way to ensure a comprehensive and programmatic implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The synergies and trade-offs between SDG targets as well as between the three dimensions of sustainability (i.e. social, economic and environmental) have been consistently emphasised by Member States and explored in numerous publications.¹³
11. To better support the implementation of SDGs, the Secretary-General announced in June 2017 a reform of the United Nations Development System.¹⁴ Among the set of planned initiatives is the redesigning of the UN Development Assistance Framework and of the UN Country Teams to enhance the coherence of UN's support to countries in achieving SDGs.¹⁵ The reform is likely to affect the work of all UN agencies at country level, including interventions, partnerships and resource mobilization strategies.

2.2 The case of SDG2: from "halving hunger" to "zero hunger"

12. The MDG hunger target (1.C) was to halve the proportion of people who are undernourished. It commanded much attention especially during and after the 2008 'food crisis', and in 2015 the target appeared nearly achieved: the number of undernourished people in the developing nations had decreased from 23.3 to 12.9 percent between 1990

¹³ The Independent Group of Scientists (a group of 15 independent experts appointed by the UN Secretary-General) intends to present a map of SDGs interactions as part of the 2019 Global Sustainable Development Report.

¹⁴ A/72/124-E/2018/3 - Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda: ensuring a better future for all – Report of the Secretary General. New York, United Nations 2017.

¹⁵ Going forward, a new strategic document called the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCF) will define development priorities for UN agencies in a given country in a coherent manner, and the FAO Country Programming Framework (CPF) is now expected to be derived from the UNSDCF, as are other UN agencies' country programme documents.

and 2015.¹⁶ However, food insecurity and malnutrition are on the rise again. As showed by the 2019 report on the State of Food Insecurity and Nutrition in the World, *"the trend in world hunger [...] reverted in 2015"* and *"more than 820 million people in the world are still hungry today, underscoring the immense challenge of achieving the Zero Hunger target by 2030"*.¹⁷ Beyond undernourishment (i.e. hunger) and micro-nutrition deficiency (sometime called "hidden hunger"), other forms of malnutrition such as overweight, obesity and non-communicable diseases are increasingly affecting all nations, in a phenomenon described as the "nutrition transition". This evolution is well reflected in SDG2, target 2.2 - end all forms of malnutrition.

13. The links between food security, food value chains, food systems and the environment are also reflected in the SDG framework, and therefore in SDG2. The outcome document of the Rio+20 conference, entitled *"The Future We Want"*,¹⁸ expressed deep concerns about climate change and its potential threat to food security, both globally and locally, and emphasized the importance of adapting to climate change, including by *"improving the functioning of markets and trading systems [...] and] by increasing public and private investment in sustainable agriculture, land management and rural development"*. Farming and food systems are not only contributors to climate change, they also present potential mitigation measures to it.
14. SDG2, entitled *"End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture"* was conceived to address both social and economic progress and environmental sustainability. Fighting undernourishment remains one of the targets (2.1) but instead of halving it, SDG2 advocates for its complete eradication. Furthermore, other SDG2 targets go much beyond undernourishment to contemplate the multiple forms and underlying causes of food insecurity and malnutrition. It also includes elements of resilient and sustainable agriculture, food systems, biodiversity, research & innovation, and trade (table 2).
15. The combination of targets is supposed to cover the four dimensions of food security: physical availability, economic access to food, utilization and stability,¹⁹ as well as the main "means of implementation"²⁰ for the goal. Additionally, SDG2 targets are linked to other SDGs targets through numerous synergies and trade-offs (e.g. with target 1.3 - Social protection; 3.4 - Non-communicable diseases; 5.A - Women's equal access to and control over resources; 12.2 - Sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources, and 13.1 – Resilience to climate-related hazards and natural disasters).²¹

¹⁶ UNDESA. 2015. The Millennium Development Goals Report. New York, UN.

¹⁷ FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. 2019. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2019 – Safeguarding against economic slowdowns and downturns. Rome, FAO.

¹⁸ A/CONF.216/L.1 – The Future We Want – Outcome document of the Rio+20 conference, United Nations 2012.

¹⁹ Transforming food and agriculture to achieve the SDGs – 20 interconnected actions to guide decision-makers, Rome, FAO 2018.

²⁰ The notion of 'means of implementation' describes the interdependent mix of financial resources, technology development and transfer, capacity-building, inclusive and equitable globalization and trade, regional integration, as well as the creation of a national enabling environment required to implement the sustainable development agenda.

²¹ These links will be explored during the evaluation process. Please refer to Section F – Methodology for further information.

Table 2: SDG2 targets and indicators

Targets	Indicators
2.1. By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round	2.1.1. Prevalence of undernourishment 2.1.2. Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity in the population, based on the Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES)
2.2. By 2030, end all forms of malnutrition, including achieving, by 2025, the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons	2.2.1. Prevalence of stunting (height for age < -2 standard deviation from the median of the WHO Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age 2.2.2. Prevalence of malnutrition (weight for height > +2 or < -2 standard deviation from the median of the WHO Child Growth Standards) among children under 5 years of age, by type (wasting and overweight)
2.3. By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment	2.3.1. Volume of production per labour unit by classes of farming/pastoral/forestry enterprise size 2.3.2. Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status
2.4. By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality	2.4.1. Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture
2.5. By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed	2.5.1. Number of plant and animal genetic resources for food and agriculture secured in either medium or long-term conservation facilities 2.5.2. Proportion of local breeds classified as being at risk, not-at-risk or at unknown level of risk of extinction
2.A. Increase investment, including through enhanced international cooperation, in rural infrastructure, agricultural research and extension services, technology development and plant and livestock gene banks in order to enhance agricultural productive capacity in developing countries, in particular least developed countries	2.A.1. The agriculture orientation index for government expenditures 2.A.2. Total official flows (official development assistance plus other official flows) to the agriculture sector
2.B. Correct and prevent trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets, including through the parallel elimination of all forms of agricultural export subsidies and all export measures with equivalent effect, in accordance with the mandate of the Doha Development Round	2.B.1. Agricultural export subsidies
2.C. Adopt measures to ensure the proper functioning of food commodity markets and their derivatives and facilitate timely access to market information, including on food reserves, in order to help limit extreme food price volatility	2.C.1. Indicator of food price anomalies

16. Achieving the ambitious set of targets under SDG2 by 2030 will require major transformations in terms of awareness, capacities, partnerships, policy coherence, and use of public budgets and/or ODA contributions. In financial terms, FAO estimates that achieving SDG2 will require additional investments to the tune of USD 265 billion per year.²²

2.3 FAO's Strategic Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals

17. The FAO Strategic Framework for 2000-2015 predated the Millennium Declaration, and for this reason made no explicit mention to the MDGs, even though FAO's objectives were consistent with the MDGs.²³ In November 2009, the new Strategic Framework adopted for the period 2010-2019 drew parallels between FAO's work and the MDGs, especially MDG1.²⁴
18. In 2013, the Strategic Framework was reviewed to concentrate efforts on addressing the challenges faced by the Member Countries. Five Strategic Objectives (SO) were developed to guide FAO's work, and they were duly informed by the MDGs (Box 1).²⁵

Box 1: FAO's Strategic Objectives

SO1. Contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition.
SO2. Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner.
SO3. Reduce rural poverty.
SO4. Enable more inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems.
SO5. Increase the resilience of livelihoods to threats and crises.

19. However, already by 2013, the reviewed Strategic Framework stressed that *"the scope of MDG1 is no longer considered as ideal for advocating for hunger reduction in the context of the post-2015 development agenda, and FAO and partners need to find new, appropriate platforms to promoting food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture"*.²⁶
20. Issued in 2017, the Medium Term Plan (MTP) 2018-21 acknowledged the 2030 Agenda as the *"new global charter for international development cooperation and governance"*,²⁷ and stressed the paramount importance of food and agriculture to achieving the SDGs. The reviewed MTP 2018-21, issued in 2019, reinforced that FAO's results framework is adopting SDGs targets and related indicators for measuring progress towards its Strategic Objectives (Fig. 1).²⁸

²² Transforming food and agriculture to achieve the SDGs – 20 interconnected actions to guide decision-makers, Rome, FAO 2018.

²³ See: Strategic Framework 2000 – 2015. Rome, FAO 1999.

²⁴ Strategic Framework 2010 – 2019. Rome, FAO 2009.

²⁵ E.g., MDG1 was purposefully reflected in Strategic Objective 1 (SO1).

²⁶ C 2013/7 - Reviewed Strategic Framework - Conference Thirty-eighth Session (15 – 22 June 2013). Rome, FAO 2013.

²⁷ C 2017/3 - The Director-General's Medium Term Plan 2018-21 and Programme of Work and Budget 2018-19. Rome, FAO 2017.

²⁸ OED is currently conducting an evaluation of FAO's Strategic Results Framework. This evaluation will assess how the SDGs framework is reflected in FAO's Strategic Framework and related structures and mechanisms.

Figure 1: SDG indicators included in the 2018-2021 Strategic Objectives framework

Source: <http://www.fao.org/3/my734en/my734en.pdf>

21. It is likely that a new strategic framework will be proposed, that may attempt to tie FAO's support ever more closely to the 2030 Agenda. The current Strategic Framework ends in 2020. In June 2019, a new Director-General was elected for a four-year term commencing from 1 August 2019. In his address to the FAO Council, he highlighted as his highest priority the nexus between SDG1 and SDG2, i.e. between poverty eradication and hunger eradication.²⁹ In September 2019, he launched the Hand-in-Hand initiative, that aims to enable "matchmaking" between countries with high poverty and hunger rates and developed countries, confirming that "increasing its impact in countries that need the most help for achieving SDGs 1 and 2" will be part of FAO's priorities.³⁰

2.4 FAO's support to SDG2

22. During the scoping phase, OED reviewed existing documentation and sources to gauge the potential amount of work to evaluate. Evidently, SDG2 is central to the mandate of the Organization and pervasive in its programme of work. It is the SDG to which FAO is expected to contribute the most.³¹ This is evidenced by Figure 1 above, where SDG2 is the only SDG reflected in all five FAO Strategic Objectives.
23. FAO's important role concerning SDG2 is equally evident in the global indicator framework. FAO is the custodian agency for 21 indicators, nine of them under SDG2. FAO is the custodian agency for nine out of 13 indicators available to monitor SDG2 (i.e. 2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.4.1, 2.5.1, 2.5.2, 2.a.1 and 2.c.1), and the partner agency for another one (i.e. 2.a.2).

²⁹ Item 9 of CL 161/PV : Verbatim Records of Plenary Meetings of the Council, Hundred and Sixty-first Session - Rome, 8-12 April 2019.

³⁰ See: Food systems and tropical agriculture are SDG hotspots. FAO Director-General address to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, New York, 25 September 2019.

³¹ See for instance General Assembly Resolution 73/253, which recognized the prominent role played by FAO in the context of SDG2. A/RES/72/238 - Agriculture development, food security and nutrition. UNGA 2018.

24. FAO fulfills its support to countries through a variety of roles and functions. In the absence of an official definition of specific roles played by FAO in support of SDGs, the OED evaluation team is proposing a typology (Box 2) that reflects the FAO's core functions,³² the implementation arrangements included in the FAO Corporate Programmes Monitoring Board 2016/04,³³ and the various SDG-specific roles identified in recent documents produced by FAO within the context of the 2030 Agenda.³⁴
25. This typology of roles could be further refined during the evaluation process, while trying to keep to a manageable list. Any of these types could be broken down in a number of sub-types, and potentially contributes to (and therefore overlaps with) other types. For instance, an additional type was proposed for normative work, standard setting instruments and voluntary guidelines. However, such normative work comes in support of other roles, such as SDG reporting, dissemination of good practices, or policy support. The evaluation will therefore consider normative work as a means through which FAO provides the support listed in types a) to f).³⁵

Box 2: Typology of roles for FAO's support to the SDGs

- a) Communication, awareness raising and advocacy about the SDGs both internally and externally.
- b) Policy support, i.e. support to the development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of national, regional and global policy frameworks meant to achieve the SDGs (including local adaptation of SDG targets, priority setting and negotiation of trade-offs between targets).
- c) Support to reporting against SDG indicators, including methodological development of new indicators, capacity building for statistical data generation, monitoring progress against targets in regional and global flagship reports such as SOFI to inform decision making.
- d) Identification, documentation and dissemination of good practices, e.g. tracking, piloting and leveraging new science, technology and innovation to achieve the SDGs.
- e) Financing for sustainable development (over and beyond resource mobilization for FAO itself, i.e. influencing ODA allocations, promoting south-south and triangular cooperation, mobilizing domestic public resources, promoting trade and investment, etc.) in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.
- f) Mobilization of partnerships to achieve the SDGs and activate their "means of implementation", e.g. support to coordination around SDG2, reaching out to the private sector to reform food systems, sizing synergies with civil society organizations, multilateral development banks and the UN system, etc. (over and beyond leveraging financial resource, which is covered in the previous role).

26. The ongoing evaluation of FAO's work on statistics will cover functions c) above, and the ongoing evaluations of FAO's private sector and civil society partnerships strategies will partly cover function f). To avoid repetitions and make the best use of the resources available, the SDG2 evaluations will focus on the other functions, but will make due consideration to the findings of other related evaluations, as appropriate.

³² As defined in the FAO's reviewed Strategic Framework.

³³ Corporate Programmes Monitoring Board 2016/04, List of Conclusions. Rome, FAO 2016. Unpublished. The board notably stressed the importance of "maintaining the focus of the Organization's efforts on delivery of its Strategic Programmes (SPs) by incorporating activities on support to SDG implementation and monitoring within the SPs through existing delivery mechanisms". (emphasis added)

³⁴ i) Food and Agriculture – driving action across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, FAO 2017; ii) Transforming food and agriculture to achieve the SDGs - 20 interconnected actions to guide decision-makers, FAO 2018; iii) AUD2718 - FAO's readiness for the 2030 Agenda and supporting Member States in achieving their SDGs, FAO 2018; and iv) C 2019/28 – Progress on the Sustainable Development Goals / 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, presented at the forty-first session of the FAO Conference in June 2019.

³⁵ A fairly comprehensive list of relevant policy toolkits, many of which were developed under the aegis of the CFS, is presented in Transforming Food and Agriculture to Achieve the SDGs - 20 Interconnected Actions to Guide Decision-Makers, FAO 2018, p. 68-70 (available at <http://www.fao.org/3/I9900EN/i9900en.pdf>).

3. Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

27. The evaluation purpose and objectives stem from the premise that FAO is still adjusting its structure, communication, programmes and interventions and shifting its priorities to address the challenges posed by the 2030 Agenda at global, regional and country levels.³⁶ Similarly, the UN development system is still preparing itself to better support countries in achieving the SDGs, as corroborated by the ongoing UN reform.
28. FAO's work on SDG2-related areas predates the 2030 Agenda. The results of these "pre-SDGs" efforts were explored by evaluations recently presented to the Programme Committee, i.e. on FAO's five strategic objectives, FAO's work on gender, and FAO's nutrition strategy. As for results that could be potentially attributed to the SDGs framework itself, they may take many more years to materialize.
29. This evaluation is therefore *not* a so-called "summative evaluation" designed to assess results in a comprehensive way. Rather, it is a "formative evaluation" aiming to i) identify bottlenecks to advance FAO's contributions to SDG2, ii) help strengthen FAO's approach, partnerships and programmes in support of SDG2, iii) identify good practices and highlight some preliminary results (if available) which may be relevant to scale up; and iv) explore what would be the best options going forward.
30. Within this purpose, specific objectives include:
 - i. Provide relevant and timely input into the potential reformulation of the FAO's programmes and delivery mechanisms to improve FAO's capacity to plan, deliver, track and communicate its support to SDG2.
 - ii. Assess FAO's past and present work on SDG2-related areas to find i) good practices that could be expanded; ii) areas for improvement; iii) potential gaps that need to be filled.
 - iii. Understand FAO's positioning and its comparative strengths and weaknesses on SDG2, and opportunities for strengthening its delivery.
 - iv. Serve as a baseline for future assessments pertaining FAO's support to SDG2, including mid-term reviews and final evaluations.

³⁶ FAO. 2018. Audit Report: Assessment of FAO's SDG Readiness in Support of Countries in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. AUD2718. Rome, FAO.

4. Evaluation scope

31. The SDG2 evaluation will cover all FAO's efforts in supporting both developing and developed countries to set and achieve their SDG2 targets, building on FAO's Strategic Framework, programmes, and roles and typologies proposed in Box 2. Moreover, due to the interconnected and indivisible nature of the 2030 Agenda, the evaluation will also examine FAO's efforts in supporting targets that are directly linked to SDG2, aka "SDG2+".³⁷ These targets will be identified during the evaluation process in collaboration with members of the Independent Group of Scientists (IGS), and in consultation with the evaluation's Reference Group. The SDG2 evaluation will attempt to treat synergies and trade-offs in relation to SDG2 targets as part of its scope, to the extent possible.
32. In assessing the efforts put in place by FAO in the context of the 2030 Agenda, the evaluation will also touch on FAO's influence in the design of the SDGs, in particular SDG2, and whether this has positioned the Organization to contribute further, as well as efforts to *transform* FAO's delivery mechanisms and programmes in the context of the SDGs and the current UN reform.³⁸
33. To address this scope, the SDG2 evaluation will cover the period from June 2012³⁹ to December 2019 (Part I, to be presented at the 128th session of the Programme Committee), and the period from June 2012 to June 2020 (Part II, to be presented at the 129th session of the Programme Committee). Evidently, a stronger focus will be given to the period from 2016 onward, when the new agenda came into force.
34. OED is currently conducting the evaluations of i) FAO's Strategic Results Framework; ii) FAO's private sector partnership strategy; iii) FAO's civil society partnership strategy; and iv) FAO's work on statistics. Given the risk for overlap and opportunities for cross-fertilization between the various evaluations, the SDG2 evaluation team is working in close collaboration with the other teams to explore synergies.

³⁷ Both targets that enable or undermine SDG2, and targets that are directly affected by SDG2 targets.

³⁸ Transformation is a recurrent reference in the 2030 agenda. It goes beyond mere change to something more profound, akin to a shift in the dominant culture or philosophy. The 2030 Agenda calls for transformation in viewing and doing development. See: Talking SDGs – 12 terms to define the 2030 Agenda, available at: <http://www.fao.org/sustainable-development-goals/news/detail-news/en/c/1149805/>

³⁹ I.e. the first official mention of the sustainable development goals at Rio+20.

5. Evaluation questions

35. The evaluation will answer the following three evaluation questions (EQ).
- a) Is FAO **positioning** itself to offer relevant support to countries in achieving their SDG2+ targets?
 - b) To what extent is FAO **transforming** its delivery mechanisms and programmes (or should transform them) to better support countries in achieving SDG2+ targets?
 - c) How is FAO **collaborating** with others to support countries in achieving their SDG2+ targets?
36. For each question, a set of sub-questions will guide data collection and analysis. Table 2 below presents a preliminary list of sub-questions, which will be further refined in collaboration with the external experts that will be recruited to compose the evaluation team.
37. The evaluation will pay particular attention to the implications of the UN Reform when collecting and analysing data to answer the three evaluation questions.

Table 3: Detailed evaluation questions

<p>A. Is FAO positioning itself to offer relevant support to countries in achieving their SDG2+ targets?</p> <p>A.1. To what extent has FAO contributed to the design of the SDGs, especially SDG2, and how has this positioned the Organization to contribute further to the 2030 agenda? Were the ideas presented by FAO substantial and potentially useful? To what extent were they adopted?</p> <p>A.2. To what extent is FAO currently addressing the needs and demands of Member Nations of various income levels and development situation under "SDG2+"?</p> <p>A.3. How visible, respected and recognized is FAO's role in support of SDG2+ targets, e.g. among member states, donors and other key stakeholders? What are its comparative strengths on SDG2-related areas vis-à-vis other development actors and UN agencies in this regard? What can FAO do better than others, and what can others do better than FAO?</p> <p>A.4. What are other UN agencies doing on SDG2+, at global, regional and country levels? Are there synergies and/or overlaps with FAO's work? To what extent are the overlaps avoidable? Are there gaps that FAO could help to fill?</p> <p>A.5. How is the ongoing reform of the United Nations Development System affecting or likely to affect FAO position within the UN system relative to other UN agencies supporting SDG2?</p>
<p>B. To what extent is FAO transforming its delivery mechanisms and programmes (or should transform them) to better support countries in achieving SDG2+?</p> <p>B.1. Does FAO have a corporate plan and guidance on SDGs, in particular SDG2? Did the Organization clearly articulate what it needs to do within the SDG framework, both internally and in relation to external partners/stakeholders?</p> <p>B.2. Is FAO transforming itself to support countries in achieving SDG2 and correlated targets, in terms of: 1) addressing development goals that are multi-sectorial as well as the synergistic relations and trade-offs between goals through an integrated approach; 2) reframing key "signature products" and services that are particularly relevant to SDG2 and sustainable development;⁴⁰ 3) establishing innovative partnerships to act at regional or national scale (as opposed to funding small pilot projects); and 4) adopting a people-centred approach and addressing mechanisms of economic exclusion in order to "leave no one behind".</p> <p>B.3. In practice, to what extent is FAO contributing to SDG2 and correlated targets ("SDG2+") against the typology of roles (Box 2)? How are these various lines of work qualitatively different from what the Organization was doing before? To what extent are these lines of work likely to promote a transformational change?</p> <p>B.4. Is FAO promoting mutual accountability among its Members Nations around the 2030 agenda, e.g. through impartial reporting on SDG indicators of hunger, malnutrition and sustainable agriculture; or through its governance mechanisms and the CFS?</p>
<p>C. How is FAO collaborating with others to support countries in achieving their SDG2+ targets?</p> <p>C.1. What are the key partners of FAO regarding SDG2-related work (type of partnership established, reason, etc.)? Are these partnerships building on clear comparative advantages from FAO and its partners? Do they help FAO deliver relevant assistance?</p> <p>C.2. To what extent is FAO forging new, innovative partnerships in support of SDG2, or preparing to do so (e.g. in financing, know-how and technologies, advocacy, etc.)? In particular, is the Organization deepening and diversifying its partnerships over and beyond its member states, such as with the private sector or with civil society? With what results?</p> <p>C.3. Are FAO, its partners and other stakeholders committed to collaborating, avoiding duplication of work and competition? In particular, are Rome-based agencies (RBAs) committed to collectively support countries in achieving their SDG2 targets?</p> <p>C.4. To what extent is FAO supporting countries in developing partnerships to mobilize "means of implementation" to achieve SDG2 (e.g. financing, costing, resource mobilization, technical cooperation, south-south cooperation, etc.)?</p>

⁴⁰ "Signature products" are the most visible and famous among all those produced by a given company, and seen as central to the company's image. A detailed list of relevant signature products to review is provided in section F. Methodology.

6. Methodology

6.1 Generalities

38. The SDG2 evaluation will be presented to the Programme Committee in two parts: i) at the 128th session (spring 2020); and ii) at the 129th session (autumn 2020). This would reconcile on the one hand, the need of FAO and its incoming Director General for rapid feedback, and on the other hand, the complexity of the topic and the need to approach certain questions in a collaborative manner (e.g. working with the Evaluation Offices of other UN agencies, which may take some time).
39. Part I will focus on answering part of EQ A (positioning) and EQ B (transformation) through document reviews, interviews and surveys of FAO staff and partners. Part II will revisit EQ A on positioning and EQ B on transforming, while attempting to answer EQ C (collaboration) through document review, interviews and surveys of external stakeholders, and an UN system wide research. Part II will also test hypothesis raised in both Parts I and II by using country case studies and summarizing evaluation findings in order to draw overall conclusions and recommendations with a view of guiding FAO's future work in support of SDG2.
40. The evaluation will use models and methods from the field of political science and social research to address the complexity and dynamism of the environment in which FAO's work in support of SDG2 is embedded. Moreover, since this evaluation will focus on learning and adapting, it will adopt an appreciative inquiry approach.⁴¹
41. Workshops with internal and external stakeholders, especially with the FAO Reference Group, will be conducted to validate the findings, enhance ownership of the evaluation process, and build a common understanding on what FAO is doing to deal with the new challenges posed by the 2030 Agenda.

6.2 Part I (September 2019-March 2020)

42. To answer EQ A (transformation), the evaluation team will need to understand the extent to which FAO is observing synergies and trade-offs between SDG2 and other SDGs targets. In this context, the evaluation team will need to map the SDG2 interconnections themselves. To do so, it will rely on i) scientific reviews (e.g. ICSU, 2015; ICS, 2017), ii) the 2019 Sustainable Development Report (to be presented at the SDG Summit 2019), and iii) on the preliminary material presented by the Interlinkages Working Group (IAEG-SDGs, 2019). The evaluation team will also work in partnership with members of the Independent Group of Scientists (IGS)⁴² through the Centre for Development and Environment of the University of Bern (CDE). This partnership will serve as an open channel for consultation with the scientists and allow the evaluation team access to scientific data on synergies and trade-offs produced by the IGS for the 2019 Sustainable Development Report. These and

⁴¹ "Appreciative Inquiry is about the co-evolutionary search for the best in people, their organizations, and the relevant world around them. In its broadest focus, it involves systematic discovery of what gives "life" to a living system when it is most alive, most effective, and most constructively capable in economic, ecological, and human terms. AI involves, in a central way, the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential." From: Cooperrider, D., & Whitney, D. (2005). *Appreciative inquiry: A positive revolution in change*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

⁴² Group of 15 scientists nominated by Member States and selected by the Secretary-General who are in charge of developing the 2019 Sustainable Development Report.

other sources will be summarized into a matrix, and the SDG2 and closely related targets from other SDGs ("SDG2+") will be graphically represented and further validated with the FAO Reference Group.

43. The evaluation will then assess the work done by FAO on "SDG2+" areas in order to understand how: i) it has evolved to address the underlying causes of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition; ii) it has progressed from a siloed to an interconnected approach; iii) it has provided countries with tailored support on SDG2 and related areas; iv) there are good practices that need to be replicated and/or gaps that need to be filled; and v) it has promoted/or it is likely to promote a "transformational change".
44. For the purpose of this evaluation, "transformational change" will be defined by the following parameters:⁴³
 - i. Relevance to global challenges (i.e. FAO's work in support of SDG2 addresses major developmental challenges).
 - ii. Depth of change (i.e. work that is comprehensive and promotes systemic changes; it addresses the root causes of social, environmental and economic inequalities; it observes synergies and trade-offs between SDG2 and other SDG targets).
 - iii. Scale of change (i.e. work that causes or it is likely to cause large-scale impact at national or global level; it promotes crosscutting impacts and has multiplier effects).
 - iv. Sustainability (i.e. work that produces or is likely to produce long term impacts, and observes synergies and trade-offs between social, economic and environmental sustainability).
45. The evaluation team will carry out a meta-evaluation of past evaluations conducted by OED⁴⁴ to aggregate findings on good practices and challenges. The five recent SO evaluations will be systematically exploited as they feature strong overlaps with SDG2. Time permitting, this meta-evaluation may also consider evaluations conducted by stakeholders that are performing similar work as FAO in relation to SDG2 (e.g. UN agencies, CGIAR, NGOs, academia, think tanks, governments and private sector).
46. In 2018, the FAO Office of the Inspector General (OIG) conducted an audit on FAO readiness to support the implementation of the agenda 2030, and the report⁴⁵ will be used as an institutional baseline against which recent development will be compared.
47. The evaluation team will also attempt to contrast past with present work in support of "SDG2+" targets. A number of key products and services relevant to SDG2+ and closely associated with FAO ("signature products") will be sampled and reviewed to assess how they contribute to "SDG2+", their potential for upscaling, and how FAO is showcasing, redesigning or reframing key corporate products and services to cope with the

⁴³ Although "transformational change" is a critical pillar of the 2030 Agenda – "Transforming our World", the Resolution A/RES/70/1 did not introduce an official definition. This list of parameters is inspired by the definitions proposed by the World Bank (2016) and by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (2016) in recent evaluations.

⁴⁴ Including synergies with the ongoing evaluations of FAO's Strategic Results Framework, FAO's work on statistics, and FAO's partnership with private sector strategy.

⁴⁵ AUD2718 - Assessment of FAO's SDG Readiness in Support of Countries in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. FAO / Office of the Inspector General, 2018.

requirements posed by the 2030 Agenda. A number of signature products will be sampled with the help of the FAO Reference Group, and could include:

- i. the Farmer Field Schools and their derivatives;
 - ii. integrated pest management;
 - iii. agroecology;
 - iv. control of transboundary diseases and pests;
 - v. support to nutrition-sensitive food systems and nutrition education;
 - vi. support to climate-smart agriculture;
 - vii. support to agricultural investment and value chains;
 - viii. conservation and use of genetic resources and biodiversity for food and agriculture;
 - ix. support to secure tenure of natural resources;
 - x. information on food security, commodities and markets; and
 - xi. policy and legal support.
48. The team will also interview and survey a variety of internal stakeholders (e.g. strategic programmes, technical divisions, regional and sub-regional offices, and country-offices) to understand how FAO has been preparing itself over the years to deliver coherent support to countries in achieving their “SDG2+” targets.
49. To assess the degree to which FAO is addressing countries’ demand on “SDG2+”, data from the Voluntary National Reviews, Regional Forums on SDGs, FAO Regional Conferences and annual reports from regional commissions will be analysed with a view of gauging demand from member countries. FAO’s reports and data sources (e.g. the Corporate Outcomes Assessments) will also be exploited. A questionnaire survey will be sent to all FAO staff to elicit some preliminary results and collect suggestions for the future.
50. The evaluation team could eliciting country demand through other means, for instance through informal consultations during the CFS session (October 2019), devoted to SDG2. More in-depth information on countries demand will also be collected during the country case studies, scheduled under Part II.
51. To analyse the data collected within the scope of EQ B on transformation, the evaluation will use techniques such as situational analysis⁴⁶ geared to capture evolutions and transformations within a changing environment.
52. Finally, to assess to what extent has FAO contributed to the design of the SDGs (EQ A1), the evaluation will undertake a historical analysis of SDGs using historical techniques.⁴⁷ Multiple sources will be accessed and compared for triangulation, e.g. review of scientific

⁴⁶ See: Clarke, Adele. 2003. Situational Analyses: Grounded Theory Mapping After the Postmodern Turn. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240761238_Situational_Analyses_Grounded_Theory_Mapping_After_the_Postmodern_Turn/download

⁴⁷ Heuristics (i.e. identification of relevant material and informants to be used as source of evidence through snow-ball sampling, to cover “both sides of the story”), criticism (i.e. critical review of evidence to attest authenticity, integrity and credibility; exhaustive process of contextualization and triangulation of claims), and synthesis and exposure (i.e. interpretation, conformation and consolidation of the results; conclusions with a certain degree of subjectivity).

literature, analysis of historical archives on the SDG negotiation process, and interviews with informants involved in the design and negotiations of the 2030 Agenda.

6.3 Part II (March-June 2020)

53. EQ A and EQ C, on “positioning” and “collaborating” respectively, will be approached in tandem during the second phase, as there are closely connected. The evaluation team will carry out a stakeholder analysis to map key stakeholders (e.g. development partners, private sector and civil society) that are working towards the same targets, and assess the existence (and quality) of relationships via interviews.
54. Surveys and interviews with external stakeholders at global, regional and country levels will also be conducted during Part II to triangulate information and validate findings. Additionally, the evaluation team will work in close collaboration with that of the ongoing evaluations of FAO's private sector partnership strategy and FAO's civil society partnership strategy.
55. The data collection on “positioning” and “collaborating” will be complemented with a UN system-wide research on support to SDG2, which will be undertaken in collaboration with seven UN agencies (i.e. IFAD, WFP, UNICEF, WHO, IOM and UNHCR).⁴⁸ This research ought to document i) the preparatory steps taken by UN agencies to address SDG2; and ii) the degree of involvement of each agency in SDG2-related activities, and in different regions.⁴⁹ To reduce potential bias, this comparative research will be carried out by a neutral and credible research institution with sound experience in this type of study. The methodological approach for the study will be further elaborated in collaboration with the participant agencies. This research will be conciliated with the work plans of the seven agencies and is expected to start in October 2019.
56. Over and beyond the research described above, the evaluation team will directly approach the Rome-Based Agencies WFP, IFAD and Bioversity with a view to compare their positioning with that of FAO and foster synergies.
57. To analyse the data collected within the scope of EQ A and EQ C, the evaluation will continue building on the situational analysis developed for Part I. This will provide the evaluation team with a theoretical model of testable hypothesis (equivalent to an open Theory of Change).
58. To test these hypotheses, the evaluation team will carry out several country case studies during Phase II. This would serve to explore in depth how countries are adapting to the SDG2 mandate, the level of demand on SDG2-related work, to what extent FAO's contributions are addressing countries' needs, and to test the degree of “transformational change” promoted by FAO's interventions (Box 2 above). Additionally, such case studies would provide the evaluation team with a more holistic and in-depth explanation on the

⁴⁸ To use objective criteria to decide which organizations should be considered for this exercise, the Team relied on two sources. First, the document produced by Dalberg in June 2017 to inform the UN Reform process, namely, the System-Wide Outline of the Functions and Capacities of the UN Development System⁴⁸. This report identified the following agencies as primarily contributing to SDG2: FAO, IFAD, WFP, UNICEF, UNIDO, IOM and UNHCR. Secondly, the Team examined which agencies are custodian or partner agencies for two or more SDG2 indicators and identified UNEP and WHO. (See: Dalberg Group, June 2017: System-wide outline of the functions and capacities of the UN development system - Consultant's report).

⁴⁹ This research could potentially help FAO and other UN agencies identify their comparative advantage relative to SDG2; it will not in itself assess comparative advantage.

social, political and behavioural questions surrounding the achievement of SDG2 in different regions, development contexts (e.g. HDI levels), and geographical conditions (e.g. islands vs. continents).

59. The selection of the case studies will prioritize countries with significant (if early) efforts towards SDG2, as a way to capture good practices that may deserve upscaling. However, it will also rely on purposeful sample strategies to avoid confirmation bias, and will consider the diversity of contexts (e.g. socio-economic, level of development, political scenarios). Countries benefiting from the Hand-in-Hand Initiative could also be considered in this sample.
60. The evaluation team will also visit FAO regional and sub-regional offices to gather relevant data on regional and sub-regional dimensions, and meet with regional stakeholders such as the UN regional economic commissions (who report on the SDGs) as well as regional groups such as the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, the European Union, etc.
61. To complete the SDG2 evaluation, the evaluation team will summarize findings from Parts I, and II, and draw overall conclusions. The situational analysis model would be combined with a scenario analysis (equivalent to an open theory of change), which would allow the evaluation team to provide informed-based recommendations to guide FAO's work in the years ahead.

6.4 Limitations

62. Given the breadth and complexity of the evaluation scope, some limitations are to be expected. As SDG2 is a relevant and contemporary topic, the evaluation team could potentially be overwhelmed with information and find it challenging to keep track of, and process, all the data produced on a regular basis, especially considering that the Organization is adapting itself to the 2030 Agenda and data collected can become obsolete within a short time. It will be therefore necessary to keep the exploration of external initiatives and organizations to a bare minimum necessary to answer the evaluation questions. Even the exploration of FAO's own work under SDG2 cannot be exhaustive.
63. Even by applying purposeful sampling strategies, the evaluation team will not be able to test its hypotheses in a representative sample of countries, due to time and resource constraints. It is thus proposed to gear the country case studies towards collecting positive experiences and showcasing good practices for upscaling, a focus which is appropriate for a formative evaluation. Countries where the experiences are not positive or the results are still preliminary will be covered through other methods (e.g. phone interviews and surveys).
64. Given the very large number of partners involved in defining, adapting, realizing and monitoring the SDGs, this evaluation will not be in a position to clearly attribute to FAO any of the results and impacts observed at country level. These Terms of Reference deliberately use the term "contribution" instead.
65. Given the complexity involved in joint evaluations, the UN system-wide research might take more time than expected to be finalized. In this context, the evaluation team might not be able to benefit from all the results produced by this research.
66. A challenge for this evaluation will be to think simultaneously in a deep focused way on each SDG2 targets while seeing their interconnections as part of wider system, and to maintain a productive tension between highly specialized technical analyses and system-

wide, lateral thinking. The idea is to approach this problem by first mapping trade-offs and synergies within the SDG agenda, and then identifying a set of targets that makes sense to evaluate together (so-called "SDG2+"). However, it will not be possible to explore *all* the interconnections between SDG2 and other SDG targets within the scope and timeframe of this evaluation. The evaluation team will need to be selective and focus the most relevant ones in collaboration with CDE and in consultation with the FAO Reference Group.

7. Management arrangements and evaluation team

67. OED evaluation team: Olivier Cossée, Evaluation Manager; Veridiana Mansour Mendes, Associate Evaluation Manager; Sara Holst, Evaluator; Olive Zgambo, Evaluation Analyst.
68. External Consultants: OED will hire a team of independent consultants to procure high-level expertise in the following broad domains:
- i. Social development and gender.
 - ii. Environmental sustainability and planetary boundaries.
 - iii. Food and nutrition security.
 - iv. Agribusiness, food systems and food trade.
 - v. Agricultural research, extension, innovation in agriculture.
 - vi. Political economy of global development agendas.
69. UN system-wide research: to conduct this research, OED will attempt to partner with the evaluation offices of other UN agencies working on SDG2. Details of the proposal will be developed in collaboration with the UN agencies involved. It is envisaged to contract a suitable research institution to carry out this work in full independence.
70. FAO Reference Group: given that the entire Organization is contributing or expected to contribute to SDG2, a Reference Group composed of senior management representing the following departments will be formed with: Office of the Director-General, Deputy-Director General-Climate and Natural Resources, Deputy-Director General Operations, Deputy-Director General Programmes, Economic and Social Development Department, and Office of Strategy, Planning and Resources Management. This group will be consulted throughout the evaluation process. Among others, it would be asked to provide comments on the draft evaluation report, and would draft the management response.

8. Timeline

	2019												2020				
Preparatory phase	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	
Conceptualization	■	■															
Evaluability Assessment			■	■	■	■											
TORs development						■	■										
	2019												2020				
Part 1	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	
Recruitment							■	■	■								
Evaluation matrix										■							
Data collection										■	■	■					
Data analysis													■	■			
Draft report															■	■	
Final report																■	■
PC presentation																	■
	2019					2020											
Part 2	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct			
Joint research																	
Research design		■	■														
Recruitment				■													
Data collection					■	■	■	■	■								
Data analysis								■	■	■							
Joint research report											■						
FAO evaluation																	
Recruitment			■	■													
Data collection					■	■	■										
Country case-studies							■	■	■	■							
Data analysis										■	■	■					
Draft report												■					
Final report													■				
PC presentation														■			

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