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Organización de las
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منظمة
الغذية والزراعة
للأمم المتحدة

PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Hundred and Twenty-fifth Session

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Indicative rolling work plan of evaluations 2019-2021

Executive Summary

- This document contains an indicative work plan proposed for 2019-2021, which updates the current work plan for 2017-2019 (PC/120/8) reviewed by the Committee in 2016, and integrates the proposals for evaluation of thematic strategies (PC/121/7) reviewed by the Committee in 2017.
- The plan is to conduct evaluations of FAO's thematic strategies, followed by evaluations of FAO's work in statistics and FAO's contributions to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).
- Evaluations of country programmes will continue and gradually pay greater attention to assessing FAO's support to the achievement of national SDG-related programmes.
- The Office of Evaluation will continue to provide evaluation service to selected projects, and proposes to step-up its support to and quality assessment of evaluations managed by FAO decentralized offices.

Action Requested from the Programme Committee

- The Committee is invited to comment on the proposed plan 2019-2021, and endorse the plan.

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Introduction

1. The Office of Evaluation (OED) has been conducting evaluations under the Indicative Rolling Work Plan 2017-19 (PC/120/8) approved by the Committee at its 120th session in October 2016. The main objective of this Work Plan was to examine the results achieved by the Organization in line with its Strategic Framework. Its core elements were hence to evaluate FAO's contributions to each of its Strategic Objectives (SOs) and to the programmatic objectives identified in the Country Programming Frameworks (CPFs).

2. In March 2017, the Committee reviewed an additional proposal for thematic evaluations (PC/121/7) and recommended the evaluation of selected thematic strategies in the period 2019-2020. This proposal include evaluations of:

- a) The FAO food safety strategy (covered in the evaluation of Strategic Objective 4)
- b) The gender equality policy (to be covered in the evaluation of FAO's work on gender)
- c) The strategy and vision for FAO's work on nutrition
- d) The strategies for partnerships with civil society organizations and with the private sector
- e) The climate change strategy

3. At the current session, the last of the Strategic Objective evaluations (SO2) was presented. The evaluations of FAO's work on gender and on nutrition will be presented to the next session of the Committee. A synthesis of the SO evaluations will be presented next, while the remaining thematic evaluations will be undertaken in sequential order, starting with the evaluation of FAO's strategy for partnerships with civil society organizations, then the evaluation of FAO's strategy with the private sector, and finally the evaluation of FAO's climate change strategy.

4. In the period 2020-21, OED proposes to undertake an evaluation of FAO's work in statistics, followed by evaluations of FAO contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), depending on their scope and other evaluation work requirements.

5. Besides, OED proposes to continue undertaking country programme evaluations that gradually pay greater attention to assessing FAO's support to the achievement of national SDG-related objectives. OED could also present selected country evaluations to the Committee and produce regional synthesis aimed at identifying trends and enhance learning within and across regions.

6. Finally, OED continues to manage evaluations of projects funded by voluntary contributions that have budgets over USD 4 million, as per current policy. As recommended by the evaluation of the FAO's evaluation function (2017), OED suggest continuing with the development of a "decentralized evaluation system" herein project evaluations are implemented by decentralized offices while OED provides guidance, technical support and quality assurance services.

7. Table 1 provides a list of proposed evaluations and related reports to be presented to the Committee. *Table 2* provides a list of Country Programme Evaluations. As per standard practice, the selection of country programmes for evaluation is carried out in consultation with the relevant Regional Office.

I. PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF EVALUATIONS

A. Evaluations presented to the Governing Bodies

8. For the period 2019-2020, it is planned to present the evaluations of FAO's work on gender and on nutrition (spring 2019), the synthesis of Strategic Objective evaluations (Autumn 2019), the evaluation of FAO's strategies for partnerships with civil society (Autumn 2019) and private sector (Spring 2020), and the evaluation of FAO's climate change strategy (Autumn 2020).

9. Starting in 2020, depending on their scope and other evaluation work requirements, it is proposed to conduct evaluations of FAO's contributions to SDGs with priority given to the SDGs that cover themes that have not featured prominently in recent evaluations, as well as to those more directly related to the mandate of the Organization.¹ Based on these criteria, the evaluations could initially cover: SDG6 (Water), SDG13 (Climate action), SDG15 (Life on land), SDG14 (Life below water), SDG12 (Sustainable consumption and production), SDG7 (Affordable and clean energy), SDG2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG1 (End poverty). OED would conduct these evaluations, seeking to establish close partnerships with the other Rome-based Agencies as well as with other United Nations entities (such as UN Water or the Global Environment Facility) for their undertaking.

10. As in the past, the Committee will continue to receive follow-up reports to previous evaluations prepared by Management after two years of implementing the actions contained in the respective management responses. These are also included in the schedule (*Table 1*).

B. Country programme evaluations

11. OED has conducted between six-eight country-level evaluations in the period 2016-2018, as both a mechanism to provide accountability to Member countries and their populations, and to serve as an opportunity to document results, reflect on achievements, identify lessons learnt for future application, and support dialogue between FAO and the government on strategic direction of the programme.

12. As stressed by the Programme Committee during the discussions of the synthesis of lessons learnt in application of the Country Programming Framework (CPF) (March 2018), there is a "*need to further strengthen...oversight of CPFs...and the coherence of the UN at country level*".² OED thus proposes to continue with a programme of country evaluations, and supplement them with the preparation of regional synthesis, aimed at identifying regional trends and enhance learning within and across regions. These syntheses could be complemented with specific presentations on country programme evaluations requested by the Committee.

13. In the light of the reform of United Nations Development System proposed by the United Nations Secretary-General, it is expected that the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) will gain in importance as the main accountability framework of the system's contribution to the country. Accordingly, the evaluations of UNDAF should be upgraded to meet the accountability needs. To avoid duplication and increase coherence, the inter-agency United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) established a working group to enhance alignment and contributions of each agency's country-level evaluations.³ Challenges remain however. Agencies have different programme cycles, therefore the timing of country-level evaluations differ. The relationship between the accountability of the system and that of individual agencies is not yet clarified, and the evaluation offices need to conduct evaluations according to the agency's accountability requirements, rather than aligning them to the system's accountability needs. OED actively participates in this discussion, and the work to explore options will continue in the years to come.

14. One of the options, though limited in scope, is the collaboration among Rome-based Agencies in their country-level evaluations. OED conducted a joint study in Cameroon with the evaluation

¹ [FAO and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals](#)

² CL 159/3

³ FAO Director of Evaluation leads this working group

offices of IFAD and WFP. It examined comparative advantages of each agency, opportunities and gaps in collaboration among them in the light of government priorities and country needs. This study was based on country-level evaluations conducted separately by the three agencies, according to their work plan. It required the programme cycle of the agencies to coincide, and the willingness of the government to lead the discussion. While such studies do not directly address individual agency accountability, they provide a basis for strategic discussion for better role sharing and collaboration among Rome-based Agencies.

C. Evaluation of projects funded by voluntary contributions

15. OED has continued to manage project evaluations of global, regional and national scope, while supporting the piloting of decentralized evaluations, and conducting evaluations of emergency and resilience interventions. In the period 2017-18, OED has evaluated several global and regional flagships programmes, such as: i) the Forestry Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Initiative; ii) the African Solidarity Trust Fund; iii) the Global Strategy for Agricultural Statistics, and iv) the Voices of the Hungry.

16. In 2019-20, OED plans to carry out evaluations of global programmes such as the Information on Nutrition, Food Security and Resilience for Decision Making Initiative, and the Sustainable management of Tuna Fisheries and biodiversity conservation in the areas beyond national jurisdiction project, as well as to evaluate large country-level projects such as the Sawlog Production Grant Scheme in Uganda, the Pursuing Pastoral Resilience Initiative in Ethiopia, and Livelihoods and Food Security Programme in Zimbabwe. Furthermore, it is planning to conduct an ex-post evaluation in Afghanistan (on dairy production) and a cluster evaluation in Colombia.

17. Finally, OED is conducting evaluations of two major resilience interventions: El Nino response in Southern Africa (with extensive impact assessments at community level in Malawi, Zimbabwe and Lesotho) and the Syria response. OED, jointly with the FAO representation in Somalia, is managing a large evaluation of cash programming in Somalia, which is due in early 2019. In late 2019 and early 2020, OED plans to undertake evaluations of the Lake Chad crisis (multi-country), of the implementation of the resilience strategy in South Sudan and of the level 3 crisis response and resilience programme in Yemen. Also in 2019-20, OED will produce a synthesis of findings from resilience evaluations to identify lessons around FAO's strategic and programmatic approach and results in the domain of the humanitarian, development and peace nexus.

18. OED will continue to represent FAO in the Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluations team and actively contribute to decision-making and evaluation management in this area. It will also represent FAO in the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance, and other working groups in the domain of humanitarian evaluations.

D. External activities

Contribution to evaluation capacity development

19. Responding to a call for strengthening external evaluation capacities, enunciated both in a United Nations General Assembly resolution⁴ and in the evaluation of FAO's evaluation function, OED led the creation of a Community of Practice on evaluation for food security, agriculture and rural development: "EVAL-ForWARD". This initiative, now jointly supported by all the Rome-based Agencies' evaluation offices, aims at promoting the integration of evaluative thinking into national and global SDGs review systems. The Community members comprise evaluators, development practitioners, policy-makers and researchers from national institutions, and offers for many an unprecedented opportunity to access and exchange food security-related evaluation knowledge and information.

20. Over the 2019-21 period, EVAL-ForWARD will significantly expand its membership, reaching to and engaging broader audiences interested in evaluation for food security, agriculture and

⁴ A/RES/69/237

rural development, and using a variety of virtual and face-to-face channels. Based on the evolving needs of the community, EVAL-Forward will develop knowledge sharing and training activities that will strengthen evaluation capacities, with a particular focus on evaluating progress towards the achievement of SDG2.

Participation in the United Nations Evaluation Group

21. OED is an active member of the UNEG, which brings together the evaluation functions of 46 member organizations. In May 2018, OED hosted the UNEG Evaluation Week jointly with the evaluation offices of IFAD and WFP, which brought together 163 evaluation professionals to share lessons and best practices, and discuss inter-agency work programme and initiatives. Through UNEG, OED contributes to, and co-leads several inter-agency working groups and initiatives.

22. For 2018-2019, it participates in inter-agency working groups on such topics as: governance, utilization of evaluations; human rights and gender equality; evaluating policy influence; reforming the OECD-DAC⁵ evaluation criteria; and partnerships for evaluation. Further, as the Vice Chair of UNEG, the Director of OED chairs the UNEG working group to support new UNDAF evaluations, which works in collaboration with the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office.

Communication and knowledge management

23. OED continues to carry out communication and knowledge management activities to promote the use of evaluation results within the Organization, in member countries and by partners. OED plans to strengthen the utility of evaluations for end-beneficiaries, by systematically involving them in evaluation processes and reaching them through appropriate media channels and tailored multimedia resources. In addition, OED will continue to prepare the Programme Evaluation Report 2019 to be presented to the 41st Session of the FAO Conference in 2019.

⁵ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC)

Table 1. Evaluations and associated reports for the Programme Committee

Tentative Session of the Committee and evaluations to be presented	Year(s) conducted
Autumn 2018 session	
Evaluation of FAO's contribution to integrated natural resource management for sustainable agriculture (SO 2)	2017 – 2018
<i>Follow-up report on evaluation of FAO's contribution to increase the resilience of livelihoods to disasters (SO 5)</i>	
<i>Follow-up report on independent evaluation of evaluation function</i>	
Indicative Rolling Work Plan of Evaluations 2019-2021	
Spring 2019 session	
Evaluation of FAO's work on gender	2018 – 2019
Evaluation of the strategy and vision for FAO's work in nutrition	2018 – 2019
<i>Follow-up report on evaluation of FAO's contribution to reduction in rural poverty (SO 3)</i>	
Autumn 2019 session	
Evaluation of FAO's civil society strategy	2018 – 2019
Synthesis of findings and lessons learnt from the Strategic Objective evaluations	2018 – 2019
<i>Follow-up report on evaluation of FAO's contribution to inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems (SO 4)</i>	
Indicative Rolling Work Plan of evaluations (update)	
Spring 2020 session	
Evaluation of FAO's private sector partnership strategy	2019 – 2020
Evaluation of FAO's work in statistics	2019 – 2020
<i>Follow-up report on evaluation of FAO's contribution to elimination of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition (SO 1)</i>	
Autumn 2020 session	
Evaluation of FAO's contribution to clean water and sanitation (SDG6)	2019-2020
Evaluation of FAO's climate change strategy – to be combined with an evaluation of FAO's contribution to climate action (SDG13)	2019-2020
Follow-up report on evaluation of FAO's contribution to integrated natural resource management for sustainable agriculture (SO 2)	
Spring 2021 session	
Evaluation of FAO's contribution to life on land (SDG15)	2020 – 2021
Evaluation of FAO's contribution to life below water (SDG14)	2020 – 2021
<i>Follow-up report on evaluation of FAO's work on gender</i>	
<i>Follow-up report on evaluation of nutrition strategy</i>	
Autumn 2021 session	
Evaluation of FAO's contribution to zero hunger (SDG2)	2020 – 2021
Evaluation of FAO's contribution to sustainable consumption and production (SDG12)	2020 – 2021
<i>Follow-up report on synthesis of findings and lessons learnt from the Strategic Objectives evaluations</i>	
<i>Follow-up report on evaluation of FAO's strategy for partnerships with civil society organizations</i>	

Table 2. Country Programme Evaluations and Programme Evaluations in countries, territories or for groups of countries

Evaluation title and status	Timing
Africa	
<u>Completed</u>	
Kenya	Published in 2018
<u>Ongoing</u>	
Burundi	Publication expected in 2018
Uganda	Publication expected in 2019
<u>Planned</u>	
Ethiopia	Publication expected in 2019
South Sudan ⁶	Under discussion
Asia & the Pacific	
<u>Completed</u>	
Myanmar	Published in 2018
Bhutan	Published in 2018
<u>Ongoing</u>	
Cambodia	Publication expected in 2018
Timor Leste	Publication expected in 2019
<u>Planned</u>	
Afghanistan (TBC)	Under discussion
Near East	
<u>Completed</u>	
Egypt	Published in 2018
<u>Ongoing</u>	
Syria	Publication expected in 2019
<u>Planned</u>	
Lebanon	Publication expected in 2020
Yemen ⁵	Under discussion
Latin America & Caribbean	
<u>Completed</u>	
Nicaragua	Published in 2018
<u>Ongoing</u>	
Sub-regional Office for Mesoamerica	Publication expected in 2018
Mexico	Publication expected in 2019
Cuba	Publication expected in 2019
<u>Planned</u>	
El Salvador	Publication expected in 2020
Europe and Central Asia	
<u>Planned</u>	
Armenia	Publication expected in 2019
Georgia	Publication expected in 2019
Moldova	Publication expected in 2019

⁶ Indicates those with a resilience programme focus