

**Country Programme Evaluation Series**

# **Review of FAO's country programme in Eritrea**

**2017–2021**

**Follow-up report**

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**  
**Rome, 2022**

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Evaluation Recommendation	Management response <b>Accepted,</b> <b>Partially Accepted</b> or <b>Rejected</b>	Management plan			Impact of, or changes resulted from taken actions
		Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection	Description of actions actually taken, or reasons for actions not taken	MAR Score	
<p><b>Recommendation 1.</b></p> <p>FAO has harmonious relationships with the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Marine Resources, the Ministry of Land, Water and the Environment, the United Nations (UN) and donors. It has no coordination and facilitation problems and this needs to continue, but there is room for improvement in integration among projects and activities such as beekeeping project and horticulture project. There is a potential for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to augment its cooperation with the Ministry of Marine Resources and the Ministry of Land, Water and the Environment. Both ministries must be involved in the preparation of the next Country Programming framework (CPF).</p>	<b>Accepted</b>		Actually, the relations we have with the implementing partners have deeply strengthened that we are jointly planning and implementing field programmes.	Excellent	
<p><b>Recommendation 2.</b></p> <p>In implementing livestock and animal health activities, transportation is a severe constraint faced by National Project Coordinators to make field visits. If possible, FAO should keep some project vehicles for use by Ministry staff associated with its projects until this constraint is resolved.</p>	<b>Partially accepted</b>	The FAO Office in Eritrea only has three drivers, thus limited capacity to ensure the use of FAO vehicles to NPCs. However, there is a possibility to include the budget for transportation under the lead of FAO instead of including it into the letter of agreement for ease of hiring rental cars. Sometimes it is also difficult to replace government's duties as such. However, it is acceptable in case-by-case basis for integrity. FAO can only provide support when the project is active.	FAO is assisting in logistics fully if associated with projects. However, again the country office tries to cooperate as much possible for convincing issues.	Good	

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<p><b>Recommendation 3.</b></p> <p>Resource mobilization is weak but there is readiness by the Ministry of Agriculture to address this with FAO. The Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Marine Resources, the Ministry of Land, Water and the Environment and FAO should mobilise resources together to work more on Priority 1 management of natural resources as well as priorities 2 and 3. The FAO is not a donor agency rather it works with line Ministries to mobilise resources. This should be clarified. In the next CPF, line Ministries and FAO should approach partners both internal and external together to mobilise resources to help in programme design and implementation to safeguard the achievements attained in the current CPF.</p>	<b>Accepted</b>	Agreed.	Actually, in-country resources mobilization is difficult due to the political situation and stance of donor countries on Eritrea. In-country mobilizing resources is very limited. For example, UTF is non-existent. Subregional, regional and headquarters need to understand this issue and back the country office as much as possible.	Advancing	
<p><b>Recommendation 4.</b></p> <p>FAO is not input supplier. It is a knowledge organisation that can tap on the best skills in the world and makes them available to any country such as Eritrea. Therefore, the private sector needs to be supported and strengthened in order to supply inputs such as chicks, selected seeds, livestock and other commodities on a competitive tender basis to the beneficiaries as is the practice globally.</p>	<b>Accepted</b>	Agreed. However, FAO conditionally makes interventions in humanitarian assistance and resilience building of livelihoods for vulnerable communities particularly in time of crisis.	As per the country's policy, FAO is delivering inputs through the structures of government institutions.	Good	

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<p><b>Recommendation 5.</b></p> <p>The Ministry of Agriculture and FAO can partner to upscale the innovative agricultural technology being introduced such as composting (bio fertilizer), liquid homemade pesticides from production up to regulatory policy development. Upscaling the successful production of dates into large scale plantations (including dealing with their water supply needs) as well as encouraging value addition should be pursued in the next phase. Apiary is an easy area to focus on value addition where FAO can implement from start to finish and hand over to an Apiary Cooperative. Strengthening food safety capacity also goes hand in hand with increase in production.</p>	<b>Accepted</b>		This is placed in the new signed CPF and is already prioritized but depend on funds availability.	Advancing	
<p><b>Recommendation 6.</b></p> <p>FAO should increase its work on awareness and understanding of food security, not only confined on crop production but also on development of fishery resources (the Ministry of Marine Resources feels that there is little coverage of fish in FAO pamphlets, brochures, photos etc.) and animal production. Eritrea has been a net fish exporter for a long time, but there is huge potential for growth, and with the already made investment in the fish laboratory, Eritrea can now consider exporting fish to the</p>	<b>Accepted</b>		Currently, FAO is assisting the marine resources to upgrading and strengthening capacity of the government's Fish Quality Control Laboratory and technical assistance for strengthening fisheries research, development and	Advancing	

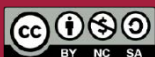
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European Union. This needs to be looked at with greater emphasis. It will add to nutrition and create jobs.			management capabilities		
<b>Recommendation 7.</b> The production of crops per hectare is very low (e.g. wheat 0.9 MT). Notwithstanding the recurrent shortage of rains, if the yield doubles, it will double the food production of the country and this will go a long way to meeting food security, the stated objective of the country. Therefore, in the next CPF an ambitious improved seed production component needs to be included. Already notable yield increase using bio fertilizers have been achieved. This needs to be expanded and there is an opportunity to embark on this innovation for the FAO in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture. As there are no private seed producers in Eritrea, unlike in many other countries, this is a challenge. Perhaps the only possibility is to create seed farmers' cooperatives.	<b>Accepted</b>	Yes, will include even in the Hand-in-Hand initiative. Actually, this needs to also be considered in the incoming CPF as an output.	The Technical Cooperation Project has been prepared for the identification of major production bottlenecks and recommendations to enhance crop productivity. At the end of project, major factors hindering production and productivity of crops will be identified and documented with policy recommendations on productivity enhancement and for possible funding and interventions.	Advancing	
<b>Recommendation 8.</b> Upscaling distribution of chicks currently standing at 30 000 households to provide tens of thousands more of vulnerable households should be pursued. Those participating in the MIHAP have maintained	<b>Accepted</b>	This is also to be linked with value addition development and is already prioritized in the government's strategic plans. This is also the same as Recommendation 4.	These are also considered in the new CPF and is already a government priority.	Advancing	

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their birds and have advanced to second and third stages. This project can easily attract donor funds, or a revolving fund mechanism can be devised. The successful surveillance of animal diseases should also be scaled up to several fold of its current 30 000 animals during the emergency project cycle as this contributes to food and nutrition security immensely and providing income as well to the farmers.					
<b>Recommendation 9.</b> The highly dedicated FAO personnel are not on a par remuneration-wise with other UN agencies. This harms their morale. However, even if the office is small, their contribution to Eritrea's development is significant. Therefore, it is highly recommended that this is addressed to attract and keep such quality staff. Furthermore, the FAO CO has exceptional challenges on procurement, and this has the risk of tarnishing its well-earned image. It has the constraints of not being able to find suitable vendors in the country, if available purchases are expensive and therefore at times is forced to make no cost extensions on projects. Special privilege should be granted to raise the FAOR's authorization limit of USD 100 000 to tackle the handicap.	<b>Accepted</b>	Recently the FAOR's authorization has now increased to USD 200 000 and the level of authorization in procurement will be discussed with FAO Procurement Services (CSLP).	Almost all issues highlighted in this recommendation are beyond the authority of the budget holder; e.g. filling the posts in fixed-term positions and the possibility to adjust salary scales.	None/poor	

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<p><b>Recommendation 10.</b></p> <p>Agricultural statistics and information are essential for planning and decision making in the process of agricultural development of the country. Thus, there is a need to collect timely agricultural statistics and establish database through collaborative work of the Ministry of Agriculture and FAO.</p>	<b>Accepted</b>	<p>The Agricultural Census is underway through a joint programme between the Ministry of Agriculture and FAO.</p> <p>There is also the need for additional work aligned with the reporting against the SDGs.</p>	In progress.	Advancing	
<p><b>Recommendation 11.</b></p> <p>The process of safeguarding and disposal of obsolete pesticides should continue and needs to be part of the next cycle of CPF 2022 to 2026. They also need to implement the construction of adequate chemical stores and undertake treatment of stores used by obsolete pesticides all over the country including construction and implementation of land fill areas for obsolete dusts and soils affected by disposal of obsolete pesticides.</p>	<b>Partially accepted</b>	FAO would provide the technical knowledge however the construction of adequate chemical stores would require the mobilization of resources from donors.	The recommendation is acceptable and doable with availability of funds.	None/poor	

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