we expanded our collaboration with evaluation communities in partner organizations and in the regions and countries. We also accelerated capacity development of national evaluation partners through the community of practice.

This document provides a summary of findings from evaluations that are most recently completed in 2020, and lists of evaluations that are on-going and planned. They are categorized as (1) corporate thematic evaluations, (2) project/programme evaluations, (3) emergency and resilience evaluations, (4) country programme evaluations.

Evaluations at FAO promote deeper understandings of how FAO has made the progress towards its organizational goals and contributed to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the global, regional and country levels, analysing what worked, what did not work and why. Our evaluations thereby provide Members and FAO Management an objective basis for their decisions at policy and operational levels.

With the Agenda 2030, our evaluations are increasingly situating FAO contributions in broader multi-partner efforts towards the achievement of SDGs. To more effectively capture this aspect,
1. Corporate thematic evaluations

Corporate thematic evaluations cover the work of the Organization on a specific policy, topic or area of work at global, regional and country level. They are conducted to assess FAO’s contributions to the achievement of its strategic objectives.

Evaluation of FAO’s statistical work

Statistics remain core to FAO’s overall work. Members demand for data to support SDG indicator implementation and the use of statistics in policy-making has increased. FAO’s profile has been raised through its methodological work on the SDG indicators and outreach work on national standards. However, gaps in internal governance, data quality and capacity development need urgent remedial actions. The recommendations included the need for long-term investment in coherent and coordinated governance, production and dissemination of modernized quality statistics, and better use of resources within a sustainable capacity development framework.

Evaluation of the FAO Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations

The Strategy for Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations, endorsed in 2013, has reiterated FAO’s commitment for collaboration with civil society organizations. Since then, FAO has further promoted civil society’s active participation in global policy discussions, regional and national consultations, and international forums, resulting in several formal partnerships agreements being signed. While this is commendable, FAO has not effectively integrated partnership development activities within its programs and workplans. Most partnership initiatives, particularly at the country level, are not focused on long-term relationship building, and are limited in scope and magnitude, due to limited planning, lack of appropriate knowledge management and guidance. FAO should take necessary steps to identify and map potential partners, seek establishment of multi-stakeholder collaboration, and enhance strategy implementation by establishing robust monitoring and knowledge management system, and streamlining relevant approaches and procedures for collaboration.

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

FAO is well positioned at the global level to offer relevant support to countries in achieving their SDG 2 targets and is committed to support the SDGs, a Global Agenda that it helped design. The new FAO’s Strategic Framework will provide an opportunity to promote and communicate FAO’s role in a coherent and joined-up manner, aligned with the 2030 Agenda. FAO has engaged with the current UN reform – strongly connected to the SDGs – with a very collaborative attitude. At the country level, which was the focus of the second phase of this evaluation, FAO’s position was found to be generally weaker due to its limited programmatic footprint. Nevertheless, a number of initiatives were “acting at scale” and producing results. Entry points to act at scale include support to develop laws and policies, to instigate agriculture trade and investment, to induce climate finance or South-South cooperation, and to education, both formal and informal. The depth and breadth of partnerships are generally increasing, but more partnerships with the private sector and mobilization of domestic resources would needed to make a serious impact on food systems.

Evaluation of Technical Cooperation Programme

The Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) was created in 1979 to enable the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to draw on regular programme resources to respond to countries’ most pressing needs for technical assistance. The overall TCP appropriation has ranged from 11.5 percent to 14 percent of FAO’s regular programme budget over the last four biennia (from 2012–13 to 2018–19). The TCP is a crucial instrument for FAO’s
positioning, visibility and operations in Member countries. However, certain projects are small and isolated, so they struggle to have a sizeable development impact. TCP needs to be modernized and repositioned to ensure that more TCP projects have catalytic and sustainable effects. FAO should transform the TCP into a more strategic, facilitative instrument that provides Members with technical assistance to achieve the 2030 Agenda. The TCP criteria should also include a requirement that projects be aligned with and contribute to specific SDG targets and/or indicators. At the same time, the TCP should remain country focused and demand driven to ensure tangible benefits for Members.

Regional synthesis of past evaluations

The Programme Committee, at its 125th Session, expressly invited OED to submit to the FAO Regional Conferences in 2020 a synthesis of regional lessons learned and trends identified in OED evaluation for each region. These regional syntheses covered all categories of evaluations that OED managed and completed between 2014 and 2019, and identified lessons and issues so as to enable more informed discussions at the Regional Conferences. The links to each regional report can be found below.

UPCOMING CORPORATE THEMATIC EVALUATIONS IN 2021-2022

- Evaluation of FAO’s support to Climate Action
- Evaluation of FAO’s role and work on Antimicrobial Resistance
- Evaluation of FAO’s COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme
- Joint evaluation on collaboration among the Rome-based Agencies
- Evaluation of FAO’s Support to Clean Water and Sanitation
- Evaluation of FAO’s south-south cooperation
- Evaluation of FAO’s support to life on land
- Evaluation of FAO’s support to life below water

In order to support the longer-term process of policy reform and policy implementation to which FIRST has been contributing and building on the trust gained with country partners and stakeholders, the development of a follow-up phase is recommended. This would also allow the global management team to consolidate lessons learned with the view to inform global governance processes.

Global level

**Food and Nutrition Security, Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation (FIRST) Programme**

The FIRST programme supports the governments of targeted countries to strengthen the enabling policy and institutional environment for Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) is unique in its design. The FIRST approach of embedding a Policy Officer within partner country administrations constitutes a valid option for building trusted relationships to support improved policy processes. In fact, FIRST has created a high level of trust with government partners and other key stakeholders, acting as a catalyst, lever and trigger for changes and reforms that generate benefits beyond the scope of EU/FAO interventions in the concerned countries. In addition, FIRST’s approach to capacity strengthening through learning-by-doing/mentoring has proved to be effective.

**Capacity Development for Agricultural Innovation Systems (CDAIS)**

“Capacity development for agricultural innovation systems”, implemented by FAO and Agrinatura from 2015 to 2019, supported the Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP) to improve the global coherence of capacity development for agricultural innovation. The project contributed to developing a common framework for a practical approach, and piloted its application across eight countries. The approach is based on developing and strengthening soft skills and the importance of processes, as opposed to the mainstream paradigm based on developing technology.
and hard technical skills. This approach was found to be relevant to most of the 40 TAP Members by helping to improve the coherence and impact of their capacity development activities. The common framework has strong potential for adoption beyond TAP members. However, it is important for future similar interventions to work on both functional and technical capacities concurrently.

**FAO’s contribution to the Pastoralist Knowledge Hub**

The Pastoralist Knowledge Hub (PKH), hosted by FAO, brings together pastoralists and the main actors of the sector to foster dialogue and develop policies at the national and global level. FAO supported the hub in advocacy and policy matters and provided technical support to pastoralists livelihood and resilience. The objective of the evaluation was to assess the extent to which the PKH has enhanced the capacity of pastoralist organizations to participate in and contribute effectively to decision-making. The evaluation found the PKH successful in setting up regional pastoralist alliances worldwide, particularly including women and youth. However, there is strong consensus among stakeholders that the hub’s structure and implementation should be reviewed. Particularly regarding engagement with pastoralist civil society and raising the quality of standards when engaging with pastoralism-related knowledge (e.g. identification, analysis, organization, dissemination). The addition of a permanent scientific advisory board is key to maintaining these standards.

**Strengthening global capacity to effectively manage areas beyond national jurisdiction**

The marine areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) comprises 40 percent of the earth’s surface, it covers 64 percent of the surface of the ocean and 95 percent of its volume. The Common Oceans ABNJ Program (2014-2019) was implemented by FAO as a concerted effort to bring various stakeholders to work together to manage and conserve the world’s common oceans. The project “Strengthening global capacity to effectively manage ABNJ”, one component of the Common Oceans ABNJ Program, addressed cross-sectoral coordination and dialogue among the separate ongoing processes - a key gap that limited effective ecosystem-based management of ABNJ. The project supported participation and knowledge sharing amongst decision makers in cross-sectoral governance of ABNJ. Limitations to the project design, budget and accountability should be addressed to foster corrective action for phase two of the ABNJ Program.

Other components of the Common Oceans ABNJ Program part of the “Global sustainable fisheries management and biodiversity conservation in ABNJ” evaluated:

- **Program Coordination**
- **Deep-Sea project**
- **Tuna project**

**Decision support for mainstreaming and scaling up of sustainable land management**

Land degradation reduces food productivity and security, disrupts vital ecosystem functions and increases carbon emissions and vulnerability to climate change. Current estimates and studies point to 52 percent of agricultural land already being affected, with 1.5 billion people around the world being directly affected. Despite the seriousness of the issue, there is still limited access to resources and planning tools for sustainable land management. Between 2015 and 2019, FAO implemented the project “Decision support for mainstreaming and scaling up of sustainable land management (DS-SLM)” at a global level across 15 countries. The aim of the project was to improve access to information on land management best practices. The final evaluation examined the impacts and sustainability of the project results. What has contributed to, or hindered, the implementation of the planned activities? What has been the effect of linkages and partnerships between the project and other major country initiatives?
Regional/national level

Africa

Contribution to the Smallholder Commercialisation Programme and to the Global Agriculture and Food Security Programme in Sierra Leone

The Smallholder Commercialization Program in Sierra Leone aims to empower rural communities to increase their food security and income on a sustainable basis. The evaluation covered FAO’s contribution to the programme between 2012 and 2018. FAO’s contribution focused on intensifying production through the implementation of Farmer Field Schools (FFSs), improving commercialisation by supporting Agricultural Business Centres (ABCs) and enhancing technical capacity of district agricultural offices and the programme management unit at central level. Knowledge was successfully transferred to farmers and national ownership of the FFS approach is strong. Whilst the ABCs model is highly relevant to the Sierra Leone context and has proven to be effective, support is still required in order for it to become sustainable. In particular, there is a need to further strengthen their governance structure and marketing and business approach, and to increase their access to financial services. The model of combined support to ABCs, FFSs and Farmer-Based Organisations (FBOs) has been recognized as effective and adopted by other development partners.

Pursuing pastoralist resilience through improved animal health service delivery in pastoralist areas of Ethiopia

Small ruminants are the main source of livelihood for rural agropastoralists in Ethiopia. Transboundary animal diseases (TADs) are a significant cause of reduced production and productivity. TADs like Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR), Sheep and Goat Pox (SGP) and Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia (CCPP) have contributed to a high level of sheep and goat mortality, especially in lambs and kids. The project, implemented by FAO between 2014 and 2020, was designed to support the strengthening of the surveillance system for most TADs. It had a primary focus to implement a progressive control programme for Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR). The evaluation found that the project has advanced PPR control and eradication and that the country has the capability to continue this momentum for the greater ambition of eradicating PPR across Ethiopia by 2027. To ensure the sustainability of future projects, challenges must be overcome relating to government strategy, coordination and resources.

Partnership for sustainable rice systems development in sub-Saharan Africa

Rice consumption in Africa has increased dramatically over recent decades, growing faster than consumption of any other major staple on the continent. However, apart from Egypt, no African country is currently self-sufficient in terms of rice consumption. From May 2014 to December 2019, FAO helped to develop sustainable and productive rice systems in ten beneficiary countries: Benin, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda. South-South Cooperation was demonstrated to be an excellent mechanism for pooling resources and efforts in innovation and development processes. Sharing knowledge with decision makers and political consultation at the highest level was useful to reaffirm and update policies strategies and intervention priorities, and to mobilize partners from a large number of countries. Several producers, producer groups and communities successfully moved from subsistence farming to commercial farming by increasing production, reducing post-harvest losses and improving quality of rice.
OTHER COMPLETED PROJECT EVALUATIONS

- Demonstration project for the decontamination of Persistent Organic Pesticides contaminated soils using non-thermal treatment methods
- Prevention and Disposal of Persistent Organic Pollutants and Obsolete Pesticides in Eritrea – Phase II
- Disposal of persistent organic pollutants and obsolete pesticides in Mozambique
- “Strengthening institutionalized subnational coordination structures and harmonization mechanisms” in Ethiopia
- Cluster evaluation of “Establishing a hunger-free initiative for West Africa” and “Mainstreaming nutrition in CAADP and agriculture policies and programmes in sub-Saharan Africa”
- Sustainable Management of Wildlife and the Bushmeat Sector in Central Africa
- Protection of the Canary Current Large Marine Ecosystem (CCLME)

Asia and Pacific

Asia Regional Integrated Pest Management and Pesticide Risk Reduction Programme in the Greater Mekong Subregion

Global chemical sales are predicted to grow by about 3 percent per year until 2050, the major part of which will take place in Asia. Many countries in Southeast Asia lack the capacity to handle chemicals management and are in great need to develop institutions, legislation, knowledge and awareness around the issues. Pesticide governance with a focus on pesticide risk reduction is a national and regional priority now within the Greater Mekong Sub-region countries. It however demands highly qualified staff, regular upgrade of scientific, technical know-how and, if possible, analytical capacities and facilities. The programme “Towards a Non-Toxic Environment in South-East Asia” was timely, and needs- oriented. Most of the trained farmers use less hazardous pesticides and biological control methods.

The momentum gained through the current programme for phasing out highly hazardous pesticides needs to be maintained in order to achieve the larger goals of poverty alleviation, gender equality and environmentally sound production methods and to develop resilience for climate change adaptation.

Enhancing Agriculture Production through Irrigation System Improvement and Strengthening Institutional Capacity

Rice and potatoes are Afghanistan’s two most staple crops after wheat, and their production is dependent on water irrigation canals. Most of Afghanistan’s irrigation infrastructure is in disrepair, leaving farmers vulnerable. Between 2016 and 2018, FAO in Afghanistan (FAOAF) and the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL) rehabilitated irrigation infrastructure and laid the foundations of a virus-free potato seed industry in three provinces (Kunduz, Baghlan and Takhar). The project enhanced food production and contributed to the Government’s agricultural development and food security objectives. The evaluation recommends that future irrigation rehabilitation includes training to demonstrate improved cropping practices to help farmers build their resilience to external shocks. Training of potato farmers and enterprises involved in the industry will help determine the sustainability of the industry beyond the end of the project.

Reducing vulnerability and increasing adaptive capacity to respond to impacts of climate change and variability for sustainable livelihoods in agriculture sector in Nepal

Nepal’s agriculture sector faces many climate related hazards including floods, draught, pests and diseases, deforestation and desertification. Improved farming techniques based on resilience to climate change and extreme weather patterns are required to be integrated into agriculture sectorial policies, plans, programmes and local actions. Between October 2015 and September 2019, FAO implemented a project to support Nepal’s agriculture sector by promoting urgent and immediate adaptation measures outlined in the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA). The project has contributed to the incorporation of climate change adaptation in relevant
institutional structures in Nepal, awareness and knowledge management in project districts, and the economic and social empowerment of the most vulnerable Farmer Field School group members, specifically the women. However, a robust agriculture sector support mechanism will be required to sustain the impact in future.

OTHER COMPLETED PROJECT EVALUATIONS

- “Improving farmer livelihoods in the dry zone through improved livestock health, productivity and marketing” in Myanmar
- Mainstreaming biodiversity conservation, sustainable forest management and carbon sink enhancement into Mongolia’s productive forest landscapes

Latin America and the Caribbean

Final evaluation of the project for the promotion of biomass-derived energy (PROBIOMASA)

According to data from the National Energy Balance in 2008, 90 percent of the total supply of energy in Argentina came from fossil fuels resulting in negative environmental impact as a consequence of the polluting emissions of greenhouse gases. The project aimed to address the increase in the consumption of liquid fossil fuels for the production of electricity. The project for the promotion of biomass-derived energy (PROBIOMASA) seeks to increase the supply of renewable and competitive energy, through the production of biomass-derived energy at the local level. PROBIOMASA increased the contribution of bioenergy in the national and local energy matrix. However, the costs of biomass-derived energy generation are high compared to other renewable energies, and the competitive advantage of bioenergy lies in the positive externalities it generates. Such benefits should be more integrated in the design of future projects.

OTHER COMPLETED PROJECT EVALUATIONS

- “Promotion of sustainable land management” in Mexico
- Improving forest and protected area management in Trinidad and Tobago
- “Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, forests, soil and water to achieve Good Living/Sumak Kawsay in the Napo Province (FSP)” in Ecuador
- Strengthening national policy and knowledge framework in support of sustainable management of Brazil’s forest resources
Review of the emergency response to the surge declaration in Yemen

Yemen is now home to the world’s worst humanitarian crisis with half of its population faces severe acute food insecurity despite ongoing humanitarian food assistance. To meet the demands for active learning, OED conducted a review of the FAO Yemen corporate surge response systems, structure, strategy and delivery. The review concluded that FAO has succeeded in supporting a significant number of beneficiaries with a wide range of projects. The operational capacity could be improved by improving local staff management and development, in-country cash-based programming, and leveraging the knowledge of implementing partners in project design, targeting and monitoring. FAO needs to expand its footprint into the various sub-offices to take advantage of further localise its response. The review suggests to instigate strategic investments to boost and improve the response in Yemen, such as; improving the project planning and procurement capacity; increasing the capacity and inclusivity of implementing partners and beneficiaries in programme design and monitoring; and, improving strategic communications, evidence-based reporting and outcome monitoring.

Real-Time Evaluation of FAO’s Response to Desert Locust Upsurge (three phases)

The desert locust poses an unprecedented risk to livelihoods and food security in already fragile regions. An estimated 20.2 million people are now facing severe acute food insecurity in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. FAO has mobilized more than USD 120 million to respond to the most devastating desert locust infestation of the past 25 years. FAO’s response includes three key pillars: (1) curbing the spread of desert locusts (including surveillance) (2) safeguarding livelihoods and promoting recovery and (3) coordination and preparedness of the rapid surge support. OED has been requested to conduct a real time evaluation that will take place in three phases over a year. The real-time evaluation (RTE) will cover all activities falling under the Global Response Plan (GRP) January 2020-2021 and preparatory activities carried out by FAO bodies and Regional Commissions in the Middle East and Horn of Africa. Phase 1 (ending in October 2020) resulted in a synthesis of results so far and recommendations for adaptation moving forward. Phase 2 and 3 will carry on until June 2021.
When you talk about basic human rights it is “Food and agriculture is a basic human right. When you talk about basic human rights it is essential to have peace.” FAO DG, Qu Dongyu

The HDP nexus or “triple nexus” refers to the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace actions and actors, necessary for sustainable development. In his remarks to the General Assembly in December 2016, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres named ‘sustaining peace’ as a pillar of sustainable development along with humanitarian response and development. These transformations are particularly relevant to FAO which, as a dual mandate agency, finds itself uniquely positioned in relation to the HDP nexus. FAO has a long history of working on issues that address humanitarian relief and development, and through its work on resilience, it has aimed to have a long-term impact on vulnerable populations and their ability to recover from disasters and crises as well as to prevent them. This strategic, high-level, formative and learning oriented evaluation, will focus on two main purposes: i) review how FAO has, and is currently, addressing the humanitarian-development nexus and implicitly or explicitly engaging with the conflict/peace dimension of the triple nexus, including how this can be strengthened; ii) provide methodological guidance for evaluating HDP nexus ways of working that can be used in subsequent evaluations.

“Food and agriculture is a basic human right. When you talk about basic human rights it is essential to have peace.” FAO DG, Qu Dongyu

Support to the implementation of the Amazon ecosystem-based conservation vision to the benefit of local communities and the preservation of ecosystem services in the Amazon region

The Amazon biome is the largest tropical ecosystem in the world, covering 6 percent of the surface of the planet. It is home to 34 million people, 10 percent of the world’s biodiversity, and plays a vital role in regulating the global climate. To support the community of park directors of the Amazon’s protected areas (REDPARQUES) and to ensure their effective and collaborative protection, between 2014 and mid-2019, FAO implemented the ‘Integration of the Areas Protected from the Amazon Biome’ (IAPA) project. The IAPA project contributed significantly to protect local and indigenous communities and their livelihoods, preserving the biodiversity of the Amazon biome, supporting management of the ecosystem, and strengthening regional integration of protected areas. Future projects should continue its efforts to influence the conservation policies at the government level, with emphasis on the integration of indigenous populations and women in project development, and carry out an integrated approach between protected area management, sustainable agriculture and agrobiodiversity.

Cluster evaluation of land reclamation projects in Colombia

The two projects “Strengthening of the processes of restitution of lands and territories” and “Resilient rural communities for the construction of peace” were able to support the Colombian State in integrating more than 3,000 families from 23 ethnic groups in the process of restitution of their territories. The application of the “rapid recovery of agricultural

Reducing the vulnerability of agricultural livelihoods through the Caisses de Résilience approach in the Sahel

The overall objective of the project was to improve the food and nutritional security of vulnerable populations in Burkina Faso and Mali by strengthening the resilience of their livelihoods in the face of climatic hazards. The project contributed to improving the food and nutritional security of the vulnerable populations targeted. Households were trained on agro-sylvo-pastoral practices that are resilient to climate change through the farmer field school (FFS) approach, which has shown its effectiveness in the transfer of knowledge. Thanks to the establishment of Village Savings and Credit Associations (VSLAs), several households have been able to access credit to finance income-generating activities and the VSLA solidarity fund has helped to strengthen the social cohesion of the group. The evaluation found an insufficient analysis of gender and socio-cultural sensitivities which had negative consequences on the participation of women in project activities.
production” model, local productive integration networks and pilot projects for transition to development were decisive in improving the livelihoods of the beneficiary communities. Improved communication between state institutions also contributed to the project’s achievements, as well as the establishment of more peaceful territories with less poverty. In order to continue strengthening the permanent mechanisms for managing this repair, the evaluation recommends that the future project apply innovative and reproducible models to achieve the planned rural transformation; integrate a monitoring and evaluation system of local actors and organizations as a communication and learning tool; continue the good practice of the gender approach established in both projects and expand training initiatives.

Video: FAO’s response to the El-Nino induced drought in Zimbabwe, The farmers’ perspective

To respond to the strongest El Niño events in 50 years crisis in Southern Africa, FAO activated a corporate surge to support affected governments and help them restore agricultural production, incomes and assets, and increase household access to nutritious food. This video showcases the experiences of farmers in Zimbabwe, providing their perspectives through lessons that can be useful to other farmers, and translated into improved strategic and programmatic approaches on the part of decision-makers, resource partners and implementing agencies.

OTHER COMPLETED EMERGENCY AND RESILIENCE EVALUATIONS

- Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey
- The Lake Chad Basin Strategy
- Information on Nutrition, Food Security and Resilience for Decision Making (INFORMED)
- “Intensifying resilience to climate change through integrated agricultural and pastoral management in the Sahel region as part of Mali’s sustainable land management approach” (French original)
- Adaptive management and monitoring of the Maghreb’s oases systems
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by promoting community forestry, removing barriers to sustainable biomass energy, and laying the groundwork for climate change mitigation in Afghanistan

UPCOMING EMERGENCY AND RESILIENCE EVALUATIONS IN 2021/2022

- FAO’s work with the Peace Building Fund
- Pro-Resilience Action (ProAct) country investment projects and the Global Network Programme
- FAO response to the Cyclone Idai in Mozambique
- FAO cash transfer and cash-plus programmes
- FAO’s work on forced migration

JOINT WORK

Evaluation of the joint programme “Accelerate Progress towards Millennium Development Goal 1C in Mozambique”

FAO, IFAD and WFP co-managed the final evaluation of the joint programme “Accelerate Progress towards Millennium Development Goal 1C in Mozambique” in partnership with the European Union Delegation in Maputo, Mozambique. The evaluation ensured a participatory process. In addition to having a management group, it counted on a reference group formed by the programme task force and national counterparts. This was fundamental to address the challenges arisen from this exercise and to cope with the delays caused by the cyclones Idai and Kenneth in an ethical manner. As a result of this joint and
The COVID-19 pandemic has forced all development and humanitarian actors to reschedule their plans and reprioritize their programme activities. Accordingly, our evaluations went through a reprioritization process. OED also joined hands with evaluation functions in other agencies to produce quick knowledge products, and are engaging in the process to produce evaluative evidences on newly-designed response plans and programmes. These efforts are expected to bear fruits mostly in 2021. Building on the collaboration with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), OED has contributed to the work of the COVID-19 Global Evaluation Coalition, which is made up of the evaluation units of national government agencies, UN organisations and multilateral institutions. The Coalition aims at providing credible evidence to inform international cooperation supporting non-clinical responses to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic in developing countries, thus helping to ensure lessons are learned and the global development community delivers on its promises. OED, together with the evaluation offices of the Rome-based Agencies and interested OECD-DAC Members, contributed to the development of a lessons note on “Responding to food security during COVID-19”, which was presented at a meeting of Development Cooperation Ministers held in June 2020.

**COVID-19 Response and Recovery Programme**

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced all development and humanitarian actors to reschedule their plans and reprioritize their programme activities. Accordingly, our evaluations went through a reprioritization process. OED also joined hands with evaluation functions in other agencies to produce quick knowledge products, and are engaging in the process to produce evaluative evidences on newly-designed response plans and programmes. These efforts are expected to bear fruits mostly in 2021. Building on the collaboration with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), OED has contributed to the work of the COVID-19 Global Evaluation Coalition, which is made up of the evaluation units of national government agencies, UN organisations and multilateral institutions. The Coalition aims at providing credible evidence to inform international cooperation supporting non-clinical responses to and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic in developing countries, thus helping to ensure lessons are learned and the global development community delivers on its promises. OED, together with the evaluation offices of the Rome-based Agencies and interested OECD-DAC Members, contributed to the development of a lessons note on “Responding to food security during COVID-19”, which was presented at a meeting of Development Cooperation Ministers held in June 2020.

**Inter-agency Humanitarian Evaluations (IAHE)**

FAO is a strategic partner of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination of humanitarian assistance. The FAO Office of Evaluation actively engages in the management of the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations (IAHE). Below are the latest published.

**Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the Response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique**

Mozambique was already facing high levels of food insecurity due to drought when the cyclone struck. Many communities that suffered severe flooding during 2007 were also heavily impacted by Cyclone Idai in 2019. This Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation (IAHE) offers an independent assessment of the collective humanitarian response to Cyclone Idai in Mozambique in 2019. It is the first to assess the contribution of the new Scale-Up activation mechanism since its adoption by the IASC in 2018 and suggest further improvements to this important IASC tool. It is only the second IAHE that utilizes a representative survey of affected populations. It thus provides invaluable insight into the humanitarian response from the perspective of affected populations.

**Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation of the drought response in Ethiopia 2015-2018**

In its well-coordinated efforts, supported by strong government leadership, the collective humanitarian drought response in Ethiopia saved many lives. It found that a majority of respondents received the aid they urgently needed to survive and felt treated with respect. People in four affected regions reported that the assistance provided enabled them to keep their homes and assets. The cluster system introduced in 2015 effectively strengthened the coordination efforts and collective resource mobilization was successful in many aspects. Areas requiring improvement include strengthening of early action, prioritizing resilience support and accountability to affected people. The evaluation identifies lessons to improve future responses to droughts in Ethiopia and similar crises. Its lessons are informing ongoing IASC work streams on resilience, risk, anticipatory action and humanitarian-development collaboration, while also helping local responders make targeted improvements to the ongoing response.

**LESSONS FROM EVALUATIONS**

**Issue 2: Gender Equality in Education**

As the FAO Director General said to world leaders, we all need to take measures to ensure access to food for the world’s poor and most vulnerable during the COVID-19 pandemic, and in particular “we have to ensure that food value chains are not disrupted and continue to function well and promote the production and availability of diversified, safe and nutritious food for all”.

**COVID-19 Global Evaluation Coalition**
4. Country Programme Evaluations

Country Programme Evaluations (CPEs) aim to identify lessons learned and provide recommendations on how FAO programmes can be better oriented at country level, to make them more relevant to the needs of the country and to strengthen the impact of the organizational efforts towards the achievement of the Members’ global goals. Usually, CPE’s are carried out in the last year of the Country Programming Framework (CPF) providing recommendations to strengthen FAO’s strategic relevance in the country to optimize the use of evaluation results in the next planning cycle.

Map of countries where CPEs were conducted

Evaluation of FAO’s country programme in Lebanon 2016-2019

Lebanon is an upper-middle income country with a population of 4.5 million people. The agriculture sector in Lebanon is an important contributor to the livelihood of poor and vulnerable populations, including 1.5 million Syrian refugees hosted in the country. FAO prudently integrated the donor and the government priority by designing the resilience programme to support host communities, with emphasis on vulnerable farmers. FAO’s resilience programme addressed both emergency and longer term development needs through interventions directly supporting small-scale farmers and agro-food cooperatives, community-based subsector planning, natural resource management and capacity development at different levels. In the context of the recent financial crisis and renewed interest in agriculture under the United Nations-World Bank Partnership Compact, the Evaluation recommends that FAO should assist the Government of Lebanon in undertaking the needed transformation of agriculture to a more productive and job-creating sector. Priority actions include: developing a sector strategy towards sustainable and productive agriculture sector; putting in place economic incentives in value chains; building human capital; and supporting sustainable and productive resource use.

Evaluation of FAO’s country programme in Ethiopia 2014-2019

Ethiopia is a low-income country and agriculture is the mainstay of the economy, accounting for 34 percent of GDP and 70 percent of total employment share. Ethiopia remains one of the world’s poorest countries, despite the significant progress achieved in reducing poverty and hunger. The government of Ethiopia through its Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP II) has consistently prioritized...
Overall, FAO’s programme displays several imbalances and disconnects, specifically between development activities and emergency response. The evaluation calls for FAO to adopt a more cohesive programmatic approach and continue to consolidate its fragmented programme. In the context of the Government’s plans for agricultural transformation, the evaluation also recommends that FAO support an economically sound value chain and market-based approach to agricultural development, while upholding normative values of inclusiveness and ecological sustainability.

**Evaluation of FAO’s contribution to the Syrian Arab Republic 2012-2018**

The Syrian crisis has caused intense and sustained levels of violence in the country, with large-scale destruction of agricultural infrastructure and disruption of all components of the food system. A total of 9.3 million people in the country are facing severe acute food insecurity. During the period subject to evaluation (2012-2018), FAO interventions targeted displaced and hosting households affected by the conflict across the country. Activities were initially carried out in Government controlled areas and subsequently conducted through cross-border operations as part of the Whole of Syria (WoS) approach. Despite adverse conditions, FAO staff were able to create a portfolio of context-relevant activities offering concrete opportunities for stable sources of income, as well as support relating to the management of natural resources, land tenure, value chains and livelihoods. Coordination with the directorates of agriculture and civil society organisations, including Syrian NGOs and Water Users Associations, played an effective role in the delivery of assistance. However, the organisation’s emergency response could have been more effective by more properly considering the regional dimension of the crisis, improved targeting, and prioritization, including coordination of activities across agencies. FAO leadership should continue focusing on and restoring rural livelihoods while promoting good governance of the natural resources and environment.

**Evaluation of FAO’s country programme in Armenia 2016-2020**

Armenia’s agriculture represents the main economic source in rural areas and significantly contributes to the country’s GDP, employing about 30 percent of the working population. Aligned with Armenia’s national development priorities, FAO’s programme has been well aligned with national priorities focusing on provision of highly specialized technical expertise towards the development of national policies, institutions, and also offering innovative approaches and solutions. The evaluation concluded that FAO should continue offering its advisory services and technical support in thematic areas within its competence, focusing on longer term sustainability of results achieved and taking into consideration vulnerability of food and agriculture systems to climate change. The Country Office needs to expand its support in areas where FAO has clear comparative advantages, and respond to the new demands in the context of the upcoming United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Guidance (UNSDCF) for the period 2021-2025.

**Evaluation of FAO’s country programme in the Republic of Indonesia 2016-2020**

Indonesia is the largest archipelago and the fourth most populated country in the world, its fast-growing economy is seeing rapid economic decentralization and urbanization, leading to challenging trade-offs. Investments in the food and agriculture sector are by local authorities, state-owned enterprises and the private sector. FAO needs to forge inclusive partnerships to further expand the breadth and depth of its impact. Both FAO and the Government need to develop preventive and resilience-building actions based on early risk identification. Modernizing Indonesia’s food value-chains, especially for small-scale producers, requires business acumen, competitive products, market research, and distribution channels. FAO should incorporate profitability, scalability and sustainability into value-chain projects. The Food Law laid the foundation for an inclusive and sustainable food-system that transcends institutional boundaries and
calls for comprehensive policy reform, and institutional change. FAO needs to support these transformative changes, and focus on generating evidence and filling data gaps to better support decision-makers and guide national policy, institutional and investment reforms.

**Evaluation of the Sub-regional Office for the North Africa (SNE)**

The assessment of the role and work of the Subregional Office for North Africa (SNE) responds to a request from its Coordinator, in a context of constant developments at the subregional and institutional level, to lead a collective

reflection on the positioning of the SNE and on the adequacy of its organizational processes. The analysis is based on a staff survey, a participatory internal workshop, a series of individual interviews with staff, and a review of many secondary sources. Reviewing the role of SNE, particularly in relation to the relevant Regional and Country Offices, reveals a need for clarification, and the difficult application of the subsidiarity principle. The role of SNE as a technical support hub for Country Offices is patent, and not entirely served by the skill mix available in SNE. As far as implementation is concerned, the assistance bias in favor of the host country, reveals a need to more clearly distinguish the SNE and national Representation’s missions.

**OTHER ACTIVITIES**

**Guidance note for conducting evaluations under the pandemic (COVID-19)**

This Guidance Note explains how evaluation managers should deal with the exceptional situation created by the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions on movements set in place by many countries.

**Decentralization of FAO evaluation functions**

A proposal for expanding FAO’s evaluation function was presented at the 128 Programme Committee in June 2020. The proposal is to expand the current model of evaluations and include decentralized alongside centralized evaluations in a way that is compatible with OED’s mandate. This approach would allow evaluation to perform its various roles more effectively and efficiently and better contribute to organizational learning. It aims to stimulate and support programme and project managers in enlivening the latter phases of the project cycle, generating evaluation evidence and making it transparent and available for wider learning at the country and regional level.

**New! Automated Management Response and Follow-up report request system**

OED has launched a new online semi-automated system to request evaluation management responses and the follow-up reports in order to establish a cohesive corporate process to systematically collect data and monitor the recommendations acceptance and their subsequent implementation. This new system will increase efficiency, and also provide a rich source of information on accountability and learning across the FAO evaluation system.

**Eval-Forward Community of Practice**

*EvalForward* – the Community of Practice on Evaluation for Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development, jointly supported by the evaluation offices of FAO, IFAD and WFP since 2018 – has been an important channel to develop evaluation culture and strengthen capacities amongst practitioners in developing countries. Facilitating knowledge exchanges, awareness raising, and networking, the Community has a membership of over 900 evaluators, decision makers and academics in 98 countries and offers its services in English, French and Spanish. Visit the website and join the community!

https://www.evalforward.org/

In collaboration with OED, EvalForward produced a *Review of monitoring and evaluation capacities in the agriculture sector*, based on interviews conducted over a six-month period in 23 countries. The study reviews how evaluation and results-based management practices are used in Ministries of Agriculture and whether the capacities and resources needed are available to officials.
Evaluation reports and management responses are public documents and are available to download at: www.fao.org/evaluation/evaluation-digest/en

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1. NO POVERTY
2. ZERO HUNGER
3. GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING
4. QUALITY EDUCATION
5. GENDER EQUALITY
6. CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION
7. AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY
8. DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH
9. INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
10. REDUCED INEQUALITIES
11. SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES
12. RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION
13. CLIMATE ACTION
14. LIFE BELOW WATER
15. LIFE ON LAND
16. PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS
17. PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

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